

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 2 September, 1976

Petitions—Questions without Notice—Governor's Speech: Address in Reply (Sixth Day's Debate)—Adjournment (Death of Mr I. P. K. Vidler, C.B.E.)—Questions upon Notice.

Mr Speaker (The Hon. Lawrence Borthwick Kelly) took the chair at 10.30 a.m.

Mr Speaker offered the Prayer.

PETITIONS

The Clerk announced that the following petitions had been lodged for presentation and that copies would be referred to the appropriate Ministers:

School Certificate Grades

The petition of certain teachers, parents and citizens of New South Wales respectfully sheweth:

That we, the undersigned, declare that we have no confidence in the use of "reference tests" and other moderating procedures as proposed by the Secondary Schools Board in the 1976 School Certificate, nor in any School Certificate based on such procedures, believing them to be invalid and hence unjust in their accreditation of students;

That the maintenance of schools' standards can be assured by

- (i) further development of consultation between schools; the provision of material, sample test items, etc., to be available where schools request it;
- (ii) the employment of the services of curriculum advisers and other resources to assist any school that may need to raise the level of achievement in any subject area.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable house direct the abandonment of the proposed "moderating" procedures for the determination of schools' School Certificate grades in 1976, and that the teachers in each school have the final decision in respect of their school's grades, assisted by services and facilities such as those described above, as they require.

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

Petition, lodged by Mr Jensen, received.

Sunday Hotel Trading

The petition of the undersigned electors in the State of New South Wales respectfully sheweth:

1. A referendum on Sunday trading in hotels was held in New South Wales in the year 1969 which showed an overwhelming majority voting against Sunday trading in hotels.
2. It is considered by the undersigned that any changes in the law allowing extension of Sunday trading in liquor in hotels or in any shop selling liquor will increase the acknowledged evils associated with the consumption of liquor including particularly danger in road travel and in crime, and in damage done to domestic life of wife, husband and children in many cases.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House:

1. Will not pass any legislation which will allow any extension of Sunday trading in liquor in hotels or in any other place where the sale of liquor is permitted.
2. If nevertheless it is intended to submit legislation to the House, this should not be done until a further referendum is held to ascertain the wishes of the people as was previously held and which as stated showed an overwhelming majority against such legislation.

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

Petition, lodged by Mr Barraclough, received.

Gambling Casinos

The petition of the undersigned electors in the State of New South Wales respectfully sheweth:

1. There are at present sufficient legal gambling outlets in the State of New South Wales.
2. During the last recently recorded period of a year the amount spent or invested in gambling exceeded the sum of \$4,000 million.
3. The opening of casinos will enlarge this expenditure and will create further inroads upon the amount available to families for the conduct of their domestic life and will thus cause hardship to parents and children in the home and will also, as experience has shown, be an incentive to crimes of stealing, embezzlement and fraud in order to make up for moneys that have been lost through gambling or which are intended for gambling.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House will not legislate to legalize casinos in New South Wales.

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

Petition, lodged by Mr Hatton, received.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

GAMBLING CASINOS

Sir ERIC WILLIS: I ask the Premier a question without notice. Has the Premier often criticized the former Government for allowing illegal casinos to remain in existence notwithstanding a law it especially introduced to strengthen the hands of

police in dealing with such casinos? Has the Commissioner of Police advised that he is unwilling to take any action against illegal gambling casinos until an appeal against that law has been decided by the courts? Was a decision given yesterday whereby the police clearly have power to close illegal casinos? If so, will the Premier, in the light of the oath or affirmation he took, on assuming his present office, to uphold the law, now direct the Commissioner of Police to close these illegal casinos immediately? If the Premier will not do so, will he indicate why these lawbreakers are allowed to go free and what inducement the Government is receiving to allow them to continue to break the law?

Mr WRAN: The Leader of the Opposition has raised a matter of considerable public interest and concern. It is of as great concern now as it was in the eleven years during which that honourable gentleman was a member of a government which consistently turned a blind eye to the existence of illegal casinos in New South Wales. It is strange that he should now have the temerity, when there has been an announcement on behalf of this Government that casinos will be brought within the purview of the law, to suggest that we have been slow to act in the matter.

The case to which the honourable member has referred is *Police v. Wilson* and it was disposed of yesterday in the central court of petty sessions. I ask honourable members to recall that there was an election on 1st May. Now, let us look at when this case first came before the court. The fact is that it was first before the court on 7th October, 1974, yet the former Premier, this pillar of righteousness, remained silent despite various questions from the Opposition at the time as to the illegal activities carried on in this city under the very noses of the Cabinet and under the very nose of the gentleman who now asks this hypocritical question. The case was disposed of yesterday. If in the May elections this pillar of righteousness who now asks this question had been forced upon the public as their Premier, that case would never have been heard, and he knows that. It was only because the Minister of Justice and Minister for Services happened to stumble upon this dust-collected file from October, 1974, that the matter came before the court and was disposed of yesterday.

Like so much of the information that is coming from the lips of the Leader of the Opposition, he has again told the House only a half-truth. Though the matter was dealt with yesterday by the court, an appeal has been lodged on all grounds against the magistrate's finding. With the phalanx of legal talent which surrounds the former Premier—though I notice the former Minister for Health is breaching the phalanx at the moment—even he should know that this case is again sub *judice*.

Let me make it quite clear: under the guidance of the Leader of the Opposition and his predecessors, for the past eleven years the former Government made a mockery of the law in relation to this subject. No longer will a mockery be made of the law. As sure as night meets day, gambling in casinos will be legalized in New South Wales. Next Tuesday a submission will be put before Cabinet and I expect that it will be accepted. After that a statement will be made that will clear the air, once and for all, on the Government's intentions in respect of casinos. One thing that should be appreciated is that these places have flourished under the gentlemen to whom I have referred—especially the righteous gentleman who asked the question. Because they have flourished, they have become virtually a part of the night life of Sydney. The Leader of the Opposition knows, after being a member of the former Government for eleven years, that to suppress that activity fully, or attempt to suppress it, if the law permitted, would only drive these places further underground and bring into existence even more unsavoury features about them than already exists.

Mr Cameron: Are you ready for a writ of mandamus?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Northcott to order for the first time.

Mr WRAN: It is curious that talk about writs of mandamus always seems to come from briefless barristers. No doubt the honourable member for Northcott can spell that phrase but I doubt whether he would know where to find it. I propose now to state succinctly what occurred in relation to the proceedings that were held yesterday. The matter was heard by Mr A. Wilde, SM, who found in favour of the prosecution. The defendant Wilson was fined \$300. He was represented by Mr P. Roach, solicitor, who has indicated that an appeal will be lodged against the magistrate's finding on all grounds. The police action in this matter was taken under a new section of the Gaming and Betting Act, section 37 (1). Under that section the finding in premises of instruments of gaming used in playing an unlawful game is *prima facie* evidence that the place was then being used as a gaming house and that the persons found therein were playing an unlawful game, or such persons were in the place without lawful excuse. The charge against John Wilson was that he had been found in a common gaming house without lawful excuse. Twelve other persons involved in the same proceedings did not appear in court and forfeited bail. As an appeal is being lodged it is of course not known how long it will be before the charges against Mr Wilson are finally resolved. The defendant has commenced proceedings in the Supreme Court against two police inspectors claiming damages for alleged unlawful arrest. This matter will also need to await the result of the appeal against the magistrate's decision.

AUSTRALIAN JOCKEY CLUB

Mr MALLAM: I ask the Minister for Sport and Recreation and Minister for Tourism whether last year the Australian Jockey Club received more than \$3 million from the Totalizator Agency Board. Is it a fact that despite this grant the AJC suffered a loss of more than \$500,000 on its activities last year? Will the Minister inquire into the reasons why the AJC dismissed without notice the former racecourse manager, R. W. Cochrane? Was Mr Cochrane's dismissal the result of the letting of false contracts? Has the AJC suffered a substantial loss because of the letting of these false contracts, and will these losses be shown in its balance sheet? Finally, has the AJC lost thousands of dollars in pursuing court cases against the advice of its legal experts? If so, why has it pursued this course of action?

Mr BOOTH: I do not know all the details contained in the honourable member's question. However, I shall do as he has requested and ask for a full investigation and inquiry to be conducted. When I receive a report on the matter I shall inform the honourable member and the House.

RAIL FREIGHT

Mr PUNCH: I direct my question without notice to the Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways. Will the Minister advise why he has rejected requests to reduce rural rail freight rates in conformity with the 20 per cent cut in fares for country passengers and city commuters? Also, will he give an assurance that rural freight rates will not be increased in the near future to compensate for revenue lost as a result of the recent reduction in fares?

Mr COX: The whole question of freight charges is at present under review. When that review has been completed I shall be making a detailed statement to the House. The matters raised by the Leader of the Country Party will be taken into consideration.

DEMONSTRATIONS

Mr RYAN: I direct my question without notice to the Premier. Is it a fact that last week during the arrival of the Governor-General members of the New South Wales police force photographed a gathering of people outside the Wentworth Hotel, some of whom were protesting and some were merely onlookers? Is that a correct and proper use of the New South Wales police? Is the use of the police in that way an invasion of privacy and an infringement upon the rights of lawful assembly? Is such a use of the State police calculated to intimidate people who assemble lawfully on a public street?

Mr WRAN: The question asked by the honourable member for Hurstville is a pertinent and interesting one. I know nothing of the details of what took place on the day and at the place in question though I well believe that there might have been films taken of the incident. It is not unusual for State or Commonwealth police to take films of demonstrations of a political kind. I suppose in one sense invasion of privacy could arise. I do not know that it could be regarded as intimidator- but I shall look into the circumstances that have been brought to my attention by the honourable member for Hurstville. Obviously there will be more of that sort of incident because a fairly discernible pattern of events has emerged both on behalf of the Governor-General and on behalf of those who disapprove of his decision and conduct last November. What must be borne in mind is that the law enforcement authorities have a responsibility for the Governor-General's safety and protection, as they have for that of other citizens. It is difficult to know how far the police should go in relation to those matters but I am certain that the Commissioner of Police is guided by the fear **that**—

Mr Viney: Guided by the Premier.

Mr WRAN: The honourable member for Wakehurst, who seems to have a penchant for pointless interruption, said that the Commissioner of Police would be guided by the Premier. I should like to reassert, because it takes a long time to get anything through the head of the honourable member for Wakehurst, and for the benefit of the House, that the conduct and the control of police at demonstrations is a matter for the Commissioner of Police. Nothing would suit better such irresponsible people as the honourable member for Wakehurst than for something untoward to happen to the Governor-General should he not be afforded adequate protection by the New South Wales police force. I should like to make it clear again to members of the Opposition, particularly the honourable member for Wakehurst, that in each **instance the** judgment will be left to the Commissioner of Police. If anything untoward happened to the Governor-General I am sure that the honourable member for Wakehurst would be the first to try to take political advantage of the fact that there were insufficient police present or that they were not doing their job properly.

WORTH COAST RAILWAY

Mr MORRIS: My question is directed to the Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways. Did the Minister recently announce plans to spend more than \$1 million to improve communications and to speed timetables on the North Coast railway line? Will he assure the House that, when centralized traffic control on this line is introduced, he will not entertain plans being considered by the Public Transport Commission to close up to thirty-five railway stations and sidings between Maitland and South Grafton, and transfer or retire 150 railway officers and employees?

Mr COX: I shall certainly examine the matters the honourable member for Maitland has raised in his question. They are important. At an appropriate time I shall come back to the House with an answer.

VERICAST PTY LIMITED

Mr R. J. CLOUGH: I direct a question to the Minister for Decentralisation and Development and Minister for Primary Industries. Is the Minister aware that the **firm** of Vericast Pty Limited has announced that it will close on Friday, **10th** September, and that consequently twenty-one people will lose their jobs? Has the Department of Decentralisation and Development been involved in the establishment of this **firm** and can it help in the matter?

Mr DAY: My attention has been invited to the announcement that the firm named by the honourable member will close but up to this time I have not been asked to provide any special assistance. I should like to compliment the member for Blue Mountains on his concern about unemployment in Lithgow, which at the moment stands at **12½** per cent. That is one of the highest figures in the Commonwealth, and it is a matter of grave concern to me and to the Government. The Lithgow area is regarded as a 100 per cent assistance area by the Department of Decentralisation and Development. Over a number of years—going back to about 1973, I understand—the firm mentioned by the honourable member has received assistance up to about \$350,000 in loans for staff training and the like. I understand that the firm manufactures principally golf club heads, as well as other articles. It experiences intense competition from golf club heads imported from Taiwan. This is one of the major reasons for the closing of the firm. I assure the honourable member that if there seems to be any way in which the department can properly assist the firm further, I shall view any application sympathetically.

I know the honourable member is aware that only recently a large firm, Ferrero (Aust.) Pty Limited, announced that it intended establishing a multi-million dollar industry in Lithgow. That also was the subject of representations made by the honourable member for Blue Mountains. I assure him that any approach by that firm will receive consideration—and for that matter any approach by any industry wishing to commence operations in the Lithgow–Blue Mountains area will receive favourable consideration.

EASTERN SUBURBS RAILWAY

Mr BARRACLOUGH: I ask the Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways whether his attention has been invited to the increasing number of children who play in the abandoned eastern suburbs railway tunnels and derelicts who use them as a refuge. Can action be taken to barricade any dangerous areas such as tunnels to ensure the safety of children and derelicts?

Mr COX: It has not been brought to my attention that children are playing in what the honourable member has described as abandoned tunnels. They are not abandoned. An inquiry is proceeding on the eastern suburbs railway and a report **will be** presented in due course. If the honourable member can furnish detailed information of these incidents, I shall take the matter up with the Public Transport Commission. It may be that some of the unemployed are sleeping in the tunnels.

PESTICIDE 2,4,5-T

Mr FLAHERTY: Has the attention of the Minister assisting the Premier **who** represents in this House the Minister for Planning and Environment been drawn to a national disaster which occurred recently in a northern Italian town where gas vapour known as TCDD, a by-product of the pesticide 2,4,5-T, settled over the town **and** had such a serious detrimental effect on the health of its population as to **cause**

the town to be evacuated? Will the Minister advise me and the House whether any industries in New South Wales are manufacturing the pesticide? What action will the Government take to protect the people of this State against any similar occurrence?

Mr HAIGH: I appreciate the deep concern the honourable member for Granville has shown, over the period that he has represented in this Parliament the people of his electorate, for his constituents' health and welfare, as indeed he has shown for the health and welfare of all the citizens in New South Wales. Two weeks ago a serious disaster occurred in a town in northern Italy. The whole world was shocked at the enormity of the disaster. Concern has been expressed as to the possible long-term detrimental effect the gas may have on the health of those who were in the area. Upon receipt of information of the disaster the Planning and Environment Commission was advised and directed by the Minister for Planning and Environment to make inquiries whether the pesticide 2,4,5-T, of which the gas is a by-product, was being manufactured in New South Wales.

Three companies were manufacturing the pesticide in New South Wales. Two companies ceased production some time ago and the third, the Union Carbide company at Rhodes, has not manufactured the pesticide since March last year. As a result of representations made by the Planning and Environment Commission that company has agreed not to manufacture any more of the pesticide until the whole matter has been fully investigated by the commission and a clearance given for its manufacture to continue.

At present the Planning and Environment Commission is in touch with companies in England, Germany, Italy and Holland where problems have been experienced with the manufacture of the pesticide. As soon as information is available the commission will be better able to make some further determination on whether production at the Union Carbide plant should resume. The Government is most concerned at the manufacture of these types of pesticides that can have such a disastrous effect on the community and it is looking at comprehensive legislation to prevent incidents similar to that which occurred in Italy and to protect the health and welfare of the community of New South Wales.

FLAMMABLE NIGHTWEAR

Mr BROWN: Was the Minister for Consumer Affairs and Minister for Co-operative Societies when in opposition fairly vocal on a number of occasions about the use of flammable material for children's nightwear? Has the Victorian Government banned because of their danger a number of materials that are not banned in New South Wales? When will the Minister translate into action his words uttered when in Opposition and protect the children of New South Wales?

Mr EINFELD: I did not realize that I had been unduly vocal. In my ignorance I thought that I had made the position quite clear: the Government that was in office for eleven years until 1st May had almost criminally neglected the children of New South Wales by ignoring the potential danger of their wearing nightwear that was easily flammable. Indeed many accidents had occurred. I remind the House that on 25th November, 1969, the present Leader of the Opposition, in response to a question by me on this matter, referred to two or three or four deaths occurring each year in this regard. He was talking of the deaths of children. He continued:

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has repeated that suggestion in this House. The figure of two, three or four deaths a year was established before any education campaign was undertaken.

The previous Government acted in this matter by producing some pamphlets, which children could not read and never got to the mothers who were the ones neglecting the children. Those mothers ——

[*Interruption*]

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the first time.

Mr EINFELD: I am sorry, Mr Speaker. I should much prefer to deal with the Leader of the Opposition's interjections, because he is the criminal in this House. By his ——

Sir Eric Willis: Mr Speaker, do I have to rise to my feet to take a point of order?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Are you rising on a point of order?

Sir Eric Willis: Have I broken any law of this State? Am I a criminal? I demand that that remark be withdrawn immediately and an apology given forthwith.

Mr SPEAKER: If the Leader of the Opposition finds the Minister's remark offensive, will the Minister withdraw it?

Sir Eric Willis: And apologize.

Mr Einfeld: Are you the Speaker?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I have asked the Minister to withdraw the word as directed to the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Einfeld: I withdraw the remark that he is a criminal.

Sir Eric Willis: On a point of order. Immediately the honourable gentleman withdrew the remark he repeated it. I ask that it again be withdrawn, and that because of the repetition you direct him to apologize to me for that insulting remark.

Mr SPEAKER: Did the Minister make the remark again?

Mr EINFELD: Yes.

Mr SPEAKER: I ask you to withdraw.

Mr EINFELD: I withdraw. As a matter of fact the Leader of the Opposition was the person who was most neglectful in this matter. I remind you, sir—I shall say something later in the Address-in-Reply debate—that before he was dismissed as Minister for Labour and Industry he was also Minister for Consumer Affairs. All members will remember that he was ignominiously dismissed from that position. He was the Minister responsible at the time. I raised this matter time and time again, as you will recall, Mr Speaker, because of your extraordinary memory for facts. You will recall that I frequently raised the matter in the House as a result of representations by doctors, particularly from the Children's Hospital, who kept on saying that children were dying or being severely injured in accidents because they had been wearing flammable nightwear. The Minister, who is now the Leader of the Opposition, refused to take any action on it. *Hansard* shows that he himself spoke of three or four deaths. That did not mean much to him.

I kept on talking frequently about it on behalf of the Opposition. We were deeply concerned about poor defenceless children who were being exposed to a most dangerous situation. My pleas fell on deaf ears. That is probably why the coldhearted former Premier is now Leader of the Opposition and no longer a member of the

Government. Eventually, after members of the former Opposition had pressed strongly for amendments, the former Government introduced legislation that provided for some labelling on garments that were considered dangerous. Labels are now attached to garments, but it is a difficult job to find them. The legislation does not say how big the letters should be on the labels. We have inspected some of these garments in the past few weeks and have found labels underneath other labels denoting the quality of the garment or the standard of textile of which the garment is made. The Government is taking action. As the honourable member for Raleigh would know, the committee of businessmen set up by the Commonwealth Minister for Consumer Affairs has brought down a report on various consumer matters. One of its recommendations is that flammable children's nightwear should be banned for at least twelve months.

That is the action I asked the Leader of the Opposition to take when he was in office, but he would not do it. At three o'clock this afternoon the honourable member for Lane Cove has an appointment with me, and he is bringing with him a gentleman who manufactures non-flammable children's nightwear from imported material that is claimed to be non-flammable. This man runs an organization known as Bimba. I shall be seeing them and will be discussing with them what further action the State Government can take. Honourable members may rest assured that the Wran Government is determined to stamp out the manufacture and sale of flammable children's nightwear and clothing, and we shall do what we can to prevent the serious accidents to children that result from fire to their clothing.

TARIFFS ON NON-FERROUS METALS

Mr PETERSEN: I ask the Premier whether he is aware of a proposal by the Industries Assistance Commission which has recommended a reduction of tariffs on non-ferrous metal products from the present rate of from 5 per cent to 39 per cent down to a general rate of 5 per cent, to be phased out completely over two years. Does the Premier know that this could result in the loss of more than 1000 jobs in the highly efficient firm of Metal Manufactures Limited at Port Kembla, as a result of competition from multi-national companies which invest in low-wage countries, such as Taiwan and Korea, to avoid paying the higher wages in countries such as Japan and Australia? Will the Government join with the local federal and State Labor members of Parliament in protesting against this economic stupidity which has been inspired by the Country Party on behalf of the multi-nationals?

Sir Eric Willis: On a point of order. I concede at the outset that I am raising a fairly trivial point.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! What is your point of order?

Sir Eric Willis: Mr Speaker you have ruled that no member of the Opposition should ask a question without notice that contains argument, seeks an opinion, or is in any way descriptive. I submit, with great respect to the honourable member for Illawarra, that the latter part of his question contains opinion and argument. If you are to be consistent in accordance with the traditions of your office, Mr Speaker, you should rule his question out of order, as you did with a question asked by a member of the Opposition the other **day**.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no point **of** order.

Sir Eric Willis: There are two **rules** here.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I just heard the Leader of the Opposition cast a **reflection** upon the Chair. I am giving him a **firm** warning that if he **continues** in that wav I shall deal with him properly—and this applies to some of his colleagues.

Sir Eric Willis: Mr Speaker——

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition made the remark that there are two rules in this Chamber. That was clearly heard by me, and I am asking him to refrain from such remarks in future.

Sir Eric Willis: Mr Speaker, if you took it that way, I shall respectfully withdraw it, but I assure you that I did not refer to anyone in particular.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr WRAN: It is true that the Industries Assistance Commission has submitted a draft report in regard to tariffs on wire, tubes and sheets made from copper and brass. This report recommends that tariffs be reduced to 5 per cent immediately, and that they be abolished after two years. Thus far it is a draft report, and has not been implemented. The present tariffs on these products range from 9 per cent to 41 per cent, and if the tariffs on metal products are reduced in accordance with the Industries Assistance Commission's draft report, there is no doubt—and I do not think I am putting it too high—that this will have disastrous effects upon the Australian non-ferrous metal industry. In particular, it will have a most serious effect upon the firm mentioned by the honourable member, Metal Manufactures Limited at Port Kembla, and upon the employees of that highly efficient and competitive Australian manufacturer.

The metals industry estimates that the proposed tariff cuts would cause a loss of up to 2 000 jobs in the base metals industry alone. It is quite correct, as the honourable member for Illawarra has said, that up to 1 000 jobs at Metal Manufactures Limited would be imperilled. The reality is that this is not the time to reduce tariffs. The metals industry is already depressed. **Oversea** producers are dumping their products on the Australian market. Unemployment among metalworkers is already high. Indeed, unemployment in the heavy manufacturing industry, of which the metals industry forms part, is at one of the highest levels in Australia. For example, among skilled metalworkers there are two unemployed persons for every vacancy. Among semi-skilled metalworkers there are eight unemployed persons chasing any one vacancy. The industry itself is not uncompetitive, and before the current recession had won important export orders for Australia.

I think all honourable members will agree that in the light of the high level of unemployment on the Australian mainland, with New South Wales bearing the unfortunate burden of having the highest percentage of unemployed, this would be the worst possible time to reduce tariffs. It is to be hoped that, in the interests not only of **Metal Manufactures Limited** and of the **employees** whose jobs are imperilled, but indeed of **all Australian** industry, the **Fraser** Government will not implement the draft report on tariffs in respect of non-ferrous metals. In response to the last part of the question by the honourable member of **Illawarra**——

Mr Cameron: The colourful member for Illawarra. That is not meant to be argumentative.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Northcott to order for the second time.

Mr WRAN: It is unbecoming for a former Speaker to behave like a larrikin in the House. In response to the last part of the honourable member's question. I **inform** the House that we in New South Wales will continue to support the Australian non-ferrous metals industry to the greatest possible extent. Instrumentalities such as the

Public Transport Commission and the Electricity Commission will continue to place orders with Australian manufacturers as part of the contribution by the New South Wales Government to supporting employment in Australian industries.

Finally, I can say yes, the Government will protest against any attempt by the Fraser Government to cause further unemployment in Australia by adopting the draft report on tariffs, which can only lead to catastrophic effects in this most important Australian industry.

FARM DAM AT JINDERA

Mr MACKIE: I direct my question without notice to the Minister for Conservation and Minister for Water Resources. Is the Minister aware that officers of the Water Resources Commission are continuing to harass Mr Klinberg of Jindera in my electorate despite the fact that he successfully defended himself in a recent court case in which the commission laid charges in regard to the licensing of a farm dam on his property? Has the commission lodged an appeal against the court's decision? Has the Minister intimated his intention to introduce amendments to the Water Act to exempt from the licensing provisions farm dams under 4 acre-feet, and could such amendments place Mr Klinberg's dam in an exempt category? Will the Minister now act fairly in the matter by calling the commission off and also withdrawing the Crown appeal?

Mr GORDON: This is a most unusual question, particularly as it is asked by the honourable member for Albury. The decision to prosecute Mr Klinberg was made on 13th November, 1974. The proceedings began on 7th April, 1975, and the hearing was concluded on 18th September, 1975, all during the period in office of the former Government. The decision was handed down on 14th July, 1976.

Mr Mackie: I do not deny that. That has nothing to do with the question.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Albury has asked a question. He should allow the Minister to reply to it.

Mr GORDON: The commission is not primarily concerned with Mr Klinberg's dam, although it was built irregularly, without a licence. In building the dam Mr Klinberg put other people's property at risk. If a watercourse passes through two or more properties and one owner dams it in his property, he infringes the rights of the other landholders. It is a responsibility of the Water Resources Commission to ensure that that does not happen. The ground on which the appeal has been lodged is that the magistrate wrongly, in the opinion of the Water Resources Commission, defined a watercourse as a drain.

COMMUTER PARKING

Mr CLEARY: I ask the Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways whether his department is providing commuter parking at some railway stations and is in the process of developing more of such facilities for rail commuters. Will the Minister consider providing, where practicable, parking facilities on land adjacent to bus depots to enable bus travellers to drive their cars to a depot, park, and proceed to their destination by public transport? Would such an arrangement assist in reducing traffic congestion?

Mr COX: It is true that I have approved of the establishment of a number of commuter parking areas at railway stations. The suggestion by the honourable member for Coogee that we take the development a step further and provide commuter parking at bus depots is a sensible one. I assure the honourable gentleman that I shall ask the

Public Transport Commission to investigate the suggestion; if adopted, it would certainly reduce traffic congestion. I shall have a reply prepared as soon as possible, and advise the honourable member and the House further in due course.

INTERSECTION OF TAREN POINT ROAD AND HOLT ROAD, TAREN POINT

Mr N. D. WALKER: My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways. Is it a fact that the intersection of Taren Point Road and Holt Road, Taren Point, has been the scene of a number of accidents recently? Were some of the children who attend the Taren Point primary school, which is adjacent to this busy intersection on the principal thoroughfare between the Cronulla peninsula and the city, involved in some of these accidents, and was one boy injured seriously? Have strong representations been made regarding the problem? Is the Minister in a position to inform me on behalf of parents residing in the area whether as a matter of urgency he will eliminate this serious traffic hazard, not only to relieve mothers of great anxiety about whether their children will return home safely each evening, but indeed to save lives?

Mr COX: I am pleased that the honourable member for Miranda has raised this matter. It is to his credit that he takes a keen interest in the children attending this primary school. The intersection of Taren Point Road and Holt Road at Taren Point does have a bad accident record. I have read some press reports about this intersection and I am aware that in a short period a number of serious accidents have occurred there. Having had a preliminary look at the matter I think there is need for a re-phasing of the traffic light at that intersection. I assure the honourable member for Miranda that I will deal with the problem as a matter of urgency. I thank him for bringing it to my notice. I shall let him and the House know what is to be done about it as quickly as possible.

GRAIN ELEVATORS BOARD

Mr MASON: My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Mines and Minister for Energy. Has the fact that a government instrumentality, the Grain Elevators Board, has for more than three months been endeavouring to introduce a second shift at its seaboard terminals been brought to the attention of the Minister? Is he aware that the introduction of an additional shift, which would offer employment to a considerable number of people, has been resisted by the two unions involved on the ground that an extra shift would interfere with overtime payments? Is it a fact that if the seaboard terminals were available for sixteen hours a day rather than only eight hours a day under the present system, additional jobs would become available not only with the Grain Elevators Board at those locations but also at country silos and terminals and with the Public Transport Commission? In view of the serious unemployment in New South Wales will the Minister use his best efforts to influence the unions to put jobs for unemployed persons before overtime for those with a job?

Mr HILLS: I am aware of a dispute which exists in relation to the Grain Elevators Board seaboard terminals. I am most concerned about unemployment in New South Wales which, on a percentage basis, is the highest in Australia. Anything that can be done to create employment for unemployed persons will be done by this **Government. I shall most certainly take up the** matter with the Department of **Labour** and Industry and arrange discussions with the unions concerned in an endeavour to provide some extra jobs. Perhaps I should stress that the type of employment to which the honourable member for Dubbo has referred is of a temporary nature only.

I will do as the honourable member has requested and see whether something can be done about this serious problem and so diminish unemployment in this State. If it is a question of employees receiving overtime pay as against providing jobs for unemployed persons, I am sure the trade union movement would see the sense in the argument.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH: ADDRESS IN REPLY

Sixth Day's Debate

Debate resumed (from 1st September, *vide* page 436) on motion by Mr Wilde:

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

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

May It Please Your Excellency—

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

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

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

Mr MAHER (Drummoyne) [11.25]: I am delighted to have an opportunity to make a contribution to the debate on the Address in Reply to the Governor's Speech. I start by congratulating you, Mr Speaker, upon your election to your high office. I compliment the mover of the motion, the honourable member for Parramatta, and its seconder, the honourable member for Blue Mountains. I compliment also other honourable members who have made their maiden speech in this Chamber in this Address-in-Reply debate. I should like particularly to mention my colleague the honourable member for Ashfield whose electorate adjoins mine. I trust that I will have the same relationship, fellowship and friendship with him as existed between my predecessor and his predecessor.

I was somewhat saddened to hear several members of the Opposition indulge in a little union bashing in their maiden speeches. I hope that, when those members have had the opportunity to meet people from all walks of life, they will understand better the great contribution the trade union movement has made to our democratic institution, the party system and our nation.

As this is my second term in this Parliament, I should like in this debate to make observations about matters that strike at the very role of a member of Parliament. As members of a sovereign Parliament that comes straight from 500 years of British tradition, we should be for ever on guard against anything that might cut into our rights or the performance of our duties. In recent years the notion has been abroad that the federal Parliament is the key Parliament. Perhaps that is because Canberra holds the purse strings. It has been accepted that beneath the federal Parliament there is local government which has grass roots contact with the people and that the Parliament in between is of no consequence and therefore redundant.

I feel that unfortunately this spirit has infiltrated some State Government departments and indeed into the thinking of some public servants. I look to the new Ministry to rid the State of that type of thinking and to restore this Parliament to its rightful place and the role of the member to the position that it should enjoy. As an example of the type of situation to which I refer I invite the attention of honourable members to the practice of some State Government departments of forming local committees with local government bodies and other organizations when a project such as a hospital, school or other institution is to be constructed.

I believe that to be quite a worthy practice. Consultation with local residents and groups is something which the Labor Party and this Government would encourage. However, my experience is that State Government departments fail to notify the local member of the setting up of such a committee and even the intention to go ahead with the project. The local government authority is informed but the local member is left in ignorance of what is happening. He is not given the minutes of committee meetings and does not even have access to meetings, details of progress or inspections. On many occasions I have had to consult the local newspapers or the local council minutes to find out what is happening at high schools, hospitals and other State Government institutions in my electorate.

That attitude adopted by government departments and public servants cuts right across the role of the member of Parliament. In this way the member is reduced in status, and his responsibility is eroded. For many years the Public Transport Commission and its predecessor the Department of Government Transport **consulted** with local government and other bodies in regional areas about bus services, complaints about running times, location of bus stops and similar matters. Unfortunately recommendations by local groups with regard to government projects in their area are not made known to the local member, though those recommendations might vitally affect him.

There should be consultation among a wide range of groups, including local government authorities and citizen groups. But, why do government departments exclude the local members from these discussions? All too often the local member is left in the dark and often duplication of representations occurs. Local newspapers publish statements that cause concern and conflict for members. The role of the member is eroded when these combined groups fail to consult with him on matters concerning his electorate.

I look to the new Government to co-ordinate the activities of all these bodies and to include the local member in any deliberations. Though a local member would not want to attend meetings of regional planning bodies, he would like to know what is going on in his electorate. I congratulate the Health Commission for including members of Parliament in its deliberations. The Health Commission has established a co-ordinated body for ail health services in the inner western suburbs. That body meets monthly, and the parliamentary members in the area concerned are supplied with

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a copy of the minutes of its meetings. The local member is not expected to attend meetings of this body but at least in this way he is made aware of what is going on in his electorate. Before this system was introduced I found that I had to refer to the minutes of council meetings to know what the Health Commission was doing in my area. I appreciate that no slight was intended on the part of the Minister. On occasions public servants have made vital decisions that affected my electorate and I had not been consulted about them.

A community health centre was established to provide a service in my electorate. However, the first I knew of its existence was when a social worker telephoned me about a problem. Social workers are precious because the federal Department of Social Security is withdrawing their services, particularly in ethnic areas. The result will be more responsibility for social workers employed by the State Health Commission. The Housing Commission has not exempted itself from the practice of ignoring local members. The commission confers with local councils and other planning bodies, but often the local member knows nothing about a proposal by the Housing Commission to commence new work in his area.

I support the involvement of local government, local organizations and citizens in all forms of decision-making, but I make a plea to the Cabinet and the Government not to overlook the local member. After all, local government areas are not really as representative of the local view as they could be. We still have the ancient notion of a property vote whereby the composition of a shire or municipal council can be influenced by the views of absentee ratepayers who live in another area. Those people are able to determine the quality of life of the citizens who reside in another shire or municipality. I hope that in its wisdom the new Government will eventually abolish this hangover from the 1858 Electoral Act. The concept contained in that legislation is that because an absentee owner happens to own a piece of land he should be entitled to vote in the local government elections in the area where that land is situated. Such a concept is anathema to me.

Some local government bodies tend to think that they are a sovereign parliament, that aldermen are above the law and that they can defame people and indulge in that **type of conduct**. A local government body is not a sovereign parliament; it is an instrument of this Parliament and it can be abolished or amalgamated at the will of this Parliament. Since I have become a member of this Parliament I have been impressed by the standard of the voluntary service given to citizens by aldermen, and by the quality of the work they do, for which largely they are unpaid. I do not wish to detract from their role in any way.

I make a plea that public servants and government departments should cease to continue ignoring local members. It is possible that part of this attitude has been the result of the reluctance of Ministers of the Crown to tell a member of the Opposition about a project planned for his area. This practice seriously affects the role and the status of members of Parliament. The Address-in-Reply debate presents me with an ideal opportunity to defend the rights of members. I look to Cabinet and the Government to tidy up the area of omission to which I have referred.

I propose to refer now to the Coombes report, which was tabled recently in the federal Parliament. In particular I call attention to the part dealing with the role of a local member. The people who compiled this report examined all the surveys carried out and concluded that the clearest measure of priority was given by public servants to matters referred to Ministers by members of Parliament. I am encouraged by that part of the report. However, the report reveals that fewer than 1 per cent of citizens with problems and difficulties sought assistance from their local member. The Coombes

report has made recommendations for improving the knowledge of constituents in relation to their ability to contact local members. If members of Parliament are to receive additional representations and have more grievances and problems submitted to them, each Ministry must ensure that honourable members are supplied with adequate replies to the representations they make on behalf of constituents and that members are kept fully informed about decisions that affect their constituents.

Another matter I wish to raise in this debate is the fact that any citizen can write to a Minister, including the Premier, and obtain in reply information about a project without the details of that reply being passed on to the local member. It is my experience in regard to any project in my area—whether it concerns a high school, a hospital or a community centre—that unless each month I make my own representations it is possible for decisions to be made, important planning steps taken or a contract let without my learning about it. For example, a local parents and citizens' association or some other citizens' organization may write to a Minister and receive a courteous reply containing all sorts of information on a project. I submit that when a decision is made that affects a member's electorate—particularly a policy decision—details of it should be conveyed to the local member concerned. He should be kept informed of the position in regard to all projects in his area.

A member of Parliament is not interested in petty, private matters that may be in dispute between a citizen and the Government. Any citizen can write to a Minister or the Premier. However, if a reply to a representation is sent to a citizen, particularly one containing a decision or a statement on policy, that information should be conveyed to the local member. I am sure that all members have been embarrassed by having a reply to representations waved at them by some constituent who says, "This is what the Minister has told me; you have been telling me something else."

A member's job is hard enough at any time. However, the practice of Ministers of writing direct to citizens, giving all sorts of information, and of not letting the local member know the position, is a serious threat to the role of a member of Parliament. Ministers are not necessarily to blame for this situation. No doubt public servants do their best to give a reply that **will** inform a citizen of the position. However, often this type of information is passed out willy-nilly and the local member is totally ignored. I look to the Government to recognize this position. I am sure that what I say will not be ignored **or** that my words **will** not fall on deaf ears. I believe that something must be done if the role of the member is to be maintained.

Without in any way criticizing the occupant of that high and important office, I propose to have something to say about the role of the Ombudsman. The European notion of an ombudsman has been grafted on to our parliamentary system with some difficulty. In Great Britain certain safeguards were established in regard to the position of its Ombudsman—that matters could be referred to that officer only through a member of Parliament. For reasons best known to itself, when the former Government appointed the Ombudsman any person was allowed to write direct to him. Members of Parliament are prevented by legislation from referring matters to the Ombudsman without the written consent of the constituent concerned. This legislative estoppel on the activities and rights of members must be removed. I shall raise that matter with the Premier. The British system is to be preferred. A British member of Parliament has the **duty and** responsibility of vetting matters that are submitted to the Ombudsman. I noted in the Governor's Speech that in future local government matters may be referred to the Ombudsman. I pity the Ombudsman and his staff. They will be flooded with complaints about local councils. When that legislation becomes law I do not know how they will get through the work, how people will get justice or how citizens will even receive a reply.

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I see the backbench member of Parliament as the cornerstone of democracy. If democracy is to succeed and flourish in our nation it will be necessary to strengthen the position of the member of Parliament. This House should use the instrument of the select committee more often so as to inform and educate honourable members on specific needs. A parliamentary select committee is needed desperately to inquire into the employment of youth and employment opportunities for school leavers. It is of great concern to me that hundreds of thousands of young people will be leaving schools this year, with no clear prospects for employment and with little idea of what they could undertake by way of extracurricular activities or tertiary studies. Counselling procedures in our schools are inadequate. A select committee on the employment of youth would be a worthwhile activity for members.

Another area in which members should be involved is the scrutiny of regulations and statutory instruments. In Canada there is a joint standing committee on regulations and other statutory instruments. The committee is assisted by a full-time lawyer. It is important to review delegated legislation because of its effect on the ordinary citizen. This sort of legislation is drafted by public servants and is never subjected to scrutiny in this House. Such a joint standing committee is long overdue.

In the short time left to me I wish to touch on several other problems. One is the housing crisis which, after unemployment, is probably the greatest difficulty facing the people of New South Wales. At my interviews on Saturday mornings I see young and middle-aged couples who cannot finance the purchase of homes in my electorate because of the deposit gap. Their plight brings me to tears. I am pleased that the Government proposes to introduce a scheme of legal aid on a first conveyance and also the deferral of payment of stamp duty on contracts. That decision could save a couple buying their first home up to \$1,000.

I am distressed about the problem of housing the aged. Former Ministers for Housing have assured me that any old person or pensioner will not have to leave the area to which they have lived for years in order to get Housing Commission accommodation. However, I know of many people in that category who have been drafted into high-rise accommodation at Waterloo and into other accommodation in the outer suburbs. They were told that if they did not accept that accommodation there would be nothing else for them. I have witnessed the distress of elderly people when told that they have to leave the area in which they have resided for many years; that they will have to leave their doctor, church and the shops to which they have become accustomed. It is a disgrace that the housing authorities cannot provide accommodation locally for people in their twilight years.

Local government must bear part of the responsibility for the housing problem. The former Government amended the Local Government Act to permit councils to approve the division of suburban cottages into two dwellings. Many spinsters, widows and other aged people in my electorate would like to be able to divide their cottages into two dwellings and let half. But most councils, with a few notable exceptions, have totally resisted that proposal. They have withheld approval from those who wish to put another kitchen in their homes, no matter how big the home. The short solution to the housing crisis facing New South Wales is for local councils to implement this worthwhile proposal. It is a scandal that in some areas one side of a road is zoned for home units or high-rise dwellings, and the other side of the road is zoned for dwelling-houses. A citizen living in a cottage looks across the road at the most hideous blocks of home units imaginable but cannot put another kitchen in his own cottage.

I touch briefly on some problems that affect women, particularly widows. I have asked questions of former Attorneys-General in the previous Government about the intention to amend the law on intestacy. Disgraceful situations arise when the husband

who owns a property dies intestate. I trust that the law of intestacy will be amended so that the widow will get the greater part of the estate, particularly if it is a aweiling house. Awkward situations arise when a man dies and leaves, for example, a widow and perhaps two children. There might be a home unit or house in his name. In that circumstance the estate would be divided between three people who may not all be in agreement on what should be done. I have had the sad experience of daughters trying to evict their mother, and so on.

Another matter that I feel needs urgent attention involves the separate property and income of women. An anomaly exists in the law. A woman who frugally saves from the housekeeping money given to her by her husband may find on the death of her husband that the money she has saved is deemed to be part of her husband's estate. In this State effect is given to this shocking notion by the Commissioner for Stamp Duties. It results in nothing but distress and sorrow for many women who have to face also the loss of a husband. I call upon the Government to legislate that archaic law out of existence.

I refer now to problems confronting migrants. Reference was made in the Governor's Speech to the fact that one-third of the citizens of New South Wales are migrants or children of migrants. I am pleased that action is being taken to teach migrant languages in State schools. Interest in a foreign language can best be engendered in primary schools. Surveys have shown that the earlier a child starts to learn a foreign language the more likely it is that the child will become fluent in that language and eventually become bilingual. In the area I represent and in many other parts of Sydney a number of ethnic groups have taken upon themselves the task of conducting classes in their own language. These worthwhile, enthusiastic bodies—particularly those of the Greek and Italian communities—have established their own parents and citizens' associations. But a burden is placed upon a child attending an ethnic school. When other children go off to play that child has to spend time studying the other language. The teaching of foreign languages in ordinary schools would obviate the need for ethnic schools and would be a great step forward for children, particularly those who wish to be bilingual. I believe that they are one of the State's greatest assets.

I am concerned about the problems confronting migrant women in the work force. In the time available to me today I cannot canvass these issues, but I congratulate the Government on the action it is taking on the matters outlined in the Governor's Speech in relation to language and migrant problems by proposing to establish a **commission** for ethnic affairs. I congratulate Alderman Jegorow of my electorate on his work over the past few years in getting the commission for ethnic affairs off the ground.

Before I resume my seat I should like to touch on the need for ferry services in Sydney. In the few minutes available to me I cannot deal thoroughly with the problems involved in the establishment of a viable ferry service on the Parramatta River. The previous Government inundated the Parliament with extensive surveys and reports on ferry services, the last one by W. D. Scott & Company. There are simply not enough ferries to do what is recommended, but I endorse the recommendations contained in the Scott report for the establishment of ferry services to Cabarita and the Chiswick-Abbotsford area. Honourable members, particularly the honourable member for Balmain, will be disappointed when they read the report and find no recommendations in it for the provision of extra ferry services on the harbour to other than those two points. I hope the Minister for Transport and the new Government will give this matter of ferry services full consideration. If we are to overcome the environment problems of smoke and exhaust pollution and the world-wide crisis in oil and fuel, we must return to ferry transport. It will have to be competitive and efficient and offer cheap

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fares in order to attract commuters. As well, new wharves must be more centrally located. I trust that the references to transport in the Governor's Speech will apply to ferry services.

They are the matters in the Governor's Speech to which I wished to reply. I appreciate the **opportunity** to **contribute** to the debate and again I say how pleased I was to hear the new members make their maiden speeches and to see you, Mr Speaker, occupy your office with distinction.

Mr MADDISON (Ku-ring-gai), Deputy Leader of the Opposition [11.55]: May I offer my congratulations to the honourable member for Parramatta and the honourable member for Blue Mountains for moving and seconding the Address in Reply to His Excellency's Speech. I have been most impressed by the maiden speeches of **the new** members of this Parliament. The Opposition parties have been singularly fortunate in attracting to this House members with a great diversity of talents, evidence of which has emerged in their contributions to the debate. I suggest that those members will prove to be worthwhile successors to the many eminent men who represented their respective electorates over the years. Most of them held ministerial portfolios **during** the time the present Opposition parties were in government.

Mr Speaker, may I offer to you my congratulation upon your appointment to your high office. I am minded, however, to reflect upon a remark made by Sir Kevin Ellis when he was Speaker that this House cannot work effectively without co-operation between the Speaker on the one hand and the respective leaders of the political parties on the other. It has been a cause of some distress to me in recent times to see what was perhaps to be expected in the opening of a parliamentary session, with a party going into opposition. I fear for the dignity of this House unless we come to a better understanding of the rights and privileges of members. I have always borne in mind what Sir Kevin Ellis said, because if people wish to frustrate this House it is possible to do so, thereby preventing it from carrying on its business of governing New South Wales **for** the benefit of its citizens.

I am concerned at the recent trend in politics that members of Parliament give greater attention to personalities than to policies. One has seen evidence of it in this Chamber in recent days. In the community and in other parliaments of this nation there seems to be a desire on the part of some people to denigrate those involved **in** political life, be they Ministers or private members. There is a concerted attack on the Governor-General, the vice-regal representative for the Commonwealth. It seems to me that it is one thing to attack, for example, the powers of the Senate in regard to money bills, but it is another thing to engage in a personal, vitriolic, continuing attack against the Queen's representative in this country. Members on the Opposition benches are concerned about the way in which the Premier indicated his apparent vindictiveness towards the person of the Governor-General. It is a shocking state of affairs that the Premier of this State should make the kind of comment that he made in answer to my question last week concerning his acceptance of invitations to functions at which the Governor-General would be present.

It seems to me that politics should concern itself with policies and not personalities. Recently in this House we have had some indication that the new Government is concerned much more with personalities than with policies. I hope that this is only a symptom of the settling down period in the life of a new Parliament. I should be horrified to think that it will continue. If it does we shall not be doing our duty to the constituents whom we represent or the people of New South Wales generally.

It is understandable that in His Excellency's Address at the opening of Parliament great stress should be laid on the problems flowing from the current economic

situation in Australia. A lot of emphasis was placed on the high level of unemployment in this State, both in absolute terms and by comparison with the position throughout Australia.

All must be concerned about the men and women who are able and willing to work but cannot find employment. More particularly we must be distressed that one in three persons unemployed in New South Wales is under the age of **21**. With school leavers entering the work force in the next two or three months the unemployment situation will get considerably worse. Words expressing concern are not enough. Where does one find in the Speech of His Excellency the Governor a reference to any positive action the Government will take to come to grips with this human problem of unemployment? One observes that an advisory committee has been established to look at ways and means of stimulating the building industry and that a manufacturing advisory council is to look at ways and means of increasing production. Presumably both will result in increased job opportunities. However, these are long-term bodies that have been set up to look to the future and do not solve the immediate unemployment problem. When can the people of New South Wales expect some action?

Nowhere in His Excellency's Speech can one find any positive initiatives to be taken by the Government. All it does is ask for more public funds to be available, which of course come from the Commonwealth, for public investment. It has not been suggested that more funds should be made available for easing unemployment. The basis for the request for more funds from the Commonwealth is an attempt to make more credible the extravagant promises that the Premier when Leader of the Opposition made prior to the election. If his concern is really for the unemployed why does he not get his priorities right? For example, why has he not introduced now some emergency legislation in the payroll tax field? As a starting point he should exempt from payroll tax the wages and salaries of employees under the age of **21**. The Premier, like his colleague the federal Leader of the Opposition, the Hon. E. G. Whitlam, has recognized in more recent times that without an active and profitable private sector there can be no economic recovery. Governments have a responsibility to do all in their power to stimulate the private sector, provide incentives for business to expand and provide new job opportunities. The Government made the spectacular promise of a **20** per cent fare reduction to which effect was given at the end of June. Although two months have passed the people of New South Wales have not been told of any results of that action. Did it do anything for unemployment? In that period have transport finances improved or deteriorated? I suspect that the cost of the experiment, popular though it is in the public mind, has been at the expense of general revenue and of providing incentives to the private sector by way of reductions in taxation. Thus I contend that the cut in fares generally is at the expense of doing something for the State's unemployed.

The opportunity now presents itself to the Premier not merely to pay lip service to co-operation with the Commonwealth Government in reducing inflation but indeed to underpin in his own State budget the essential federal budget strategy. Dr Harold Bell, economist with the Australian Mutual Provident Society, said recently that a study of the contemporary world economic scene reveals that countries showing encouraging signs of renewed economic growth are those that have been more resolute in coping with inflation. That was the underlying factor present in the mind of the federal Treasurer when he drew up his budget.

Action is required now by the Premier to indicate in unequivocal terms that the forthcoming New South Wales budget by increasing State indirect taxes will not add fuel to the fires of inflation. That assurance alone, given now by the Premier, would add to confidence in the business world and the community and demonstrate that the

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Government was serious in its own efforts to contain inflation. I suggest also that strong leadership is required now from the Premier to unite entrepreneurial, managerial and labour skills in New South Wales in a common purpose to lift economic activity, reduce unemployment and contain inflation. Can the Premier rise above the traditional Labor leader's business-bashing techniques? This has been referred to time and again by members on the Opposition side of the House during the Address-in-Reply debate.

Two proposals in the Speech of His Excellency the Governor cause me to ponder. The first is that all pre-packaged goods and perishable foods should carry a date stamp showing the date on which the items are packaged or by which they should be used. Despite the pleas made to the Minister for Consumer Affairs and Minister for Co-operative Societies not to proceed unilaterally in New South Wales without agreement from other governments across the nation, in his usual manner he is proceeding alone, willy-nilly, like the proverbial bull in a china shop—something for which he is famous. No one can know what the additional cost to industry will be. I doubt whether the Minister has spoken to the food manufacturing industry about this proposal. Inevitably the cost of conforming with the regulations will be reflected in increased prices. But will it?

I am prompted to ask that rhetorical question by the second proposal which is to set up a three-member prices commission. Does this mean that business will be caught in a three-way squeeze? I contend that it will be. The proposals will be disadvantageous to manufacturers and of marginal significance, if any, to consumers. It will increase bureaucratic controls thereby increasing costs to the taxpayer. I doubt whether the so-called evils about which the Minister for Consumer Affairs is pontificating warrant the heavy handed action that is envisaged. Again it is a unilateral decision with no relevance to manufacturers in the other States which process foods and distribute them in New South Wales.

I said that the Premier should avoid business bashing. By the same token if business enterprise engages in criminal activity—if there is continuing evidence of corporate crime—those engaged in such businesses deserve to be bashed and charged with appropriate offences. His Excellency's Speech was extraordinarily silent on one matter which has engaged the attention of the Attorney-General and has been the subject of a great deal of publicity over recent weeks. I refer to the monstrous allegation—and I stress that it is monstrous—first appearing under banner headlines accusing the previous Government, and particularly myself as Attorney-General and my predecessor, of a cover up of corporate crime in this State. The Attorney-General has indicated that he proposes to table in this House some dozen or so reports of inspectors appointed under the Companies Act which had not been tabled and, so he says, prove that friends of Ministers in the previous Government were protected from prosecution. He apparently proposes to dribble these reports out one at a time to gain the maximum media coverage. He will use parliamentary privilege to denigrate, either directly or by implication, people mentioned in such reports who, however, may not be adversely reported on by inspectors.

The reputations of many people so jealously cherished may well be destroyed by the tabling of such reports unless great care is taken in assessing the follow-up effects. As Jonathon Swift picturesquely wrote, "Convey a libel in a frown and wink a reputation down". This brash young Attorney-General, who is perpetually frowning behind a cherubic smile, is about to destroy in the twinkling of an eye reputations that have been well established and well respected. According to the *Financial Review* of 23rd August the Attorney-General justifies his tabling of reports because it is often impossible to get cold evidence on corporate crime that is hard enough to stand up to the rigorous rules applying to prosecution of crimes under the Crimes Act. He was quoted in the *Financial Review* of that date as saying: "The standards of proof are

so high". What an extraordinary statement from a Minister who is the senior law officer of the Crown, administering justice in this State. He singles out corporate crime as in some special category where apparently the normal standards of proof beyond reasonable doubt should be in some way lessened. Thus we are to find, apparently, that the system of trial and conviction by the courts is to be abandoned and that of trial and conviction by an inspector or inspectors substituted for it.

If the Attorney-General's intentions are to be pursued—and it looks as though they will be—a heavy onus indeed will lie on the media to ensure that they report faithfully and do not publish headlines and by-lines that are capable of being construed as an innuendo that a person referred to in a report has been adversely reported on and culpably involved in the companies being investigated. We had a classic example last week. The headline "Abeles named in Barton Report" implied that Sir Peter Abeles was in some way involved in the dealings of the Barton group of companies. We all know that this was not so, and the Attorney-General, anxious to recover lost ground, made that point quite clear in his answer to a Dorothy Dixier in this House last Thursday. It will be a sorry day, and a time-wasting exercise for this House, if every time the Attorney-General tables a report he has to make clear, as an aftermath of press publicity, that a person mentioned in a report had been subsequently misrepresented either directly or indirectly by the media.

Let me examine a little further the dilemma that faces the Attorney-General when he receives a report by an inspector containing recommendations for prosecution of individuals. I have already dealt with the possible adverse inferences that may be drawn about people referred to in the report although no recommendations for their prosecution have been made. When charges are recommended, however, there seems to me to be a likelihood of prejudice to the fair trial of these people if widespread publicity is given to the contents of the report. Is one of the reasons for tabling that the Attorney-General sees the standards of proof as so high that he wants to make it easier to gain a conviction? Does he want to secure a conviction at any price—a conviction based perhaps on moral values rather than on the time-honoured values of justice? He is quoted in the article in the *Financial Review* to which I referred, as saying:

Many times Corporation Inspectors discovered attitudes and approaches adopted by company executives which are clearly immoral but which cannot be proved to be criminal in strict terms of the law.

Immoral on whose standards? Many acts that may be regarded as immoral in the individual's eyes are not subject to criminal sanctions. Perhaps the Attorney-General is proposing to establish a new corporate crime, namely, that a person's name has appeared in an inspector's report.

The primary concern of a responsible Attorney-General should be to hold the balance between the public interest on the one hand and the right of a person to a fair trial and the protection of his reputation on the other. After all, inspectors appointed under the Companies Act are really crime investigators and can be described as super policemen. They have the special skills to unravel complex commercial dealings involving knowledge and experience in the law or in accountancy or in company administration. But their reports are not evidence of anything in themselves. They are reports made to the Attorney-General, who seeks the advice of the Crown law officers and the Solicitor-General as to whether on the report there is sufficient evidence to warrant the laying of charges against any person or persons.

A prosecutor cannot tender the report in court as evidence proving corporate crime. In the same way a police report of an inquiry into some alleged crime outside the corporate crime area cannot be tendered in evidence to prove a crime. Surely no

Mr Maddison]

one would suggest that police reports should be tabled in this House, thereby displaying to the public the involved interrogations and statements of citizens who make a report on some alleged crime. It was after consideration of the factors I have been talking about that the previous Government continued with the policy established shortly after going into government not to publish reports except in quite special circumstances. The mere failure to publish reports cannot in any sense be a justification for the alleged cover-up that is repeatedly charged by the Attorney-General. The true test of a cover-up would be if he could point to any charges recommended by inspectors which had been the subject of interference by the Attorney-General of the day to prevent such prosecutions proceeding.

The Attorney-General trumpeted recently that he was about to authorize charges in respect of thirty-five cases. From reading what he said at that time, one would think that the Companies Act provided that he has to authorize a prosecution. That is not so. The prosecutions are authorized by the Corporate Affairs Commissioner and flow on in the usual way. There is no provision in the Companies Act or the Securities Industry Act that the Attorney-General must give his sanction or that he may refuse to prosecute an offender. Whom does the Attorney-General think he is trying to fool? While in government we increased the staff at the Corporate Affairs Commission because we recognized that it was necessary to come to grips more quickly with complaints made in regard to corporate crime.

The commission has been diligent in instituting prosecutions on a continuing basis. Indeed, on 13th August, 1975, I tabled in this House a report indicating that there were then current some 130 charges for offences under the Companies Act, the Crimes Act in relation to company offences and the Securities Industry Act which were in the process of being determined. There was no dereliction of duty in pursuing the corporate criminal during the period from then until this Government left office. I agree that there is far too much corporate crime in this community, as there is in all countries of the Western world. I doubt whether any securities and exchange commission in itself, with the most penetrating and investigative powers, would achieve a better record than that of the Corporate Affairs Commission in this State. One of the great problems is the unravelling of usually highly complex commercial and business dealings which in many instances take years to determine.

The material that is to be found in the reports of the inspectors, together with the evidence they have amassed in the course of their inquiries, have then to be considered by the Crown Solicitor. If the Crown Solicitor recommends prosecutions, and they are in relation to indictable offences, the offences have to be prosecuted in the first instance before a magistrate's court. If the magistrate commits for trial, the matter then goes to a judge and jury. This is a long process.

The great challenge to securities and exchange commissions and corporate affairs commissions is to devise ways and means of speeding-up the processes from the time of commission of offences to the time of final disposition by the court or courts in relation to the charges that have been laid. At the time of leaving government I was putting the final touches to proposals for the elimination of committal proceedings before a magistrate in respect of any indictable offence under the Companies Act and the Securities Industry Act. I indicate to the House that that was well under way; indeed, if it emerges now as part of the current Government's policy, it will be known that it was a matter that was well under way at the time we left government.

It was proposed to substitute the trial of such offences—that is, the more serious, indictable offences—before a judge of the Supreme Court in its summary jurisdiction, sitting without a jury. Certainly it was intended that this procedure would be restricted solely to corporate crime, and did not reflect any intention on the part

of the Government at the time to erode the jury system in other criminal matters. Provided that full particulars of the offence are made available to the accused, it seems to me that a hearing before a Supreme Court judge would not prejudice the fair trial of the accused, so long as—and this was part of the proposal being considered—there is a right of appeal on the facts and on the law to the Court of Criminal Appeal.

Such a proposal would speed up the processes, and would result in a substantial reduction in costs to the accused, legal aid, and the Crown. The Attorney-General might be offended by such a proposal, but I see it as having distinct advantages all round, without prejudice to either the prosecution or the defence. The present procedure is too long, too involved and too costly. I believe that this is a matter that should receive the serious attention of the Government when it formulates its attitude to corporate crime, and I should like less bleating and a bit more action by the Government.

The increase in penalties that are being foreshadowed by the Attorney-General does not really add to solution of the problem of corporate crime, unless it is possible to telescope the time between the commission of offences and the imposition of penalties. The theory of punishment, to have any meaning at all, is to get the punishment as close as possible in time to the commission of the offence. The further away punishment is removed from the offence, the less deterrent effect penalties will have. I believe that what has been communicated to us in His Excellency's Speech is interesting, more for what it does not say than for what it does say. I foreshadow, however, that we are in for considerable shocks during this parliamentary session—

Mr DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr SHEAHAN (Burrinjuck) [12.25]: I am delighted to have the opportunity of participating in the Address-in-Reply debate for the third year in succession. I could not believe my good fortune when I learned that I was to follow the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I do not know whether all members of the Opposition realize it, but in the dying days of the Liberal-Country party Government in this State the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was the Attorney-General. However, when the shadow ministries were allocated by the new Leader of the Opposition, in consultation with the Leader of the Country Party, the honourable member for Ku-ring-gai is no longer shadow attorney-general, as one perhaps would have expected. Instead, he is the spokesman on finance and federal affairs. Most of his remarks during this debate dealt with not only consumer affairs in some depth but also his double standards on questions of corporate crime and his own self defence. He suggested a number of matters concerning the Government's intention, but he overlooked the fact that it has been impossible yet to present any legislation for consideration by this Parliament.

I join with the honourable members who congratulated the maiden speakers. Not all honourable members who have spoken in the debate have extended that courtesy to their new colleagues. I believe that the quality of the maiden speeches, regardless of whether we agree with the content of some of those from the opposite side, is a tribute to the will of the people of New South Wales when they elected the new members of this Parliament. I refer in particular to the six new members who have become my colleagues on the Government side. I wonder how many members and officers of this Parliament realize that since 1970 thirty-nine new members have been elected to this House; indeed, after the forthcoming by-election in The Hills electorate, forty new members out of a total complement of ninety-nine will have been elected to this Chamber in less than six years. This is an extraordinary turnover when one considers that almost half the members of this House have entered this Chamber since half-way through the term of the previous Government.

I believe that we should not restrict our remarks to the quality of the new members, but should look also to the quality or otherwise of some of the members who have been replaced by them. The motion we are now debating was moved by the new member for Parramatta. It might be fitting for me to mention at this stage that last night the honourable member for Burrendong expressed the sentiments of all honourable members when he paid what was for him quite a warm tribute to the former member for Parramatta, Mr Dan Mahoney, who was the only member of the Opposition in the Forty-fourth Parliament who did not take his seat on the Treasury benches after the election held on 1st May. I join with the honourable member for Burrendong, not only because the first two syllables of the name of his electorate are the same as those of my electorate, but also because of the tribute he has paid in expressing my appreciation of the work of one of the most distinguished parliamentarians, my colleague the former member for Parramatta.

The new honourable member for Blue Mountains seconded the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply to the Governor's Speech. I do not think any fair-minded Australian or member of this House could possibly pay any tribute to the former member for Blue Mountains. We saw the spectacle of this so-called independent having Liberal Party Ministers of the Crown scrutineering in his ballot after the May election. Also, we saw the former member speak against the New South Wales Planning and Environment Commission Bill, and then, when the division bells rang, he walked out of the Chamber. All of us on this side of the House and any fair-minded gentlemen on the other side would know that the only time he ever voted with members of the Australian Labor Party was when he voted against a fare increase. What could be more purely political?

I am delighted to welcome the new honourable member for Monaro, whose electorate adjoins mine. He has taken the place of one of the most beloved members, the late Steve Mauger, who was a Liberal Party Minister of the Crown. It is a tribute to Steve and to the new member for Monaro that, after the spotlight had been focused on the Monaro by-election, the former Premier, who led the coalition Government for almost as long as the Premier has been in office so far, called an early election.

We do not miss the former member for Gosford. I sat in this Parliament with my colleagues and heard what he said during the Address-in-Reply debate last year. He stated that it was all right for a man to steal money so long as he was giving it to his children. He showed no remorse for the dealings of which he was accused by our party. He said it was all right so long as he did not get the money.

We do miss the former member for Ashfield, a beloved colleague of honourable members, an extraordinary citizen and parliamentarian for many years. We do not miss the former member for Hurstville. We have still to hear the new member for Hurstville make his maiden speech. He has been prevented from doing so by a hearing ailment, which he has not yet overcome. I am sure that when the honourable member for Hurstville does speak, what he has to say will be a welcome contribution to the debate, for he has already asked two inspiring questions.

We have heard five maiden speeches from honourable members on the Opposition benches. We heard from the honourable member for Orange. Nobody misses Cheating Charlie, whom he replaced, and we welcome this young representative of the Country Party. We heard from the new member for Wagga Wagga. He rightly paid tribute to his predecessor. We miss the former representative of that electorate, now the member for Farrer in the Australian Parliament, the Hon. Wal Fife. We welcome the new member for Barwon, the new member for Gordon, and the new member for Kirribilli. Although we might share the sentiment of the honourable member for Illawarra

regarding the loss of the former member for Hurstville, Mr Tom Mead, at least we shall have the honourable member for Gordon to inspire us with his neo-fascist views. It will be interesting to watch him.

May I congratulate you, Mr Deputy-Speaker, and Mr Speaker, the honourable member for Corrimal, on your elevation to the high offices that you occupy. It is appropriate at this stage to comment on the tactics of honourable members opposite, who have been motivated in the first five days of this session to give notice of four motions of dissent from rulings from the Chair which, though right, they did not like or appreciate. How we should be guided by their attitude is a point that I shall develop in some detail later.

Turning to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor, I invite attention to the comment regarding the policies of the federal Government, the so-called Australian Government, now led by a man, a politician, appointed as Prime Minister when his party was in a minority in the House of Representatives after it had participated in delaying money bills in the Senate as a tactic which depended on twice ignoring the conventions of the Australian political system—though twice last year members of the then Opposition in the federal Parliament criticized such breaches, including one by a former Premier of New South Wales, the honourable member for Wollondilly. However, twice relying on a prostitution of the Australian political system, the Liberal and Country parties went into an election campaign promising a reformation of Parliament to make it a truly viable part of our political system. If Parliament is to have any meaning, surely the guiding principle should be that the will of the majority must prevail.

I sat in a hall at the University of Melbourne recently and heard the Prime Minister say that henceforward the Senate was to be regarded as the primary House of the Australian Parliament. It appears that we are to be dictated to federally by an unrepresentative House. Further, the Government of the nation is led by a politician who in his ministerial career fell out with the permanent heads of both of the major departments that he administered, the Department of Education and Science and the Department of Defence. He fell out also with the uniformed head of a service department, of which he was Minister. I refer to General Daly, then service head of the Department of the Army. Yet when it came to election time in 1975, one of Mr Fraser's campaign themes was a promise to return to the traditional relationship between a Minister and permanent head of his department as his chief adviser.

We have in the present Prime Minister a politician who brought down two leaders of his own party in order to advance his personal ambitions. He then comes out in an election and advocates a return to stable government as a reason for voting him into office. Here is a man caught by a former Prime Minister, the Rt Hon. John Gorton, conducting a campaign against the staff of one of his own departments through a traceable press leak. He assured the Prime Minister that he had not leaked any information. He denied the facts when they were published, and even asked one responsible journalist whether he would deny having had a press briefing. We remember the events that led to the resignation from Cabinet of the Rt Hon. J. M. Fraser, now Prime Minister of Australia. He asked the journalist to whom I referred whether he, as a responsible member of the press, would deny having had a briefing from a Minister of the Crown. Finally, Mr Fraser deceived Prime Minister Gorton about his own intentions. Now, he comes before the people as a Prime Minister himself insisting on what he calls proper and appropriate forms of conduct in government.

In the light of my remarks about the Prime Minister it is interesting to note in His Excellency's Speech a reference to co-operative federalism, and coupled with it a reference to the quality of life that should be available to citizens of this State,

Mr Sheahan]

whether they live in the country or the city. I pay tribute to our own Minister for Health for dealing with this matter in some detail last night. I do not intend to embark on a detailed discussion of it today. However, the question of federal co-operation raised in His Excellency's Speech was brought to notice on 24th August when the honourable member for Mount Druitt, a close friend of mine, directed a question to the Minister for Decentralisation and Development and Minister for Primary Industries, who answered by saying in part:

. . . I want to indicate that the previous Government, under the last two Premiers, forbade any State government department or instrumentality to give evidence to any Industries Assistance Commission inquiry. The attitude was a party political one. It showed no concern for the welfare of this State or its industries, which was the proper responsibility of the State Government. This attitude led to some disastrous recommendations by the Industries Assistance Commission, including the reduction of 85 per cent in the local content in motor cars.

I support those remarks by the Minister, and I support his endeavours to implement the policy of the Australian Labor Party in respect of decentralization of industry in this State.

I should like to mention now the contribution made by the honourable member for Gordon. He paid tribute to his predecessors, including the lamented parliamentary leader of the Democratic Labor Party, who vacated this House as the only member of it in the history of State parliamentary government to represent that party, and who genuinely could be regarded right from the commencement of his term of office as a classical oncer. The former member for Gordon deluded himself at one stage nearing the election into thinking that he would get sufficient support from Liberal Party voters to be returned if he abandoned the Democratic Labor Party. He thought that he could then crawl back into his mousehole in the corner and sit as an independent.

Mr Fischer: What about the National Civic Council?

Mr SHEAHAN: I know nothing about the National Civic Council. The honourable member for Sturt knows more about it than I do. He is nothing more than a Country Party grouper. That is how he has been described by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and his name was one that appeared on an invitation sent to reputable people in my electorate, to reputable people in the federal electorate of Hume, to others in the federal electorate of Farrer, and to others still in the State electorate of Albury. Do not talk to me about the National Civic Council: it is not national, it is not civic and it is not a council.

We will not take any notice of the smart comments of the honourable member for Pittwater and his attempt to mislead the Speaker so that he could speak on a motion for the adjournment of the House. There was also an incident yesterday when the honourable member for Gordon brought a tape recorder into Parliament and said that it was a device that had the capacity to be used for tape recording. I am pleased to see the honourable member for Wagga Wagga in the House. I shall have something to say about him also. The honourable member for Gordon made an attack on an honourable member whom he described as the tired old man of the Labor Party, the Hon. P. D. Hills, M.L.A. I remind the honourable member for Gordon that the Liberal-Country party Government did not have a Minister who could handle three portfolios at the one time. We have several.

The honourable member for Gordon said he was a member of a trade union, though he did not identify it. In making his maiden speech he said nothing about the electorate of Gordon. For we all know that the needs of the people who live there were

satisfied over the past eleven years, and that the needs of the people who live in the outer areas of Sydney, the outer western suburbs, and in some country districts, were not satisfied in any way. The honourable member for Gordon commented favourably on the part of the Governor's Speech where His Excellency talked about the establishment of consultative committees within the Public Transport Commission. My predecessor as representative in this Parliament of the electorate of Burrinjuck, when Minister for Transport twenty-six years ago, implemented that system, and the mealy-mouthed member for Maitland, for whom we all shed crocodile tears yesterday when he was removed from this House at the direction of the Speaker, piously paid tribute to the Government for proposing to re-establish these committees, when the government of which he was a member had abandoned them.

I turn now to the matter of natural gas and inform the honourable member for Wagga Wagga that I have been reading with interest his statements on this subject. I am pleased to see the honourable member for Gordon come into the Chamber, though I am now giving my attention to the honourable member for Wagga Wagga. I read on the front page of a newspaper that the honourable member for Wagga Wagga said he had been to Sydney and had had talks with the Leader of the Opposition and the honourable member for Pittwater, who incidentally is the Liberal Party spokesman on mines and energy, about the implementation of country laterals for natural gas. Yet the honourable member for Wagga Wagga in his maiden speech left it until his last paragraph to mention this important subject. When the honourable member asked a question in this House all he wanted to know was why the Minister for Decentralisation and Development and Minister for Primary Industries had not answered his telegram.

Mr Schipp: That was because there was a drought on.

Mr SHEAHAN: I am well aware of the drought. The honourable member, in the course of his question, suggested that the Minister for Decentralisation and Development and Minister for Primary Industries might have too much to do because he had these two portfolios. However, the shadow minister for both these portfolios is none other than the Deputy Leader of the Country Party, the honourable member for Tenterfield. Lest the honourable member be minded to say that the Opposition's structure merely mirrors the Government's structure I inform him that only this morning I obtained from the library a list of the shadow ministry and it is obvious that some of the allocations do not coincide with the Wran ministry. Apparently the honourable member for Pittwater knows a lot more about mines and energy than the former Minister for Mines and Minister for Energy, the honourable member for Young.

The honourable member for Wagga Wagga attacked the attitude of the Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Mines and Minister for Energy towards the Australian Gas Light Company, but did not acknowledge that the Minister revealed details of the dealings of the former member for Wagga Wagga with the Australian Gas Light Company with regard to country laterals. So, when the honourable member's question about drought and reference to natural gas—which was answered by the reply of the Minister for Mines and Minister for Energy, which extended over two pages of *Hansard* and explained the neglect of the previous Government—is taken into consideration, honourable members on this side of the House will be most interested to watch the honourable member's progress in this place.

I turn my attention now to the honourable member for Kirribilli who I am pleased to see in the Chamber. I compliment him on the way in which he delivered

his maiden speech. I for one do not miss his predecessor in any way. Let us consider what the honourable gentleman said in his maiden speech a few days ago:

I am conscious of the fundamental need for parliamentarians to have unfettered right of free speech particularly in general debate between parliamentarians. But when members raise what they regard as a matter of public concern involving a private citizen, then might I suggest as a reform, that 48 hours notice of such intention be given. In addition, they should give the name of the individual confidentially to the Speaker and be required to table the documents and evidence on which they base their statement in readiness for the time when they make the statement. This would allow the citizen to be forewarned about the allegations and to know the basis on which they were made. He could then prepare his reply which would be given by the appropriate Minister, or tabled after the matter was raised. Alternatively, the citizen should have the right to appear at the Bar of the House to put his side of the case. I do not question the right of a member to use parliamentary privilege as a matter of urgency, to expose corruption, vice and other wrongdoing.

The honourable member wants two days' notice. I will give him a bit more than that and inform him now that the honourable member for Charlestown and some other colleagues of mine have not yet finished with him. One can imagine what would happen to corporate criminals if the suggestion of this 2-day wonder, the 48-hour notice, were implemented as a matter of policy. The Bartons would be able to start up a luxury motel in Paraguay to accommodate escaping Australian corporate criminals. The honourable member suggests that names should be given confidentially to Mr Speaker. That would be a tremendous imposition upon the Chair.

Mr McDonald: Is not the honourable member interested in the rights of citizens?

Mr SHEAHAN: Of course I am. The honourable member's contribution was good though in many ways it did not match the contribution of his leader, whose priorities were the omission of a request for Divine guidance in the last paragraph of the Governor's Speech and the fact that the Premier chose not to use a Bible when making his affirmation of allegiance to this Parliament. Also in the priorities of the Leader of the Opposition was the establishment of nude bathing beaches in New South Wales. He said that Labor could not take credit for nude bathing because his own Government had started it. No doubt there are interesting possibilities if one were to follow through that line of argument. I remind honourable members that in the motion moved by the honourable member for Parramatta we do as members of this Parliament call upon the assistance of Divine guidance in our deliberations. I for one believe in Divine guidance and I have no objection to the Governor's saying to me and other honourable members, "I now leave you to carry out the important duties entrusted to you by the people of New South Wales". That is where my colleagues and I got our trust from and that is where our mandate and power came from—the people—on 1st May last.

[Mr Speaker left the chair at 12.45 p.m. The House resumed at 2.15 p.m.]

Mr SHEAHAN: Prior to the luncheon adjournment I was developing a theme pioneered last night by the honourable member for Dubbo who spoke of the need for members of Parliament to accept their responsibilities and the kudos that attaches to their office. I am keen to uphold those traditions. I was making observations earlier about the behaviour, remarks and performances during this debate and session so far of some of the new members of this House. I turn now to some matters raised by

more senior members of Parliament who I believe have something to answer for as senior members of the previous Government and as men who, in my submission, have treated with contempt your office, Mr Speaker.

The honourable member for Upper Hunter spoke in the Address-in-Reply debate on 26th August and raised the question of the Border Ranges. Prior to the honourable member speaking in the debate the Premier had twice accused him of ministerial misconduct. When the milk quota issue erupted in the Parliament the honourable member for Upper Hunter sought to make a personal explanation under the guise of taking a point of order, and you, Mr Speaker, ruled him out of order. Later in the day he rose again on a personal explanation. I am sure most of his colleagues thought he intended to attempt to explain away his shameful acceptance of milk quota money as a Minister of the Crown, but the honourable member thought better of indicting himself on that issue and on his personal explanation he told a story about the Border Ranges issue quite different from the two versions he had already placed before the House in the form of interjections and points of order. The honourable member for Upper Hunter is not the only member of the Opposition with charges to answer in respect of the milk quotas issue. We all know what the Leader of the Country Party, the honourable member for Gloucester, had to say in yesterday's *Sydney Morning Herald*. There was no attempt to challenge the figures given by the Minister—and no personal explanation. That press article reads:

Also speaking outside the House Mr Punch said the figures given in Parliament by Mr Day had been generally known to the public for more than six months.

Mr Punch: Rubbish.

Mr SHEAHAN: It is not rubbish. The Leader of the Country Party admitted it. That is what he said. The figures might have been known to the public, but not to the Parliament. It has been made quite clear that the Minister for Decentralisation and Development and Minister for Primary Industries had been trying to elicit this information for some **time**.

Mr Mulock: The Leader of the Opposition said such information had never been disclosed.

Mr SHEAHAN: That is right. Let us look at the honourable member for Maitland. He is, of course, one of the bush lawyers who sits on the front bench of the Liberal Party. Honourable members will recall, of course, that the honourable member for Maitland was removed from the Chamber last Tuesday. Today one of the bush lawyers on the front bench of the Liberal Party gave notice of a motion of dissent from the ruling of Mr Speaker in ejecting the honourable member for Maitland. However, that honourable member himself told the Australian Broadcasting Commission, and admitted to me and to other members of this House, that had he been the Speaker he would have put himself out. That is what he said. Today, with the change of tactics and the quietness that has descended upon the Opposition benches, we heard three notices of motions of dissent. I hope the honourable member for Maitland recalls what he said and votes with the Government on the dissent motion concerning his ejection the other day. He is strongly in favour of the decision of Mr Speaker to eject him for disorderly conduct. Let there be no mistake about it, the honourable member knows his politics. Last Tuesday he was seen to look squarely at the Minister for Decentralisation and Development and Minister for Primary Industries and he was about to resume his seat when he saw you, Mr Speaker, on your feet, and he came charging back to the table. He was making himself a martyr for his rich and powerful friends in the milk industry.

The former Speaker has more to answer for in his conduct and attitude towards you, Mr Speaker, as his successor. The honourable member for Northcott is the only member who has spoken in this debate without congratulating the new members who have delivered their maiden speeches. He did not even congratulate his own colleagues who made their maiden speeches. Pussyfoot there and the honourable member for Gordon and others were not congratulated by him.

Mr Ferguson: You mean Hagar the horrible.

Mr SHEAHAN: I am pleased that the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works, Minister for Ports and Minister for Housing is in the Chamber. Earlier this week he was attempting to help the honourable member for Lane Cove by making a personal explanation but the honourable member for Northcott interrupted him. The Deputy Premier was trying to assist the honourable member for Lane Cove to salvage something worthwhile from the Opposition's parliamentary debacle this week.

The honourable member for Northcott now contends, and has done so repeatedly over the past few days, contrary to his own performance as Speaker, that Sir Kevin Ellis when Speaker specifically warned an honourable member three times before having him removed. Honourable members on the first floor of the pizza hut heard the honourable member for Davidson explain to the honourable member for Cronulla why it was wrong that he, the honourable member for Davidson, was removed from the House. I hope that before the dissent motion is debated next week the honourable member for Davidson will read *Hansard* and see why he was removed.

Mr Healey: The honourable member for Burrinjuck should read it.

Mr SHEAHAN: The honourable member for Davidson should take another trip overseas. He should go back to Europe and fix up Mesopotamia and Medibank. The other day the honourable member for Northcott was prancing about complaining that he had been gagged. In his day in the Chair, if any member of the Opposition stayed on his feet when the gag was moved, he would be summarily ejected. The Minister for Lands and the Minister for Sport and Recreation and Minister for Tourism can testify to that. It is obvious, Mr Speaker, when we analyse your performance over the first few days of this sitting, that you have been more than tolerant by comparison with the performance of former Speakers. The Attorney-General's suggestion that the shoes of Sir Kevin Ellis were too big and the wig too small for the honourable member for Northcott was accurate.

I congratulate you, Mr Speaker, on the tolerance you have displayed to the Opposition over the past few days. I congratulate also the Hansard staff who have been more than generous to honourable members opposite in the reporting of their behaviour. Unquestionably, the greatest manipulator of the forms of the House is the Leader of the Opposition, who the other day asked this rhetorical question during the Address-in-Reply debate:

I ask this simple, rhetorical question: Would the Attorney-General have acted in this same kindly way if the member of Parliament had been a member of any party other than the Labor Party?

Yesterday in the course of debate on a dissent motion the Attorney-General challenged the former Premier and Treasurer when he said:

I was trying to clear the character of the honourable member for Ku-ring-gai who had no part whatever in that *ex officio* indictment; he made sure that he was out of the State and did not have to dirty his hands with it.

It was Stainless Steel who arranged for the ex *officio* indictment to get on the desk of a public servant. By his direction that happened; it was not the honourable member for Ku-ring-gai.

The Leader of the Opposition got excited about that and took a point of order. He was not defending himself. When the Deputy Leader of the Opposition got up to reply he did not defend his leader for his conduct. The hypocrisy of the allegations made by the Leader of the Opposition about the Government dismissing public servants and taking credit for what he claimed to have been initiatives of his Government were dealt with by the honourable member for Balmain. He rightly paid tribute to the activities of the former Government in the dying days of its administration prior to 1st May.

Last week, at the close of the address of the honourable member for Burwood in this debate, a ludicrous incident occurred. The honourable member made a comment, which was recorded in *Hansard*, that the Premier had gone back on his undertaking not to introduce casinos. I interjected that there was no need to introduce casinos for they were already in existence. The honourable member for Burwood retorted, "Nonsense". To cap all the misrepresentation that has been indulged in by the Opposition recently, the honourable member for Burwood, right at the close of his remarks, purported to quote from the last and second-last paragraphs of the Governor's Speech, but he left out two words and did not indicate their omission. When I took a point of order you, Mr Speaker, rightly drew the attention of the honourable member to the fact that he had exhausted his time.

We now have the honourable member for Wakehurst as the shadow minister for transport, but he knows nothing about country transport. On behalf of the Country Party, the shadow attorney-general, the honourable member for Sturt, seeks one vote one value in representation in that geriatric hospital, the Legislative Council, affectionately known as the most undemocratic House of Parliament in the world except the Kremlin.

Mr OSBORNE (Bathurst) [2.25]: I join with other honourable members who have taken part in this debate and congratulate the honourable member for Parramatta and the honourable member for Blue Mountains for moving and seconding the adoption of the Address in Reply to the Governor's Speech. I congratulate also those honourable members who have contributed to the debate, particularly those who have made their maiden speeches in the House. My remarks apply particularly to the honourable member for Orange. I listened with interest to the speech made by the honourable member for Drummoyne earlier today. His remarks were well thought out and they contributed something to the debate. One of the first points mentioned in the Governor's Speech is that the Government recognizes the fundamental importance of the rural industry in the economy. Those who represent country electorates will agree with what was said by the Governor. Perhaps I might put forward a few suggestions about what could be done to assist not only rural industries but also the people who make up the community.

The Minister for Lands will be asked to reverse the decision he made recently when he wrote to all country members and notified them that the special allowance **that** honourable members receive and were able to make available to trustees of small country parks and reserves would be terminated. The Minister said that he had done that on the advice of honourable members representing country electorates, but I have not met any honourable members from country electorates whose opinions were sought on the matter. Generally, the areas concerned are small reservations scattered throughout villages and country areas. The amount received by an honourable member was \$500. Normally he made five allocations of \$100. The value to the Crown of those allocations was that the money was usually used for the purchase of

materials **and** voluntary working bees would do the work. In that way work to the value of \$400, \$500 or \$600 would be done for a grant of only \$100. I appeal to the Minister for Lands to restore the allowance. Though it was a small amount it was of great benefit to many people.

The Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways could be of help to people in country areas. A vital consideration in attracting rural industry is a good road system. Recently a supplementary grant of \$11.3 million was made by the Commonwealth Government to the State Government with a request that a large proportion go to local government bodies. Statements made recently in this Parliament indicate that of that amount rural arterial roads are to receive \$6.3 million, rural local roads \$2.98 million and urban arterial roads \$1.69 million. Recently in my area the Shire Association asked that at least 50 per cent of that \$11.3 million be allocated to rural local roads. I ask the Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways to consider that request seriously. He should alter his recommendation to the Commonwealth Government about the apportionment. Judging from the plight of many **rural local** roads, that apportionment will **not** raise the figure to the amount that is needed, but it would at least allow some sort of maintenance work to be done on the roads.

Foot rot is a major problem in the Central West. The disease has been prevalent in my electorate and in surrounding electorates. It could be one of the worst diseases with which we have to contend in those areas of the State with a reasonably high rainfall. Recently Professor J. R. Egerton of Sydney University addressed a seminar in Bathurst on the disease. I shall read the first paragraph of his address:

I begin with the premise that if progress is to be made in control effective vaccines—means of protecting rather than curing sheep—are needed. There is sufficient evidence from work already done, to justify pushing further towards this goal.

What Professor Egerton and his team need is a full-time veterinarian who can do the field work, plus some support staff. The estimate of the amount needed for the research being carried on is \$35,000 a year over a 5-year period. For the outlay of not a great amount of money there could be a tremendous breakthrough in improving the health of stock and in overcoming the havoc caused to the rural industry by foot rot.

His Excellency mentioned that the Government will support the concept of education as a life-long process. As a result of the development of the Bathurst–Orange growth centre a number of problems have arisen with schools. Those familiar with the pattern of decentralization development will appreciate that in an area of rapid growth it is not sufficient to provide just homes and jobs. Families will become discontented if schools of sufficiently high standard are not available. The previous Government made all the necessary plans to overcome the problem in the Bathurst–Orange growth area and I ask the Minister for Education to provide funds to implement them.

At the beginning of the year a demountable high school was provided at Kelso. A new high school is planned for Kelso and I expect that tenders will be called shortly. Temporary accommodation is in use at the Bathurst High School, which is overcrowded. Plans have been prepared and I appeal to the Minister to provide the necessary funds for their implementation. Building programmes have been prepared for the Kelso public school and the West Bathurst public school and work is held up waiting for the provision of funds. Although the crisp and bracing climate of Oberon produces wonderful footballers it does create problems with schools. Ground is available for the construction of a new school which would relieve the accommodation pressure at the existing school. Again I ask the Minister to consider the needs of Oberon when looking at his priorities.

At Kandos the Department of Education is in the process of purchasing church land as the site for a new primary school. This in turn will enable the building of a multipurpose hall on the site of the present high school. I ask the Minister to make funds available so that this work may proceed as quickly as possible. Recently the Minister for Education inspected the Bathurst Technical College, which suffers from being housed in an old school building. I know that the Minister is concerned about conditions at the college. I hope that as a result of the unfavourable impression that he formed of the conditions at the college he will take action to remedy the difficulties.

Families who choose to send their children to independent schools are worried about the future of those schools. This arises from their knowledge of what happened in Sweden, where there is a socialist government. What is happening in that country and in Great Britain is accurately stated in a paper that was delivered on 8th September, 1973, by Mr Roy Hattersley, the Labour shadow minister for education of Great Britain when addressing the annual conference of the Incorporated Association of Preparatory Schools. He said:

I must, above all else, leave you with no doubts about our serious intention initially to reduce and eventually to abolish private education in this country . . .

Near the end of his address he said:

I hope I have demonstrated that the political will exists . . . If I am to give you an accurate picture of both the policy of the Labour Party and the prospects for independent schools during the lifetime of the next Labour government I must, above all else, leave you with no doubts about our intention initially to reduce and eventually to abolish private education in this country.

On Monday, 29th September, 1975, the Labour Party Conference in England passed by a small majority a resolution calling for abolition by 1980 of private education in Britain. It is understandable that those citizens who choose to send their children to independent schools are worried about the future of those schools.

Mr Mulock: Under Fraser they are. They were better off under the last federal Government.

Mr OSBORNE: The Minister of Justice and Minister for Services refers by interjection to what the Hon. E. G. Whitlam did for parents of children attending private schools. His policy was to build up these schools by subsidy and then take the subsidy away. This is how it was done overseas. His Excellency mentioned **also** that public transport fares had been reduced by 20 per cent. To some people that may be the very great gesture that it sounds, but the figures reveal otherwise. For 1975–76 there were 179 474 000 rail passengers in the Sydney metropolitan area. In country areas, including Wollongong and Newcastle, there were 2 935 095 rail passengers. Country areas, including Wollongong and Newcastle, accounted for only 1.4 per cent of rail passengers who received the benefit of the 20 per cent fare reduction. If Newcastle and Wollongong were excluded then country rail passengers accounted for less than 1 per cent of those who enjoyed this concession. In other words, if one assumes that as a result of the 20 per cent fare reduction commuters are receiving a subsidy of \$25 million, only some \$250,000 is received in country areas. Although the saving may look appealing, country people are not receiving much benefit from it.

In fairness the Minister for Transport should provide freight concessions for country people and rural industry. Out of a total of 182.4 million people only 2.9 million country people benefited. Country people have an interest in the railways and

wish to share in its services. They wish to see the railway system maintained and improved. Equally, they wish to participate in a fair share of the concessions extended by the Government. The figures I have given the House reveal that country people are not being treated fairly. The fare structure is not the only reason for the lack of patronage on the State's railways. I suggest there are many other reasons for which I hope the Minister can find the answers.

This morning a question was asked in this House about the introduction of central traffic control to the railways. This system will shortly come into effect at Blayney, which is in my electorate, and as a result a number of jobs of railway workers will be phased out. Today those railwaymen are having discussions with officers of the Public Transport Commission to ascertain what their future will be. I ask the Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways to extend every consideration to these citizens, many of whom have been a long while in the area and have built their homes there. I hope that arrangements can be made for them so they will not be required to work long distances from their homes.

His Excellency's Speech states that government-guaranteed loans will be provided to lending institutions to enable first-home purchasers to borrow up to 100 per cent of the value of a dwelling. Although I see some merit in this, I wonder whether there could be any side-effects. This proposal might come undone because immediately the deposit is taken off the purchase price, the repayment and interest commitment becomes bigger. I believe it is a general requirement of all building societies that repayments are not to exceed one-quarter of the applicant's weekly wage. It might well be that this added 10 per cent to be serviced might mean that people on lower incomes will not qualify for a loan. This is something that the Minister might watch very carefully.

Recently the Minister for Housing decided against the sale of Housing Commission homes to tenants. This is causing some concern to my constituents, mainly Housing Commission tenants who applied some time ago to buy their homes. Many people tell me that although they have approvals in principle to purchase, and have spent considerable sums of money on such improvements as paving, they cannot proceed to purchase until the new policy has been formulated. I ask the Minister for Housing, before he makes a final decision in this matter, to consider the plight of these people who in good faith have spent much money on their homes, in the justifiable anticipation that they would be able to purchase them. I ask the Minister to look carefully into this matter and to give special consideration to these people.

When decentralization of industry was being considered in New South Wales one of the major initiatives taken by the New South Wales Government was to move the Central Mapping Authority from Sydney to Bathurst. Some problems have arisen in this regard; I have been asked to bring them to the attention of the Minister. When the arrangements were being made for the transfer of this staff, one condition was that bridging finance would be provided at a subsidized rate to the officers who required it. This was to extend for two years, but not beyond 30th June, 1977. I have been informed by some officers that this type of finance ceased this week, on 31st August, 1976, thus causing considerable hardship to a number of people. I ask the Minister to review the matter urgently, and to re-establish the original date, 30th June, 1977. This will enable the people who went there in good faith to have the benefit of this subsidy. If this is not done they will be adversely affected.

In his Speech His Excellency said that the departments of planning and environment have now been combined. I believe that this is wise in principle; these administrations should never have been parted. In country areas land-use regulations require

people who wish to live outside an urban environment to have a minimum area of 40 hectares or 100 acres before they can proceed with a **proposed** development. Most people favour the new **regulations**, but some of those who want to live outside the urban atmosphere might not be able to afford to buy an area as large as **100** acres or 40 hectares. It might be a family man with children who wants to live outside the town environment. I suggest to the Minister for Planning and Environment that the answer to this problem is to use villages—and there are many of them—in which blocks of 1 acre, 2 acres or maybe more can be made available for this type of living. I appreciate the problems that flow from the indiscriminate settling of **people**. Once they establish their homes, they want roads, telephones and other services. The provision of these facilities becomes very costly for not only the people themselves but also the local authorities. Often the people and the authorities cannot afford them. However, most villages have an infrastructure; they already have roads, stores and schools. The basic village already exists. I believe that people who do not want to live in a town atmosphere have a right to go out into the open. I do not support a repetition of the Sydney suburban sprawl, but I believe that village living should be developed and encouraged. It would be good for the people who seek this type of atmosphere. Also, it assists the villagers by holding them together and at the same time keeping their store and school in operation.

Decentralization is one of the most important tasks undertaken by governments in the past ten years. The Government of New South Wales has decided to establish growth centres, the first being at Bathurst—Orange. Thousands of words have been written for and against growth centres, but I submit that the Bathurst—Orange growth centre has progressed probably faster than anyone thought it would. Despite many problems, it has been a success story. Wherever dramatic changes occur, they are accompanied by problems. This has happened here.

I shall recite to honourable members the building statistics for the Bathurst area, thereby demonstrating what happens when a serious attempt is made to decentralize. These figures were obtained from the Bathurst council and they do not include government building or Housing Commission construction. In 1966 the total value of approvals was \$888,000; in 1972 \$2 million; in 1973 \$6 million; in 1974 \$5.2 million; in 1975 \$7.1 million; and in the eight months of this year \$6.3 million. Those figures exclude the development carried out by the Government, but they show the dramatic expansion that has taken place since the announcement was made to develop this growth centre.

In fact, the Commonwealth has made an allocation of only \$2 million. The Commonwealth is considering reports of how much money it will put into the project. Bathurst—Orange is a State growth centre. It was researched by the State; it was announced by the State and it was set up by the State. Of course, we want federal funds for it, and I have done and will continue to do what I can to support the Government in its efforts to get additional funds from the federal Government. However, it should never be forgotten that the federal funds that have been spent so far have been spent on land acquisition, and \$2.6 million was spent on a backlog of local government work. The promotion and the development of this growth centre has been done by the State Government. The State's commitment and expenditure has been substantially greater than that of the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth has contributed \$14 million, whereas from State sources, excluding the new technical college, a sum of more than \$22 million has been outlaid.

We need to encourage confidence in growth centres. The Government by its action has shown it is serious about the transfer of government departments to that area. We must build up the confidence of the people so that private interests will

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follow. The Windmill window factory will go ahead with the construction of a factory and Cliff Engineering will also start up production within the region. I appeal to members of the Ministry and all other members of Parliament to support the growth-centre concept. Recently Mr Wyndham Thomas, general manager of Peterborough, a new town, said that nothing in Great Britain could equal the Bathurst–Orange growth centre for speed of development. He is a leading authority on the concept of new towns. He paid tribute to what has been done in the time available. It behoves us all as citizens of this State to assist in this decentralization scheme and support this concept of development.

I should like to say something to the Minister for Sport and Minister for Tourism. Recently he visited the Kandos-Rylstone area but unfortunately did not pay me the courtesy of letting me know he would be there. There is an urgent need for sporting facilities to be established in that area. I have a copy of an application forwarded to the Minister seeking an allocation of \$50,000 for the development there of two rugby league fields, two tennis courts, two basketball fields and a hockey field. The Minister has been to the area and is aware of its requirements. I regret, as do some of the shire councillors, that he did not announce his intention of making that visit. The Minister has had his trip; I now ask him to produce \$50,000, which is not a very large sum to spend at such an important centre as Kandos-Rylstone. I appeal to the Minister to give favourable consideration to this submission. Here is his opportunity to show his appreciation for having had a nice day up there. I look forward to hearing from the Minister that he has approved the allocation of funds for this development. I conclude by again congratulating the members who have made their initial contributions to the Parliament during this debate. Also, I congratulate you, Mr Speaker, upon your elevation to your high office.

Mr BOOTH (Wallsend), Minister for Sport and Recreation and Minister for Tourism [2.54]: I am pleased to have this opportunity to speak in the Address-in-Reply debate. As other speakers in this debate have done, I congratulate the members who have made their maiden speeches. I congratulate especially the honourable member for Parramatta who moved the motion and the honourable member for Blue Mountains who seconded it. Their contributions to the debate give an indication of the mark that they are sure to make in their long stay in this Chamber. It is an ordeal to make one's first speech in Parliament, but they acquitted themselves well. We on this side of the House are proud of them.

I wish to make specific reference to the honourable member for Bathurst and his remarks relating to the Kandos-Rylstone area. It is true that I did visit that district, though it was a hurried visit one morning while on my way to Lithgow. I made that visit at the request of a group of local citizens. For the honourable member to suggest that members of the Rylstone shire council were not aware of my intending visit is quite wrong. In fact, I interviewed several members and officers of the council, including the shire president and the town clerk. They accompanied me on my tour of inspection. As well as speaking to them I spent the whole morning at the council chambers receiving deputations which were organized in such a way that every half hour or so different groups of people saw me. I held a wide range of discussions on matters concerning industry, business, youth organization and rugby league football. This was the format of the discussion arrangements. Therefore, to claim that there was no consultation with any local-government authorities is quite wrong.

Perhaps the honourable member is a bit put out but he should have been more upset by the neglect of that area over the past ten years. I was absolutely amazed at what I saw. That there are no developed sporting facilities in the area is a reflection upon the local member and the previous government, which failed to look after the

interests of the people in Kandos and Rylestone. This is one of the worst cases of neglect of the people I have seen, and I agree on the need for urgent development. I assure the honourable member that the department and I are having investigations made into what might be done in this area. I am pleased to say that the local council has decided to contribute to the development of playing areas. The policy of this Government is to endeavour to help those youth organizations and community groups which are prepared to assist themselves, particularly on a financial or self-help basis. I assure the honourable member for Bathurst that the needs of the Kandos-Rylestone area are being closely examined. Hopefully, within the next couple of weeks, after details of the Budget have been worked out, a satisfactory answer will be given to the request.

The two subjects about which I wish to speak principally relate to my portfolios of sport and recreation, and tourism. I wish to deal particularly with tourism which over the past few weeks has been quite a topical subject. Unfortunately tourism does not enjoy the emphasis and publicity that it deserves. It is to be deplored that there has been a reduction in the number of tourists, particularly from overseas. Though there are many causes for this decrease the problem itself is fairly straightforward. Quite simply, there has been a downturn both of Australians travelling within Australia and overseas visitors to Australia. In 1975 a total of 516 023 people came to Australia from overseas. The figure for 1974, 532 683, represents a downturn of 3.1 per cent, thus making 1975 the first year for more than fifteen years when we have not had an increase of visitors from abroad. During 1975, 911 815 Australians went overseas, an increase of 18 per cent over the 1974 figure. A conservative assessment suggests that 1 046 000 Australians will proceed overseas during this financial year.

From these figures it is obvious that for every one incoming overseas visitor to Australia, two Australians will depart for holidays abroad. The impact upon our tourist industry will be most serious. Fewer Australians take their vacation locally, and each individual who goes overseas represents one customer lost to the domestic industry. The **standstill** situation with overseas visitors is even more disturbing, as they spend far more per capita than our own tourists. Being a service industry, tourism has been hit particularly hard by the inflationary spiral of the past few years. The cost of travel within Australia, especially air fares and private cars, and the steep rises for accommodation in hotels and motels have produced considerable customer resistance. For all of these reasons it is quite impossible to follow the reasoning of the federal Government with regard to an industry that employs 10 per cent of the total work force of this country. The federal Treasurer has set a new type of record by being the first Treasurer in the past ten years to present a budget without once using the word tourism.

Funds for the Australian Tourist Commission, which is responsible for the promotion of Australia overseas, have been severely cut. Research into the travel habits of Australians have been stopped, and a study into the possibilities of low-cost accommodation has been pushed aside. All these factors point to the need for this State to make its own running with respect to the tourist industry. The New South Wales Government has announced its intention of setting up a tourist industry development fund of \$3 million, to assist in the first instance in the improvement of tourist industry plant within the State. For the first time money will be available for improvements in the Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong areas, and the gap created by the new federal policy to cease making grants to assist the industry will be closed. The fund will allow the Government to act virtually as a private banker to the industry, and I am hopeful of new and improved attractions within the State as a result of this innovation.

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I am optimistic that discussions which are now taking place between officers of my department and the board of Old Sydney Town at Somersby will result in that exciting attraction being preserved. The Commonwealth Government has announced that it will not continue to be involved with the project, in which it holds a considerable equity. The threat to allow the project to be closed endangers the jobs of more than seventy people in the area, and would remove a valuable re-creation of our history from future generations of Australians. I have also advised the Premier of my interest in making Elizabeth Bay House available to tourist visitation in Sydney. **This** beautiful property would be of great interest to Australians as well as to **oversea** visitors. Being located so close to the city, it would become a major addition to the city's attractions. A master plan for the redevelopment of the Jenolan Caves resort was prepared by the previous Government, but no steps were taken to put the plan into action. I am studying that plan and hope to make an announcement about a phased development programme later in the year. The caves are a beautiful and exciting attraction for all generations, and we have a major task of conservation on our hands in ensuring that the reserve is protected yet enjoyed by future Australians.

The Sydney area has been sadly neglected by previous governments. I am taking steps to remedy this situation as quickly as possible. My department will co-operate closely with the exciting Festival of Sydney early next year, and arrangements have been made to co-ordinate tourist promotion within the city through **the** formation of a Sydney area tourist association. In particular, the Premier has announced his strong interest in the development of a convention centre capable of attracting large domestic and **oversea** conventions to Sydney. The ability to bring between 3 000 and 5 000 convention members to Sydney every week should do much **to** assist our larger hotels, restaurants and retail stores. I hope **to** be able to announce more specific plans **in** this respect in the new year.

Naturally, our responsibilities in other areas mean that funds available for tourism promotion are limited. To make the available funds go as far as possible, I have asked departmental officers to work with regional bodies wherever possible, and also with the private sector of the industry and private news media groups in order to stretch our promotional efforts. A pilot scheme with an oil company for increased tourist information centres has already commenced on the South Coast, and we are negotiating with other bodies regarding an exciting domestic promotion. I intend discussing with Ministers from other States the question of joint and co-operative efforts on the borders of the State. Clearly, the Murray Valley is an area **in** which co-operation with Victoria is most desirable, and would make good sense to a tourist intending to visit that area. Through the loan programme we intend to upgrade the standard **of** government travel centres in other State capital cities. These offices are the front line representatives of the New South Wales travel industry in other States. It is most important that they reflect the right image to intending tourists. Improvements and additions will also be made to the limestone cave resorts at Wornbeyan and Abercrombie, both of which are receiving more visits each year.

The Travel Agents **Act**, which has been in force in this State for more than two years, is the first example of this type of legislation in Australia. Within the last day or two an announcement has been made that federal legislation along similar lines is imminent. That Act, which has done much to protect the interests of the many people who today use the services of a travel agent, will be improved by amendments which I hope to place before the House in the near future. They will remove certain anomalies in the present situation and will help to close various minor **loop-**holes that now exist. The amendments are necessary in the light of the experience that the department has gained since the legislation was originally introduced.

Tourist associations throughout the State are undergoing their own difficulties, but I hope to find ways of assisting them by the proposed Tourist Industry Development Bill. In addition, the Department of Tourism should be able to place liaison officers in the Hunter and Illawarra regions in the coming year. These important tourist areas are not at present assisted by departmental officers within their boundaries, and the appointment of liaison officers will reflect this Government's concern for this large and important area in and around Sydney. The federal Minister for Transport, the Hon. P. J. Nixon, was reported in Monday's press as saying that he had endeavoured to divert a number of charter flight operations from Sydney to Melbourne. Mr Nixon had been advised by the airlines concerned that they could not accept this suggestion as their passengers simply do not want to go to any city except Sydney. Those tourists show good commonsense. Mr Nixon might just as well try to induce visitors to England to fly into Manchester or Birmingham instead of London. We are fortunate that Sydney and New South Wales are by far the major tourist attractions and tourist areas within Australia. I assure honourable members that as Minister for Tourism I shall see that this position improves rather than declines, and that the people of New South Wales and our tourist industry get an increasingly better deal when their holiday periods come round.

I turn now to the Department of Sport and Recreation which also comes within my administration. Apart from perhaps the racing aspect, the activities of the department receive little publicity. There is a tremendous amount going on in the department. I should like to inform you, Mr Deputy-Speaker, of its many and varied activities. The Government is mindful of the importance of sport and recreation to New South Wales and is now proposing to make a separate department to cater for those activities. The director, Mr C. L. Bayliss, will become the permanent head of the department. It will be the first time in New South Wales that there has been a separate department for this purpose. As a matter of fact, in no other State of Australia or in the Commonwealth is there a separate department of sport and recreation. This is an indication of the Labor Party's concern for this field. It is of the opinion that the work done by employees in this field should be encouraged.

For the Sport and Recreation Service of New South Wales—established to cater for the physical and recreational needs of all age groups within the community—last year was one of record achievement and expansion with approximately half a million people participating in service programmes. Through its North Sydney head office and a statewide network of regional offices and service centres, the service caters for the sporting and recreational needs of groups and individuals by the provision of community recreation services, camping and training facilities, learn-to-swim-campaigns, vacation play centres and miscellaneous branch activities and services. Apart from a healthy growth in its traditional programmes, 1975-76 saw a number of innovations, such as the publication of the service's sports directory and sports calendar, the production and distribution of a number of instructional films and videotapes, and the official opening by the Premier of the new recreational centre at Lake Burrendong on 24th July.

In an effort to provide effective statewide coverage the service operates a decentralized network of eleven regional offices, five in the Sydney metropolitan area and six in country areas. Naturally, community needs vary considerably from area to area and regional staff are constantly experimenting with many different types of recreational and sporting activities in an effort to provide an appropriate programme to satisfy local community requirements. Many successful learn-to-play courses were conducted throughout the State in 1975-76, ranging from an introduction to golf, squash, and tennis through to bridge, chess and musical appreciation. These courses

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offer people an opportunity to sample a recreation or sport at minimum cost to themselves and, once having experienced the activity, they are directed to the nearest club where they may continue their chosen activity. One of the most successful programmes instituted by the service has been its learn-to-play-golf sessions, which offer six hours of professional tuition at local golf courses at a cost of only \$6 a person, including the use of golf clubs and balls. The courses have proved most successful. They have been encouraged by professional golfers who can see coming from it a possible flow of people into the sport.

I turn now to service centres which are camping sites. They represent a major investment of the order of \$20 million. With the extension of Lake Burrendong and another camp site there a lot is happening in recreation by way of camping. Apart from reaching a new peak in attendance figures, the 1975-76 camping programme proved to be the most eventful and progressive step since the inception of the service. A greater number of participants than ever before were attracted to the programmes, with an aggregate of 46 770 attending the various centres. The opening of the new centre at Lake Burrendong was one of the year's highlights and the new look of the complex and its splendid setting will bring enjoyment to thousands of youngsters for many years to come. Property was also acquired at Minnamurra and Wagga Wagga to provide for expansion in future years.

Vacation play centres were conducted throughout the State for three weeks during the January school vacation and in the Sydney metropolitan area and in Tamworth during the second week of the May and September school vacations. They provide a healthy, creative atmosphere for children aged from 5 to 15 years. Centres are organized on a co-operative basis between the Sport and Recreation Service and various other authorities. Municipal and shire councils, Commonwealth Hostels and the Aboriginal Welfare Board all join in this community effort. During the year 204 159 attendances were recorded.

I am sure everyone acknowledges the need for learn-to-swim campaigns. Last Monday night I attended the annual meeting of the Royal Life Saving Society, which is doing a wonderful job sponsoring lifesaving. It is mindful of the assistance that the Department of Sport and Recreation is providing. The society is doing such a magnificent job that in the coming budget the Government intends to increase its allocation. Each January the Sport and Recreation Service conducts Australia's largest learn-to-swim campaign. It offers children who cannot swim a chance to become confident in the water and gives them a proper understanding of swimming techniques and skills. More than 86 000 children enrolled in the 1976 scheme under the supervision of more than 1 578 specially trained staff during two 10-day periods. In addition, regional offices conducted their own pre-school water confidence and adult learn-to-swim programmes on an ongoing basis where heated swimming pool facilities were available to them.

Most citizens acknowledge the need for water safety. New South Wales has 600 000 backyard swimming pools, which indicates the need for people to be aware of their dangers, particularly to those who own them and children who have access to them. Water safety should be considered by all who own a private pool. There are also other aspects with them that need highlighting. The fact that there are now 600 000 private swimming pools signifies that an increasing number of people may require training in water safety. Demonstrating in a practical manner the Government's concern for the needless loss of life through drowning, the Sport and Recreation Service implemented a series of water safety demonstrations. The aim of the water safety programme is to educate the community on the hazards associated with aquatic activities and on the simple measures that can be taken to eliminate these dangers. The programme was so widely acclaimed that additional staff were required. The

police lecturing section was trained by the service and now covers all demonstrations for schools, **with** the service assisting in the community. Approximately 20 000 people attended demonstrations during the year. All were free of charge.

The Department of Sport and Recreation has continued to expand the provision of publications to keep people informed. A sports calendar is published twice a year, but not enough is being done to inform the public of what is happening in sport and **recreation** throughout New South Wales. Sport coaching is an important aspect, particularly following the criticism that has surrounded the performance of our athletes at the recent Olympic Games. Special coaching courses for sports too numerous to mention in the time available to me were conducted throughout New South Wales. Courses were also arranged expressly for the teaching of coaches to equip them to pass on their experience to sports participants. The courses ranged in sophistication from the guidance of novice coaches to the instruction of coaches who were active at State and national team levels. A total of 563 coaches from 15 different sports and activities were involved.

I turn now to the aims of the Department of Sport and Recreation. Shorter working hours, increased hours of daylight in summer and other trends serve to highlight the need for expert guidance so that a highly urbanized community such as ours may maximize the benefits to be derived from increased leisure. Future aims and objectives of the Sport and Recreation Service—the encouragement of the community in general to raise physical standards and develop lifelong, worthwhile recreational outlets and interests—will be pursued through the extension and updating of existing facilities and the development of new offices and centres. Sufficient flexibility will be retained within the service so that it is able at all times to adapt to the community's ever-changing requirements.

I should like to mention the Olympic Games and to refer particularly to some of the criticism that has been made of the performances of Australian athletes. The Government is mindful of the effort and tremendous dedication of athletes who represented New South Wales at the games. In conjunction with the Shell Oil Company, which was heavily involved in fund-raising to assist our athletes to go overseas, the Government held a farewell function to wish them bon voyage. We emphasized then that, irrespective of what their performances might be overseas, we were very proud of them all. Upon their return the news media severely criticized their performances. The Government does not agree that the criticism was justified. We endeavoured to inform the competitors that we were still most proud of them and pleased to welcome them home.

It seems incredible that the athletes should be criticized. One instance that comes to mind was the criticism levelled at Stephen Holland. Although he swam his best time to break the world record, he came only third. Most people were disappointed that he did not obtain a gold medal. Judy Pollock, a 36-year-old athlete, ran her best time but because she did not make the final many people were inclined to be critical of her efforts. Australia had more competitors in final events at Montreal than in the Olympic Games at Munich. All competitors did credit to Australia. One must keep in mind that Australia and New Zealand are possibly the two countries closest to having pure amateurs, which is in the true tradition of the Olympic Games. One can always be proud of our competitors, notwithstanding the criticism that may be levelled at them. I appreciate that governments must be prepared to accept criticism. There are some areas of sport in which the Government could be doing more. However, one cannot criticize the athletes themselves for their performance on behalf of Australia.

Mr **Healey**: Some coaches ought to be careful about what they say.

Mr Booth]

Mr BOOTH: That is so. Everyone must be careful of what he says about Australia's competitors. The Government expressed its pride in the athletes upon their return. One must remember that in most instances they are competing out of season, which provides difficulties. I remind the House that when they competed in the Melbourne Olympics they did extremely well because they were competing in their own environment. This is a matter that those who are prone to be critical should take into consideration before they put pen to paper or speak on television or radio. They should think about the outstanding performances of the competitors.

From conversations that I have had with many people since our competitors returned from the Olympic Games in Montreal I believe two things are needed: expert coaching and competition. These two requirements do not need an enormous amount of money. Whether they proceed overseas to obtain good coaching or coaches are brought to Australia is a matter for the administrators of particular sports to decide. Our athletes can be given proper competition by sending them overseas or oversea teams can be brought to Australia. When Denise Robertson returned from overseas she ran much better because of her European competition. The Government is looking at these aspects that relate to our competitors participating in international championships, particularly the Olympic Games. The Government is mindful that they deserve every encouragement. Some of those who criticize do not realize the dedication or the amount of time that competitors put into becoming sufficiently fit to represent Australia.

Some suggestion has been made of New South Wales conducting the 1988 Olympic Games, but it would be impossible under the existing financial arrangements for the State to undertake this task. We would be happy to stage the games, but there is so much uncertainty about the future political climate. The best arrangements might be made and then two years, twelve months or even two weeks before the games were to be held there might be a political confrontation by some countries and others might opt out of the games.

Mr Healey: Do not close the door.

Mr BOOTH: We have not closed the door, but it is financially impossible for the State to stage the Olympic Games by itself. There has been no indication whatsoever from the Commonwealth Government that it will provide funds. Another discouragement at this stage is that the federal Government has further cut back the funds for sport and recreation.

Mr Healey: That is continuing finance.

Mr BOOTH: Whether it is continuing or not, people are asking now whether we are to stage the Olympic Games in 1988. Any decision will have to be made by 1980: we would need at least eight years to prepare for them. My reply is that there will have to be a lot of changes, and promises will have to be committed to paper. We do not want the difficulties that arose at Montreal. There must be clear agreement between the State and federal governments; everyone will have to know his commitment, and all these things will have to be committed to writing. As I have said, we as a State cannot take the full responsibility. Quarantine regulations present another problem. I do not know how it will be overcome. I understand that the organizers of the Melbourne Olympic Games did not declare until very late that they were not going to conduct the horse sports, but the Olympic Federation says, "If you do not have the lot, you do not have any". The quarantine regulations against the entry of horses into this country pose a basic problem. If we say that horses cannot come here, we are immediately in trouble. Australia has had this problem before, because our quarantine regulations are different from those in other countries. This serious problem is acknowledged by people associated with the Olympic Games.

I make those remarks on behalf of the Government to show how we feel about staging the games in 1988. Much work has to be done and we need an indication from the Commonwealth Government that it will underwrite the project and provide at least 80 per cent of the cost of the staging of the games.

Mr HEALEY (Davidson) [3.24]: I congratulate the mover and seconder of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply to His Excellency's Speech. I congratulate also honourable members from both sides of the House who have spoken. **The** standard of debate achieved by many new honourable members has been high, and I am sure that all will have a happy and interesting time in this Parliament.

After hearing the Governor's Speech, I took the opportunity of examining the Labor Party's policy for the last election campaign. It was interesting to see what the Government said it would do in the health field. His Excellency's Speech showed that the Government had no innovative ideas. I cannot blame the Governor for that statement—he had to read what was prepared for him. Matters of health earned barely a mention in the Speech, except for the listing of hospitals that had already been approved by the previous Government. His Excellency mentioned also that the Public Hospitals (Amendment) Bill would be introduced. Honourable members know that it was introduced into this House by the previous Government but its consideration was not completed. That is the sum total of the new ideas and health policies that have been put forward by the Labor Party. The Governor's Speech contains no indication that the Government has any new ideas, and the Minister for Health, who spoke in this debate last night, gave no outline of what he proposes to do during his term of office.

I am grateful to Mr Speaker for allowing me to have yesterday off, because I did not have to sit through the torture of listening to the Minister for Health when he spoke here last night. Today I closely examined his remarks and found that he covered everything under the sun but said very little about anything in the health field. He gave no indication of his intentions; he certainly did not cover his portfolio like the Minister for Sport and Recreation did when he preceded me in this debate. The Minister for Health has had an association with hospitals over a long period, but he gave no indication that he proposes to bring into this Chamber any effective, new, progressive health measures in the coming year.

Last year the cost of health in New South Wales rose for the first time to over \$1,000 million. The health field in this State employs 65 000 people and is therefore one of the biggest businesses in Australia, with figures higher than those of the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited. Despite this, it is being conducted by the Government with no policies, no ideas and no innovations. About \$750 million of the \$1,000 million was spent on hospitals alone in this State. This huge amount should be given careful attention, and the Government must ensure that it is spent wisely.

Mr Mulock: That will be a change.

Mr HEALEY: The honourable member for Penrith is carrying on as he did when in Opposition. He has changed little. Governments cannot go on increasing the health budget without having some regard to the amount of money involved and what value the public is receiving for it. Open-ended agreements on health and hospital matters cannot be tolerated. The expenditure on curative medicine is becoming so high that we risk pricing ourselves out of the business.

The Commonwealth contribution was criticized last night by the Minister for Health. All he seemed to do was to criticize what the Commonwealth has done. However, during the past year there has been a general increase of 14 per cent by the Commonwealth on health matters—from \$2,737 million to \$3,124 million. Contrary

to what the Minister for Health said last night, there has been an increase in the money available in this vital field. This year the Commonwealth Government gave the State about \$37 million for capital hospital works. This allocation came from the 5-year agreement that was initiated by the Labor Government under Mr Whitlam. That \$37 million, out of a total of \$108 million for the whole of the Commonwealth, is the same figure as last year's, under the agreed 5-year period. What the Minister did not say last night is that in 1974, when setting up the Commonwealth-State fund, Mr Whitlam said that the agreement would be at current money values. However, last year he said that it would be not at current money values but at 1974 values, thus ensuring that there was no indexation of the money made available by the Commonwealth Government for capital hospital works.

Mr Mulock: Prior to that there was nothing.

Mr HEALEY: We have become used to the Minister chattering away incessantly. He is an assiduous interjector, and most of his interjections are inane. In the community health field the State asked for about \$42 million to develop its programme, but it did not get what it asked for. The programme had been prepared over a long period by the previous Government. We needed about 900 extra people for community health services, and to keep up with normal growth we needed at least \$36 million. We received only \$29.4 million, which is only a slight increase on last year. The community health services in this State are well established, and New South Wales has more of these services than all the other States put together. Community health services really began in New South Wales when Dr Sidney Sax was here; he took the idea with him to Canberra, and that is how it came about. The first community health centre in New South Wales was established at Queenscliff by the Hon. A. H. Jago when he was Minister for Health, but community health started in this State years ago with the establishment of baby health centres throughout the State. Indeed, the Country Women's Association was the forerunner of other organizations in this field.

The biggest cost in health services this year is the construction of the Westmead hospital, which this year will cost about \$40 million or \$50 million—if not more. At the beginning of last year the total cost of the Westmead hospital was estimated to be \$120 million. Of course, added to that must be the cost of inflation, wage increases and so on. The final cost of the hospital will be something in the order of \$200 million. That rate of increase in costs represents a lower escalation of costs than in the non-inflationary period when the Sydney Opera House was under construction. In fact, it is the biggest single public work ever undertaken in New South Wales.

If we can limit the total cost of Westmead hospital to \$200 million, on an original estimate cost of \$120 million, we shall have done a good job. There is no doubt that a major hospital in the outer western metropolitan area was necessary. The outer western area, with its population of 1.2 million, does not have the modern facilities of a major regional hospital. This hospital will be the most up-to-date institution of its kind in Australia and it will provide every service possible. It will have not only a dental school but also an emotionally-disturbed children's unit and other modern features. This institution will fill a gap that has existed for some time in the western metropolitan region.

Last year \$17 million was spent on this hospital and in the previous year \$8 million was outlaid. Obviously costs are escalating year by year. This year's cost expenditure should be the highest. It is expected that the 558 beds of the first stage will be available for use in October, 1978. I understand that the building programme is proceeding so well that the estimated finishing date will be met. The project has been rather free of industrial unrest and, in fact, the first strike that has occurred on the

site has been during the administration of the present Minister for Health. The use of a fast-track system of construction will enable this hospital to be built and completed by the time it would have been finished under the original planning which involved conventional methods of building. We will not lose any time in the construction of the hospital under the fast-track system.

As Minister for Health I took a stand with the Health Commission in a number of areas which I thought could be better left to private enterprise and should not be undertaken by government or semi-government instrumentalities. Huge sums of money are spent on group laundries, frozen-food factories and in cleaning. About \$5 million was spent on a group laundry at Orange, \$12 million on a group laundry at Parramatta, and some years ago several million dollars was spent on a group laundry at Ryde. A plan for another group laundry, to cost about \$9 million, was proposed for Liverpool. I had these projects taken out of the programme and asked the commission to investigate ways and means of having laundry and linen services undertaken by private enterprise. I did this for the simple reason that I believed that the Health Commission was in the business of providing health services for the public and too much money was being spent on associated services such as laundries, frozen-food factories and so on. I thought that this money would be better spent in building hospitals not only in country regions and outer metropolitan areas but also in those Labor-held areas where improved hospital services are needed urgently.

By taking the \$9 million allocated for the Liverpool laundry we were able to accelerate planning for additions to Gosford hospital, the construction of a new hospital at Kanwal in the Wyong area and a new hospital at Shellharbour on the South Coast. In my view it is monstrous to spend so much on group laundries. With proper encouragement and administration most of the laundry and linen services for hospitals could be provided by private enterprise. In this way huge sums of money would be saved for direct use on health care. It was proposed to construct a \$5 million frozen-food factory for the Westmead Hospital. I believed that private firms could better undertake the freezing of food for hospitals. Organizations such as Scotts Foods (Australia) Pty Limited and Qantas do it successfully and I believe it is the sort of thing that should be left to private enterprise.

Every year \$110 million is spent on cleaning public hospitals. This is roughly one-seventh of the total maintenance cost. As an example, a certain hospital in Sydney has an annual cost of \$3,500 a bed for its cleaning programme. My inquiries revealed that private enterprise could do that same cleaning for around \$1,500 a bed. The present practice is wasteful. Unfortunately the Labor Party will be in the hands of the trade unions and I see no chance immediately for the Government to be able to overcome the union objections to the system I have proposed. I have no doubt that the new Minister would be interested in savings of this nature but his hands will be tied. I admire the way in which the various unions involved in the health industry look after the interests of their members but I believe they should not adhere to this attitude to the detriment of the interests of the State.

One of the most important needs is to introduce legislation to reform the Health Commission. The original commission was set up with five bureau heads who spent so much of their time looking after their own individual bureau interests that they had insufficient time to spend on thinking and evaluating health programmes and policies. I believe that there should be no bureau heads at commission level. The commission should be a commission. The commissioners should look at the overall effect of the health programme and directors should be in charge of bureaux. This would make for a better set-up. We should look at the whole public service arrangement within the health commission. The administration is built upon a vertical management system

Mr Healey]

rather than a horizontal system of management. The resignation of Dr Barclay offers the opportunity to reduce the commission to three commissioners who can act as commissioners and have directors to administer the five bureaux. In fact, they could be cut down to two, one to provide health facilities and the other to look after administrative matters.

Proper horizontal management within this sort of structure would make it relatively easy to make the system work. The legislation needs to be amended. The regional set-up is first class and we have some first-class officers running them. It is the most decentralized department in the Government and I hope the Minister for Health will not do anything to upset this. A decision is made within the areas and priorities are determined in those areas by a man of some standing within each region to whom the local people can go.

Health education is a most important factor in the Health Commission. Though we have some good staff who can prepare worthwhile education programmes, what is sadly lacking is somebody with the ability to market or to sell. I think that there is an urgent need for somebody to be appointed at a top level in the health education section to ensure that any product that developed within that section is marketed and sold to the public. The position requires a person possessing special knowledge.

The commission should make better use of the media, especially radio and colour television. Queensland has a small section of forty-nine employees, compared with 150 in New South Wales, and that State has arranged weekly newspaper articles, radio programmes, colour television commercials and so on to educate the public. Unfortunately, despite the work I did over a 15-month period, I did not succeed in moving the commission quickly, though the matter was under review. We must educate the people to the view that preventive medicine is better than curative medicine. The best media to use for this purpose is colour television. I found no one in the Health Commission who had had experience in commercial radio or television, though there was one employee who had been in the employ of the ABC. I changed that thinking within the commission and I am sure some results will be forthcoming.

I was delighted to learn that the Minister in making a speech recently to the New South Wales Hospitals Association at a luncheon meeting at the Royal North Shore Hospital espoused many of the principles that I had begun within the Health Commission. He said he would look into the possibility of using private contractors for laundry and linen services as well as the possible use of contractors to reduce the cost of cleaning. He referred also to expansion of pathological services and the modernizing of radiological services.

The Minister expressed interest in future energy requirements of hospitals. He is right when he says that these things need examination. Notwithstanding the stupid remarks concerning my trip overseas, I was able to look at some matters on which there is not a lot of expert knowledge in this State. I went to Switzerland to look at the electric energy systems used in the hospitals there. If similar systems could be introduced in some of the biggest hospitals in Australia, it would remove the need to use oil and, in some cases, coal as energy sources. One of the problems is that in Australia it is not possible for hospitals to receive a preferential rate for electrical energy to make it economic to use electricity in hospitals as the only power source.

Let me give an example of what is going on in some hospitals. A hospital in a well-known Labor electorate has used cod to fuel its boilers for many years. The hospital got the cod from the Burratorang Valley at \$26 a ton plus cartage to the hospital. The coal could have been purchased from a colliery almost right alongside the hospital for \$16 a ton, including cartage. A new appointee to the hospital board,

a person I appointed, drew that to the attention of the board and was able to save some of the energy cost. These matters have been highlighted by the Minister. I was glad to hear it, as they are important.

I was delighted to hear of some of the other things that the Minister has espoused. He has suggested that the cleaning of hospitals, laundering of linen and the provision of frozen food be handed over to private enterprise. This must be done. There are some disturbing elements related to Medibank that the Minister will have to consider. It is essential that the most efficient method of doing these things be used. The committees set up to talk about budgets of hospitals in March and October of each year might well be looking at some of the inefficient methods used in the past and decide to cut budgets unless some changes are made in the services. In New South Wales our hospitals make up the biggest catering organization in Australia, the biggest cleaning organization and the biggest laundering organization. But they were established to provide hospital and health services. They should divest themselves of as many of those things as possible and use the money saved for health purposes.

May I give an example. A well-known firm in Sydney owned stores that were scattered throughout the metropolitan area. It took a good look at its operations and decided to sell all of its stores and to rent them or to lease them back. This firm took the view that it was a retail marketing organization and it was not in the business of handling real estate or managing real estate. That kind of approach must be taken in relation to our hospitals. They should not be in the business of cleaning, laundering or catering. They are in the health business and they ought to leave some of these things to other people.

When the Liberal-Country party Government went out of office it left behind it an orderly programme for hospital building, rebuilding and, where necessary, refurbishing. There was no reason to take any of those matters out of the order of priority given to them. For political reasons the Minister for Health has taken Casino and Griffith out of order and intends to give them priority over other projects. The Minister cried poor mouth about funds for health this year and blamed the new Commonwealth Government for it. As I am speaking from memory I am not sure of the figure, but I believe that something like \$250 or \$280 million in additional funds will be available to New South Wales as a result of the Medibank agreement and the 50-50 sharing of hospital charges. The Minister for Health will probably have the same problem as I did in getting the Treasurer to agree that any of that money should be used as additional funding for health. That money will be used for other purposes.

I am concerned about the so-called women's health centres at Liverpool and Leichhardt. There has been criticism about what goes on at those centres in the form of advice to women regarding abortion, lesbianism and other matters that concern females. Some of the literature coming from those centres borders on being pornographic. If any members have seen the "beautifully" produced covers and the four-letter words on them they will know what I mean. The other day the Minister for Health indicated that the method of funding those centres had been changed. The federal Minister has now said that he will give a block amount to the State for this purpose. The State will determine how much is to go to the health centres or whether the health centres will receive anything at all. That has not been the position. Earlier there was a system of tied grants from the Commonwealth Government. I shall be interested to hear of the reaction of the Minister for Health to this new approach. The other day he carefully avoided the question I asked of him on this matter. I understand his reticence. He is likely to be very much a prisoner of the left-wing and radical sections of the Labor Party which will continue to press for finance for these centres so that they may continue to function.

Mr Healey]

The practices and performances of these women's centres should be scrutinized. There is a good report from the Association of Women Medical Officers which has inspected these centres and know what is going on in them. They have raised serious objections about what occurs at some of these centres. The representatives of the Association of Women Medical Officers accused these centres of anti-professionalism and substandard medical practices. The Government should have no part of that. I hope that there will be an investigation into the centres before they are allowed to continue on their merry way. The Family Planning Association has also become a humanist organization. It is alleged that now, instead of talking about family planning, it is trying to influence young women attending schools and elsewhere to adopt the kind of thinking that takes places at these women's centres.

The Minister for Health has said publicly that he intends to hand over the control of chiropractors to a chiropractic organization and also to give chairside status to dental technicians. The Minister will have to make decisions on these matters but he should be very careful about handing them over to people who are virtually unqualified. He should make sure that he protects the interests of the public. The only reason why the former Government would not agree to giving chiropractors complete control was that it did not accept that they are professionally qualified in the same sense as are doctors, physiotherapists and others in the medical profession. Once the Government gives the imprimatur of registration, and so on, it is virtually saying that those people are qualified and that the public can have faith and trust in them. I do not know that it can. Before these people are given that sort of control a centre should be set up to provide a course of training for chiropractors. There should be university-trained lecturers in the fields of biochemistry, anatomy, radiology and physiology. Some of the claims of cures by chiropractors cannot be borne out medically or by any other reasoning.

My remarks apply to dental technicians having direct access and chairside status to provide dentures to people who need them. One wonders what redress there will be for people who suffer as a result of action by the Government to provide this kind of public access. One of the proposals of the Liberal-Country party Government, which I was implementing, was for the Health Commission of New South Wales to take over the ambulance services. I still think that this should happen and I hope that the Labor Government will give effect to the proposal. We need to update our ambulance services and bring them into the 20th century. They are efficient, but the service they provide can be improved. Overseas, ambulance services do give a better service. I was greatly impressed by the ambulances in the United States of America, Los Angeles in particular, where there is immediate radio access to public hospitals from an ambulance. They use telemetry between the ambulance at the site of the accident and the nearest hospital to enable data of the patient's heartbeat and pulse rate to be fed back to a specialist at the hospital. Treatment instructions can be given by portable radio. We should do something about training our ambulance officers to bring them to the level of the paramedic. Rather than be left sitting round doing nothing, the trained paramedic could be working in the casualty department of the hospital to which he is attached and keeping himself up to date with treatment methods.

Arrangements were made for a number of doctors and other people who were going overseas to look into these matters. For example, Dr Coolican from the Royal North Shore Hospital investigated trauma experiences in other countries. Also, Dr Wright of St Vincent's Hospital had a look at developments in methods of resuscitation. Mr Eagleton, the secretary of the Health Commission of New South Wales went to Europe to look at ambulance organization and services and Dr Storey looked into some aspects of ambulance services including the use of the Messerschmidt 105B helicopter in West Germany.

One area in which we are lax is the provision of a quick method of getting people injured or suffering a heart condition to a hospital and conveying them there under medical supervision. At eight centres in West Germany a helicopter ambulance service is available to cover more than 50 per cent of the population. They convey people in need of treatment to the nearest hospital for urgent medical attention. A single Messerschmidt 105B helicopter could cover a 50-kilometer radius of Sydney in bringing patients to the nearest hospital for treatment.

I have gathered all the available information on the medical aspects of rescue operations by multi-purpose helicopters. These aircraft are used as mobile intensive units during disasters in the Federal Republic of Germany. A similar public service is provided in many states of the United States of America and in Denmark, Sweden and Great Britain. Australia is a long way behind the rest of the world with its emergency services. We have not yet investigated the type of service to which I have just referred and we ought to be doing something about it. At this moment a Messerschmidt 105B helicopter is in the Philippines and it could be brought to Australia for evaluation in a matter of weeks.

Officers of the Health Commission and some doctors from hospitals are looking at trauma centres overseas and the helicopter services now in use. I hope that the Government will bring the present ambulance officer course up to paramedical standard. This can be achieved with five months' training and thus better qualify ambulancemen to play their role. Strange as it may seem, this service is provided in Los Angeles in the United States of America by the fire brigade but in other parts of the world the ambulance does the task.

The Public Hospitals (Amendment) Bill which is to be brought before the House will contain two matters of public importance: the delineation of privileges for doctors and the accreditation of hospitals. We need something in the nature of a peer review by doctors of other doctors. When I was overseas I endeavoured to induce doctors to come to Australia to fill the 150 vacancies in New South Wales. In Denmark 3 000 doctors are out of work. Last year Dr Boger of the Health Commission was sent overseas to try to encourage doctors to come to Australia. This is the type of thing that the Government must do.

Above all things the Government must improve our nursing services, but I ask the Minister for Health to hasten slowly. I envisage that some 25 per cent of our future nurses could come from colleges of advanced education. We must ensure that none of the many hundreds of young school certificate leavers who now come into the nursing service at that level of education are lost to the system.

One point I wish to make concerns a statement made the other night by the honourable member for Balmain about the Hospitals Contribution Fund being run by the Hospital Saturday Fund. Only three positions on the board of the Hospitals Contribution Fund of Australia are held by the Hospital Saturday Fund. Of them two are filled and one does not exercise his right to vote—the president. It is absolute nonsense to suggest that the Hospital Saturday Fund runs the Hospitals Contribution Fund.

The registration of psychologists is a proposal that warrants consideration. One needs to be careful of a scientology organization called the Citizens Commission on Human Rights which is starting to bombard members of Parliament. Its members have a psychopathic hatred of psychologists and of psychiatry. A committee has been established to examine all psychiatric hospitals in New South Wales to ensure that psychiatric patients are well cared for and to give them a feeling of confidence. I hope

Mr Healey]

that the projected new Mental Health Act will be brought before the House shortly. It will update our thinking on the care of psychiatric patients. The legislation covering them should be brought into the 1970s.

Debate adjourned on motion by Mr Durick.

ADJOURNMENT

Death of Mr I. P. K. Vidler, C.B.E., former Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Mr F. J. WALKER (Georges River), Attorney-General [3.55]: I move:

That this House do now adjourn.

It is my sad duty to report to honourable members the death in England last Monday of Mr Ivor Percy Kidd Vidler, C.B.E., a former Clerk of this House. Mr Vidler was born at Parramatta and educated at Newington College, Stanmore, where he represented his school in the rowing eight and played in the first XV Rugby team and the second XI cricket team. He was also a school prefect.

Mr Vidler gave most distinguished service to this House. He joined the Legislative Assembly staff on 1st August, 1928, as a junior clerk at the age of 19. The late Sir Daniel Levy was then Speaker. He was appointed Clerk of Papers and Assistant Clerk of Bills from 1st January, 1937. On 12th May, 1945, he was appointed First Clerk and Clerk of Bills. Then came his appointment on 17th February, 1947, as Serjeant-at-Arms and Clerk of Select Committees. On 30th August, 1947, he became Second Clerk-Assistant and Clerk-Assistant from 1st July, 1956. From 1st July, 1956, to 16th July, 1956, he was Acting Clerk of the Legislative Assembly. Between May and July, 1961, he was attached to the staff of the House of Commons to study the administration and procedures of the Westminster Parliament. From 1st January, 1967, until 31st January, 1974, he served in the Legislative Assembly as Clerk. Mr Vidler was the author of the parliamentary publication *A Guide to Procedure in Committee of the Whole House*

The late Mr Vidler had a distinguished war service. He served in the 9th Division of the 2/17 Australian Infantry Battalion from 1940 to 1943 and attained the rank of Warrant Officer, second class. He saw active service in Australia and the Middle East.

Mr Vidler also had distinguished connections with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association to which he was elected honorary secretary of the New South Wales branch in 1956. He occupied this position until his retirement. As secretary to the Australian States delegates Mr Vidler attended the general conferences of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association held in Nigeria in 1962, in the Bahamas in 1968 and in Trinidad and Tobago in 1969. During his period as honorary secretary he also attended all of the association's Australasian area conferences. The late Mr Vidler was Clerk to the Australian Constitutional Convention that was held in Sydney from 3rd to 7th September, 1973. Over 110 delegates comprising members of parliament and local government representatives from all over Australia were present at that convention.

In summary, the late Mr Vidler served as an officer of the Legislative Assembly for 45½ years. For more than 26 years he was a Chamber Officer, and in his last 7 years he was Clerk of the Legislative Assembly. In June, 1973, Her Majesty the Queen conferred on him the title of Commander of the British Empire in recognition of his distinguished services to the Parliament and the State. The Government extends its sympathy to Mrs Vidler and her two children who are in England.

Sir ERIC WILLIS (Earlwood), Leader of the Opposition [3.58]: I should like to be associated with the tribute to the late Ivor Vidler, C.B.E., a man we all knew affectionately and almost solely as Snow for so many years. The late Mr Vidler was associated, as the Leader of the House has stated, with this Legislative Assembly for a long time. I benefited greatly from his friendship and the advice that he so readily gave me over the period of almost twenty-four years we were associated.

When I was first elected as a member of the Legislative Assembly in 1950 Mr Vidler was the Second Clerk-Assistant. All honourable members know that is the officer who sits closest to Opposition members. As a junior member in Opposition I had many occasions to be grateful for the guidance, advice and assistance and, indeed, the encouragement that he gave me. I recall an occasion when I met him in Hunter Street. At the time I was a most junior member and he urged me not to be discouraged. He said I was doing very well and offered other complimentary remarks. He advised me to keep up the good work and then added, "I have looked round the House for many years and I am sure that one of these days you will be the leader of your party". As no such thought had even remotely crossed my mind I walked away from him three inches above the ground elevated by his encouragement and sage advice. It took a long time for his prediction to come true, but ultimately it did. I have often thought that there must have been some quality in Snow that I did not recognize that enabled him to foresee the future better than many of us can.

I had been told of Snow Vidler's many personal qualities by two close parliamentary associates, Sir Charles Cutler and Mr Stepper Stephens, who both served with him in the 2/17 Infantry Battalion in the Middle East. Both gentlemen had a high regard for Snow Vidler, and I am sure that they were saddened indeed by news of his untimely passing. Mr Vidler later became Clerk Assistant, and in 1967 Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, at a time when I was Leader of the House. Therefore, on the other side of the House I was again closely associated with him for a period of some years. We worked most harmoniously in the interests, I hope, of the Legislature and all honourable members. I have great and lasting reasons for being grateful for the manner in which he co-operated with me. Probably the closest co-operation I ever had from Mr Vidler was when I had the honour of being chairman of the Australian Constitutional Convention that was held in this Chamber in September, 1973. At that stage he had just received his C.B.E. decoration, and he was appointed clerk of the convention. I had every reason then to recognize his organizing capacity, his ability as an administrator and, above all, his personal qualities of patience and tolerance. I can say that the efficiency of that convention was due largely to what Snow Vidler put into it.

This gentleman had all the qualities required of a Chamber officer, and obviously this Legislature and this House depend largely on the qualities of these officers. They have a big responsibility and there is no doubt that we owe them a great deal. In this respect I pay a particular tribute to Snow Vidler. A man of patience and tact, he was most helpful to all honourable members of this Assembly, irrespective of their party, simply because he believed in Parliament and wanted to assist parliamentarians. Above all, he had a profound knowledge of parliamentary procedures and he was the author of a publication entitled *A Guide to Procedures in the Committee of the Whole House*.

Parliament owes a lot to its Chamber officers, and it can be well said that this Parliament owes a great deal to Snow Vidler. I join in the remarks of the Leader of the House. I am sure I speak on behalf of all the members of my party in saying to Mrs Vidler and family that we respect his memory and mourn his passing, as they too undoubtedly do.

Mr FERGUSON (Merrylands), Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works, Minister for Ports and Minister for Housing [4.4]: I was dismayed and sorry when I heard the sad announcement today of the death of the former Clerk of this Assembly, Mr Ivor Vidler—better known to us here as Snow. I place on record our appreciation of the great help that he rendered to us all in the high traditions of the Clerk of this Assembly or any other officer of this Parliament—without fear or favour to any political party. Although, unlike the Leader of the Opposition, I cannot claim that Snow ever advised me that I would attain high office, I appreciated his advice and warm friendship towards all honourable members. Along with Mr Wheeler, the Clerk Assistant, I had the opportunity of visiting Mr Vidler during his last illness and I pay a tribute to the courage that he displayed in his suffering. This State has indeed suffered a sad loss, and I join with the Attorney-General and the Leader of the Opposition in expressing my sincere sympathy to Mrs Vidler and family.

Mr PUNCH (Gloucester), Leader of the Country Party [4.6]: On behalf of all members of the Country Party, my wife and myself, I join with the Attorney-General, the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Premier in conveying to Mrs Hilary Vidler and her family our deepest sympathy in their sad loss. When I first came into this Chamber the Country Party Whip at that time, Mr Stephens, said, "I must take you up to meet a most important gentleman in this House." He took me to meet someone who happened to be a distant cousin of mine. I did not know this until I met Mr Vidler. I later traced through the family tree and found that this was so. I have a vivid recollection of my first meeting with him in the Clerk's chambers. Mr Vidler was not the Clerk at that time, but from then on our friendship developed.

Ivor Vidler was a great personality in his own sight. Previous honourable members who have spoken have dealt adequately with his sincerity and the work he did in this Chamber. He was a stickler for proper procedure and advised everyone here of the pitfalls and what he believed was the correct way in which honourable members should behave, draft motions and so on. He advised them on the various standing orders, and was a most helpful Clerk. Of course, the same applies to the other Clerks of this House, who all assist members so much. Despite the fact that I was distantly related to Mr Vidler, he never failed to tell me when I was wrong and to pull me up on those occasions. When I had the privilege of serving for some years as Chairman of Committees in this Chamber, although the present Clerk, Mr Ward, was my official adviser I had Mr Vidler also as an unofficial one. Perhaps that is why I was a little confused at times, with two sets of advice coming forward. Nevertheless, Mr Vidler was of tremendous help and a friend to me. All honourable members who were associated with him appreciate the fine service he rendered to the Legislature and to them all. The members of the Country Party and his own family join me in conveying sympathy to his wife, Hilary, and the family.

Mr CAMERON (Northcott) [4.8]: I wish to associate myself with the remarks made by previous speakers concerning Ivor Percy Kidd Vidler—known to us as Snow. I sincerely believe that this Parliament has been magnificently served by all its Clerks—at least those in recent times—and by none more than its present Clerk. However, I want to associate myself particularly with the remarks about Snow Vidler because he was the Clerk of this Assembly in 1973 when I had the honour and privilege of becoming Speaker. I should be the first to concede that the early days in the chair of any Speaker are associated with some trauma, and the introduction of a new Speaker to his responsibilities is largely conditioned by the sort of advice and guidance that he receives from the Clerk. I must say that my insight into the personality of Ivor Vidler came largely from the particular precedents that he referred to me for my guidance then concerning the office I was about to assume. Many of them

tracked well back into history, but I believe all were reflective of the office. I gained a real insight into the personality of Snow Vidler from the amount of reading that he imposed upon me at that stage and which I, as a student, willingly accepted.

When the time came for his retirement Mr Vidler was most emphatic to me that, although he had been associated with this Parliament since 1928 and had a deep love for it—which was obvious to all of us—he had formed a definite opinion about political speeches given in this Chamber upon such occasions. He did not want his own retirement to be the subject of any such speech. That is past, and it is now appropriate that this House should pay its tribute—and a very warm one—to the great services that Ivor Vidler rendered to it over such a long period. I have deep satisfaction in at last having the privilege of making these observations and expressing these sentiments.

Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at 4.10 p.m.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

The following questions upon notice and answers were circulated in *Questions and Answers* this day.

COAL TO OIL CONVERSION PROJECTS

Mr FISCHER asked the Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Mines and Minister for **Energy**—

- (1) Were discussions held between the New South Wales State Government and Imhausen International of West Germany recently over coal to oil conversion projects?
- (2) If so:
 - (a) Was consideration given to the possible use of the Oaklands Coal deposits for this purpose in the discussions?
 - (b) Was there any specific outcome to the discussions, including the possibility of joint feasibility studies on sections of the Oaklands Coal deposits not already allocated for exploration?

Answer—

- (1) The German industrial delegation, led by Professor Karl-Heinz Imhausen, met with officers of my Department on 30 June, 1976. The meeting was opportune because it will, I trust, act as a catalyst whereby some concerted action might be taken within Australia on the subject of coal liquefaction.

(2)

- (a) In the discussions, the Oaklands Coal deposits, among many other matters, were discussed. The Oaklands deposits were used as an example of the different types of coal available and the Oaklands location provided an indication of the different material handling problems likely to be encountered—as say compared with coal in the Hunter Valley.
- (b) There was no specific outcome to the discussions at that time. The German delegation also had discussions with the Federal Government, the Governments of Queensland and Victoria and with private companies in these States. I understand that a bilateral Agreement on Scientific and Technological Co-operation will probably be signed by representatives of the Australian and West German Governments shortly.

I have advised the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Natural Resources, that my Department would be pleased to assist any further investigations by the German delegation.

ABBOTSFORD PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr MAHER asked the Minister for Education—

- (1) Have plans been completed for Stage II of additions at Abbotsford Public School?
- (2) What additional facilities and classrooms will be constructed in Stage II?
- (3) Is an infants' class being conducted in a wooden portable classroom which is substandard and situated some distance from the Infant's Department?
- (4) When will Stage II of the additions be commenced?

Answer—

- (1) No.
- (2) Stage II is no more than a notional proposal which will be considered at a future date when its priority justifies further action. At that time the accommodation needs will be reviewed in the light of the then enrolment trends.

An indication of need would be, in respect of the Primary Department, to replace existing toilets and ablutions, shelter and Physical Education store and, in respect of the Infants' Department, to provide two new classrooms and a shelter. However, as indicated above, these needs would be subject to review.

- (3) An infants' class is being conducted in a wooden portable building adjacent to the primary department. The building is of a standard comparable with portable buildings generally. It is equipped with adequate lighting and heating. (Two infants' classes are currently being conducted in the primary department.)
- (4) At this stage no indication can be given as to when Stage II will be commenced.

