

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, 29 August, 1978

Death of the Rt Hon. the Lord Mayor of Sydney, Alderman Leo Port, **M.B.E.**—Assent to Bill—Petitions—Questions without Notice—Anti-Discrimination Board Recommendations (Urgency)—Questions without Notice (Resumed)—General Loan Account Appropriation Bill (Int. and second reading)—Loan Estimates Speech—Governor's Speech: Address in Reply (Fifth Day's Debate)—Mr Peter **Anderson** (Personal Explanation)—Questions upon Notice.

Mr Speaker (The Hon. Lawrence Borthwick Kelly) took the chair at 2.15 p.m.
Mr Speaker offered the Prayer.

DEATH OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE LORD MAYOR OF SYDNEY, ALDERMAN LEO WEISER PORT, M.B.E.

Mr SPEAKER: It is with regret that I have to inform the House of the death of the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor of Sydney, Alderman Leo Weiser Port, M.B.E. On behalf of the House I have informed the family of the late gentleman of the deep sympathy of members of the Legislative Assembly in the loss sustained.

Members and officers of the House stood in their places.

ASSENT TO BILL

Royal assent to the following bill reported:
Supply Bill

PETITIONS

The Acting-Clerk announced that the following petitions had been lodged for presentation:

Pensioners' Electricity Accounts

The Petition of certain citizens of New South Wales respectfully sheweth:

That economic hardship is being suffered by those citizens of this State whose incomes consist solely or mainly of age or invalid pensions and who are—

(a) subject to increasing charges for electricity;

- (b) required to pay maximum rates applicable to smaller consumers; and
- (c) are not able to obtain any rebates under the existing provisions of the Electricity Act.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House take early steps to so amend the Electricity Act as to empower each electricity distributing authority in this State to allow rebates on the electricity accounts of the abovementioned pensioners.

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

Petitions, lodged by Mr **Duncan**, Mr Singleton and Mr Wilde, received.

Quality of Education

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of Australia, New South Wales, respectfully sheweth:

That because there is much concern in the community over the failure of modern education at primary and secondary levels to meet the expectations of many parents, teachers, lecturers, professors, employers and students.

That because there is considerable doubt as to the content and standards, philosophy and moral values of new courses or projects, such as M.A.C.O.S. ("Man—a Course of Study"—ex U.S.A.); "People of the Western Desert" (Aust.); and S.E.M.P. ("Social Education Materials Project"—Aust.) and in view of the fact that M.A.C.O.S. and S.E.M.P. have been withdrawn from Queensland schools.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray ~~that~~ the Parliament of New South Wales will:

- (1) Immediately suspend Courses and Projects such as "M.A.C.O.S.", "People of the Western Desert" and "S.E.M.P." from all New South Wales primary and secondary schools and Teachers' Colleges, and conduct an independent public inquiry into their suitability and conformity with the provisions of the New South Wales Education Act.
- (2) Enforce the following guidelines in relation to all text books, courses, projects, etc., used in State schools and institutions:
 - (a) They should encourage loyalty and respect for God, Queen and Country, our Federal and State Constitutions and observance of the laws of the land.
 - (b) They should recognize the importance of marriage, family life, motherhood and fatherhood, as well as the privacy of the family and the individual student.
 - (c) They should avoid profanity, indecency and any encouragement of racial hatred, anti-semitism, sedition or violent revolution against our Australian democratic parliamentary institutions.
 - (d) They should provide for studies in history and geography (rather than sociology) and show the importance of the **Judeo-Christian** ethic as our natural Australian heritage.

- (e) They should teach the 3 R's, that is, the skills of reading, writing and arithmetic, so that all children receive an effective basic education for their future responsibilities.
- (3) Implement a system of public preview and approval of all text books, novels, courses and projects with reasonable access for all parents and citizens before they are approved for use in schools in accordance with an approved core curriculum.
- (4) Introduce a more meaningful system of testing and assessing of educational results so as to provide a more equal opportunity for all students in New South Wales.

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

Petitions, lodged by Mr Maddison, Mr Moore, Mr Quinn and Mr Viney, received.

Freeways

The Petition of the undersigned citizens of New South Wales respectfully sheweth:

That there is very widespread dismay in Ku-ring-gai municipality and most other parts of Sydney, at the personally signed statement dated 22nd June, 1977, by the Minister for Transport which said "The Traffic Authority is in the process of advising all metropolitan councils and chambers of commerce that the application of clearways embracing substantial periods of the day, and including weekends, to sections of the main and secondary road system is expected to be effected within the next three years."

That the Government's decision to transform all of Sydney's main roadways into what will virtually be 24-hour freeways will have disastrous consequences on local shopping centres and virtually bring to an end commercial activity thereby creating lifeless traffic corridors.

That the decision disregards entirely the essential use of church buildings for services, funerals, weddings, meetings and community functions day and night throughout the week.

That the decision will be disastrous for business houses whose capital investments of millions of dollars will be eliminated.

That the decision will be disastrous for local residents whose shopping facilities in Lindfield, Gordon and elsewhere will be eliminated.

That the decision crucifies small business because it, in effect, advantages the city of Sydney and large regional shopping complexes at the expense of the little shops.

That the decision takes no account of the additional traffic congestion in "side streets" which will result, thus reducing the residential amenity of hundreds of suburbs and localities.

That the decision has been made with no offer whatever of compensation, retraining or relocation to those thousands of disadvantaged Sydney-siders and especially the people of Ku-ring-gai municipality.

That the decision has been made with no indication by the Government of the increased traffic flow which is supposed to result and no indication of a new freeway programme.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House reverse the decision of the Minister for Transport to apply clearways embracing substantial periods of the day, including weekends, to sections of the main and secondary road system within the next three years.

Petition, lodged by Mr Moore, received.

Education Commission

The Petition of the undersigned citizens and parents of children attending schools in New South Wales respectfully sheweth:

That because there is criticism, confusion and great concern in the community and especially by parents about all levels of the present systems and methods and aims of education.

That the (majority of the community and especially parents again are not aware of the formation of an education commission.

That the methods of informing the community and parents has not been satisfactory in reaching the majority, and therefore the majority are unaware that such a commission is to be formed.

That there has been insufficient time allowed for the majority to become informed fully, as to the pros and cons of an education commission.

That there should be more information made available to the community and parents on all issues to do with education or the formation of an education commission and where our tax money is to be spent.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House will:

- (1) Not allow under any circumstances the formation of an education commission at this time, and take steps to fully inform the public of what an education commission is all about and the effects it will and will not have on our children.
- (2) Hold a full open inquiry on education in New South Wales schools and take steps to fully inform the majority of the community and call for them to write and make submissions to this inquiry as a matter of urgency.
- (3) By holding a full open inquiry eliminate the existing criticism, confusion and concern and produce a standard of education that is acceptable to the majority of the community, i.e., parents, employers, students and other citizens of New South Wales.

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

Petitions, lodged by Mr Caterson, Mr Ferguson and Mr Ryan, received.

Inquiry on Education

The Petition of the undersigned citizens of New South Wales and parents of children attending New South Wales schools respectfully sheweth:

That because of today's modern education (that has no definite syllabus, does not put a lot of emphasis on the 3 R's but puts emphasis on social and moral issues, compiles complicated school reports, has a

system of gradings that the majority do not understand), we now find criticism, confusion and illiteracy. We now feel very concerned as parents and employers and citizens about education in both primary and secondary schools.

That because of this kind of education with emphasis on children being asked to question and evaluate for themselves matters concerning social and moral issues (through innovative programmes, projects, kits and text books and special courses that have not been fully evaluated), we find many problems arising in the home, work force and society and we feel perhaps the schools have infringed too far on the parents' role in educating their children on these matters and forming their children's attitudes, ethics and morals.

Your Petitioners humbly pray that your **honourable** House will take steps to hold a full independent open inquiry into education in New South Wales and take steps to satisfactorily fully inform the public on said inquiry and invite the public to comment as well as make written submissions.

or

- (1) Bring in a **definite** syllabus with emphasis on the 3 R's for primary schools.
- (2) Remove innovative programmes and courses and social studies until they are evaluated.
- (3) Replace social studies with history and geography.
- (4) Have any school that operates as a "progressive school" come back into line with other schools or allow parents a freedom of choice on such a school.
- (5) Ensure that primary and secondary schools have a good syllabus that is uniform in all schools so parents will be satisfied and teachers will not find their jobs so difficult or demanding and will not have too much responsibility placed on them individually.
- (6) Have school reports from primary and secondary schools made more easily understood by parents with marks out of 100 in all subjects and position in class.
- (7) Put more emphasis on the core of a definite syllabus on all subjects for secondary schools. With English to include spelling, grammar, reading and literate speech.
- (8) Abolish gradings in secondary schools as they are neither understood or accepted by the majority of people.
- (9) Bring a return to full external examination on all subjects in all secondary schools for School Certificate and Higher School Certificate. With marks shown on these certificates in percentages or A, B, C, etc. Plus position in year and position in State. This would be of great benefit to parents, students and employers.
- (10) Have less emphasis on social and moral issues and see that teachers are encouraged to reinforce the standards and values most children have already been taught by their parents in regard to respect for other people, democracy, law, traditional values and morals. Not seek to destroy these ideas.
- (11) Satisfy the taxpayer that his money is being spent on an education that is acceptable.

- (12) Bring the education of the children of New South Wales back to what is understood and accepted by the majority of today's society, do not prepare them for some future society that has not arrived as yet.
- (13) Endeavour to maintain any future system with the above outline for a reasonable period so that it can be fully evaluated before it is modified or changed in any way.

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

Petitions, lodged by Mr **Caterson** and Mr Ferguson, received.

Education System

The Petition of certain confirmed citizens of **Winston Hills** and **Baulkham Hills**, and other suburbs, being parents and friends of children attending various schools respectfully sheweth—

There is widespread criticism and confusion of the education systems.

There should be a return to either full external examinations or **50** per cent examination and **50** per cent assessment.

There should be a return to a more easily understood school reports and certificates. There should be a return to a syllabus which includes spelling tests and grammar, and some courses reintroduced should include shorthand, bookkeeping and typing. There should be uniformity in all schools. Terminology such as "moderated reference tests", "core", "electives" et cetera should be done away with and plain simple English used.

The Education Department's methods of informing parents and the community of the Secondary School Boards Invitation has not been satisfactory in reaching the majority.

Parents and community should have more say before the people concerned keep making so many changes every year in our schools. This only creates confusion.

Extension of time on the Secondary Schools Boards Invitation, so more submissions can be made.

More information to reach the parents and community on the board's final decision.

Your Petitioners humbly pray that your honourable House will take steps to eliminate the existing education problems as a matter of urgency.

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

Petition, lodged by Mr **Caterson**, received.

Sunday Hotel Trading

The Petition of the undersigned citizens 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) Alcohol is a contributing factor in a large proportion of road accidents causing many fatalities and maimings and more facilities for weekend drinking will inevitably add to the problem.
- (3) The high incidence of alcoholism among our young people is causing much concern.

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 any other place where sale of liquor is permitted.
- (2) If however it is intended to submit legislation to the House, this should not be done until the people of New South Wales be given the democratic right of vote by referendum on this **important** issue.

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

Petitions, lodged by Mr Brewer, Mr Degen, **Mr Duncan** and Mr Mason, received.

Pensioners' Motor Vehicle Fees

The Petition of all pensioners of all classes and other interested citizens respectfully sheweth:

Current Car Registration and Compulsory **Thirdy** Party Insurance fees required by the present New South Wales regulations are a great burden on pensioner car owners.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House will give earnest consideration to a substantial decrease in these fees.

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

Petition, lodged by Mr Rofo, received.

Trading Hours

We, the undersigned, wish to express our strongest opposition to any extension of trading hours in New South Wales.

Past performance has proven that longer trading hours do not lead to increased sales. However, it does increase costs because shops have to be staffed for longer periods. To cover these increased costs, retailers are forced to increase prices and reduce staff levels. This means that longer trading hours increase both inflation and unemployment.

The Government's Committee of Inquiry into Retail Trading Hours proved last year that there was no consumer demand for extended trading hours.

We call on the Government to enforce the existing trading hours legislation and to resist any calls to introduce extra weekend trading.

Petition, lodged by **Mr Duncan**, received.

Income Tax Rebate

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

That the taxpayers of New South Wales pay the highest State taxes and charges in Australia, and that these have risen further, some by as much as 900 per cent, in the past two years under the present State Government.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House will during the current Session of Parliament pass legislation which will provide for a rebate of the income tax levied on the residents of New South Wales.

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

Petition, lodged by Mr Caterson, received.

Baradine—Coonamble Road

The Petition of the people of Baradine and Coonamble in the State of New South Wales respectfully sheweth the Baradine—Coonamble Road, Main Road 129B, is in a deplorable condition.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House order such steps as are necessary to effect the reconstruction and bitumen sealing of the whole of the said road without further delay.

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

Petition, lodged by Mr Renshaw, received.

Police Station for Pennant Hills

The Petition of the residents and ratepayers of Hillcrest Road and adjoining streets, Pennant Hills, respectfully sheweth:

That the proposed police station in Hillcrest Road, lots 18 and 20, D.P. 6740 (Nos 12 and 140), Pennant Hills, would be prejudicial to the social and physical environment of Hillcrest Road and would result in the lowering of property values in the street. The residents consider that the existing police station on Pennant Hills Road is more environmentally sound and acceptable to the community.

The relevant Ministers and the Hornsby Shire Council have been previously advised in detail of the residents' objections.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House endorse our objections and request the Minister for Police to reject the proposal for a police station to be constructed in Hillcrest Road, Pennant Hills.

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

Petition, lodged by Mr Cameron, received.

State Forests

The Petition of certain citizens of New South Wales respectfully sheweth:

That many people in the Kyogle district derive income from sawmilling, and associated industries, dairying, grazing, agriculture, bee-keeping, transport and commerce. The proposal to convert Wiangaree, Roseberry and Mt Lindesay State Forests into a National Park, if implemented, would have lasting adverse effects on the livelihood and well-being of many of the people living in the Kyogle Shire.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House ensure that:

- (1) Wiangaree, Roseberry and Mt Lindesay State Forests are not converted into a National Park.
- (2) The Forestry Commission of New South Wales control the three State Forests under present land use and management practices.
- (3) A major plantation programme be commenced immediately to ensure a supply of logs at least sufficient to maintain employment in the Shire at its present level.
- (4) A major recreational programme, for the three State Forests, be commenced immediately.

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

Petition, lodged by Mr Day, received.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

MANUFACTURING INVESTMENT

Mr COLEMAN: I address a question without notice to the Premier. Last Thursday at the Chamber of Manufactures of New South Wales dinner did the Premier state that he was gratified that manufacturing investment in New South Wales was matched by only one other State, Western Australia? Is the Premier aware of the misleading nature of that statement? Does the survey he quoted, which was prepared by the Commonwealth Department of Industry and Commerce, show that in Victoria and Queensland, as well as Western Australia, manufacturing investment exceeds that of New South Wales and that in 1977 New South Wales obtained only 17 per cent of the total Australian manufacturing investment instead of its usual 35 per cent to 40 per cent? Has New South Wales now by far the lowest *per capita* rate of investment in manufacturing enterprises of all the States?

Mr WRAN: It is a tragedy that the Opposition has a collection of knockers who seem to be dedicated to finding something wrong with New South Wales and everything that is done in relation to it. The answer that I give to the Leader of the Opposition is that what I said last week to the Chamber of Manufactures was accurate. Although a member of the Leader of the Opposition's staff shakes his head and says "No", I should much rather accept the Department of Industry and Commerce survey, which has been widely circulated and is being quoted by leading Australian industrialists. It is universally accepted that industrial development in this State has received a great fillip in the past two and a half years. The figures quoted show that investment and commitment to investment in New South Wales is beyond that in all other States except Western Australia.

It is futile for the Leader of the Opposition—or members of his staff—to wave in the air a photostat copy of some other document. The simple situation is that this year, for the first time since February 1975 employment in New South Wales has fallen below the national average. The unemployment growth rate in New South Wales in the past twelve months has been running at less than 2 per cent, compared with an average of 30 per cent for the rest of the States. The inflation rate for New South Wales, as measured by the consumer price index, is 7.5 per cent, compared with an average of 7.9 per cent for the rest of Australia. The rate of investment committed to New South Wales is greater than that of all other States except Western Australia, which is only marginally ahead because of the massive commitment of investment in respect of the gas projects on the North West Shelf.

VICTIMS OF SEXUAL OFFENCES

Mr JOHNSON: Will the Premier advise the House whether referral centres for victims of sexual offences have been established? Will he inform the House which hospitals have been selected, what service is provided, and how effective these centres are in meeting the needs of victims?

Mr WRAN: I thank the honourable member for Mount Druitt for his question. He has played a significant role in the new procedures adopted by the Government in relation to the treatment of victims of sexual offenders. His electorate is about to be one of the beneficiaries of the imminent opening of the Westmead hospital complex. On 1st July new police and medical procedures were introduced for rape victims in New South Wales. Also, special rape referral centres were established for adult victims of these offences at six New South Wales hospitals—Royal North Shore Hospital, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Blacktown Hospital, St George Hospital, Wollongong Hospital and Royal Newcastle Hospital. Special centres for children were established at Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children and the Prince of Wales Hospital. These centres now operate twenty-four hours a day and provide full medical and support services for the victims of sexual assault.

[Interruption.]

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The level of audible conversation in the Chamber is far too high.

Mr WRAN: In the past it was not unusual for a victim of a sexual attack to spend up to five hours with the police before getting medical treatment. Now initial questioning by police is sufficient only to get details for apprehending the offender. Police officers then accompany the victim to the hospital, and after medical treatment is given they resume their questioning. Many victims go directly to hospitals and decide not to involve the law. Whatever the case, a victim of sexual attack is treated as a medical and psychological emergency.

One of the products of this new system of referral centres has been that the Health Commission has established a working party to implement and monitor the service. However, a uniform system of data collection has not yet been established. Though it is not possible to make a comprehensive evaluation at this early stage, all hospitals involved report a significant increase of up to 50 per cent in the number of rape victims being treated by them since 1st July. Every indication supports the premise that rape is the most unreported crime and that the availability of a non-judgmental and supportive service is encouraging victims to seek help. It is the Government's intention, following the great success of this scheme, to establish referral centres throughout the State. They offer more humane and much more sensible treatment for persons unfortunate enough to be subjected to a sexual offence.

KYOGLE—CASINO TREE PLANTING

Mr PUNCH: I direct a question without notice to the Minister for Conservation and Minister for Water Resources. Is it a fact that on 2nd May last, when the Government's decision to create a national park in the Border Ranges was announced, it was stated that additional employment opportunities would be created immediately in the Kyogle—Casino region through a 2 300 hectare tree-planting programme? How many jobs have been provided under this programme in the three and a half months since the announcement? Has the Minister given any specific instructions to the Forestry Commission for implementing the necessary changes for forest management in the area?

Mr CORDON: It is proposed to revoke 7 000 hectares of State forest—including the controversial Levers Plateau—for dedication as national park. This area is additional to areas already under the control of the National Parks and Wildlife Act. Of the 7 000 hectares to which I referred, only 1 500 hectares, in the Grady's Creek locality, are to be subject to further logging. Such operations are considered to be essential to the operations of the local timber industry.

Mr Punch: Immediately, you said.

Mr GORDON: It is not immediate; it is in accordance with forestry management. In addition, areas are to be planted to Southern pine and Bunya pine. Already the New South Wales Forestry Commission has received advice from forestry officers of the Queensland Forestry Commission who are conversant with this type of plantation. Planting will commence as soon as possible. Expert advice suggests that several species of Southern pine will provide timber of the most desirable type. The Forestry Commission has already taken steps to purchase land, and where possible to clear land. Southern pine seedlings are started in a nursery. Wherever possible, seedlings will be purchased from the Queensland Forestry Commission.

TEACHER EXCHANGE

Mr PACIULLO: My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Education. Will the Minister inform the House of the result of his recent visit to several countries where he took part in discussions on teacher exchange and other multi-cultural educational issues?

Mr BEDFORD: The honourable member for Liverpool evinces considerable interest in the subject of teacher exchange between Australia and countries other than those with which exchanges traditionally have been made, namely Great Britain and Canada. On my trip overseas I took the opportunity to discuss with the authorities in countries other than Great Britain what might be done to effect some sort of teacher or cultural exchange programme between those countries and New South Wales. Australia has been receiving migrants from non-English speaking countries in fairly large numbers for more than twenty-five years, but in that time nothing has been done by the Commonwealth or by any State government to ensure some sort of connection between this nation and the countries from which those migrants came.

I visited Yugoslavia, Greece and Italy to see what could be done to establish a cultural exchange programme with New South Wales. The governments concerned are not keen on the idea of sending their teachers to Australia on an exchange basis with New South Wales. They prefer to have our teachers go to their countries for twelve months and bring back to Australia the knowledge they gain so that they can spread it among their colleagues who are involved here in multi-cultural and migrant education programmes. I was successful in having arrangements made for four teachers to go to Italy, three to Greece, two to Yugoslavia—to the Republic of Macedonia—and three to Turkey. The teachers have been selected, as I announced

last Friday night at a gathering concerned with ethnic schools and classes. Those who will be going to Italy are to leave Australia on 18th September next. Those who are to go to the other countries will first undergo intensive linguistic studies before leaving for overseas in mid-October.

Much interest has been shown by the other States, and indeed by the Commonwealth, in this matter. We expect that the programme begun by New South Wales will, in many ways, become a pilot scheme for other governments in Australia. We look forward to these teachers returning after twelve months and feeding their expert knowledge into the general teaching service, to the advantage particularly of those who are now involved in developing multi-cultural programmes and migrant education programmes generally. I assure the honourable member for Liverpool and all honourable members that the Government intends to extend the programme, after it has been evaluated, to other countries from which Australia draws migrant children. We look forward in the coming years to an extensive programme of cultural exchanges with those countries.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

Urgency

Mr MASON (Dubbo), Deputy Leader of the Opposition [2.38]: I move:

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

That this House rejects the recommendations of the Anti-Discrimination Board that *de facto* relationships be given equal legal status with marriage, and its recommendations concerning the adoption of children.

This matter is urgent because it is completely unsatisfactory that such a controversial and full-scale attack upon the traditional concepts of marriage and the family should go unchallenged for six months, the period that the Premier has prescribed for public consideration of these matters. Although many of the recommendations in the volumes that have been tabled in this House by the Premier should be considered over a period of time, and are worthy of study in their implications, no time should be given to the recommendation that *de facto* relationships be given equal legal status with marriage, and the recommendations concerning the adoption of children, which undoubtedly will be rejected out of hand by the overwhelming majority of people of New South Wales, who would wish to uphold family life and marriage as the basis of society.

It is urgent and important that we distinguish between the acceptance by modern society of the new relationships between men and women—which has undoubtedly led to these particular recommendations finding their way into the report—and the legalizing and formalizing of those relationships. I believe that society has shown great tolerance and understanding of the human relationships that exist between men and women outside marriage, but that tolerance and understanding must not be confused with the gigantic step of legalizing **such** human relationships. Therefore, we must reject this proposal on the spot. There are **all** sorts of reasons why people choose to live in this type of relationship. But let us declare that our acceptance or understanding must not be interpreted as meaning that this House accepts such relationships without at least the need for some civic recognition of them.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! As the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has risen to speak on urgency, he is required to convince the House why the business of this Chamber should be interrupted to deal with this matter at this time. I believe that at the moment he is dealing more with the substantive motion than with the question of its urgency.

Mr MASON: Mr Speaker, it is urgent that this Parliament reject these recommendations of the Anti-Discrimination Board, for they have been made without being accompanied by any supporting information or argument. There is a grave danger—and this is why the matter is urgent—that young people in particular will be misled into believing that these relationships have the imprimatur of this Parliament and the community if these recommendations go unchallenged and are not rejected immediately. I searched the documents forming the report in vain for evidence or a suggestion from behavioural scientists that some grave psychological damage is being done in the community, but those documents contain merely the bold statement that all these relationships should be **legalized**. On that ground alone I submit that this House should forthwith reject them.

This matter is urgent on the ground that we should have expected from a board which made such significant and controversial recommendations that they would spell out how a de facto relationship is to be determined. The report says that such a relationship exists between those who "ordinarily live together **as** husband and wife on a permanent and bona fide domestic basis." However, no attempt is made in the report to define the point at which a non-marital relationship becomes permanent, bona fide or domestic. It is not as though a form of civil marriage is not freely and readily available for people who have religious objections to the normal Christian tradition of marriage. How on earth can we allow these recommendations to lay on the table of this House without rejecting them, especially when they are based on such flimsy, unsupported evidence.

This matter is urgent because in particular the recommendations concerning adoption should be rejected. We must not let another day pass without declaring that we reject out of hand the suggestion that children be entrusted to people involved in a relationship that does not **have** the security of marriage. To entrust a baby or a child to the partners of a relationship who have so little confidence in each other that they are unwilling to bind themselves to one another in a legal and meaningful way is, as far as I am concerned, completely and utterly unacceptable. To entrust a child to the parties of such a relationship would be to go against all the evidence on the training and upbringing of children whose greatest needs, next to love, are security and confidence in the future.

Mr Petersen: On a point of order. I submit that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is flouting your ruling, Mr Speaker, and is now arguing the substantive motion. I suggest that he has come to the end of his arguments on urgency, and I ask that you draw his attention to that matter.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I think the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is now speaking to the substantive motion and has exhausted his arguments for urgency. I ask him to address himself to the motion before the Chair: that is, that it is a matter of urgent necessity that the House consider the matter he is raising.

Mr MASON: It is urgent that the members of this Parliament, despite their political **differences** and party allegiances, be given the opportunity today to take **a** public stand for the family and to draw a line against those subtle forces that are determined to overthrow the traditional values on which our Western Judeo-Christian

culture has been built. It is urgent, for the time comes in a permissive society such as ours when the community leaders—people whose opinions, judgment and example do much to determine the course of the lives of many people—must say "Stop. Enough. No more." I submit that such a moment has come for the members of this Parliament. I ask all those who are concerned about the future of our society to reject now these particular recommendations of the Anti-Discrimination Board.

Mr WRAN (Bass Hill), Premier [2.47]: The principal argument put forward by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in his somewhat emotional plea that this House of Parliament should pre-empt the public debate on the report of the Anti-Discrimination Board is that it is completely unsatisfactory that the recommendations of the Anti-Discrimination Board in relation to the status in our society of *de facto* relationships should go unchallenged for six months. This recommendation of the Anti-Discrimination Board has already been challenged by church leaders of some denominations. At the present time a healthy and objective debate is proceeding in the community in relation to the recommendations of the Anti-Discrimination Board, including this recommendation in respect of the status to be accorded by the law to *de facto* relationships.

It is a pity that the Opposition, in the guise of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, has been unable to resist the temptation to belittle and debase the value of serious debate on serious matters in our community by endeavouring by this motion to shut off that debate. I repeat what I said when the chairman of the Anti-Discrimination Board released the report: it is the report of the board as the result of the direction of Parliament in the Anti-Discrimination Act. Therefore, by virtue of the mandate of the Parliament, the board was bound to deal with the whole range and manner of subjects that it dealt with in its report. However, I said further when the chairman of the Anti-Discrimination Board released his report that it was to be hoped that the public debate, and certainly the parliamentary debate, would not focus upon the subjects of homosexuality, prostitution and the status of *de facto* relationships, for to do so is to cheapen the whole value of what on all sides is agreed to be a valuable contribution to the social fabric of the community and one that deserves the serious, solemn and objective consideration of the community.

For my part I find it difficult to see how the law could define a *de facto* relationship to elevate it and equate it with a legal marriage. If one properly reads the report, the Anti-Discrimination Board has rather posed the problem that exists in relation to people, many of whom, as responsible editorial writers have said, live together with much affection and respectability. The problem is how one can legally equate their situation and what flows from it with the legal obligations, status and responsibilities of marriage. I find it most difficult to translate that particular recommendation in the report into legal definition. It would be a sorry day for this Parliament, irrespective of what our views may be, if it sought to pre-empt healthy discussion in the community, which has already commenced and will undoubtedly continue in the ensuing weeks and months.

Anyone who for one minute feels that the family is not the central and basic unit of our community is obviously out of touch with community standards and community mores. Our Government whole-heartedly embraces those concepts and ethics which support family life in Australia. We recognize the value of those concepts to a stable, moderate, sensitive community in which all sections, from the old to the young, can enjoy the benefit of the stability that the family brings. At the same time, the Government does not propose to bend to political opportunism by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition at a time when the majority of people in the community have not had an opportunity to study the report. I venture to say that, although the Leader of the Opposition and his deputy——

[Interruption]

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Hornsby to order.

Mr WRAN: —might have read parts of it, there would not be more than one or two members on the Opposition benches who have read the Anti-Discrimination Board's report. The Government certainly does not intend to pre-empt discussion in a free Parliament and a free community in relation to matters that have been seriously put forward, although I repeat that for my part in this respect I find it difficult to see how it could be brought about. Therefore, I adjure members of this Parliament to recognize the serious questions that are raised in the Anti-Discrimination Board's report and to let us have the benefit of the views of all sections of the community. Let us have the views of the majority as well as the minority, of the church leaders who are held in such high esteem in our community, and of sensible, responsible people; but most of all, let us not treat serious questions in a political way as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has sought to do in this Parliament today. The freedom of discussion that I promised the public in respect of all the recommendations of the Anti-Discrimination Board will ensue so far as this Government is concerned. It will neither censor that report nor close the door to discussion at the behest of the Opposition.

Question of urgency put.

The House divided.

Ayes, 43

Mr Arblaster	Mr Griffith	Mr Park
Mr Barraclough	Mr Healey	Mr Pickard
Mr Boyd	Mr Jackett	Mr Punch
Mr Brown	Mr Leitch	Mr Rozzoli
Mr Bruxner	Mr Lewis	Mr Schipp
Mr Cameron	Mr McDonald	Mr Singleton
Mr Catterson	Mr McGinty	Mr Taylor
Mr J. A. Clough	Mr Maddison	Mr Viney
Mr Coleman	Mr Mason	Mr N. D. Walker
Mr Cowan	Mrs Meillon	Mr West
Mr Doyle	Mr Moore	Mr Wotton
Mr Duncan	Mr Morris	
Mr Fischer	Mr Murray	<i>Tellers,</i>
Mr Fisher	Mr Mutton	Mr Brewer
Mr Freudenstein	Mr Osborne	Mr Dowd

Noes, 48

Mr Akister	Mr Durick	Mr Jackson
Mr Bannon	Mr Einfeld	Mr Jensen
Mr Barnier	Mr Face	Mr Johnson
Mr Bedford	Mr Ferguson	Mr Johnstone
Mr Booth	Mr Flaherty	Mr Kearns
Mr Brereton	Mr Gabb	Mr McGowan
Mr Cahill	Mr Gordon	Mr Maher
Mr Cleary	Mr Haigh	Mr Mallam
Mr R. J. Clough	Mr Hatton	Mr Mulock
Mr Crabtree	Mr Hills	Mr O'Connell
Mr Day	Mr Hunter	Mr Paciullo

Mr Petersen	Mr Sheahan	Mr Wran
Mr Quinn	Mr Stewart	
Mr Ramsay	Mr Wade	
Mr Renshaw	Mr F. J. Walker	<i>Tellers,</i>
Mr Rogan	Mr Whelan	Mr Degen
Mr Ryan	Mr Wilde	Mr Keane

Question so resolved in the negative.

Motion of urgency negatived.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

(Resumed)

MANGROVE CREEK DAM

Mr O'CONNELL: I ask the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports whether he visited recently the Central Coast and inspected the Mangrove Creek Dam. Will he advise me and the House of the stage of construction reached with the dam and when it might be available to fulfil its intended purpose of providing major augmentation of the Gosford and Wyong water supply scheme?

Mr FERGUSON: Yes, recently I visited the site of the proposed Mangrove Creek Dam, which is part of an extensive \$60 million water supply scheme for the Gosford and Wyong shires. The scheme has been financed 50 per cent by the State Government and 25 per cent each by the Gosford shire council and the Wyong shire council. I take this opportunity to pay tribute to the Gosford and Wyong shire councils and the Department of Public Works, and indeed the Government, for their co-operation in the funding of this scheme.

The first stage of the project provides for a wall height of 81.5 metres and provision has been made for a final height of 108 metres. The dam will be capable of storing 422 000 megalitres or 90 000 million gallons. Stripping and rock excavation of the site are now being carried out by the Department of Public Works. This work is nearing completion and tenders will soon be invited for the construction of the dam wall. Work is already well advanced on a 490-metre diversion tunnel being constructed at a cost of \$1.3 million. Following completion of the dam, which is programmed for 1980, water will flow by pipeline and tunnel to a new water treatment plant at Wyong and from there it will be distributed to Wyong and Gosford shires. This will guarantee adequate water supplies for the two shires for at least the next twenty years.

The programme is indicative of the Government's concern to provide water and sewerage for the people of New South Wales. Last year the Government provided a record \$27 million for country water and sewerage. I am confident that when the Loan Estimates are announced it will be found that the Government is providing another record amount.

KAREELA INTERSECTION

Mr N. D. WALKER: My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways. Have a number of representations been made to the Minister in connection with the installation of traffic lights at the intersection of Box Road and Bates Drive, Kareela?

[Interruption]

Mr N. D. WALKER: The Minister of Justice and Minister for Housing laughs. He should be the last person to laugh because——

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will address himself to his question.

Mr N. D. WALKER: With the greatest respect, Ministers can say anything——

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I called on the honourable member for Miranda to ask a question without notice, and he should proceed to do so.

Mr N. D. WALKER: Is it a fact that a new shopping complex has been opened adjacent to this area and that recently a large school has been built in the area? Is it a fact, also, that I presented a petition about this matter to the Parliament last week from 3 300 people? Will the Minister give this matter urgent and favourable consideration in order to eradicate this potential killer intersection?

Mr COX: It is true that representations have been made to me from time to time about this matter. The honourable member for Miranda wrote to me and I forwarded a reply to him on 4th May. It is also true that his opponent, Mr Ralph Robb, wrote to me and I forwarded a reply to him.

Mr Barraclough: What has that got to do with it?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Bligh to order.

Mr COX: The honourable member for Miranda mentioned that he had made representations. Other people have also made representations. The information contained in the honourable member's question is substantially correct. Major roadworks have been undertaken to improve sight distance and to provide right-turn storage bays and a climbing lane. The work has been completed and I understand that generally the situation for both pedestrians and motorists has been improved. A nearby shopping complex, which was opened about three weeks ago, has generated additional traffic movement in the area, and the department is again reviewing traffic trends with a view to providing additional facilities should they be warranted. I am sure the honourable member for Miranda will be interested in that review. I am hoping to have a further reply for the honourable member within a period of ten days.

POOL CHLORINE PACKAGES

Mr BANNON: My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Mines and Minister for Energy. Is it a fact that the use of slow-release chlorine tablets for treatment of swimming pools is becoming more popular? Is it possible that people could be lulled into a false sense of security by subsequently using for chlorine powder the same container that is used for slow-release tablets? Can the combination of these two chlorine products produce a violent reaction to the presence of an additional chemical in the tablet? Will the Minister review the position with a view to ensuring that adequate warning is clearly given on the containers of these products?

Mr HILLS: I appreciate the obvious concern for the welfare of the community clearly indicated by the honourable member for Rockdale in his question, particularly as the warmer weather approaches and people obtain materials to treat their swimming pools. It is a fact that slow-release chlorine tablets for treatment of swimming pools are becoming more popular and that people should not use these containers for the use of other chemicals. The pool chlorine compounds are solid substances containing chlorine, and they are classified as dangerous goods Class 5.1, an oxidising agent, under the dangerous goods regulations. The honourable member is quite correct in the assumption suggested by the second part of his question. Pool chlorines are

quite reactive substances. For example, when some are placed in a closed container with water, vigorous reaction may occur and this could rupture the container. Not all pool chlorine compounds are compatible. When two are mixed together it is quite likely that reaction could occur.

[Interruption]

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I drew honourable members' attention previously to Standing Order 166. I now draw their attention to both Standing Order 155 and Standing Order 166. Those standing orders require members to keep the level of conversation low. Excessive conversation can be dealt with by removal of honourable members from the Chamber after they have been called to order.

Mr HILLS: Instantaneous combustion has been known to occur with tragic results when swimming pool disinfectants have come into contact with greases or rubber. In one tragic incident a child who knocked a container of chlorine on to a rubberized raincoat was burnt to death. I am astounded that Country Party members do not seem to be concerned about such a tragic accident. The seriousness of this matter should be drawn to the attention of the public as well as to members of the Country Party. The dangerous goods regulations require that when pool chlorine is in a quantity exceeding one kilogramme, it must be marked with a class label, with a yellow "Diamonds are for Danger" sign. It must also be marked with the name of the dangerous goods or the trade name under which the goods are sold.

Packages of smaller quantities of pool chlorine normally have detailed instructions and precise warnings on the container. In view of the honourable member's timely question I will have this matter investigated by the dangerous goods branch of the Department of Labour and Industry with a view to determining whether warnings on these packages are sufficiently clear and adequate for the public protection.

GENERAL LOAN ACCOUNT APPROPRIATION BILL

Urgency

Mr F. J. WALKER (Georges River), Attorney-General [3.12]: I move:

That it is a matter of urgent necessity that the General Loan Account Appropriation Bill be brought in and read a first time and the second reading proceeded with at this sitting.

Mr Brown: **Mr Speaker**—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition is the only honourable member allowed to speak at this stage.

Motion of urgency agreed to.

Suspension of Standing Orders

Motion (by Mr F. J. Walker) agreed to:

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would preclude the General Loan Account Appropriation Bill being brought in and read a first time and the second reading proceeded with at this sitting.

Message

Mr Speaker reported the receipt of a message from His Excellency the Governor recommending the General Loan Account Appropriation Bill. The message was accompanied by a copy of the Loan Estimates, 1978–79.

Loan Estimates ordered to be printed.

Introduction

Motion (by Mr Renshaw) agreed to:

That a bill for an Act be bought in to provide for the appropriation of a certain sum out of the General Loan Account and for the application of that sum for certain public works and services.

Bill presented and read a first time.

Second Reading

Mr **RENSHAW** (Castlereagh), Treasurer [3.13]: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I now wish to present to Parliament details of the New South Wales Government's Capital Works Programme for the financial year 1978–79.

Together with the Budget Speech, giving details of the Government's recurrent expenditures, it outlines the Government's financial planning for the current financial year.

Capital expenditure by the New South Wales Government and authorities will rise by 8½ per cent to more than \$2,000 million in 1978–79, a small increase in real terms over last year's expenditure. It has taken a very great effort to achieve that much of a positive result. While the Government has been unable to offset all of the severe cuts in federal funding, we have been able to maintain the stimulus to the New South Wales economy and steady improvement in community services that was given by last year's record level of capital expenditure.

This year's programme has been prepared under severe financial restrictions imposed by the Federal Government.

As honourable members are aware, the Federal Government controls three of the State's principal sources of capital funds—the State's general loan funds, federal funding of specific projects and programmes and the borrowings of the State's semi-government authorities.

The total funds available to the State from these three federally controlled sources will be \$1,301 million this year, only \$2 million more than last year. Allowing for inflation this represents a cut in real terms of some \$100 million. As examples of this severe treatment, for the first time in twenty-five years the Federal Government has made no increase at all in the State's General Loan allocation—the primary source of the Government's capital works funding.

Secondly, there have also been drastic cuts in federal funding for specific purposes: a \$24 million cut to welfare housing; the abolition of the hospital building grants; community health grants cut by more than half; pre-school funding cut by more than half; school dental scheme share—down 33 per cent.

Thirdly, increases allowed by the Federal Government in borrowings of the State's semi-government authorities have been insufficient to cover increases in costs.

Given these cuts it has only been by the tightest financial control and a most careful review of the State's available internal resources that we have been able to achieve a modest increase in the total capital programme in real terms.

The rigid control has extended over all spending.

Proposed expenditures of every department and authority have been examined and trimmed until the capital works programme could be accommodated within the financial resources available to the State.

In this process, we have been compelled to cut or slow down certain parts of the ongoing works programme. We have slowed down the construction of the new Parliament House and a number of other government building projects have been deferred. We have reduced the allocations to the Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority and the Department of Lands.

In our determination to prevent a calamitous wind-down in the capital works programme, the Government has again, after careful review, been able to supplement the programme by prudent use of internal reserves. This is the second year in which we have been faced with these difficult decisions, a situation directly due to the federal Government's continuing harsh restrictions on State capital allocations.

We have utilized to the maximum the borrowings by smaller State authorities, the one area to which the federal Government has attached no limits.

Almost half of the internal funds consist of revenues collected by the Department of Main Roads and Electricity Commission in accordance with normal operating policy of the authorities.

In addition, there will be a run-down in the accumulated reserves of the Metropolitan and Hunter Water Boards, the Maritime Services Board, the Public Transport Commission and the Hospital Fund.

The drawing on these reserves will in no way hamper the operation or continued financial viability of the State's statutory authorities. It reflects our determination to use every resource at our disposal in order to maintain the State's Capital Works Programme.

I must point out however that even with the additional use of State funds we have not been able to fully make up for cuts in Federal Government funding—particularly in the area of Welfare Housing, where the base Federal allocation has been cut in half.

Despite the limitations on available funds we will make further progress in upgrading the public transport system and a special additional provision has been made for road and expressway construction. Major improvements in the State's prisons are also planned in line with the recommendations of the Royal Commission.

Modest improvements are also planned in education, health and social welfare.

The New South Wales Government's attitude to capital works spending is in stark contrast to that of the Federal Government.

The New South Wales Government has consistently argued that public sector capital investment provides a controlled stimulus to the economy, particularly the private sector, without adding to inflation.

Our policy in the past two years of allocating record amounts to capital works coupled with a budget policy of holding and reducing State taxes has clearly benefited the New South Wales economy.

Over the past two years unemployment has risen much more slowly in New South Wales than in any other State and inflation has been reduced further in New South Wales than in any other State.

The Government's determination to maintain the real level of capital expenditure allows us to continue our support for the large section of the private sector which heavily depends on public sector capital spending and the employment it provides.

Similarly, the Government recognises the importance of the programmes to rural areas and country towns.

Provision has been made with the allocations for water conservation, irrigation, soil conservation, grain storage, decentralisation, forestry, country industries and water supply and sewerage for the country.

I now turn to the specific allocations within the programme.

In 1978–79 total funds available to the Department of Main Roads will be \$465 million, an increase of \$64 million or 16 per cent over last year's expenditure.

This year the Government has included in this allocation a special addition of \$40 million State Loan Funds to allow a further increase in the rate of road and freeway construction. The Government believes that even in this year of tight constraint, an exceptional effort had to be made to maintain the significant increases in road expenditure made over the past two years. With the Special Programme, the total funds available for roads this year will be more than 50 per cent above the expenditure in the financial year 1975–76.

The increase in road expenditure over that time will have been achieved with little help from the Federal Government. In the three years since 1975–76, the State's contribution to road construction in New South Wales will have increased by over 70 per cent, while the Federal contribution will have increased by only 26 per cent.

The New South Wales Government has presented a strong case for additional Federal road funds. We believe that the additional \$250 million revenue that the Federal Government will receive each year from New South Wales motorists as a result of the increased crude oil levy adds further strength to our case for greater Federal payments for roads. Four years ago, the Federal Government financed 45 per cent of the State Government's road expenditure—now it provides only 36 per cent of the funds.

Despite the inadequate contribution from the Federal Government, this year's programme is a major step towards providing an efficient and safe road system throughout the State.

More than 1200 construction and maintenance works will be undertaken by the Department of Main Roads throughout New South Wales this year.

The major works to be undertaken this year include the following:

Western Suburbs of Sydney

North Parramatta by-pass between Pennant Hills Road and Windsor Road.

North Parramatta by-pass from Windsor Road to Old Windsor Road.

New bridges at Rickaby's Creek and South Creek on the Richmond–Blacktown Road.

Western Freeway between Concord and Granville and between Parramatta and May's Hill.

Mr Renshaw]

Widening of Great Western Highway to four lanes between St Mary's and Kingswood.

Reconstruction of Windsor Road to four lanes between Baulkham Hills and Kellyville.

Widening of Wallgrove Road at Horsley Park.

Extension of Silverwater Road to Stewart Street, Eastwood.

Construction of four lane deviation of Pemberton Street, West Strathfield.

Upgrading of major secondary roads to provide a continuous link between Liverpool and Parramatta.

Southern and South Western Suburbs of Sydney

Construction of a new bridge over the Georges River at Liverpool on the South Western Freeway.

Widening of Hume Highway to six lanes between the Crossroads and Liverpool.

Construction of the County Road by-passing Bankstown between Rookwood and Canterbury Roads.

New bridge over the Woronora River on the Sutherland–Menai Road.

Completion of divided carriageway on Foreshore Road between Botany Road and General Holmes Drive.

Widening of the O'Riordan Street railway underpass at Mascot to four lanes.

Eastern Suburbs of Sydney

Last stage of the Bondi Junction by-pass.

Last stage of widening of New South Head Road at Edgecliff.

Northern Suburbs of Sydney

Construction of divided carriageway in Mona Vale Road between the Pacific Highway and St Ives.

Widening of Military Road to six lanes from Marlin Street to Wycombe Road, Neutral Bay.

Completion of the divided carriageway from Miller Street to Willoughby Road along the Warringah Expressway.

Completion of the project to provide a four lane link between Old Barrenjoey Road and Eastbourne Avenue, Avalon.

Newcastle Area

Upgrading of Pacific Highway in the vicinity of Swansea and Cains Hill.

Construction of a by-pass on the Pacific Highway at Charlestown.

Construction of a six lane carriageway in Donald Street to Trunk Road near Newcastle.

Wollongong Area

Construction of the Northern Suburbs Distributor from Gwynneville to Towradgi Road.

Extension of the Southern Freeway in the vicinity of Dapto to meet the Princes Highway at Mount Brown.

Widening of Mt Ousley Road to four lanes from the Southern Tollway to the Southern Freeway.

Country Areas

Upgrading of Pacific Highway at Coffs Harbour, Corindi Creek and Tyagarah.

A new bridge on the Woodburn–Lismore Road to replace the ferry on the Richmond River.

In the New England region, upgrading of the road between Tamworth and Armidale through the Moonbi Ranges, construction of a new bridge on the New England Highway at Uralla as well as realignment of 4 kilometres of road at the Devil's Pinch between Armidale and Glen Innes.

Large-scale works on the Hume Highway between Yanderra and Mittagong including major bridges over the Nepean River at Pheasant's Nest, Douglas Park and Menangle. Other large projects on the Hume Highway are in the vicinity of Gundagai and Tarcutta.

On the Sturt Highway reconstruction work east of Wagga Wagga and a new bridge at Kyeamba Creek.

On the Great Western Highway over the Blue Mountains three projects: at Lapstone Hill, Woodford, and west of Katoomba to Victoria Pass. Each of these projects, when completed, will greatly improve traffic flow. They are also part of the Government's plan to build a four-lane highway across the Blue Mountains.

Construction of dual carriageway on the Great Western Highway between Lithgow and Marrangaroo.

On the Mitchell Highway extensive reconstruction north of Molong. Also in the Central West, a new bridge over the Eachlan River at Condobolin.

A new bridge over the Namoi River at Walgett on the Castlereagh Highway.

A new bridge over the Shoalhaven River and a deviation in the Princes Highway at Nowra.

A new bridge at Merimbula and reconstruction and resurfacing of the Princes Highway south of Bega.

Completion of bridge and new approaches at the Bredbo River on the Monaro Highway in addition to extensive upgrading of the highway.

The funds for these projects and the other works of the Department of Main Roads will come from the following sources:

Departmental funds and revenue, including Motor Vehicle				
Taxation and Road Maintenance Charges	..	..		\$220 million
State Government Loan Funds	..	..	..	\$ 40 million
Borrowings by the Department of Main Roads	..	..	..	\$ 38 million
Federal Government Road Grants	..	..	..	\$167 million

An amount of **\$207 million** will be allocated to the Public Transport Commission for new equipment, track upgrading and improvement of facilities. This is **\$17 million** or 9 per cent more than last year.

Mr Renshaw]

With this capital expenditure, the Government is well on target to reach its objective of spending \$1,000 million on its 5 year public transport upgrading programme.

This year's expenditure will:

Add 96 new double-deck suburban train carriages, bringing the total of new carriages introduced since July 1976 to 216.

Provide for the completion of deliveries of 30 new air-conditioned double-deck inter-urban carriages for the Blue Mountains and Central Coast areas.

Add 20 new powerful diesel electric and 5 electric locomotives to improve freight and country passenger services.

Add 118 new coal wagons, bringing the number introduced since July 1976 to 644.

Add 70 new wagons for other freight bringing the total number introduced since July 1976 to 890.

Add two new ferries to the Sydney Inner Harbour fleet.

Upgrade 215 kilometres of track at a cost of \$35 million, bringing the total track upgraded to 430 kilometres since the present special programme began eighteen months ago.

In addition, 215 modern buses will be added to the Public Transport Commission's fleet, under the special leasing arrangements, bringing the number of new buses introduced since July 1976 to 415.

This year's expenditure will continue the introduction of modern signalling equipment in the Sydney area and at Goulburn. There will also be major improvements to railway workshops at Goulburn, Bathurst, Clyde and **Chullora**. Quadruplication of suburban railway lines will continue between Strathfield and Epping and between Seven Hills and St Marys as well as the improvement of the Botany line in association with the development of Port Botany.

The sources of the \$207 million for capital expenditure on Public Transport are as follows:

State Government Loan Funds	..	..	..	..	\$103.4 million
Direct borrowings by the Commission	..	..	..	..	\$ 47 million
Renewals Fund and other Reserves of the Commission	..				\$ 56.6 million

A capital programme of \$105.4 million in 1978–79 has been approved for Hospitals and other Health services.

Yet again the problems associated with meeting the need for new and improved hospital and health facilities have been compounded by further substantial cuts in Federal Government funding. Having cut its contribution to the Hospital Development programme by more than half last year the Federal Government has now scrapped the programme altogether.

The Federal Government has also severely cut its contribution to Community Health and the School Dental programme.

In all, Federal contributions towards Health capital programmes this year will amount to only \$2.9 million, compared with **\$20.3** million last year and \$41.5 million the year before.

The State has increased its own allocation for Hospital and Health facilities to offset Federal cuts. This includes \$20 million to be borrowed by hospitals under the small State authority borrowing programme. Even with those measures however we have been unable to maintain the desired momentum on this programme.

The largest single expenditure this year will be for the Westmead Hospital. The \$48 million provided for this project will bring medical services of the highest quality to the Western area of Sydney. The first intake of patients is scheduled for November this year and the major part of the hospital will be in operation before the end of 1979.

Health services in the Western and Southern suburbs of Sydney will be improved by expenditures on the new hospital at Mount Dmitt, redevelopment of the Nepean Hospital, construction of an intensive care unit at the Bankstown Hospital and expenditures at the Campbelltown, Liverpool and Sutherland Hospitals.

Outside Sydney, there will be significant expenditures on hospitals at Casino, Gosford, Shellharbour, Parkes, the Blue Mountains as well as the medical school at Newcastle.

The programme also provides \$2.2 million for Community Health Centres and \$2.3 million for School Dental Services.

This year's allocation includes a provision of \$3.4 million for ambulances and ambulance stations, an increase of over 40 per cent on last year's allocation.

The \$190 million to be spent on capital works at schools and technical colleges in 1978–79 is \$17.5 million or 10 per cent higher than last year.

This year's allocation of \$160 million for schools provides for:

Construction to start on 11 new primary schools bringing the number of new primary schools since July 1976 to 33.

Construction to start on 2 new secondary schools bringing the number of new secondary schools since July 1976 to 9.

Major additions and alterations to be undertaken at 19 primary schools and 6 high schools.

A wide range of minor projects aimed at improving existing facilities.

The Government plans to spend \$15 million on the modern type of demountable school rooms. This programme is designed to provide ordinary and specialist classrooms to meet the short-term demand for classrooms at established schools, and to supply the facilities needed during the construction of new schools in urban growth areas.

An allocation of \$30 million has been made for technical colleges, an increase of \$6.5 million over last year. This includes a grant of \$20 million from the Federal Government. The contribution that technical education can make to the skilled workforce fully justifies this increase in funds.

Mr Renshaw]

Major works will continue at the technical colleges at Goulburn, Liverpool, Albury, Granville, North Sydney and Wollongong. Works will commence on new colleges at Wetherill Park, Campbelltown, Glendale, Padstow, as well as on additional facilities at Mount Druitt, Muswellbrook, Tamworth and the Sydney Technical College.

Acquisition and improvement of housing for teachers in country areas will be met from allocations totalling \$2.7 million for the Teacher Housing Authority—\$400,000 more than last year.

The \$104 million for welfare housing provided by the Federal Government for 1978–79 is \$24 million less than last year. The effect of the Federal Government economy drives on the disadvantaged is graphically illustrated by its cutbacks in welfare housing. In real terms, the Federal Government has cut its contribution to welfare housing by 25 per cent.

This year, the New South Wales Government has taken the unusual step of providing \$10 million for welfare housing from its loan allocation. This action has only offset part of the cut in Federal Government funds. In 1978–79, the Housing Commission will be forced to reduce the number of new contracts let for construction of family dwellings. The reduced Federal allocation will mean less funds for terminating building societies to lend to home buyers.

The New South Wales Government deplores the Federal Government decision to cut back in so important an area of social welfare policy. We have done everything possible to minimize the effects of these cuts, but the State cannot make up the full extent of the reduction in Federal funds.

The Government has approved a borrowing authority of \$110 million for the Metropolitan Water, Sewerage and Drainage Board for 1978–79. Although this is a reduction of \$30 million on last year, the Board will supplement these funds by substantially drawing on internal reserves and this will enable it to maintain the good progress it has been achieving in recent years.

This progress is particularly evident in the provision of sewerage services. By July 1979 these services will be available to roundly 200,000 more people in the Board's area than in July 1976.

The Hunter District Water Board has been allocated \$15.5 million in 1978–79. This will be financed by Board borrowings of \$9 million as well as by the use of reserves.

The Public Works Department is responsible for the construction of a wide range of public buildings. The Government had to make a number of difficult decisions in this area to provide adequate funds for projects of a high priority and to ensure that total expenditure was limited to the available finance. There are significant increases in the allocations for prisons, police buildings and facilities and child welfare buildings.

The allocation for capital works at prisons in 1978–79 is \$6 million, an increase of more than 70 per cent over last year's expenditure.

This greatly increased allocation will allow significant progress towards implementing the recommendations of the Royal Commission Inquiry into Prisons.

During the year, work will commence on the following projects:

A new maximum security gaol, proposed for **Parklea**, to accommodate up to 300 prisoners at an estimated total cost of \$13 million.

Four new security units of the type recommended by the Royal Commission to be located at Goulburn, Maitland, Malabar and Parramatta.

Other work to be commenced in line with the recommendations of the Royal Commission include:

New accommodation for women at Silverwater.

At Malabar work will start on a new security control and communications centre, a special care unit, and reception facilities.

At **Grafton**, work will begin on a new education block, observation tower and a new complex for prison industries.

At Parramatta Gaol work will begin on a new gateway, a new reception and visiting centre and a new kitchen.

The prison at Narrabri will be rebuilt on a new site providing accommodation for 50 prisoners.

The redevelopment of Milson Island will proceed to accommodate 80 prisoners in total.

Further works flowing from the recommendations of the Royal Commission will proceed including additional heating at Cooma Gaol and improved amenities for officers at Maitland.

The increased allocation will enable work already under way in prisons to be speeded up, including the redevelopment of Bathurst Gaol. Other major works in progress include additional prisoners' accommodation at **Grafton** Gaol and redevelopment of the Oberon and Kirkconnel Afforestation camps.

The Government has also made provision for repairs to the Central Industrial Prison at Malabar following the recent riot.

The allocation for child welfare buildings in 1978–79 is \$4 million, an increase of nearly 30 per cent over last year's expenditure.

This year, the most important works will be at the shelters at Worimi, **Cobham**, Wagga Wagga and **Grafton**. Work will start this year on the Central Metropolitan Remand Centre at Glebe and the Renwick Wards Home at Mittagong.

Mr Renshaw]

An amount of \$8.6 million has been allocated for police buildings and equipment and special housing. This is an increase of \$500,000 over last year's allocation.

The new equipment to be acquired this year includes a helicopter, several launches and additional computer equipment.

The major new work being planned this year is Stage I of the Sydney Police Centre in Brisbane Street which will allow reorganization of police services operating from the city area.

Work will commence on police station projects at Dee Why, Manly, Macquarie Fields, Ballina, and Engadine. Police buildings at Charlestown, Narooma, Bourke, Guyra, Barraba and Iluka are scheduled for completion this year.

Total expenditure on public buildings generally this year will be \$18 million. This is below last year's level, after taking into account other sources of funds, and reflects the higher priority that the Government has given to other capital works.

No new works will be undertaken in this section of the works programme this year and all other work has been held to the minimum level required by contracts already entered into.

Work on the new Parliament House has been slowed down to the lowest possible rate. Planning has been undertaken for the construction of the new Government Office building at Newcastle but limited funds will not allow this and a similar building at Griffith to start this financial year. Both these buildings are of high priority to the Government and construction will start as soon as funds become available. Construction of the McKell Building in Rawson Place and buildings already under way at Broken Hill and Gunnedah will be finished this year.

An amount of \$3 million has been allocated for courts this year.

The funds provided will allow completion of major renovations to the Supreme Court building in King Street and work on the court houses at Newcastle, Dubbo, Manly and Wagga Wagga. Work on the new court house at Muswellbrook will commence this year following the demolition of the old court house.

In this year of exceptional constraints on funds for capital works, the Government has continued to attach a high priority to improving facilities in rural areas of the State. I have already mentioned expenditures on Main Roads, Railway improvement, Hospitals and Schools. In addition, there are allocations for grain storage, loans for farm improvement through the Rural Bank, agricultural services, forestry, water and soil conservation and expenditures in growth centres.

An allocation of \$15 million has been provided for the Grain Elevators Board, 11 per cent more than last year and double the allocation of 1975-76.

Major works for 1978-79 include the following:

Completion of construction work at the Newcastle Terminal adding a further 87 000 tonnes of storage capacity.

Completion of the first stage of the new facilities at Moree in time for receivals from the coming harvest. Work will continue on the second stage.

A start on reconstruction of the sub-terminal at Parkes.

A start on new storage facilities at North Star, Nevertire, Coonamble, **Milvale**, Yanco, **Bellata**, Tabbita, Merrywinebone and Wallendbeen.

Completion of the aeration programme at Gilgandra, Gunnedah and Milguy.

Completion of the mechanization programme at **Brocklesby**, **Nyrang** Creek and Wirrinya.

Completion of the dust control system at the Junee sub-terminal.

Completion of fast outloading facilities at Temora and Werris Creek.

The Board will also undertake minor works at numerous grain storages in the State.

State Government funds of \$8 million have been provided to the Rural Bank for on-lending to primary producers for various forms of farm improvement, an increase of \$500,000 on last year's allocation.

Over the past two years, over 1 900 loans have been provided for such improvements as farm water supplies and soil conservation.

The Government believes that these loans have made a significant contribution to improved farm productivity.

The capital allocation for the Soil Conservation Service is \$2,450,000 an increase of 15 per cent over last year.

Major works this year include works on the **Pejar** Dam catchment areas and foreshore protection at other large dams and catchment areas. Work will proceed on soil stabilization in the Hunter Valley and new laboratories and equipment for the Gunnedah Research Centre to accelerate research into the serious soil erosion problems of the north-west of the State.

The Forestry Commission will spend over \$23 million on capital works in 1978–79, of which \$14.3 million will come from the Government's Loan Funds with the remainder being financed from royalties and other revenues. The Commission's major expenditures are for purchase of cleared land for forest plantations, development of softwood forests, purchase of equipment and for construction of forest roads at Fden and Tumut.

The Department of Agriculture will spend **\$2.9** million on capital works in 1978–79, 50 per cent more than last year.

Mr Renshaw]

Almost \$1 million is to be spent on upgrading the Orange Regional Research Centre. The Centre will make an important contribution to the campaign to control Tuberculosis and Brucellosis in cattle. Achieving status as a TB and Brucellosis free area by the target date of 1984 is essential for the growth of meat exports from New South Wales.

Other works will be undertaken at the Research Centres at Cowra, Tamworth, Narrabri, Wagga Wagga, Glenfield, and Rydalmere.

The State's water conservation and irrigation programme will be allocated \$31 million of loan funds this year.

An allocation of \$5.7 million of this amount will allow completion of the wall and spillway of the Chaffey Dam near Tamworth. Other works will be undertaken on the Windamere Dam near Mudgee, repairing flood damage to the Namoi River Weirs, Gwydir River distributary works in the Moree District, the Yanco Weir and the Tombullen Storage at Darlington Point.

More funds for water conservation may become available during the year from the Federal Government under the National Water Resources Programme.

As I pointed out in last year's Loan Speech, the Federal Government's support for Growth Centres has all but disappeared. However, the State Government will honour its commitments to press ahead with development of the Albury–Wodonga and Bathurst–Orange Growth Centres.

This year, Federal Government payments for Albury–Wodonga are \$5 million—the same as last year and considerably below payments in the two previous years. The history of that Government's abrupt change in its support for its initiative in establishing this Centre is well known.

This year, the State Government through its Departments and instrumentalities will spend \$22 million in the Albury–Wodonga area.

The Bathurst–Orange Growth Centre will receive nothing from the federal Government, compared with \$1.5 million last year. In spite of this, the State Government has approved an expenditure by the Bathurst–Orange Development Corporation of \$13.5 million this year, an increase of more than \$4 million.

The allocation of Loan Funds to the Country Industries Assistance Fund for decentralized industries throughout the State has been doubled to \$6 million. The Fund will also receive a sizeable amount of funds from the Consolidated Revenue Fund and details of this allocation will be given in the Budget Speech to be delivered to Parliament shortly.

The Government will allocate roundly \$30 million to assist councils to undertake water supply and sewerage works in country towns. This is almost \$3 million more than last year and \$13 million more than in 1976–77.

Major works being undertaken include the following:

The Medway water treatment plant near Berrima;

The Karangi earthfill dam at Coffs Harbour;

The extensive water and sewerage schemes in the Gosford–Wyong area;
 A service reservoir at **Sawtell**;
 A storage dam and two service reservoirs at Port Macquarie;
 Completion of the Goulburn water supply scheme;
 Trunk mains and a water treatment plant at Tamworth;
 Sewerage augmentation at Banora Point, Bateman's Bay and Narooma.

The Government is proud of the contribution made to the basic services made available to country people through these projects and the twenty-seven water and sewerage projects completed in 1977–78.

The Electricity Commission's capital works programme for 1978–79 calls for expenditure of \$211 million, 24 per cent more than last year.

Since New South Wales is the only mainland State without proven oil or natural gas resources, further industrial expansion in this State will depend heavily on successful development of our coal resources and coal-fired power stations.

The programme for construction of power stations will increase generating capacity by more than 50 per cent over the next seven years. This provides ample scope for expansion of industries requiring large quantities of competitively priced energy—particularly the base metal, chemical and papermaking industries.

There are two main sources of funds for the Commission's capital expenditure. Borrowings by the Electricity Commission will raise \$70 million and revenue from electricity sales will provide \$81 million in accordance with the Commission's established financing policy.

The largest single expenditure planned for this year will be \$92 million for the **Eraring** Power Station on Lake Macquarie. The State Government has made application to the Federal Government for approval to borrow funds for the project under the new "Infrastructure Guidelines" of Loan Council. Other major expenditures will be for the Wallerawang and Vales Point Power Stations, transmission lines and development of coal mines to supply the new power stations.

The Maritime Services Board will undertake capital works costing \$40 million in 1978–79, an increase of 13 per cent over last year's level.

Some \$32 million will be spent this year on the \$150 million Port Development at Botany Bay. The Board will also continue the reconstruction of a number of berths at Darling Harbour and White Bay to enable the Board to keep pace with the needs of special-purpose ships from overseas and to cater for modern techniques of cargo handling.

Half of the works programme will be financed from loans raised by the Maritime Services Board. The other half will come from the Board's revenue and reserve funds.

Mr Renshaw]

A start will be made this year on construction of a new coal loader at Port Kembla and on upgrading loading facilities at **Balmain**.

Stage I of the Port Kembla loader to be completed by 1981 will have an annual capacity of 15 million tonnes. The Government has presented a strong case to the Federal Government establishing that approval should be given under the new guidelines for infrastructure finance for the State to raise the funds for the Port Kembla loader and we are confident our application will be approved. In the two years from 1975 to 1977, the quantity of coal exported from New South Wales increased by 20 per cent and new coal loading facilities are essential for this growth to continue.

The Public Works Department will also carry out a wide range of works in harbours and rivers; \$7.1 million has been allocated to the Department for these works in 1978–79.

Expenditures this year will include:

Roundly \$3 million for the development of fishing ports and tourist craft facilities including works at Greenwell Point, Bateman's Bay, Quarantine Bay, **Bellambi**, Wollongong, the Macleay region, Brunswick Heads, Yamba and Ballina.

\$1 million to continue the beach protection and improvement scheme.

\$1.65 million for river and foreshore improvements in tidal rivers.

\$500,000 for the Chipping **Norton** Lake Scheme.

Allocations for capital expenditures within the responsibility of the Minister for Planning and Environment will be as follows:

\$1 million for the Heritage Conservation Fund to be raised by borrowings for acquisition and preservation of historic buildings, sites, etc.

\$700,000 for the State Pollution Control Commission.

\$7.7 million for the Macarthur Development Board to be raised from borrowings. These funds, with the Board's own revenue from land sales, will continue the development of industrial estates in the Campbelltown region.

\$10.8 million for the Planning and Environment Commission consisting of \$3.5 million of State Loan Funds and \$7.3 million from borrowings.

The major innovation in the Commission's policy is the acquisition of inner city land for open space—\$2 million has been allocated for this purpose in 1978–79. The purchase of inner city land is in addition to the normal purchases of land in outer suburban areas and foreshore land acquired as part of the Coastal Lands Protection Scheme.

The Minister for Lands has been allocated \$5 million for the National Parks and Wildlife Fund, \$1.6 million for development of parks and reserves generally and \$3 million for the subdivision and development of Crown Land for homesites.

The Department of Local Government will receive \$500,000 to assist local councils to eliminate and improve railway level crossings.

The State Brickworks has been allocated \$610,000 required to continue upgrading and modernization.

The Land Commission will raise \$1 million from the issue of securities and further capital requirements will be financed by commercial bills.

Special arrangements are presently being negotiated with private firms for the construction of the Entertainment Centre in the Haymarket.

Councils and County Councils borrowing more than \$1 million each in 1978–79 will be able to borrow up to \$133 million in total under the semi-Government borrowing allocation. This is \$3 million more than last year. Borrowings of less than \$1 million by other smaller councils will, of course, add to the total borrowings by local government.

The Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority will raise \$4.2 million this year to allow a continuation of its operations.

Expenditure by the Metropolitan Waste Disposal Authority in 1978–79 will be in excess of \$5 million, more than double the figure for last year. The development and enlargement of the capacity of solid waste disposal depots in the Metropolitan Area are the major features of the programme which will contribute greatly to reducing pollution in waterways and on land around Sydney.

The works programme is an impressive one by any standard.

We have managed to maintain and indeed increase the real level of capital spending in the face of the most savage cuts in federal funding.

Despite the limited funds available we have developed a carefully balanced programme, which allows for responsible increases in high priority areas, and which emphasizes the need to maximize employment opportunities notwithstanding increasing economic difficulties.

This, of necessity, has been a long speech consistent with our belief that the Government should both explain and justify the sources and uses of public funds.

It is a programme of which the Government is proud.

Debate adjourned on motion by Mr Coleman.

Mr Renshaw]

Appendix I

LOAN COUNCIL ALLOCATIONS TO NEW SOUTH WALES

(i) *Allocations for Governmental Works and Housing:*

	1974-75 \$000	1975-76 \$000	1976-77 \$000	1977-78 \$000	1978-79 \$000
Works	334,309(a)	411,171	431,873	463,467	463,467
Housing	123,411	123,411	123,411	128,011	103,721
Total \$	457,720	534,582	555,284	591,478	567,188

(a) Includes New South Wales' share, \$18,616,000, of additional \$60 million approved for all States in February, 1975.

(ii) *Allocations for Borrowings by Statutory Authorities and Municipal Shire and County Councils:*

	1974-75 \$000	1975-76 \$000	1976-77 \$000	1977-78 \$000	1978-79 \$000
"Semi-governmental Authorities" ^{w*}	244,767(a)	303,720	360,108	443,127	472,746
"Local Authorities" [†]	52,921(b)	65,439(b)	85,707(b)	91,318(b)	113,850(c)
Total \$	297,688	369,159	445,815	534,445	586,596

* Each borrowing more than \$500,000 in 1974-75, more than \$700,000 in 1975-76, more than \$800,000 in 1976-77, and more than \$1,000,000 from 1977-78.

† Each borrowing \$500,000 or less in 1974-75, \$700,000 or less in 1975-76, \$800,000 or less in 1976-77, and \$1,000,000 or less from 1977-78.

(a) Includes New South Wales' share, \$14,825,000, of additional \$50 million (including a further special temporary allocation of \$10 million for Queensland) approved at the February, 1975 Loan Council meeting for the purpose of assisting employment.

(b) Actual borrowings.

(c) Estimated borrowings. No limit has been placed by the Loan Council on aggregate borrowings by this group for 1978-79.

Appendix II

FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF ALLOCATIONS FROM GENERAL LOAN ACCOUNT*

(excludes expenditure from the borrowings or internal funds of individual departments and authorities).

						1974-75	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78	Estimate 1978-79	
						\$m.	\$m.	\$m.	\$m.	\$m.	per cent
1. Transport, Roads:											
	Rail and other	..	..	..	..	60.9	89.0	120.3	127.5	103.9	..
	Roads and bridges	..	..	..	..	2.0	7.3	8.3	9.0	40.0	..
	Total	..	..	..	..	62.9	96.3	128.6	136.5	143.9	24.5
2. Ports, Harbours, and Rivers						16.6	9.0	17.1	32.6	10.5	1.8
3. Electricity						18.6	20.6	20.5	20.5	0.5	0.1
4. Conservation and Land Settlement, etc.:											
	Conservation of water, soil, and forests, including flood mitigation	..	..	..	..	37.4	44.6	52.5	54.5	49.4	..
	Land settlement, National Parks, etc.	..	..	..	..	6.5	6.5	9.5	9.7	6.6	..
	Rural and other services	..	..	..	..	3.5	6.6	7.0	9.4	10.3	..
	Total	..	..	..	..	47.4	57.7	69.0	73.6	66.3	11.3

		1974-75	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78	Estimate 1978-79	
		\$m.	\$m.	\$m.	\$m.	\$m.	per cent
5. <i>Water, Sewerage, and Drainage</i>	..	40.3	46.4	48.3	30.7	31.6	5.4
6. <i>Housing</i>		3.5	8.7	2.5	3.2	13.7	2.3
7. <i>Health and Hospitals</i>		59.8	86.5	94.4	89.0	78.6	13.4
8. <i>Education</i> (including technical and further education projects).		152.5	183.8(a)	157.0	172.5	190.0	32.3
9. <i>Other Services</i>		32.5	36.0	46.2	44.5	52.2	C9
Total (1 to 9)*		434.1	545.0	583.6	603.1	587.3	100.0

* Includes expenditure from new loan raisings; certain Commonwealth funds for specific and general purposes; and repayments arising from previous years' expenditures and disposal of assets.

(a) Includes special supplementation of \$30 million.

LOAN ESTIMATES SPEECH

Copy of Treasurer's Loan Estimates Speech, together with appendices, tabled and, on motion by Mr Renshaw, ordered to be printed.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH: ADDRESS IN REPLY

Fifth Day's Debate

Debate resumed (from 24th August, *vide* page 660) on motion by Mr Gabb:

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 affirm our sincere allegiance to Her Most Gracious Majesty.

2. We beg to assure Your Excellency that our earnest consideration will be given to the measures to be submitted to us, and that we will faithfully carry out the important duties entrusted to us by the people of New South Wales, and that the necessary provision for the Public Services will be made in due course.

Mr BOYD (Byron) [3.57]: I congratulate the new member for Earlwood on his election. He will quickly realize that he has succeeded a competent politician whose performance he will have difficulty in matching. We wish him well. A new member is welcomed with courtesy and co-operation so that he might properly represent his constituents.

The Governor's Speech is a cosmetic, lightweight document that does not tell us much. Having heard the Treasurer's Loan Speech, which sets out the works programme for this financial year members will be better able to contribute to this debate. I note with alarm that the Government thinks so little of agriculture that it has given it only two short paragraphs in the Speech. Let me tell the Government how important agriculture is. If somebody does not, it will be ignored. Members on the Government side say they are great supporters of country people and will lead them to a land of milk and honey.

Mr Crabtree: Hear! hear!

Mr BOYD: Let us look at some of the results of federal Government policy. It might help the Minister for Lands to assess the Liberal—Country party Government's country record. I know he is looking after the wombats and many other things, but let me tell him about agriculture. The Bureau of Agricultural Economics, an objective body, is aware of what is happening in Australia. According to it, in 1978–79 farm incomes will rise by \$2,550 million. This is a pleasing announcement.

Farm incomes will increase by 22 per cent after allowing for inflation of 8 per cent. It would seem that suddenly agriculture can look forward to a degree of equity with other industries. Gross returns will climb in the current year to \$7,800 million, an increase of 13 per cent. That is in sharp contrast with the situation of three years ago when certain federal colleagues of Labor members then in opposition in this Chamber were directing the welfare and future of agriculture. I want to give several comparisons so that the House can appreciate the changes that have occurred. The prediction for the current year is that income from meat will be \$1,250 million. In 1975–76 it was worth \$706 million. This year wool income will increase to \$1,215 million. In 1975–76 it was \$999 million. Income from wheat this year will rise to \$1,370 million compared with \$1,249 million in 1975–76. Income from sugar will go to \$452 million this year; it was \$435 million in 1975–76. Sales of sheep meats will bring in \$375 million this year; in 1975–76 the figure was \$203 million.

Surely the figures I have quoted give the lie utterly and completely to the continued suggestions of members on the Government side that the Liberal and Country parties have no sympathy for agriculture and have no expertise that would allow them to look after its future and to ensure that it gets the opportunity it deserves. Members on this side of the House hope that they will hear no more nonsense on this subject. The facts speak for themselves.

Let me now deal more specifically with a problem that we can come to grips with in New South Wales—the sugar industry. For the benefit of members on the other side of the Chamber, in New South Wales there are three sugar mills, at Condong, Broadwater and Harwood. For 100 years they were owned by the Colonial Sugar Refining Company which for four years has been negotiating to relinquish its financial interest in them and transfer ownership to the growers. It has been a long and tedious negotiation that obviously had to be handled with a great deal of delicacy and, to use a term that most country people will understand, with a fair bit of horse dealing. These mills will have a total income of between \$23 million and \$28 million a year. The industry is worth preserving and encouraging and it is of enormous importance to people who live on the North Coast. Some four years ago the growers offered the Colonial Sugar Refining Company \$2 million for the mills. The CSR was not interested in a sale at that price; it wanted \$12 million.

Having traded backwards and forwards trying to reduce this enormous gap, the company offered the mills on the open market but did not succeed in getting anyone to make an offer. Then the company was forced to resume talks with the growers to attempt to reach agreement on a more realistic price. Negotiations started again in April 1976. A deputation from the sugar industry came to Sydney and saw the Leader of the Country Party, who was then the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports, the honourable member for Oxley who was then the Minister for Agriculture and Minister for Water Resources, and also the honourable member for Maitland, who was then the Minister for Decentralisation and Development. Certain assurances were given that assistance would be forthcoming and the representatives of the sugar growers returned to the North Coast heartened and fortified to try once again to negotiate an agreement with the company. Two years later, in about April 1978, agreement on a price was reached. The price was to be \$5.5 million for the three mills plus \$600,000 for stock in hand, giving a total transfer price of \$6.1 million.

The Department of Decentralisation and Development was to provide \$3.1 million by way of loans through the Country Industries Assistance Fund. It is of interest to record that a fair bit of skulduggery has gone on about this whole process. Statements have been made about neglect on the part of certain people. I have here

a circular dated 13th February, 1978, from the Department of Decentralisation and Development and it shows that loans to country industries are available at 7.5 per cent. That is common knowledge. The Minister for Decentralisation and Minister for Primary Industries has done some horse dealing in this matter too. He suggested that he would provide \$3.1 million to help finance the deal, at 10 per cent. He put that forward as a big deal. He was not honest enough to tell the people to whom he made the offer that a similar rate of interest was available on loans to many other industries in this State. He tried to big-note himself by suggesting that he was giving them a special deal at 10 per cent. In other words, he regarded these people as second-class citizens who should be dealt with accordingly. As time went on he, cunningly, like the good secondhand car salesman that he is, decided that he would announce a reduction in the interest rate out of so-called special consideration for his constituents, whom he believed were by now eating out of his hand. He proclaimed: "I have done you a great service. You are getting this money at a special rate of interest of 73 per cent." But he did not tell them that it was 73 per cent to everyone else too. Such is the level of his politics, the stock-in-trade of a secondhand car dealer, but I suppose that we must accept it.

The other finance required for the deal was to come from grower equity and share capital—\$3.4 million, made up by the growers paying in \$130 a hectare on assigned land over a 5-year period. Also, there would be a bank overdraft of \$3 million on first mortgage from the Rural Bank or the Commonwealth Bank. That seemed to be a reasonable proposition. A businessman who could not borrow \$3 million against a share equity of \$3.4 million and a total asset value of \$6.1 million would obviously not be a good businessman. A first mortgage is about the best guarantee one can have. By contrast, the Department of Decentralisation and Development has been taking second mortgages, practically throughout the whole field of its operations, on enterprises that it underwrites. With \$9.5 million available in liquidity to purchase mills and plant worth \$6.1 million, one can only describe the position as a pretty fair balance.

It is interesting to look at the present situation of the sugar milling industry in Australia. Recently I went to North Queensland to view the sugar milling operations so as to inform myself of the problems there and the possible hardships that are likely to be encountered in this State's future operations of the co-operative that has been formed to take over the mills in the northern part of New South Wales. In Queensland I inquired into the operations of four sugar mills. In 1977—they have a different financial year from ours, particularly for sugar milling operations—one mill showed a loss of \$661,571. Another was a bit more fortunate, recording a profit of \$145,764. A third showed a loss of \$402,487 and the fourth showed a small profit of \$37,583.

The figures I have put before the House show the finely balanced financial structure of the sugar milling industry, which needs a fair amount of sensitive help and understanding. Recognizing the type of help required and the worth of the industry to New South Wales, the Leader of the Country Party when approached by industry leaders who were seeking an alternative proposition with regard to the purchase of New South Wales sugar mills, looked at the problem sensibly. He suggested to the industry that the people involved in it would need a lot going for them or they would not succeed. If the operational costs of the mills continued to be finely balanced they could run into financial trouble. The Leader of the Country Party generously offered a straight grant of \$2.75 million to assist the growers to resolve their problem. He offered also, through the Department of Decentralisation and Development, a loan of \$2.75 million. The remainder of the finance required was to be raised out of loan funds and share capital. That was a fairly good offer and much in keeping with the previous sensitive approach of the Leader of the Country

Mr Boyd]

Party to the sugar industry in allocating a sum of \$1 million for cane roads. This sum was to be matched by a similar amount from local government and the industry, bringing the total available for this work to \$2 million. The Leader of the Country Party displayed a similar sensitivity to the needs of the sugar industry in ensuring that millions of dollars would be provided by way of loans for flood mitigation.

The proposition that I have mentioned was made known to the present Minister for Decentralisation and Development and Minister for Primary Industries, who was asked whether his Government would be willing to match it. His answer was a resounding, "No, we will not match that offer at all." He claimed that the Leader of the Country Party was playing politics and was not really being sympathetic at all. Further, if the Government were to do what has been asked of it a precedent would be established with which it could not live. I refer the House to some precedents, of which there are many. This year the Government said finally to the opera house trust, "As you are in trouble we will give you another \$5 million." Also, the Government said to Woodsreef Mines Limited, "You are in trouble, we will give you \$1.1 million." It said also to the State Superannuation Board, "Here is a gift of \$109 million to go towards retirement benefits for public servants." When one starts looking one finds plenty of precedents. I have no quarrel with grants; they are an established fact. However, the whole population of New South Wales should be treated on an equal basis. The citizens of the electorates of Casino and Byron should not be treated as second-class citizens by being told, "We cannot do anything to help you in your hour of need as we might establish a precedent." The Opposition does not accept that attitude.

On two occasions the Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways was asked by the Leader of the Country Party to match the main roads programme of the former Government. On both occasions the Minister has said, no. Every time something solid and constructive is proposed to help the sugar industry on the North Coast, the answer is a well-established negative. Having reached the stage where the growers were ready to proceed with the purchase of the sugar mills, and the Minister's acceptance of that proposition, the Minister for Decentralisation and Development and Minister for Primary Industries displayed remarkable insensitivity to the real situation by not heeding the views of some seventy canegrowers from the Tweed River area and a smaller number from two other river areas. These people genuinely believe that if they were to accept a proposition as badly based as the present one, with no grant money available to help them, they would stand a big risk of losing their share commitment should the mills fail. They feel that a better proposition should be put forward. For these reasons they have resisted joining the co-operative. The success of the whole operation is so finely balanced that it is imperative for every canegrower in New South Wales to co-operate in the scheme and grow the maximum quantity of cane. If these things do not happen the whole operation may not succeed.

I am grateful to the Minister for Consumer Affairs and Minister for Co-operative Societies who, since the co-operative has been formed and the agreement signed for the purchase of the mills, has shown enormous interest in and sensitivity to the operation. Currently the Minister is trying to arrive at a formula that will be acceptable to dissident groups and bring about a settlement of the problem this week. The cane planting season is almost upon us in New South Wales. Even the Minister for Lands would know that if a farmer does not plant one year he will not get a harvest in the following year. I stress that the Government must take the initiative through its Minister for Decentralisation and Development and Minister for

Primary Industries. This afternoon he should proceed to the northern rivers area and endeavour to prevail upon all the parties to reach a compromise and get on with the job of growing sugar, thus providing New South Wales with a great source of income and an avenue of employment for those involved in the sugar industry.

The Minister should get off his tail and show some initiative and leadership similar to that displayed by the Minister for Consumer Affairs and Minister for Co-operative Societies. I can understand the Minister's reluctance to do this when there is some division between canegrowers in the different river areas. Obviously the Minister considers that he should not do anything constructive at this stage when it may reflect upon him politically. Surely there comes a time when a Minister must be bigger than petty politics. The Opposition knows that he has a very small margin in the electorate of Casino and that he will be battling to hold his seat at the next elections. I remind the Minister that most people will respect a man who is big enough to accept his responsibility by doing something constructive. I challenge him to rise above petty politics and to do something constructive this afternoon towards bringing about a settlement of the dispute in the northern area of the State so that the growers in the sugar industry can get on with the job. On its record, with a little bit of sympathetic understanding and help here and there to enable it to get away to a reasonably solid start, the sugar industry will endure and remain a major source of employment in the northeastern corner of New South Wales. I wish the industry well in the future and I hope its problems will be quickly overcome.

I should like to speak briefly about housing, particularly that which affects country people. The 1976-77 annual report of the Housing Commission of New South Wales discloses that some 3 428 units of accommodation were built in New South Wales. By way of comparison, 7 068 units were built in 1975-76. One must assume there would be some good reason why the Housing Commission built in one year twice as many homes as it did in the previous year. I shall analyse these figures. The 3 428 homes built in 1976-77 cost \$145.4 million, of which \$104 million came from the Commonwealth Government as loan finance. The average unit gross cost, including land and all other cost factors, was \$42,425. One may say that is a considerable sum. In the previous year, 1975-76, when 7 068 homes were built—almost twice as many as 1976-77—the total cost was \$189 million, of which \$127 million came from the Commonwealth Government as loan finance. The gross average unit cost was a mere \$26,742. I ask honourable members to contrast the figures for the two years that I have mentioned. They disclose a shocking and alarming state of affairs for 1976-77.

Continually the so-called dreadful federal Government is blamed for the lack of money available for spending on housing. In 1975-76 the federal Government allocated \$125.7 million to New South Wales for housing, in 1976-77 \$125.2 million and in 1977-78 \$129.8 million. From the point of view of housing administration there is not much wrong with that. Clearly, some degree of internal management is needed but if that management is not forthcoming the results will not be favourable. It is not unreasonable for the federal Government to take the view that if New South Wales is not interested in getting value out of its finance for housing, the amount should be cut back a little so that this State Government will try to manage a little better.

State governments have the privilege of deciding what amounts should go to welfare housing and to the co-operative building societies. The State Government should retain that privilege. I have no quarrel with that. The thing that concerns me about allocations for building is the Sydney-or-the-bush attitude. It is always Sydney—standing for Sydney Einfeld—when it comes to finance for housing in New South Wales. In 1976-77 847 homes were built in the country areas of the State, whereas

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in 1975–76 2 520 were constructed outside the metropolis. In the first year of the Labor Government's administration the number was pruned back to a miserable 847, or about 33½ per cent of what the former administration had managed. It might be said that this result was a flash in the pan and there is nothing to be concerned about. That may well be so except that many people in the country who vote for Labor Party candidates are the ones who are suffering. The Labor Government is supposed to represent those people in this place. As a local member in a rural area I find it pathetic to listen to the housing problems of people who seek welfare housing. How can one give those people even a ray of hope, considering the performance of the Government? It is convenient to charge the federal Government with cutting back, but if one examines this State Government's record on housing one must soon conclude that if it is willing to campaign on that part of its record, it will not succeed at an election.

I turn my attention now to project homes. In the country areas of the State sixty-two project homes have been built. Many people believe that the initials N.S.W. stand for the cities of Newcastle, Sydney and Wollongong. After all, 389 project homes were constructed in Newcastle, Sydney and Wollongong compared with sixty-two project homes in the rest of the State. About one-third of the population of this State are in the big, open country. They got sixty-two project homes but the city people had 389 project homes provided for them. In other words, the country people received only 16 per cent of those homes. That would not be too bad if one did not know what was going on behind the scenes. The big project-homes scandal at Newcastle suggests to me that the Government cannot administer this simple aspect of its responsibilities. It permits a bogus company to receive financial help and that company then fleeces the people of Newcastle to the tune of between \$3,000 and \$4,000 a home. That is certainly a case of Sydney or the bush.

I should now like to refer to education. In 1975–76 an amount of \$190 million in loan funds was allocated for this purpose, compared with \$140 million in 1977–78 or a decrease of \$50 million. Actual expenditure in 1975–76 was \$168.7 million. In 1976–77 spending was down \$29.7 million to \$139 million. The carry over of finance in 1974–75 was \$46 million but in 1976–77 it was \$88.3 million or a rise of \$42.3 million. Some people might say that there is good reason for it, that some money must be carried forward to the next financial year. One government has managed to carry forward much smaller sums than another. Why? I suggest that it was probably due to better management. The total carry over of loan funds increased from \$261.2 million in 1975–76 to \$414 million in 1977–78. So, in two years the increase was \$153.8 million. Doubtless the Premier will point out this fact at the general elections and suggest that therefore he is a good manager. The Premier has complained bitterly and continuously that the federal Government has not provided enough money for capital building programmes and that this had helped to prevent his Government from getting on with the task of creating employment opportunities. What nonsense, when he does not use the finance that he has.

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

Mr R. J. CLOUGH (Blue Mountains) [4.27]: I should like to congratulate the honourable member for Earlwood on moving the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply to His Excellency's Speech so early after his election. Coal, the coal industry and coal loading have been the subject of much discussion by both Government and Opposition members. I am amazed at the distortion of the facts and the downright lies that have been told concerning the condition of the coal industry in New South Wales. The honourable member for Mosman has been shown by the press in my

electorate to have a passing, if inaccurate, knowledge of and interest in the coal industry. I should like to provide the House with a few facts concerning the coalmining industry in New South Wales.

In recent months the Opposition has made a concerted attempt to scare people away from the industry and to drive a wedge between the mining leaders and some of the new miners in the industry. It is unlikely that such a move would succeed because the coalminer is used to being employed in one of the most difficult of all industries. Many features of the industry require a particular type of person. In 1976–77 coal production in New South Wales increased by more than 5 million tonnes. In the western district coal production increased to 4 million tonnes, an output rise of 679 000 tonnes. During the same period 16.4 million tonnes of coal were exported from New South Wales, an increase of 2.7 million tonnes. That coal went through the coal loading plant of this State. It is pleasing to record that in the western district 426 000 more tonnes of coal went to the export market and that an additional seventy people were taken on in the coalmines of the Lithgow district.

I shall now deal with coal loading facilities. The Botany Bay project has been kicked round ever since I became a member of this House. The Simblist inquiry decided that the project was unsuitable for Botany Bay. The Government—quite rightly in my opinion and in the opinion of coalminers in the western district—decided to build a new coal loader at Port Kembla and to upgrade the facilities at Balmain. Those facilities were intended to be used in handling coal from the western coalfields. There is an obvious imbalance in our coal loading facilities. The former Government spent millions of dollars upgrading facilities at Port Waratah. I remember the many sarcastic comments made by my colleagues at that time. They expressed grave doubts about the propriety of spending that money. The Port Waratah coal loader can handle 29 million tonnes a year but at present handles only 8 658 tonnes.

The Balmain coal loader has a capacity of 2 500 000 tonnes a year. The Government intends—and the Treasurer referred to this earlier today—that this capacity will reach 4 million tonnes and then 5 million tonnes. At present it is handling only 2 749 000 tonnes. The coal loader at Port Kembla can handle 6 500 000 tonnes of coal a year. That capacity is capable of being increased to between 7 million and 8 million tonnes. At present it handles about 6 million tonnes a year. When the first stage of the new coal loader is built at Port Kembla it will handle 15 million tonnes of coal a year. That work will cost \$100 million. Employment in the coalmining industry has shown an upward trend, which illustrates the confidence the industry has in the Government. The Government has the ability to ensure that coal is mined and that proper rail facilities are provided to get it to the coal loaders. The Government has shown that it is determined to provide adequate coal loading facilities. During the 1976–77 financial year employment in the coalmining industry increased by 437.

A lot has been said recently about the differential that has been applied in respect of coal taken to the Newcastle coal loader. Only about 35 per cent of the capacity of that loader is used. Once again, the Opposition has adopted an hysterical approach to this question. The Opposition hopes to win the seat of Blue Mountains at the next election. It has about as much chance of winning that seat as it has of piloting the next space craft to the moon. The people in the Blue Mountains recognize that the Government is willing to work hard to ensure that stability and security are brought to the Lithgow district and other parts of the Blue Mountains electorate. The suggestion has been made that a moratorium was put on coal export contracts but that has never been the case. Another suggestion was that the Public Transport Commission would be unable to handle the extra tonnage of coal to Newcastle, but that again was so much rubbish.

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The Opposition persisted with its approach to the Botany Bay project. It said that if the Liberal-Country party coalition had been re-elected to office in 1976 all coal would have gone through Botany Bay. That claim is absolute rot. Even if the former Government had been returned to office and the people of New South Wales had not been **as** astute as they turned out to be, the Botany Bay coal loader would still be twelve months away from completion. Even if the facility had been completed, the complete neglect of the rail system would have made it impossible to carry the coal on an all-rail facility at Botany Bay. The Government's massive coal programme has allowed huge quantities of coal to be transported to the coal loaders. There was no possibility that coal mined in the Lithgow district would have been able to be transported by rail through the Zig Zag tunnel system—and I shall have something to say about that later.

If the former Government had been re-elected, there was no possibility of the outdated waggons—or the new ones that were built with the wrong bogies underneath—being able to transport coal to the appropriate coal loaders. The Opposition said that a coalmining consortium should finance a coal loader at Botany Bay. The various firms involved in that consortium could not have financed that project. The consortium did not have the money at that time and it has not got enough now. Last year one of the firms involved in that consortium, Austen and Butta, made a profit of \$1.8 million, the first profit it had made for many years—and it was made during the time the Wran Government has been in office. **Also**, other more **affluent** companies in that consortium were not in a position to provide the necessary finance to construct that coal loader.

The question of private involvement in the Botany Bay coal loader has been highlighted by the fact that the other companies have withdrawn from the Port Kembla project. The previous Government made no provision for Botany Bay; it spent millions of dollars upgrading the facilities at Newcastle, which can handle another 20 million tonnes of coal. However, the Opposition complained about having to use that facility. The Opposition wants to use Balmain and the old loader at Port Kembla because loading costs at both those places are moderate compared with the charges that will be made when the new coal loader is built. Naturally coalmining companies want to take advantage of the cheap loading costs at coal loaders that were built many years ago. The larger amount of export coal came mainly from coalmines that formerly supplied the steel industry. The bottom has dropped out of the steel industry, so that it is no wonder that the coalmining companies wish to export their coal.

A number of coalmining projects have been commenced—in fact they are well advanced—in the Lithgow district. The Coalex project at Clarence is one of these projects. The drifts have been substantially completed and the work on this project is on schedule. The agreement between the Electricity Commission of New South Wales and the Taiheiyo company of Japan is going smoothly. It is expected that Japan will be one of our best customers for export coal. I wish to make a claim in respect of this particular project. The Taiheiyo project would have never come to Lithgow if the secretary of that company had not made a **personal** approach to me. He asked whether we could organize a joint venture in the Lithgow district between the Electricity Commission and Taiheiyo. At first, the company wanted to go to Singleton. Recognizing the great benefits that would come to the area **from** such a project, I hastened to take steps to ensure that the Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Mines and Minister for Energy made certain that the project came there. The coalminers at Lithgow are aware that people are knocking the coalmining industry only for political reasons. The Wran Government's popularity rating in New South Wales will give the answer to those knockers at the next election.

I ask the public—particularly the people of Lithgow—to remember the days when coal from the western coalfields could not be sent by train. Happily, those days **are** now over. Brand new rolling stock will now be available to take our coal out. Jobs in the **coalmining** industry at Lithgow are now safe. The result is that homes can be built. The only likelihood of job unrest in the Lithgow district could result from companies making a mess of things.

I should like now to deal with other massive works taking place in my electorate. When **Labor** came to office in May, 1976, the railway system serving the Blue Mountains electorate was in a state of shambles. The railway track was unsafe and the rolling stock was old. The majority of waggons servicing the area where hauled by locomotives. I remember the days when the former member for Blue Mountains represented the electorate and the hikes that went on in this House. I have examined the record of proceedings at the time when the former member for Blue Mountains represented the electorate. The record shows that the former member for Blue Mountains **supported** every fare increase made by the former Government.

Mr Mason: You will have your day.

Mr R. J. CLOUGH: We have had our day and we will continue to have our day. The first thing that the Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways did on coming to office was reduce fares by 20 per cent. This has had an effect on the Blue Mountains——

Mr Mason: And on the railways, too, to the tune of \$500 million.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr R. J. CLOUGH: People on the Blue Mountains again saw silver rolling stock on their service. In 1971 the silver rolling stock was taken away from the Blue Mountains service. Under the former administration the silver trains were replaced by the old red rolling stock pulled by locomotives. From 1971 onwards no new rolling stock was **built** for the commuter service to the Blue Mountains. Plenty of promises were made by the coalition Government and the previous member for Blue Mountains. In each advertisement published prior to an election the former member for Blue Mountains promised that orders would be placed for new rolling stock.

Mr Keane: He was a good **promiser** but a poor doer.

Mr R. J. CLOUGH: Yes. He regularly promised that new rolling stock was **on** order. Further, he promised that a four-lane highway would be constructed **through** the electorate. He promised more things than could be fulfilled. He had **no** influence in this Parliament even when he was a member. Earlier today I **examined** the *Votes and Proceedings* of the Parliament over a number of years. I learned that from the commencement of the session in 1965 until the end of the 44th Parliament in 1976 there had been more than 1 400 divisions in this Chamber. **Not to my** surprise, though to my great concern, I learned also that the previous **member** for Blue Mountains was absent from no less than 633 divisions during that period.

Mr Crabtree: Disgraceful.

Mr R. J. CLOUGH: It certainly was disgraceful.

Mr Mason: Despite that he must have the honourable member worried for him to carry on with all this nonsense.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr R. J. CLOUGH: I am not worried at all. The former member was absent on many occasions when divisions were held.

Mr **Cameron**: The former member for Blue Mountains was a magnificent member.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr R. J. CLOUGH: Nowadays brand-new rolling stock is used on the Blue Mountains service. The most impressive track upgrading programme in our railways' history has been implemented on the Blue Mountains. One of the most amazing railway engineering feats in history has been put into effect in the Zig Zag tunnels approaching Lithgow. The entire railway track has been lifted and the bed has been excavated. A concrete base has been put down and on top of that another base has been laid to carry the rails through the series of ten tunnels just east of Lithgow. Speed restrictions have been enforced in the Zig Zag tunnel system since 1974.

Only now, following the election of the **Labor** Government, has a farseeing track upgrading programme been put into operation. The Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways is offering the people of the Blue Mountains a decent railway service. Admittedly, there is still a lot to be done. That arises from the neglect of eleven years under the previous administration. When **Labor** came to government it was imperative that something be done to improve the **Blue Mountains** service. The Government has achieved a lot in a short time.

Mr Keane: It has a five-year programme.

Mr R. J. CLOUGH: That is so and **Labor** can handle the work in five **years**, whereas it would take the Opposition thirty years to achieve similar results. I am sorry that the honourable member for Hurnsby is not in the Chamber. I regard him as the worst Minister for Education this Parliament has ever had. Prior to the **last** elections **when** he was in Lithgow he made the blunt statement that there was nothing wrong with schools on the Blue Mountains. That statement could only have been made **by** a Minister who had no idea what was going on. It was a matter of necessity that education establishments in my electorate in a climate such as that enjoyed in the Blue Mountains should be upgraded to provide the basic comforts required by school children. *[Quorum formed.]*

[Interruption]

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Dubbo to order.

Mr R. J. CLOUGH: It is interesting to note that when the Deputy Leader of the Opposition called attention to the state of the House he and the honourable **member** for **Northcott** were the only Opposition members in the House. When **Labor** came to office it was aware that schools in the Blue Mountains district had to be upgraded. Shortly after my election I learned of a plan—and that is all it had amounted to—with the Department of Education to provide a library and laboratory block at Katoomba High School. Apparently late in December, 1975, a promise was made that these facilities would be built. However, no provision had been made in the department's estimates for the expenditure.

I pay tribute to the Minister for Education in the Wran Government. When the **real** situation was placed fairly before him he ensured that in the first budget brought down by the Wran Government provision was made for the construction of a library and laboratory block at Katoomba High School. Since then approval has been given to build a new school at Wentworth Falls. Mobile library accommodation has been provided at **Lawson** Primary School. Extensive and expensive refurbishing has taken place at Leura **Primary** School and at North Katoomba Primary **School**.

A grant of \$28,000 was made to Blackheath Primary School for the updating of sporting facilities. Mt Victoria Primary School had been provided with a demountable classroom and will shortly get a demountable library. The small school at Mt Wilson, neglected for many years, will be refurbished.

Recently the Minister for Lands officiated at an historic event at the Hartley historic village. This village had been allowed to fall into a state of neglect during the previous Government's term of office. The Minister for Lands, with the perception that is his hallmark in this Parliament, decreed that the village and its buildings should be restored to their former glory. Recently it was my pleasure to be with the Minister when stage 1 of the project was officially opened. It was interesting to see the people of the Hartley district, of all political persuasions but particularly members of the Liberal Party, attend that function. They were pleased to commend the Minister for **taking** a giant step forward for their district and congratulate him on the manner in which he had started this project. The three remaining stages of the work will be completed within four years.

Over a long period I have made representations to the Minister for Lands to establish a ranger training station in New South Wales. I am hopeful that such an establishment will be developed in my electorate. I have made representations also about the upgrading of many of the lookouts throughout the Blue Mountains district. I refer particularly to Evans Lookout at Blackheath to which the Minister accompanied me recently.

One of the problems affecting the electorate of Blue Mountains is the need for a majority of the **working** people to travel to Sydney and back each day. That places great strain on the railways, about 3 000 persons having to leave the electorate of Blue Mountains each day to work in Sydney. The Minister for Decentralisation and Development and Minister for Primary Industries has helped the establishment of industry in the Lawson industrial estate by giving assistance to Amko Industries Pty Limited, a firm that manufactures demountable classrooms. He has given assistance also to A and M Furniture, a firm that produces furniture. This has caused the proportion of people employed locally to rise.

What of the future of the Blue Mountains district? The Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Mines and Minister for Energy has said that a new power generating plant will be built on the coalfields after the new power station at Eraring is completed. The feasibility study of the project suggested that the new power station will be located on the Newnes Plateau. It is my wish that it be built in the Portland district where employment is, and has been for some years, facing an uncertain future. The cement industry in Portland relies entirely on the special type of white cement that is produced there. The cement industry provides employment for the whole township. As Portland needs a second industry, my request is that the Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Mines and Minister for Energy consider urgently the possibility of locating the second western coalfields power station in the Portland district.

Much has been said about the introduction of a 374-hour working week in the power-generating industry. When the suggestion was first mooted in Parliament it was opposed by members of the Liberal and Country parties, who have continued to oppose it at all times. The federal Government sought to intervene, as did the Liberal-Country party governments of other States, to prevent the introduction of a reduced **working** week. It is history that they were refused the right to appear when

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the case was heard by the Industrial Commission. An agreement was reached by the union and the Electricity Commission, and approved by the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, subject to the acceptance of the necessary rosters, providing for a 37½-hour working week in the power industry immediately.

The situation at this stage is that the unions in the northern sector of the power-generating field have not accepted the proposed amendments to the rosters, and everyone in the industry is working a 40-hour week until the matter is resolved. The Government's political opponents have intimated their opposition to the introduction of a shorter working week in the electricity industry, even though most of the clerical staff and most managerial personnel have been working a 35-hour week for more than thirty years. Yet the men who do the work, who do the operating, who provide the power for New South Wales, have been consistently denied a shorter working week. Only under a Wran Labor government in New South Wales can men working in the power industry look forward to a reduction in working hours. There is absolutely no chance that they will ever be granted such a working week by a Liberal-Country party coalition government.

I again congratulate the mover of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, the honourable member for Earlwood, and wish him well.

Mr MASON (Dubbo), Deputy Leader of the Opposition [4.54]: I commend the newly elected member for Earlwood for his interesting speech opening the debate on the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, and marking the commencement of his career as a member of the Parliament of New South Wales. It was a pity so few of his Labor Party colleagues were present to hear him. The Premier, who played such a successful part in bringing the honourable member for Earlwood into this House, was conspicuous by his absence.

I want to express to the House this afternoon my belief that we have a bad government in New South Wales—a government that is bad by example, bad in action. As I speak about a number of matters I want to show up how the badness is evident and how it is creeping into government administration. In particular I wish to speak about the Government's badness in example. We saw some of it when a report was brought into this Chamber proposing measures that would make drastic inroads on the moral fibre of the people of New South Wales. I am deeply concerned about the bad example the Government sets at so many points. Listening to this debate, one might be excused for thinking there was something of an election in the air. One ought to be puzzled about that.

Mr Crabtree: What are you shaking about?

Mr MASON: You will be shaking in a moment when I say a few things about your administration. One ought to ponder why there should be an election in the air, for a report in the Melbourne *Age* of Friday, 30th September, 1977, carries the heading, "To Poll or Not to Poll: Wran". I ask honourable members to listen to these pearls dropped by the Premier:

NSW Premier Mr Wran yesterday accused the Prime Minister of having a "Hamlet-like obsession" about the timing of the next election.

"Every day we are treated to futile and sterile speculation, largely inspired by Mr Fraser or his spokesmen—about the date of the next election."

"Anyone would think that the date of the election was the chief problem of modern statesmanship."

Well, did he catch the disease!

Mr Schipp: Who said that?

Mr MASON: Thn was the Premier of New South Wales in 1977. "No State election this year—Wran", is the heading. My goodness. We are going to have fun as we listen to some of these things, The Premier said:

I merely suggest that if Mr Fraser gave half as much thought to the economy as he gives to his electoral timetable, Australia might be further along the road to **recovery**.

He said **also**:

. . . Mr **Fraser** has the biggest majority in both Houses of Parliament since Federation—on a mandate of solving Australia's economic problems—yet he was "dominated by a Hamlet-like obsession about the timing of the next election."

One thinks about the Premier's appearance at the anti-federal Budget rally the other day when one reads comments of that sort. The Premier went to that rally and incited people at it so that they rushed down to the Sydney Stock Exchange and kicked in the windows. That is where one gets a glimpse of the real **Labor** Party attitude in this State. That is where one sees what it is about. What about those who are looking for work? If the Premier is dedicated to the recovery of the State's economy, why did he not give that matter a thought when he went and addressed the rally, which was pulling people out of work, lowering productivity, and denying employees wages? What about the New South Wales economy that was bad enough before he went to that rally without inciting people at it to riot? Here is the hypocrisy. The Premier must be the greatest show pony of all time when he can say that sort of thing and then get up in this House, or go to meetings outside it and say, "The Prime Minister is a humbug because he is going to have an election too soon. This is what the Premier said:

Governments are elected to run their whole term and I am more concerned about the economy of New South Wales than about electioneering.

If ever there has been the action or the portrayal of a show pony, the Premier of this State has presented it. When he was commenting on the early election called by Prime Minister Fraser, he was reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 2nd October, **1977**, as saying:

. . . there were very obvious advantages for him to call an early election, but he had no intention of doing so because his main task was to concentrate on restoring the N.S.W. economy and lead the way for the rest of Australia.

What hypocrisy. Earlier today the Treasurer, who is sitting at the table, introduced the General Loan Account Appropriation Bill before the usual time. Never before in the history of this State has this measure been introduced in this way. Also, we know, because we read it in the newspapers, that the Treasurer intends to deliver his Budget Speech soon. These are the actions that are being taken as a result of the leadership of the Premier, who is making all these decisions yet says he is not interested in early **elections** or speculation. He says that he wants to restore the economy of New South Wales. What a show pony.

Mr Crabtree: How would the honourable member know?

Mr MASON: The Minister for Lands should not talk. I shall come to his administration in a minute. The following words appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 28th October, **1977**:

The N.S.W. Premier. Mr Wran, said yesterday that Mr Fraser's decision to go to the polls in December would make it "the most unnecessary Federal election in history".

What about the New South Wales elections? If we listen to speeches **given** in this House, we realize that an early election is to be held. In this debate we have just heard from the honourable member for Blue Mountains, who took us on a parade up and down the hills in his electorate. He gave a pre-election speech if ever we heard one, at a time when the Government is supposed to be doing something about the economic recovery of this State. If anyone in this House should be concerned it is the Treasurer, who presides over one of the most disappointing Treasuries ever seen in this State. It is hoarding money that should be spent, and it has put a stop to public works across the State. The Treasurer should be ashamed of being a part of a government that does those sorts of things. I know he is a genuine man, with a real concern and sympathy for country people, and it is almost unbelievable that he has allowed himself to be a party to this sort of show pony performance by the Premier.

I shall give another quotation from a newspaper to illustrate what the Premier said when the Fraser Government was proposing an early election. In the *Daily Telegraph* of 28th October, 1977, the following item appeared:

Calling a Federal election now was an act of political cynicism, the Premier, Mr Wran, said yesterday.

"The Prime Minister, Mr Fraser, has the largest majority in Federal Parliament in the history of Australia and there is absolutely no need for this election," Mr Wran said.

What hypocrisy. One more quotation that I should like to give appeared in the *Daily Telegraph*, on 31st October last. It stated:

Neville Wran summed it up pretty neatly when he emerged from talks with Mr Fraser at the Premiers' conference.

Overwhelmed by the Federal Government's generosity in approving a new youth employment scheme . . .

Wonderful advertisements accompanied by a wonderful photograph of the Premier have appeared in the newspapers. I refer to the touched-up photograph, with the halo round the Premier's head. A little colour could have been added here and there. I am sure honourable members have seen those advertisements, as I am equally sure that no honourable member has seen in them any reference to the fact that the funds were provided by the federal Government. If ever there was political hypocrisy and a misleading of the public, there it is on the record. When the Premier was taking this attitude and criticizing the Prime Minister over the early elections, he said he was doing so because he had the support of the polls. What did the polls say then? On 10th October, 1977, the *Sydney Morning Herald* published the figures upon which the Premier based his argument. The article was headed: "Most voters oppose an early election".

The Treasurer should take notice of this. The honourable member for Gosford, also, should take notice of it instead of trying to interject. He had better get back into his teaching uniform, and get his chalk ready to start teaching, because he will not be here much longer. This article goes on to say that fewer than one in five voters thinks the federal Government should call an early election if it thinks this would be to its advantage. The article goes on to describe the reactions of various groups. It sets out that 19 per cent of the Labor voters said that the federal Government should call an election if it is to its advantage. However, when they were asked the question, "Should a government govern for a three-year term?" 52 per cent of Australian Labor Party voters said yes. Honourable members sitting on the Government benches should be careful. I have told them what their leader had to say.

I turn now to a more serious matter. I say deliberately and carefully that one of the most despicable acts of electioneering that has ever happened in my experience in this House—and I hope in the experience of every honourable member, whether he be Labor, Liberal or Country Party—has been a matter that has been brought to my attention concerning the Minister of Justice. I call for an investigation into it by the Auditor-General. This Minister has apparently employed one Peter Anderson, who was a police prosecutor and stood against the honourable member for Nepean at the last elections. I suppose some decision was made somewhere that it was not good to have a police prosecutor standing as a candidate in an election, because there might be some people he had had to deal with in the courts. What decision was made? It was that this man would be employed on the staff of the Minister of Justice. I want the Auditor-General to look into this matter, because this is unquestionably a phoney appointment. I have a mass of evidence, which I shall make available. It concerns people who will say, if the Auditor-General conducts an inquiry, that this man does not spend one jot or tittle of his time in the interests of the Ministry of Justice. He is a full-time campaigner for the Labor Party.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Leader of the Opposition is well aware of the wide area that may be covered by this debate. He may raise many matters that arise from the Governor's Speech, or even matters not mentioned in it. However, when it comes to attacking people outside the House, irrespective of who they are he must be very careful, because they have no right to defend themselves in this forum.

Mr MASON: Thank you for your advice, Mr Speaker. I make it clear that I am making a deliberate attack on the Minister of Justice.

Mr Crabtree: No, you are not.

Mr MASON: I am, because he is the person who employed this man and told him that he can go out and forget about his duties—told him to get out there full-time in the electorate of Nepean. I am attacking the Minister of Justice. I am willing to name him **here**—

Mr Morris: The guilty man is the Minister.

Mr MASON: Yes, and he is the Minister of Justice. I have never before in the political history of Australia heard of such a despicable thing—that any Minister can employ someone in this way.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! If the Deputy Leader of the Opposition wishes to move a substantive motion against the Minister of Justice, he would be in order, but during this debate he may not make innuendoes or offensive remarks about the Minister without moving such a motion. The Minister must have the right to defend himself.

Mr MASON: They are the facts. This is the most blatant piece of electioneering I have ever heard of. It is a disgusting and disgraceful thing and it brings this Parliament into disrepute. It is disgraceful that public funds can be used deliberately for politicking, and it should not be allowed. As a matter of fact, the Labor Party suddenly seems to have a tremendous interest in public servants. When I went through the list of candidates for the next general elections, I found that no fewer than twelve public servants will be standing. Is it any wonder that special legislation was forecast here today, by which the Government will make it possible for public servants to stand for office in the Parliament without **losing** their

rights and privileges if they are unsuccessful candidates. I know why these measures, of **which** notice was given today, have to be introduced in a hurry. No fewer than twelve public servants are involved, and I shall tell honourable members about one or two of them.

I have mentioned Mr Anderson, that former public servant, in **the** electorate of Nepean. What about Mr Egan, who last week resigned from the public service? At least he had the decency to resign, unlike some other people. What about the candidate in Yaralla, Mr McIlwaine? Yesterday the Premier opened his offices. I guarantee Mr McIlwaine was there when he should have been in the Crown Law Office attending to his duties. I wonder whether he was taking a sickie?

Mr F. J. Walker: On a point of order. It has long been a tradition of this House that an honourable member does not denigrate or defame the characters of people who are not in this House.

Mr Barraclough: What did you do the other day——

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Bligh to order.

Mr Pickard: You should know.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Hornsby to order.

Mr F. J. Walker: The gentleman that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is referring to is on long-service leave. It ill behoves the Deputy Leader of the Opposition as a gentleman of the cloth and a so-called Christian to defame him. He should not be defaming innocent people in this way.

Mr MASON: I am pleased to learn from the Attorney-General that this gentleman has taken long-service leave. I commend him for it. I am pleased that the Attorney-General has given the House that information.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I have not yet ruled on the point of order. I draw the honourable member's attention to the right of all honourable members, and that is free speech. However, in using that freedom honourable members must take care that the matters they raise in the House are those that an honourable member would raise knowing the facts of which he is speaking.

Mr MASON. Thank you, Mr Speaker. One recalls some of the cowardly things that have been said recently about some honourable members from this side of the House and some Liberal and Country party candidates, and one hopes that the same sort of indignation that now stirs the Attorney-General will stay with him at all times.

The other day the Premier came into the House and wanted to rubbish members of the Country Party who are seeking election to the Legislative Council. He played one of the oldest tricks in the trade. He knows that any person who properly represents a country electorate—like Castlereagh, for example—and who wants to take a significant part in this Parliament, has to spend a lot of time in the city and probably has to have an address in Sydney as well as an address in the country. A farseeing and concerned Premier—and we have not had one for a while—gave members of Parliament a specific allowance to allow them to do this. That was a good thing. Those of us **who** represent country areas—the honourable member for Monaro **and** the honourable member for Castlereagh will support me in this, though there are not many more on that side of the House who would—know **that** country members have special problems.

It was a despicable, misleading and disgraceful misuse of the facts for the Premier to attack members of the Country **Party** who have city addresses when he knows quite well that the Hon. F. M. **MacDiarmid** has a **country** property where his main home is. Let us hear what the honourable member for Castlereagh, the Treasurer, has to say about the Premier's attempt to disgrace the name of Jack **Doohan**, one of the most respected men in the western division of New South Wales. The Premier said that Mr **Doohan** lives at St Ives and does not know where the country is. The Treasurer knows that he is one of the finest of men and has lived in the western division nearly all his life. That was one of the most disgraceful things I have ever heard. If Government supporters want to get down to that level, let me remind the Treasurer that he lives at 35 Kameruka Road, Northbridge, and probably has not lived in his electorate for thirty years. I do not know how he has represented it.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Dubbo is certainly going over a wide area. I ask him to come back to the matter before the Chair, which is adoption of the Address in Reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor, on the motion moved by the honourable member for Earlwood. I do not believe he can answer any remarks made by the Premier, for the Premier has not spoken in this debate.

Mr MASON: As a matter of fact, twelve members of the **Labor Party** do not live in their electorates, but I am not allowed to go into that. I began by saying that this was a bad government—bad in action and bad in example. I shall now give another example of that badness and the disgraceful way in which it conducts the affairs of the State. In doing so I am **well** within the terms of His Excellency's Speech for this matter is referred to in it. I read with amazement—and I shall be interested to hear what the Attorney-General has to say about this later—an advertisement in the press announcing the New South Wales Government's sports insurance scheme. There were words to the effect that this scheme is open and is now being arranged. If ever any matter has been a political football, if ever there has been a disgraceful use of injured people in a harassed position—one man crippled and a paraplegic for life—and a dreadful play upon sympathy, it is this great sports insurance scheme that we read about months ago in the press.

The Attorney-General said it has been introduced, but I scanned the bills on the table at the time and there was nothing about it. Yet on the front page of the **Telegraph** and in significant places in other newspapers it was stated that the Government was introducing this scheme. Here is another example of misleading actions by this Government. In this disgraceful advertisement the Attorney-General and the Minister for Sport and Recreation and Minister for Tourism have allowed their photographs to be printed. The Attorney-General knows that it is a sham: there is no such scheme. There cannot be any scheme without enabling legislation in this House. I defy any member of the Government to say that that is not so. Unless legislation is enacted in this Parliament there cannot be any scheme. The Government is misleading the people of this State with that advertisement.

In my view this advertisement should be referred to the authorities who study misleading advertisements. It is one of the worst pieces of misleading advertising. I shall send it to them for it is disgraceful. It is a misinterpretation of all the facts. There is, of course, one line which refers to the fact that we are going to have the legislation. Where is it? What notice of it has been given? This advertisement encourages people to believe that they will be covered for their sporting injuries. Every honourable member knows that the legislation will never come into this House in this Parliament. What about the proposed Lord Howe Island Bill? I searched through the Governor's Speech for any reference to it. I searched for the bill itself. The only

Bill in Lord Howe Island is the Minister for Lands when he is over there. Unfortunately, he cannot go there very often because the Premier will not let him. The Premier is over there so often and has the accommodation booked all the time. By the way, I do not suppose there is a bill for that either. I do not suppose there is that sort of Lord Howe Island bill.

What about this wonderful legislation that we read about concerning chiropractors, the great concern of the Minister for Health? We have seen the Minister weep crocodile tears about these poor chiropractors. Where is the legislation? Honourable members know quite well, and the people in this State should know, that that is but one item of a great mass of legislation that has been promised by the Government that it has no intention of introducing or debating in this Parliament. Self-employed truck drivers up and down the State have been promised legislation. Where is it? The Government has no intention of introducing that, either. This Government is bad because it has misled the public at every turn and every opportunity.

Let me say a word about transport. It is intolerable that, without warning, the great transport industry of this State—and I refer to the road transport industry, which is responsible for the cartage of 80 per cent of the freight of this State—should suddenly learn one morning that new regulations had been brought in, the effect of which **was** to put every bus, for example, at risk. The honourable member for Monaro, the honourable member for Gosford and the honourable member for Castlereagh ought to be concerned at this because they have buses in their electorates. Every bus is suddenly at risk because of the arbitrary actions of this Government. Here is another example of how the Premier seeks to mislead the people. He went to the annual meeting of the Livestock and Grain Producers Association——

Mr Akister: Were you there?

Mr MASON: Yes, I was there and I heard every word. I was in the front row, not out the back where you would have been. The Premier said that stock **carters** and livestock operators can carry their stock with the knowledge that they are not going to be prosecuted. He said that he would alter the existing law.

Mr Renshaw: That is a lie.

Mr MASON: That is how it was reported in the press. I was there and I questioned it. I sought to discover whether this was the correct situation. All the stock carters in my electorate and in the electorate of Castlereagh ——

[Interruption]

Mr MASON: I am not manufacturing this

[Interruption]

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Wagga Wagga to order.

Mr MASON: Transport operators from Castlereagh came to me with summonses that they had received. They showed me what the Premier had said. They were misled. I shall read the press report:

Wran pledges freight help. Cattle and sheep hauliers will be able to load their trucks fully without fear of heavy fine.

That has never been denied. I wrote a letter to the newspaper and asked whether it was true, and I telephoned the department. If ever there was any government that was bad by example, it is this Government. There are many more things that I could

say. I have not even started on some honourable members sitting on the Government benches. There are many more examples that I could give of the badness of this Government.

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

Mr JOHNSON (Mount Druitt) [5.24]: I am pleased to speak in the Address-in-Reply debate now before the House. First, I **congratulate** the new honourable member for Earlwood, who so ably moved the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, and the seconder, the honourable member for Gosford. I feel sure that the honourable member for Earlwood, who made a great contribution to this debate, will be an asset to our Government in the years ahead. **All** thinking Australians must be concerned about the persistent high level of unemployment in the community. In my own electorate of Mount Druitt there are 4 027 people unemployed, of whom 1 776 are juniors. Clearly, after nearly three years of the Fraser Liberal-Country party Government, these **figures**——

[Interruption]

Mr JOHNSON: I was talking about all thinking Australians, so that excludes the honourable member who attempted to interject. Clearly, after nearly three years of the Fraser Liberal-Country party Government, these figures constitute the greatest indictment of the Fraser stewardship. Further, it is a repudiation of the so-called fight-inflation-first strategy. I am utterly dismayed at the prospect of a further 90 000 people being thrown out of work because of the latest Fraser horror Budget. Any State government has limited means to try to combat an unemployment epidemic which is bedevilling every State government. The Wran Government will continue to give high priority to job-creating programmes, with special regard for their effect on young people and on the most seriously depressed regions in the State.

The Wran Government is co-operating with the federal Government through the special youth employment training programme. Under this scheme a further 500 young people are to be trained within the State public service and statutory bodies from 1st September next. As part of the special industries programme to generate further job opportunities in an area of high unemployment, action is being taken with a view to acquiring additional land for industry in the western suburbs. This Government will continue to give the strongest encouragement to large-scale development projects in the private sector, particularly in mining and manufacturing. Unfortunately, the federal Government is refusing to come to grips with the problem and prefers to see people collecting the dole rather than in productive employment.

The real problems for federal governments in the 1980's will be structural readjustment of our manufacturing industries. This is an area that has been totally ignored by the federal Liberal-Country party Government. It is the only solution to the long-term problems confronting us. I am pleased to say that the Wran Labor Government's policies of attracting industry to the outer west especially are succeeding. The Kellogg's factory at Rooty Hill, which at present is under construction, will be opening later this year, and it will provide a large employment potential for local residents.

During the recent referendum campaign it was impossible to tell whether honourable members opposite were officially supporting the referendum but were privately against it or, alternatively, were officially against it but privately supporting it. Fortunately, the people responded magnificently to the call of the Government by their overwhelming support of the referendum and their amusement at the plight of the Opposition. In view of the difficulty of amending constitutions, the referendum victory

was even more outstanding. It is a pity that the Opposition could not have been party to such an historic change. As a member of the Legislative Assembly, I feel deeply the need in such changing times for the institution of Parliament to be seen as relevant and meeting the needs of the people. I for one will be strongly urging the pursuit of further much-needed reforms. Most upper Houses do not enjoy a very favourable reputation. With the democratization of the Legislative Council, there is a unique opportunity to establish an effective role for it by instituting a comprehensive committee system.

As honourable members are aware, the options of a State government are largely dictated by the federal Government. Apart from honourable members opposite who welcome tax increases, petrol price increases, cuts in family allowances, chaos in public health and huge increases in the price of liquor and cigarettes, the people of New South Wales are reeling from the latest Fraser horror Budget, the worst in living memory. Be that as it may, the Wran Labor Government has always tried to co-operate with the federal Government in the interests of the people of this State. That was set out in our election manifesto and it is policy from which this Government has not deviated.

Much of a member's time is occupied in interviewing constituents and making representations. **PS** I represent a solid working-class electorate. These representations have not abated. I must say that I experience a great sense of satisfaction in the electoral work. I am pleased to report a number of significant achievements in my electorate. No doubt they are in part responsible for the high standing of the Premier and the Government as a whole. I pay tribute to the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports in his capacity as Minister responsible for the Metropolitan Water Sewerage and Drainage Board. Early in his distinguished tenure of office, he recognized the need for adequate sewerage facilities. He was aware of the health risks in non-sewered areas. These simple facts escaped the comprehension of Liberal-Country party Ministers for ten long years. The Deputy Premier has embarked upon a bold programme to extend sewerage. I am pleased to report that residents of old Mount Druitt now have sewerage. Soon the long-suffering residents of Rooty Hill will have it. With the exception of a few isolated pockets, the whole of the Mount Druitt electorate will be seweraged by 1979.

In the previous ten years the Liberal-Country party Government had a pathetic public transport record. Its entire neglect of essential maintenance of tracks and rolling-stock and its ever-increasing fare and freight increases resulted in the loss of millions of passenger journeys. In its 1976 policy speech, Labor promised a better deal for commuters. On assuming office the Government's first initiative was to reduce rail, bus and ferry fares by 20 per cent in an effort to attract back to the service millions of lost passenger journeys which were an annual event under the Liberal-Country party Government. Despite increasing costs and severe cutbacks in federal funding, the Labor Government has maintained fares at the 1976 level. The Fraser Government has tried to destroy this policy by its recent dramatic increase in fuel prices.

The Wran Labor Government has embarked on a \$200 million track upgrading programme and work on the quadruplication of the Granville-Penrith and Strathfield-Hornsby lines. The completion of these works will bring about a vast improvement in journey times for commuters. This will be of particular benefit to my constituents, most of whom travel long distances. Some of them have to catch a bus to a railway station, a train and another bus at the other end. In line with the Government's policy of renewing rolling-stock, another thirty air-conditioned double-deck interurban cars will soon be completed. Honourable members will be aware of the Government's outstanding record with its programme of providing 500 Mercedes-Benz buses. In what

has been conceded as being a difficult portfolio, the honourable member for Auburn has been an outstanding success as Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways. He was kind enough to inspect a useless pedestrian overbridge provided by the previous Liberal-Country party Government. It was a visible testament to its maladministration. This is indicative of his personal involvement in the portfolio. The residents of Mount Druitt will be pleased to learn that the Minister has agreed to have the bridge ramped so that they may make some use of it. I received word today from the Minister to the effect that work will commence on this project on 16th September.

Perhaps the two most important developments for the Mount Druitt electorate are the completion of the Mount Druitt technical college, the first stage of which is almost completed at a cost of about \$5.4 million, and the proposed hospital. Honourable members will be aware of my fierce determination to ensure that adequate health facilities are provided for the people I represent. Although Mount Druitt has a polyclinic, it was never intended that it be a substitute for a hospital. It never could be. The scrapping of **Medibank** by the Fraser Government will create an extra burden on outpatient clinics of public hospitals. The demand will be more acute in the areas such as that which I represent. There is an after-hours problem in obtaining medical services generally and, in particular, an after-hours casualty problem with the polyclinic, though the hospital will overcome this. When I first came to Parliament the hospital for Mount Druitt seemed to be light years away. Plans for it will soon be completed, ahead of a revised schedule. I am looking forward to attending in the near future the ceremonial turning of the first sod. I pay tribute to the Minister for Health for the interest he has shown by providing a hospital for the people of Mount Druitt.

While touching on health matters, I wish to refer to the problem of skin cancer. Per head of population Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world. Of all patients attending general practitioners, the 10 per cent who suffer from skin disease have no academic representation in universities throughout Australia. There are over 1 100 full-time academics involved in medicine, but not one of them is involved in dermatology. Inevitably, patients must suffer from a lack of proper research, new techniques and doctor education. It is therefore unlikely that conditions in hospitals engaging in skin cancer treatment will improve until a chair of dermatology is established in a university. I ask the Minister for Health to give serious and sympathetic consideration to the early establishment of a chair of dermatology at the University of **Sydney**.

Over the past thirteen years the New South Wales Housing Commission **has** completed approximately 10 000 houses in Mount Druitt. It is the largest single housing project of its kind in the southern hemisphere. The commission plans to build several hundred more homes in the suburb of **Hassall**. Owing to the savage cutback in **funds** by the Fraser Government the commission has been unable to **commence** the work. This will be a great blow to the 20000 **low-income** earners throughout the State who are still waiting to be housed. At this juncture, I pay tribute to the dedicated Housing Commission staff who administer the Mount Druitt estate. In particular, I commend the manager of the **Whalan** office, Mr Fisher.

Mount Druitt has long suffered from the effects of being labelled an under-privileged problem area. Most of this publicity has stemmed from unsubstantiated and unreliable reports in the city media. Mount Druitt residents have a lot to be proud of. Their record in civic and community **affairs** is comparable with **any** other area in the State. One indication of the public spiritedness of Mount **Druitt** residents is the number **of** people who wish to become justices of the peace. In 1977, forty-four people

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from the Mount Druitt electorate applied and were confirmed as justices of the peace. So far this year, forty-five applications have been approved. The role of a justice of the peace is a responsible one, and only people with the highest personal qualifications are accepted. I urge Mount Druitt residents to take an active part in raising the image of their area.

Further developments by the Wran Labor Government since 1976 in the field of education in the Mount Druitt electorate include the Colyton public school. Six new classrooms and a library-administration unit have been completed, two classrooms upgraded and various conversions carried out. The six classrooms and library-administration unit were occupied on 13th February. So far, expenditure of \$933,655 has been approved. Several years ago the Colyton public school celebrated its centenary. When the present Government came to office some two and a half years ago I was asked by the principal of the school and the parents and citizens' association to have the school connected to the sewerage. They were up in arms over the fact that it had been available in the area for some considerable time but not extended to the school premises. They also asked me to inquire into what had been done about the new school that had been promised several years before. An invitation was extended to the Minister for Education to visit the school, and within three weeks of his doing so it was connected to the sewerage. I have referred the House to the other various works that have been carried out at the school in the short space of a little over two years. At Noumea public school twenty-one classrooms, an administration block, library, food service unit and shelter, car park and associated ancillary spaces have been provided. To date, \$1,696,844 has been expended.

At the Bidwell education centre there is a new school, a pre-school centre with three classrooms and a 28-classroom primary school. There are full high school facilities for a stabilized enrolment of 1 100 secondary pupils. The library, administration block, multi-purpose centre and playing fields will be shared by the three departments. Funds approved to date are \$7,033,247. The Bidwell complex is unique because, under the one roof it will provide education for children from pre-school to year 12. Stage 2 of the Plumpton High School involves 25 classrooms, three staff studies, a resource centre and associated ancillary spaces. Funds approved to date amount to \$724,338. The Crawford Public School is a new school comprising twenty-one classrooms, a library, an administration unit, food service unit-shelter, plus ancillary spaces. The estimated cost will be \$1,959,000.

Capital works in the Mount Druitt electorate since May, 1976, concerning education include minor works for secondary schools totalling \$15,941. Various works—bus bays, brick veneering of classrooms, conversion work and so on—have cost \$200,173. An amount of \$15,181 was spent on sewerage connections and associated works, \$50,000 on ground improvements, \$24,720 on improved electrical services and \$91,969 on the installation of ceiling fans. The grand total of expenditure on minor capital works in the electorate during that period was \$397,984.

Several major public works located just outside the electorate have recently been completed. They will amplify the water supply within the electorate of Mount Druitt. The Minchinbury reservoir cost \$1.1 million, Minchinbury reservoir rising main from Prospect Creek water pumping station to Minchinbury reservoir cost \$3.5 million, and Prospect Creek pumping station cost \$3.8 million. I shall now give a summary of the works carried out by the Metropolitan Water Sewerage and Drainage Board since 1976. In 1976–77 an allocation of \$7.72 million was provided for the continuation of current and new works. Stage 2 of the St Marys plant for the amplification of adjacent pumping stations continues. Reticulation was undertaken in Mount Druitt,

Plumpton and Rooty Hill. In 1977–78 a further \$9.9 million was provided in order to continue stage 2 of the St Marys plant and adjacent pumping stations. Another three carriers to serve Plumpton and Rooty Hill, together with pumping stations and rising mains, are involved.

I shall now deal with funds allocated by the Minister for Youth and Community Services in my electorate. In Rooty Hill the Essie Women's Refuge Committee was allocated \$35,000 for operating and capital costs, to be paid in three monthly instalments. In December, 1976, the Mount Druitt and Rooty Hill Community Aid Service was granted \$1,220 for provision of a four-week holiday care centre for children. In May, 1977, \$500 was provided towards the operating costs of the community aid service. This is funded with six other centres in the region. There is a joint co-ordinator through the Outer Western Region Community Aid Services. The salary and administrative costs are \$11,000. In May, 1977, a grant of \$1,000 was made for a May school holidays vacation care centre for children. A sum of \$1,000 was provided in June, 1977, towards the operating costs of the information service. In August, 1977, \$1,500 was provided for a vacation care centre for children in the August school holidays. In August, 1977, also, \$500 was granted to a special funding to replace stolen equipment. In December, 1977, a grant of \$3,258 was made for the four-week vacation care centre for children.

The Mount Druitt Welfare Youth Service, which is run by the Mount Druitt Baptist Church, received \$5,000 in 1976–77 for a youth worker salary subsidy and in 1977–78 received \$2,000 towards the youth counsellor salary, subsidy and operating costs. North Mount Druitt Community Activity Centre received \$500 in May, 1977, towards the establishment costs of the neighbourhood centre. That month it also received joint funding with other centres in the region for a co-ordinator. In January, 1978, an amount of \$2,250 went towards the operating costs of the neighbourhood centre.

Although they are not solely funded to the Mount Druitt electorate I shall mention funds to the Blacktown electorate and outer western region which directly affect Mount Druitt, as the groups funded also service the Mount Druitt electorate. The Outer Western Regional Council for Social Development received \$25,000 towards the operating costs of the information and research centre. I was privileged to attend the opening of the Hebersham pre-school which received a grant of \$122,000. The opening of the pre-school was performed by the Minister for Youth and Community Services. Shalvey pre-school received a grant of \$127,000. Keymer pre-school received \$3,986 by way of grants. Salary subsidy grants to pre-schools in the area between 1st July, 1976, and 31st March, 1978, included a grant of \$41,482 to the Holy Family pre-school at Emerton. The Margaret Druitt pre-school, which is also situated at Emerton, received a salary subsidy grant of \$15,247.

The Hebersham pre-school received a grant of \$37,133. St Marys pre-school received \$46,340. Keymer pre-school at North St Marys received \$6,877. Shalvey pre-school received a salary subsidy grant of \$24,979. Doonside pre-school received \$45,672. The Mount Druitt Baptist pre-school, located at Emerton, received \$51,128. Mount Druitt Church of England pre-school at Mount Druitt received \$5,592.

The Minister for Sport and Recreation, recognizing the need to provide sporting facilities in the Mount Druitt electorate, recently funded some projects in conjunction with the Blacktown council, through the Department of Sport and Recreation. An amount of \$20,000 was made available for the provision of two football fields at Shalvey reserve. At Whalan reserve \$25,000 was provided for two football fields. A major tennis complex at Rooty Hill was funded in the amount of \$47,500. At Wilmott reserve \$27,000 went towards the provision of an amenities building. The Mount Druitt roller skating rink received \$20,000.

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I have listed the amounts of money granted by the Government to organizations in my electorate. It ill behoves the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to say that the Labor Government is a bad government. I am sure that, if he went in to my electorate and said that, he would be stoned out of the area. I am sure that at the general election the people will return the Wran Government with an overwhelming majority. They will give the lie to what the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has said. The Government is to be congratulated also on its proposed sports insurance legislation which will soon be put before the House. I urge all sporting bodies in my area to register their players as soon as the legislation is passed.

I am pleased with the record of the Labor Government in the field of technical and further education. I congratulate the Minister for Education. Traditionally, this field of education has been much neglected. Serious problems in overcrowding have occurred at Penrith and Blacktown technical colleges. The Mount Druitt Technical College will be a most welcome addition to community facilities provided for the Mount Druitt electorate. It will be of particular benefit to apprentices and mature-age students.

A unique development for Mount Druitt has been the provision of a chamber magistrate at the polyclinic. This is the first time that a chamber magistrate has been stationed outside a court house. In view of the number of people using the service, it has been an overwhelming success. A further addition to community services has been the provision of a motor registry at Mount Druitt. It will be most convenient for the people of Mount Druitt. Doubtless it will overcome overcrowding at Blacktown and Penrith motor registries.

State taxes have not been increased in the past two years. This is consistent with the sound, moderate and responsible policies of the Wran Labor Government. Despite the great progress that has been made in the premier State of Australia I am confident that there will not be any increased taxes in the forthcoming Budget.

I am proud to be part of this Government. I take great pride in all that it has accomplished in such a short time. I assure the Premier that I am ready—as are my loyal and dedicated party workers—to fight an election at any time. I have complete faith in the judgment of the people of New South Wales. When an election is held the people of this State will, by a massive majority, give the Wran Labor Government an overwhelming mandate to implement Labor Party policy.

Mr CAMERON (Northcott) [5.50]: This is a soft options Government. A government of that description is a millstone at any time. In the harder economic times we are now experiencing, such a government is a veritable disaster. Mad Nero, Emperor of Rome, from his accession in 54 A.D. to his death fourteen years later, has been accused of playing the fiddle—he, too, had overpowering thespian and artistic pretensions—while Rome burned in the course of the great fire that ravished it in 64 A.D. Likewise, this Wran Government is a Nero administration. All of the great primary challenges that cry out for attention are ignored while the Government focuses its dilettante attentions upon secondary preoccupations, such as elevating *de facto* relationships to equality with holy matrimony, legalizing homosexuality and prostitution and, through its Attorney-General, at least, extending the imprimatur of respectability to backyard pot cultivation. I pass over the protective umbrella that the Government has raised over the State's mushrooming abortion-on-demand industry. With it, first things come not first, but last.

What are some of these great primary challenges that I see as being so recklessly ignored? I shall list them, one by one. In this debate, I comment on the drab Speech that the Premier has put so uncomfortably in the mouth of a great man—one of our

greatest men—His Excellency the Governor. All of these great challenges to which I shall refer should have found a place in the forefront of that Speech, but there has been no reference, or only incidental reference, to them. All of the Labor members, led by the new member for Earlwood, whom I congratulate upon his entry into this august Chamber, have passed over these challenges without focusing any real attention on them at all.

Apart from Nero, history gives us many other chilling examples of the ultimate **cost** of taking soft options. Hitler, in the 1930's, annexed or invaded territory after territory, but no one would stand up to him. The soft options lobby had the numbers, as it has the numbers within the ranks of the Wran Government today. The voices of Churchill and others, raised against Hitler, warning about what he meant for the world, were ignored. Alsace-Lorraine, the Sudetenland and Czechoslovakia were subjugated, one after another. Hitler marched on, but nobody raised a hand against him; no one stirred to contain him. Already the holocaust within the Jewish community had begun—depredations that would ultimately claim 5 million or 6 million lives—but still no one stirred. People preferred to take the soft options. They preferred to believe that by doing nothing the problem would solve itself.

Closer to home, in South-East Asia, we have seen the tragedy of Vietnam. We heard the leaders of the free world say clearly that if we took the soft options with Vietnam, if we failed to contain the spread of revolutionary communism there, **the domino** theory would prove to be correct and, one by one, adjoining nations would, like dominoes, topple over and crash down. Nobody could predict the way **the theory** would work. The leaders of the free world said it would happen, but **they** were ridiculed, lampooned and laughed at. In point of fact, through the collapse of the will to resist on the urban pavements of New York and Sydney, we left Vietnam to communism. Now we are left with sickened hearts and guilty consciences at the fate of the poor people of Laos and the people of Cambodia, now called **Kampuchea**. **Now** hundreds of thousands of Kampuchean are being executed with pickaxes, to save communist bullets. Again, the soft options lobby won and today humanity pays the price—and there is blood on the dominoes.

What are some of these great challenges to which I refer? The one that **I see** as being dilemma No. 1 concerns communism. We are the inheritors of a **free way** of life, the strength and virtues of **which** are not being effectively articulated or defended. An **inferior**, controlled way of life—the communist alternative—is expanding dramatically in our region of the world; it is creating a real risk that **we**, **too** could be absorbed within the space of not many decades. In many ways State governments more intimately affect the way of life of the ordinary citizen. But what is **the** option this Government adopts? It ignores the problem, pretending that it does not exist.

The second dilemma is that extremist union leaders, mainly communists, **are** abusing the great power they hold to create disruption for revolutionary purposes. **Strikes**, which dislocate one great industry after another, are called on in **conformity with** a carefully pre-arranged timetable, which is so structured as to cause maximum inconvenience while involving as few employees and as little loss of wages as **possible**. **This** Government is directly concerned and directly involved. But what is the **option** chosen by the Government? It ignores the problem; it pretends that it does not exist.

I shall deal now with the third dilemma. We have evolved a unique system of arbitration and conciliation. That system involves some human beings on benches, **adjudicating** industrial disputes and deciding whether or not to give away **other** people's money, that is, the money of employers. The predictable result is that, **like** human beings everywhere, they tend to like pleasing as many people as possible,

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and to bow to the weight of numbers. And the unions—not the employers—have the numbers. So they usually decide to give more of the employers' money away to the unions. The results are inevitable though rarely immediate. By slow, confused processes of a kind that make it hard for ordinary observers to attribute results to their true causes, costs of production rise. We price ourselves out of one market after another. Imperceptibly, the dole queues lengthen. One man's pay rise means the loss of another's job, but people in the queues do not realize it. In an understandably human way, those administering the system ask the diminishing proportion of productive taxpayers to contribute still more so as to enable higher unemployment benefits to be paid to an ever-larger number of recipients. This Government, through its State Industrial Commission, is responsible for part of this arbitration and conciliation system. What is its chosen option? It ignores the problem, pretending that it does not exist. In many instances it positively exhorts the unions to demand **more**—and still more.

[Mr Speaker left the chair at 6 p.m. The House resumed at 7.30 p.m.]

Mr **CAMERON**: Dilemma No. 5: for reasons quite distinct from the wage fixing and the arbitral process generally, we are becoming inefficient producers compared with some competitor countries. Productivity tends to be low overall and especially low in government employment. It remains one of the forbidden words, never to be mentioned by **Labor** members. Let us feed the relevant data concerning this dilemma into one of the Government's expensive computers. Let us tap out on the control keyboard the question we want answered. Good. Now the wheels are whirring and lights are flashing here and there. Click; everything comes to a stop. Now we are getting the Government's solution coming to us in print-out form. What does it read? "**Create** more government jobs". Let us read it again. Surely that cannot be right, but yes, there it is.

State Government employment is up by 20 000 since the Wran **Labor** Government came to power. During the last triennium more than 70 000 jobs in private industry were wiped out. Though the State's payroll is increasing at the taxpayer's expense, federal Government employment within New South Wales has been contained. Yet, in the speech prepared for His Excellency, the State Government again tritely falls back on the excuse of unparalleled financial stringency imposed on the State by the federal Government. No attempt has been made by the State Government, as a sovereign government, to find revenue remedies of its own. It is too timid for that. Again the answer is, let the public service grow.

From what we have learned today from the list of new **Labor** candidates it is as plain as a **pikestaff** that virtually every new **Labor** member to come into this Parliament following the forthcoming elections will be a public servant with a public service attitude. What is wrong with the rest of the community? What is wrong with the people who work in private industry for private employers? Why do they not seek a place as **Labor** candidates? Maybe the remedy is too real. Maybe they have too much association with private enterprise ever to lend themselves to a socialist apparatus.

Dilemma No. 6: in the economic conditions which now prevail taxpayers are revolting against paying the wst of government involvement in business enterprises that **run** at a loss. The people are calling for divestment of the Government's equity in commercial operations. Luxurious forms of socialist adventuring within commercial spheres could be afforded, I suppose, in easy economic times but it is becoming widely recognized that they cannot be afforded today.

This Government has a massive involvement in commercial activity. To mention only a few there are the Government Insurance Office, the State dockyard, the State brickworks, the State tileworks, the State furniture undertaking and the vast number

of State laundries. The principles are clear-cut. They apply whatever government is in office, State or federal, socialist or private enterprise. Peter Samuel, a commentator whom I greatly respect, on this occasion aiming his barbs primarily at the Commonwealth Government, sums up the arguments most attractively in this passage from the *Bulletin* published today:

The arguments in favor of a programme of government divestment of its equity in businesses are powerful.

First they would subject the management to far more discipline to conduct their businesses efficiently, so they would raise the productivity of those businesses. The threat of bankruptcy and managerial takeover is an extremely important and necessary component of the corporate marketplace. It weeds out the no-hopers, whereas in government business undertakings patronage can put poor people in charge and only slow and uncertain political processes can get rid of them.

In the commercial setting, enterprises are more flexible in both expanding and contracting and in switching areas of operation, than they are if established as governmental businesses. They can make share issues, or borrow without the long processes of getting government approval and without having to compete in the interdepartmental negotiating process in competition with countless other agencies.

They do not have to compete with welfare payments and other hand-outs. They can hire and fire more easily, free of arbitrary staff ceilings on the one hand and politically designed no-retrenchment policies on the other. On balance their industrial relations are better. They are less prone to be used as vehicles for political vote-buying than government outfits.

They are more likely to make a return on capital, and to be closed or modified if they do not, which is equally important. They are less likely to be given monopoly powers and other privileges, which are always at the expense of the consumer.

Looking back a few years, Mr Samuel recalls:

Some of the world's most successful businesses are ex-government. Volkswagen is the biggest. It was first established by the nazi regime, but post-war, as an ailing no-hoper, was sold to the people. A variety of forms of ownership and conditions of sale could be arranged. For some it might be appropriate to limit single shareholdings so that excessive concentration of ownership was avoided. Some could simply be floated on the stock exchanges.

The idea is not new. Menzies sold off a handful of the Chifley Government's legacy of moribund government holdings which have since been turned into thriving productive businesses. Only the socialist ideologues and featherbedding unionists can object to the idea.

The return to right principle is starting spontaneously to evidence itself in area after area. The harmfulness of excessive government intrusion into the economic lives of citizens is dealt within the following passage that is to be found in this morning's *Sydney Morning Herald*:

Government intervention in the lives of Australians is a main reason for the nation's economic slump, an economist said yesterday.

Mr Gordon Bruns, the chief economist of the ANZ Banking Group, said there were many fields in which government intervention had been harmful.

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They included housing, transport, farming, manufacturing, exports, foreign investments, small business, health and education.

Mr Bruns was speaking at the opening of the Royal Australian Planning Institute's biennial congress in Sydney.

He said: "When half of all income is spent in ways we do not choose—and would not, if we were free to choose—incentive to maximise production is blunted."

Dilemma No. 7: parents are witnessing the education of their children by a handful of radicals on the Teachers Federation executive. These parents with strong spiritual reflexes, keen to raise their progeny in the same traditions they themselves inherited from their forbears, find their children's minds in the grasp of secular humanists. Their children come home and disgorge ideas incompatible with the traditions of the parents who brought them into the world, have showered love on them, have nurtured them and are raising them. In the State education system basic skills have been ignored and we see in it a retreat from competitive examination. The system provides for an excess of elective subjects and the placing of the emphasis upon entertaining children rather than on their education.

Recently I was horrified to see a textbook that came out of the library of a metropolitan girls' high school. The textbook dealt with English literature. Whereas once we might have expected to find in a textbook on English literature passages from Milton, Byron and Shakespeare, this book contained the utterances of a pop-figure confessedly on pot. The girls of this high school were invited to assess the language he put forward in justification of his habit with never the slightest element of criticism of that habit. Now parents face the threat of an education commission by means of which the Minister for Education will abdicate control of his department. Control will pass to the commission which will be under the thumb and dictatorship of the radicals on the executive of the Teachers Federation.

So, what option has this Government taken? It can be summed up in one word—abdication. I believe there will be a rebellion against these processes. Recently I had one of the most inspiring evenings of my life when I went to Merrylands to hear a group called ACE, Accelerated Christian Education. It is an American group that believes in traditional education, with emphasis on academic excellence, on all the basic skills, and on competitive examinations. It is founded upon the teaching of the Bible, but locked into ordinary, orthodox patriotism, love of country, and love of the Bible. In America this group already has 2 000 small schools operating. People are taking their children out of the humanist-dominated public education system and giving them a traditional education in this way. Even at this stage the group has up to twenty small schools in Australia. The programme will boom, because people simply will not accept what is being imposed on them by this process of abdication in which the Government is participating.

Dilemma No. 8: we are the most over-urbanized community on earth, and nothing effective is being done to decentralize. N.S.W. stands for Newcastle-Sydney-Wollongong. What do we, as private members of this Parliament, come to it for? Do we come as presumably the leaders of the Government come, simply to be timeservers, or do we come to grapple with the great challenges, with the great problems, that are being ignored? Are we in business here to try to tackle the problems of decentralization, to provide incentives to people and to industries to fan out from the tightly bunched cities on the metropolitan seaboard frontage, or are we in business to make it attractive for people to go to the great interior of our State? Will we use our precious heritage of land with its potential for production, or are we to be just a handful of people on the edge of an emptying continent?

This Government is accepting no real challenge in that area. At a time when Parliament should be meeting to grapple with the great problems confronting us, at a time when the elected Government should be discharging its responsibility to govern, those on the Treasury benches have only one thought in mind and that is to avoid their responsibility and to **rush** off to a premature and expensive election in complete abrogation of their real duties.

Dilemma No. 9: intimately linked with the problem of over-urbanization is the escalating, out-of-control incidence of metropolitan crime. The innate sense of justice of the man in the street is being affronted by the disproportionality of the crimes committed and the punishments meted out for them. His instincts cry out, not vengefully, but simply as a matter of fairness and proportion, for justice; that right may be done, and may be seen to be done; that wrongdoers may be brought to book. But the cry of his heart goes unanswered. The police are compelled to fight crime with one arm tied behind their back. They are under constraint. Criminals offend, and laugh in the face of society. Because the board and lodging of criminals in gaol has become expensive, the Government prefers them to be free; out on licence; out on parole, or perhaps serving weekend confinement only. The prisoners lobby is a pro-Labor lobby, and the Government services it. The challenge is to contain crime. It is a hard challenge calling for the taking of hard options. What does the Government opt for? To appease the criminal.

Dilemma No. 10: our roads network cannot carry the traffic pushed on to it as commuters are forced, by the unsuitability of State-owned transport services, into their own cars and on to our choked, over-saturated thoroughfares. The resultant congestion costs countless millions of dollars a year, largely because our cities are just too big. The Government is doing nothing to effect real decentralization. Here is another problem to feed into the computer. Put it in. Click. Here is the Government's print-out, its answer, its solution—Phase out expressways. Unbelievable, you say? Perhaps it is, but it is true. Blink again if you cannot read it. That is the Government's policy with an over-saturated roads network; that is the solution proclaimed in the policy of this Government at election time, and reiterated again and again—Phase out expressways.

We are running out of petrol for our motor cars. What is this Government doing to match what other governments are doing to back research into other forms of fuel, such as petroleum produced from sugar cane, or other forms of propulsion—the electric, battery-powered vehicle, the steam car, or the water fuelled car? These are possible alternatives. Put this problem into the computer. Press the buttons. What's this? A malfunction? Nothing—just nothing—is coming out. The ultimate soft option always is, do nothing.

Mr F. J. Walker: I would say that this is a leadership bid by the honourable member.

Mr CAMERON: Dilemma No. 11 will interest the Attorney-General. Already we are experiencing on our roads a tragic carnage that dwarfs the human casualties exacted by war. Slot this one in: here comes the answer. Hm! It seems to be over the signature of the Attorney-General. It reads, "Let each young person grow two pots of cannabis". Well, if alcohol cannot make our roads totally unsafe, marihuana certainly will complete the job.

Dilemma No. 12: our people seem to have lost their sense of vision. Where there is no vision, the people perish. The vision has gone. How can we create it? will we find it in the delusional world of pot? should we press on regardless into the

domain of new trends? I suggest not. Better that we seek to return to first principles, to the tried and true that worked for our forbears; to the primacy of the free individual living within the inherited truths and wisdom of those before us.

Mr BRERETON (Heffron) [7.50]: I join other honourable members in congratulating the mover of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, ~~the~~ honourable member for Earlwood, on his splendid maiden speech. I congratulate him on his election also and wish him well in his career in this Chamber. I am certain it will be auspicious.

Judging from recent press speculation, I think I might not have an opportunity later to express my sincere thanks to the parliamentary staffs for all their efforts, and for the invaluable assistance they have provided to me and to my fellow members. For my own part, I thank particularly the staff of the Parliamentary Library. I am truly grateful to them.

Over recent months I have taken the opportunity of giving some thought to stage presentations in the city of Sydney. I am sure that theatre-goers and theatre lovers throughout the State mourn the approaching demise of the Old Tote Theatre. The Old Tote company in its prime gave us great productions of both drama and comedy. Sadly its time has passed. I wish now to acknowledge its contribution to the theatre scene, and also to speak in support of the proposition that urges the establishment of a New South Wales State theatre company.

State recognition and official status should be given to a new theatre company, which should be given an identity. Also, an examination should be made of the ways in which the State Government could support such a company. What would any citizen want from a company of this kind? I believe it must, above all, identify and keep in touch with the public it hopes to serve. It certainly needs to adopt a style. That is what is said by Bradley G. Morrison who wrote a report on the Old Tote in October, 1977. I believe that when the State theatre company is established it must develop a style of drama that has quality and is reliable. This certainly must be one of the best ways to encourage and expand a regular audience. The company, like the South Australian theatre company, must also be identified with a place or building.

In New South Wales we have the drama theatre in the magnificent Sydney Opera House, and also the Seymour Centre to consider as an alternative venue for tributary productions. Furthermore, we should give some little thought to the Parade Theatre which is situated in Kensington. I personally support the claims of Drarnsac, the University of New South Wales Drama Society, for the Parade Theatre to be returned to the university as a student-theatre. This theatre was originally given in 1969 to the Old Tote, on a temporary rent arrangement of \$408 a year. The Old Tote requested use of the Parade Theatre only until it obtained its own theatre in the opera house. Yet the Parade Theatre has been an on-going effort as far as the Tote is concerned. Although nominal rent of \$408 a year was fixed, it has never been collected by the University of New South Wales. I strongly urge that in future the Parade Theatre be used by the university as a student theatre. Surely there must be for any State theatre company an external indication of what is being performed inside. It has been said before ~~that~~—

There is need to put lights, banners and some sort of **kiosk** outside the Drama Theatre not only to suggest that something is happening there under the aegis of the State Theatre Company but just to help people find it in the gloom. We need to see the new company **trumpet** its presence to the public.

I believe that any such State theatre must have a permanent company of actors, thus allowing it not only to develop a style but also to maintain a consistent standard. **Such** a move will help avoid the unpredictable productions of the past. Certainly if the public shows that it likes stars and identifies with them, that could be one of the elements needed by any new company to attract an audience and to present good theatre. Actors in such a viable company, while often not well paid, grow in skill, experience and stature. The work of the Nimrod Theatre company has proved that over the years. Names like John Bell, Peter Carroll and Anna Volska spring immediately to mind for the professional quality of the work they have done with that splendid company. I believe, also, that there should be a single, highly-visible artistic director, who should be given authority along similar lines to that possessed by the artistic director of the Melbourne Theatre company, Britain's National Theatre or the Royal Shakespeare company. In those companies the artistic director as chief executive also has the power of veto over administrative and artistic affairs. The public will eventually relate to the developing style and personality that such an artistic director will inevitably stamp on the company, as Mollison has done for the National Art Gallery, John Bell for the Nimrod Theatre and Richard Bonyng for the Australian Opera company. In these successful companies there is no gamble in buying tickets for each production as the quality is reliable.

The company must also activate friends, as Brian Hoad, arts editor, writes in that now even-handed weekly journal, the *Bulletin*. The Australian Opera and the Australian Ballet have flourished with the help of these groups who not only raise money but also spread that vital goodwill. It will need patrons, and those most influential in today's theatre world must be recognized. Such persons these days are government officials and bureaucrats who recommend grants, schools and universities who decide curriculums for student studies, and media personalities who both promote and spread the word by the very nature of their profession. Trade union officials, who influence union policies and actions, businessmen and corporate and foundation executives can give invaluable support. If not providing the very lifeblood of a State theatre, such groups will assuredly promote and provide the necessary icing for the cake. Publishing, promotion through a house magazine, and programme arrangement are all small individual components but they are vital to the public **who** need to relate to the company, to adopt it as their own, and to grow in faithfulness as subscribers. I trust that sufficient attention can be given to these factors.

As yet I have not touched on the funding of such a company. While working on the premise of value for money we should be assured there will be State and federal commitment of funds, as is done for other State companies. The Old Tote affair has exposed a "central, highly unsatisfactory anomaly in our arts subsidization organization", as pointed out in an editorial of the *Sydney Morning Herald* on Monday, 7th August, 1978. That editorial stated:

The Federal funding body (has) life-or-death command of some State bodies, even though it has no practical responsibility for their functions or for State problems and difficulties. It owes this command not to any rational division of cultural responsibilities but solely to the Federal Government's monopoly of the main existing sources of growth revenue. Drama is, by its nature, a regional activity; its subsidized theatres—and certainly the State theatres—should be State responsibilities, funded by autonomous State bodies, albeit with Federal assistance. The State should encourage Mr Fraser to initiate a critical re-examination of the operations and responsibilities of the Australia Council to determine which of these, for realistic cultural reasons, would be better decentralized.

Mr *Brereton*

Although I do not agree wholeheartedly with all the conclusions reached by the editorial, it does examine a vital issue that must not be ignored. Perhaps all that is needed is a revamping of the existing system, but we must never again see a situation where State and federal funding bodies are played delicately one against the other as we have recently seen. The Premier has acted most responsibly in the recent crisis and has, with commonsense, offered to administer and stage the Old Tote's five remaining plays for 1978. I was delighted with the answer given in this Chamber on Thursday last in reply to my question on the Old Tote Theatre company, when the Premier advised:

It is to be hoped that over the next few months the discussions that have been initiated between the Government and the Australia Council will provide some definitive mechanism for the continuance of subsidized drama in New South Wales.

It may well be that out of all this will come a State drama company. I urge that the most serious consideration be given by all concerned to the establishment of such a company.

I now wish to take some little time to refer to the speech of the honourable member for Kirribilli on an earlier day during this debate. In his opening words he spoke about what he termed the continuing deception of the Premier—strong words indeed. But when one thinks about it, when it comes to deception the honourable member for Kirribilli is a man with considerable qualifications. It is perhaps timely to remember the judgment of Mr Justice Matthews of the Supreme Court of Queensland in 1968 when he said——[Quorum formed.] Before I was interrupted, I was talking about the claim by the honourable member for Kirribilli that the Premier **was** involved in a continuing deception. I had started to point out to the House that perhaps it was timely to remember the judgment of Mr Justice Matthews of the Supreme Court of Queensland in 1968 when he said, "In any event I would not describe Mr McDonald as a reliable witness". Throughout his speech the honourable member for Kirribilli portrayed himself as an expert in the field of housing policy, economics and construction. Indeed, he holds the title of shadow Minister for business and consumer affairs.

Mr Mulock: Monkey business.

Mr BRERETON: There is probably some merit in that comment. Frankly, it amazes me that the honourable member for Kirribilli is brazen enough to portray himself in this role, especially in view of his own dismal performance on the practical side of the housing field. The House should know of his experience. In September, 1977, a company of which he is the managing director—Macfield Developments Pty Limited—completed two blocks of six townhouses situated in Hazelbank Road, Wollstonecraft. It is now almost a year later. Apparently the company has been unable to sell all of the premises. When one looks at them one finds out why. The reason it cannot dispose of them is the disgustingly poor finish, with the new paint already peeling from the walls and defective timberwork. So much for the honourable member's practical efforts in the field of housing construction. Perhaps it is just as well that he should restrict himself to talking of housing, rather than inflicting such miserable developments upon the home-hungry citizens of Sydney.

The honourable member for Kirribilli spoke of his party's economic plan which, he said, provides for an increase in capital development. I can only say that I hope there is more substance in that plan than we have seen in the yet to be released Liberal Party housing policy. This often previewed but yet to be released housing policy is apparently the work of the honourable member alone. Certainly none of his colleagues to whom I have spoken appears to know anything whatever about it.

Mr F. J. Walker: What about the shadow Minister?

Mr BRERETON: The shadow Minister has been very silent indeed. While listening to the honourable member for Kirribilli I was struck by his misleading and false comments in regard to the failure of the New South Wales Government to bail out the Old Tote Theatre Company, to which I have referred at an earlier stage this evening. In one breath the honourable member calls for efficiency in government and in another he proposes that an additional \$320,000 should be ploughed into the Old Tote Theatre Company, after the Australia Council and the theatre-going public have amply demonstrated the company's lack of viability and the hopelessness of its prospects.

The honourable member went on to say that North Sydney was receiving absolutely no attention from the Government in regard to the acquisition of land for open space. Honourable members should perhaps be aware of his efforts to prevail upon the Government to bail out some of his developer friends, mainly the now in liquidation Middle Harbour Investments, and to acquire lot 1 French Street, McMahons Point, at an exorbitant price, in complete conflict with the Government's policy of first satisfying the areas of need as its essential priority. In this regard it should be noted that in the last survey of open space for active and passive recreation throughout the Sydney region, North Sydney council—the council for which the honourable member for Kirribilli is calling for assistance—was shown as having 1.96 hectares of open space for each 1 000 head of population. That is in stark contrast with my own municipality of South Sydney, which was shown in the same survey as having 0.68 hectares of open space for each 1000 head of population—about one-third as much—and Marrickville municipality which was shown as having 1.04—that is about half—or Leichhardt municipality with 1.08.

The honourable member referred to the abandonment by the Fraser Government of the H.A.V.E. scheme, that is, the housing allowance voucher experiment, as a further reason why we do not have time to waste on such social laboratories, being a carry over from the Whitlam-Uren Department of Urban and Regional Development policies. Honourable members should be aware that the housing allowance voucher experiment, which was recently abandoned by the Fraser Government, was not introduced when our colleagues were on the government benches in Canberra. It was the work of the former federal Minister for Housing, Mr Newman, and the Fraser Government. I have been following with some interest the reports in the *Australian Financial Review* concerning the Liberal Party's plans for urban consolidation as part of its State policy. On 9th August I suggested that this portion of the still to be released Liberal policy had been plagiarized from the policies of the Australian Labor Party. On 16th August, 1978, I read in the same journal the honourable member for Kirribilli's letter, part of which is as follows:

It is no doubt as a result of my continuing public comments and in particular my paper to the AIUE's Task Force on the Challenge of the Cities, as reported in depth in your paper on November 4, 1976, that the Labor Party started to heed my warnings on urban Sydney, and began to develop some attitudes on the subject.

Having had a chance to peruse the honourable member's submission of 4th November, 1976, I find that it was mainly concerned with his efforts to reduce local government and safety standards in order to encourage development. In short, what the honourable member wants is more development along the lines of Eastlakes and Hillsdale, which, as a result of the former Government's disastrous planning, must become the slum areas of the future. As the honourable member has attacked the performance of the Ministers of this Government in regard to housing, it is worth noting the advances that have been made during its two years and three months in office.

The Minister of Justice and Minister for Housing has done very well. Since May, 1976, he has completed 5 519 dwellings. As well as that, this Government has been responsible for the new rental policy that gives low-income tenants a more generous rebate and raises the rents of other tenants in stages to 80 per cent of the market rental. The Minister of Justice and Minister for Housing has been responsible for the Housing Commission's ceasing to sell homes in the metropolitan area so as to provide for a stock of rental housing to meet future accommodation needs.

The Minister of Justice and Minister for Housing was responsible for the injection of \$10 million into the Housing Commission and \$17.5 million into terminating building societies as part of this Government's special employment scheme, which has already resulted in 370 additional dwellings being constructed in twenty centres throughout the State. During all of that programme preference was given to tenderers who could guarantee the most new jobs. The Minister of Justice and Minister for Housing has also been responsible for a substantial \$10 million programme of capital improvements on older Housing Commission dwellings, including the provision of insulation, hot water services and improvements to laundry facilities, a great number of which I am pleased to say have been carried out in my electorate. He has also been responsible for the expansion of dwelling maintenance programmes and for the first section of restoration work at Woolloomooloo being completed. He is responsible also for a \$4 million contract let for major Housing Commission development in The Rocks and for various committees of inquiry on an interdepartmental basis to overcome some of the problems in housing. The same gentleman has also been responsible for seventy-five cottages being allocated for single parent families and I am pleased to say that the first tenants are in occupancy of first homes purchased under that scheme.

I could go on with further achievements of the Land Commission in New South Wales, but I shall not go into any detail. The Local Government Superannuation Board has provided funds to terminating building societies which have increased from \$2 million in 1976 to an estimated \$10 million in 1978. Investments by the board with local government authorities have increased from \$56.4 million in 1976 to an estimated \$105 million in 1978. The State Superannuation Board's investments in terminating building societies have doubled under the present Government. The amount invested with societies during 1975–76 was \$22.4 million compared with an estimated new investment of \$48.8 million during 1977–78. These are worthwhile achievements. The total now on loan to societies by the board is approximately \$150 million compared with \$69.3 million in June, 1976. The Minister for Consumer Affairs and Minister for Co-operative Societies has been responsible for an allocation of \$27 million for schemes designed to provide low-cost homes for home buyers on low incomes and to stimulate the building industry. Contrast all this activity in a little over two years of government with the performances, not of these people sitting opposite, because they have not been in a position to perform at all, but of their federal colleagues in Canberra. I refer to a report contained in the pages of the *Australian Financial Review* of 16th August, 1978, which stated:

Government funds for encouraging home ownership have been sharply reduced in this year's Budget with \$15 million sliced off the home savings grant scheme, a \$10 million cut in defence service home loans and abolition of the home loan interest deductibility scheme.

What a shameful performance. The article continues:

These cuts, announced in yesterday's Budget, were preceded in June this year by a Government announcement at the Premiers Conference that funds for welfare housing would be down by \$74 million in 1978–79 compared with the previous year.

Funds for the home savings grant scheme will be \$20 million in 1978–79, compared with \$35 million in 1977–78.

The report continues:

This will result in an increase of nine months in the waiting period for the grant.

It could also have the effect of excluding many of the current 50,000 applicants for the grant from the scheme.

That is what is happening already. Today I received correspondence from a constituent of mine, Mr Phillip Thogersen. He had been saving his money in accordance with the new home savings grant scheme and he applied on 27th July. He posted his letter on the same day and was subsequently advised in a card that he received on 24th August that due to budgetary restraint by the federal Government the grant, if approved, would be paid in July, 1979—fully twelve months away. I have a copy of the correspondence, which states:

Your application for a grant has been received and you will be notified of the outcome as soon as possible. Any personal documents forwarded will then be returned.

As part of general budgetary restraint the Government has announced that expenditure on Home Savings Grants this financial year has been restricted.

Your grant, if approved, will be paid in July, 1979.

This is the way in which young people in New South Wales have been sold out by the federal counterparts of members sitting opposite. I reiterate to the House the New South Wales Labor Party's policy on housing. Our goals include: increasing housing production for both purchase and rental; reducing unemployment in the building industry; providing a variety of housing types to satisfy the particular housing needs of various categories of home seekers. We seek to ensure that housing—and public housing in particular—enjoys a location accessible to public transport, recreation, community facilities and job opportunities. We seek to use housing policies and Land Commission acquisitions to increase the Government's control over urban development, land prices and land use.

We seek to ensure that design standards are developed to cater for the specific housing needs of physically handicapped people; to encourage young people to purchase their own homes; to eliminate the necessity of prohibitively large deposits; to introduce new sources of finance for lower income earners to help bridge the deposit gap; to assist first home buyers financially during the first years of their purchase; to introduce partial deferred payments of principal and interest geared to income increases; and to end discriminatory practices of some lending authorities in refusing to take into account a spouse's full earnings when assessing family incomes to determine the capacity to repay home loans. We seek also to establish a stock of emergency housing available for short-term occupancy in crisis situations. These are real policies developed by the New South Wales branch of the Australian Labor Party. They have been adopted by the party's State conference following two years of careful consideration and detailed research papers prepared by professional planners and others involved in the field of urban policy formulation. They represent a serious attempt to achieve rational planning and efficient use of the State's resources. They are in sharp contrast to our opponents' often previewed but yet to be released policies. It may well be that the time of the honourable member for Kirribilli and his colleagues would be better

Mr Brereton]

spent in a unilateral approach to their federal counterparts in Canberra in order that housing needs for the generations of future Australians can be properly catered for. Certainly a massive injection of funds is the only real way in which the housing industry can be put back on its feet.

Mr FISCHER (Sturt) [8.20]: Redistribution or retribution? That is one of the questions that I wish to discuss tonight in this Address-in-Reply debate. I recall with interest His Excellency's reference to the historic nature of this, the third session of the Forty-fifth Parliament of New South Wales. It is historic because on 17th June last the people of this State made a decision that dramatically altered the composition of the Legislative Council. To digress for a moment, I suppose it was historic in other ways; for example, for the honourable member for Earlwood. I take this opportunity to congratulate him on his maiden speech. I was disappointed a little that he had to use notes and did not follow in the fine tradition set by the honourable member for Lismore and one or two others who gave their maiden speeches without any notes whatsoever. The decision of the people of New South Wales of 17th June was historic, but nowhere near as historic as the decision that they will face on the next polling day, whenever it occurs. Of course, the suggested date is 7th October next, but it may not be until May, June or even, under the Constitution, July of next year.

On the occasion of the forthcoming elections the people of New South Wales will make an even greater historic decision. They will be determining the electoral structure of the Legislative Assembly for a long while. As a result of the referendum decision of 17th June, the size of the Legislative Council will be reduced from sixty to forty-three members with an ultimate size of forty-five members when the change-over is complete. The decision of the people at the next general election will have great impact in that each Government supporter has signed a pledge to uphold the Australian Labor Party platform. That platform, which was confirmed at a conference in June this year, provides in relation to redistribution: first, that all electorates will, as far as possible, have an equal number of voters.

Mr Petersen: Hear! hear!

Mr FISCHER: Second, the two centres, country and city will be abandoned.

Mr Petersen: Hear! hear!

Mr FISCHER: Third, no electorate will vary more than 10 per cent on quota.

Mr Brereton: Hear! hear!

Mr FISCHER: I am interested to observe the hear, hears from members of the Labor Party. Tonight in this Chamber the Attorney-General made the point that the Labor Party could not wait for the redistribution, because it will be a retribution exercise if it is conducted by a re-elected Labor Government. I turn now to the issue of one vote one value.

Mr Petersen: Does not the honourable member believe in democracy?

Mr FISCHER: I believe in one vote one equal value of representation. That is the basis of democracy. People in country areas who even under previous Labor governments traditionally received a moderate degree of tolerance in electorate size should continue to receive that moderate degree of electorate tolerance. The Labor Government that was in office from 1941 until 1965 supported redistribution that had a moderate degree of tolerance—a word not known to the honourable member for Peats—in the sizes of electorates. Country members of the Australian Labor Party are conspicuously absent from the Chamber. I shall deal with them in a moment electorate by electorate. Government supporters would wipe out the record

of previous **Labor** governments in New South Wales which showed a balanced and moderate degree of tolerance for country electorates when redistributions were carried out. There is good reason for having that tolerance of balance, quite apart from any party-political result that might arise. Earlier this evening the honourable member for Northcott referred in his speech to a new dimension of decentralization with balanced development throughout New South Wales. That will not be achieved if the Parliament is stacked more than ever before with a concentrated **Newcastle-Sydney-Wollongong** rump that is not representative of the balance of the State. Is it fair and proper that a member of Parliament whose electorate is two square kilometres in size—

Mr F. J. Walker: On a point of order. The House is debating the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor. The honourable member for Sturt is referring to a situation that he will have to face after his party is decimated at the next elections. Naturally he is concerned about his political future, but it is completely irrelevant for the honourable member to discuss in this debate a redistribution after the next election.

Mr Fischer: On the point of order. At the beginning of my remarks I referred to that part of His Excellency's Address that related to the historic nature of the present session of the Parliament. It is historic because of changes in the composition of the Parliament and in that context, and in the wide-ranging context of the Address-in-Reply debate I seek to continue with my remarks.

Mr DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order! During the Address-in-Reply debate it is in order to discuss matters that have been mentioned in His Excellency's Speech and matters that have been omitted from it but which members think should receive attention. At this stage the honourable member for Sturt is in order, but he might stretch my feelings of sympathy towards him if he pursues his present line too far.

Mr FISCHER: Government supporters are covering up for what they have in store for New South Wales if they have the opportunity. They will carry out their declared platform of so-called one vote one value redistribution. I note with interest the arrival in the Chamber of the honourable member for **Burrinjuck**. If the Australian **Labor** Party platform formula is applied to a redistribution in this State, with a 99-seat Legislative Assembly every electorate would have to average 31 **036** voters. This means that the honourable member for **Burrinjuck** would require **5933** electors to achieve a **minimum** tolerance.

Mr Face: On a point of order. The honourable member for Sturt is addressing the far end of the Chamber rather than you, Mr Deputy-Speaker. I submit that it is in the best interests of the House that the honourable member address you rather than the other end of the Chamber.

Mr DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I am sure that the honourable member will in future address his remarks to the Chair.

Mr FISCHER: I am addressing you, Mr Deputy-Speaker, from a position near the Mace that was traditionally used before the Mace was placed in the Chamber. The honourable member for **Burrinjuck** will cause the abolition of his own electorate by pledging to uphold a formula for redistribution that will lead to the abolition of six country seats. The electors will demonstrate that they are not proud of him when they vote on the next polling day. They will see the **commonsense** in their maintaining a voice in Parliament. For this reason the honourable member will be defeated. The electorate of Casino requires 4 **085** electors to achieve a minimum tolerance. I do

not intend to dwell on these figures; I merely mention them in the context that the people of New South Wales at the next State elections will make an even more historic decision than they made on 17th June, when by referendum they altered the composition of the upper House. On 7th October, or whenever the State election takes place, the voters of New South Wales will make a decision on the proposition that the Legislative Assembly is the House of the Parliament where all power resides under the Westminster precedent.

Country Australian **Labor** Party members should declare their positions before the next general elections. They should state clearly that they will not vote for legislation which will lead to a redistribution that will abolish six country seats. The only other thing I want to mention about the vital and important area surrounding the composition of the Legislative Assembly is that apparently a **different** set of ground rules will apply for the redistribution than apply now, following the **McGregor** Royal commission on the federal redistribution. If the Attorney-General threatens honourable members, including me, with possible abolition of our seats, he is committing a breach of ethics, if nothing else, in relation to the conduct of redistribution in New South Wales. When the decision is taken by the people of the State they will do it in a positive way, make the correct decision and tip out those country **Labor** Party members who vote for the abolition of six country seats. Next polling day the voters of New South Wales will vote to maintain a balance of representation in the composition of this House.

I turn to another matter related to the style of this so-called progressive **Wran** Government. It is a one-man government. The Premier does not allow other Cabinet Ministers to make key announcements in relation to their portfolios. The system does not allow free rein to any other Cabinet Minister: the Premier handles everything. That does great damage to the Westminster system of government. As the honourable member for Bathurst has pointed out accurately, the members of the Government are a set of puppets. One man, the Premier, works the strings to suit the particular occasion. Schemes are announced and news releases are made though the back-up legislation has not even been presented to the Parliament.

On this style of government I refer to the practice of the Department of the Valuer-General in issuing so-called land value assessments on the notices of valuations throughout the length and breadth of New South Wales. I do not know whether some honourable members on the Government benches are aware that that is happening; perhaps they could be forgiven for that because the Parliament has not seen the **legislation** pertaining to site valuation. Honourable members have had hints of it, **an** announcement was made by the Minister for Local Government and there was a suggestion of it in the Address of His Excellency the Governor. But honourable members have not seen the legislation and that is not good enough. All this has not worried the Valuer-General: he went ahead without legislation and without even proper regulation and placed a land value on valuation notices issued last April in New South Wales. The land values are designed to allow a council, between now and 1982, to choose which system of valuation it wishes to employ. What a lovely situation. It might be said that it will give freedom of choice to councils, but it will also be an invitation to total confusion and chaos in the rating system and valuations in the State.

A clear-cut statement or ruling is needed. Though land values might be put forward as possible guidelines, it is not good enough for this to occur before the Parliament has seen the enabling legislation. These valuation notices are being issued and widespread concern is felt about the matter. In the Narrandera shire people are concerned about the possible impact on land values. Until an exercise has been done to calculate whether relativity is maintained between the land value and the **unimproved**

capital value, one will not know for every section of the shire whether the rating policy of the shire council will be dramatically altered by adoption of the land value or site value system. I urge that the information that is available from the computer lists of the Valuer-General be collated and released to councils so that ratepayers and councils may make a proper assessment of the impact of site or land value in levying rates, rather than using the traditional unimproved capital value.

I acknowledge that a need exists for further improvements to the valuation system, but I point out that it should be done in a proper legislative way. The legislation must be presented to this Parliament and discussed. That should happen before the Valuer-General's Department heads off, virtually on its own initiative, on the basis of a ministerial news release, and puts land values on rate notices. To do so on the basis of a ministerial edict or a press release is contrary to every principle of the Westminster system of government. On an issue of this kind it may not lead to gross excesses or abuses, but in the past other instances have occurred where such action could lead quickly to damage and devastation of the system of government, causing chaos in relation to the issues involved.

Another example of the style of this Government—of rushing ahead of legislation—is the so-called sportsmen's insurance scheme. The department is conducting seminars throughout country areas and disseminating information to sporting and football clubs throughout the **Riverina**. When the representatives of the sporting organizations attend the seminars and get the full run-down—I **was** not there to urge them to a particular opinion one way or the other—they suddenly realize that they are being sold a pup. It is a worthless scheme and one that would not really meet the demands of football codes, particularly those in the southern part of the State. The Victorian Football League offers football clubs throughout the southern part of **this** State a far more comprehensive insurance cover scheme at a cheaper premium than that envisaged in the **proposed** legislation. It is about time honourable members saw the details of the legislation. That should happen before the Government rushes into a series of announcements designed to delude and **confuse** the people, creating the atmosphere that the decisions have already been taken, when they have not been taken at all. The style of government **exemplified** by the valuation notices and the sportsmen's insurance scheme has to be stopped. It must be reviewed. The Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council should receive the legislation first in the time-honoured proper way before attempts are made to implement administratively a scheme.

The penalties imposed for violent crime is another area of great concern to the community. Many people regard a series of decisions in the courts as powder-puff sentences by the judiciary of New South Wales. Suggestions have been made that harsher penalties should be imposed for crimes of violence. Another suggestion is that determinate sentences should be imposed without provision for so-called automatic remissions. The community and prisoners would then know the exact duration of a particular sentence. I do not know whether it is generally appreciated that a first offender is eligible to receive an automatic remission of one-third of his sentence. Prisoners convicted of rape, murder or other violent crimes are eligible for this remission. Prisoners who have previously served a sentence of up to twelve months are eligible for an automatic remission of one-quarter of their sentence.

A judge may impose what he considers to be a proper sentence, only to find that it can be reduced automatically as a result of the remissions to which I have referred. The parole system also has the effect of reducing sentences imposed by the courts. It then becomes a matter of debate whether the sentence imposed by a judge was sufficient to meet the expectations of the community, particularly in violent crimes. I realize that I must be careful not to criticize the judiciary. Judges have a special place in the

Mr Fischer}

community and there is a need to protect their independence and role in the legal system. However, judges must expect to receive a feedback of community views. When they are appointed to the bench they are not in some way sanctified or put in a position where people think they can do no wrong. A judge imposes what he believes to be a correct sentence, but members of the judiciary must relate to the community in the same way as members of Parliament. Judges must realize that powder-puff sentences should not be awarded for crimes of violence. Light sentences are certainly not a deterrent to criminals.

I am pleased to see that in the case of some violent crimes, including bank robberies involving the use of shotguns, sentences imposed by judges have been increased dramatically following appeals by the Crown. It is too easy for drug addicts or broken-down racecourse punters who are short of a dollar to pick up a sawn-off shotgun and rob a TAB office, a chemist shop or a bank, and get away with it. Criminals of this type must be hit hard and given a sentence appropriate to their crime. Judges need a fair go, too. The community ought to know the whole of the facts involved at the time a sentence is imposed. When a judge imposes a sentence he should know when the prisoner will become eligible for probation or parole. Many prisoners are sentenced and then laugh all the way to prison, knowing that they can become eligible for automatic remissions which will considerably shorten their sentences. A judge should be able to award a determinate sentence that will take into account any remissions to which the prisoner may become eligible in respect of probation, parole and rehabilitation. Amending legislation should be introduced in this respect. If automatic remissions were abolished, prisoners would receive a fair dinkum sentence that they—and the community—would **understand**—

Mr Day: They could be lashed.

Mr FISCHER: The Minister for Decentralisation and Development and Minister for Primary Industries suggests that prisoners should be lashed. The Country Party favours harsher penalties for violent crime, but what is done in the future is a matter for the community in the light of future developments. Any action on the reintroduction of capital punishment or corporal punishment should be decided having regard to the attitude of the community. Tonight I am concerned only that judges should impose fair dinkum sentences upon people found guilty of violent crimes. If determinate sentences are imposed, they would be understood fully by prisoners and the community at large. The community will then know how long a prisoner will serve in prison before becoming eligible for release on probation or parole.

I come now to another matter of concern in my electorate. The **Oaklands** coal deposits in my electorate are extensive, and the Mitsubishi company holds an exploration lease over these deposits. It is looking at the possibility of developing a mine in the area. The development could include a related infrastructure involving the manufacture of oil by conversion processes or the production of natural gas. Alternatively, coal from these deposits could be used to supply the needs of an electricity power station on the New South Wales grid. Recently the Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Mines and Minister for Energy granted Mitsubishi a two-year extension of its exploration licence. The Minister should be bending over backwards to encourage the development of coal deposits such as those at Oaklands, and the related benefits that would flow provided there were no adverse effects to the environment of the area. I call on him to make sure that he does not continue granting Mitsubishi exemption after exemption. Before the expiry of the current extended lease, the Minister should extract from the company a firm decision on whether it intends to go ahead with the development of the **Oaklands** coal deposits or whether it will forgo the lease and move on to other parts of the State.

A need exists for the development of the precious coal resources of this State. I am not satisfied that everything is being done to develop the Oaklands coal deposits. I hope it will not be long before a decision is made. I hope the work of the Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Mines and Minister for Energy and the efforts of Mitsubishi, the Department of Mines and many others will result in a breakthrough, and that this potentially magnificent decentralized project will come to fruition. I conclude by saying that the Government has cut short the work of Parliament by taking administrative action to proceed with a number of schemes before honourable members have had the opportunity of debating appropriate legislation on the floor of the House. Legislation should be presented in the Legislative Assembly before schemes are put into effect across the State by mere administrative action.

Mr RAMSAY (Wollongong) [8.50]: I congratulate the honourable member for Earlwood on his great win in the recent by-election and on his fine maiden speech in moving the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. I hope he will remain a member of Parliament for a long time. I am sure he will give loyal and faithful service to his party and to the people he represents.

I should like to bring to the attention of the House a gross distortion of facts put forward last week in another place by the Hon. E. P. Pickering. The honourable gentleman, in an attempt at self-praise, indicated that in 1968 he was the youngest member of the Duke of Edinburgh study conference. A group from the conference was set the task of studying the Wollongong region. He referred to the report of the group which observed that during World War II the Japanese resolved to invade Wollongong, but when they saw the little sentry boxes in every backyard in the area they were not game to attack. Fortunately, through the actions of the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports, the backlog of sewerage works in the Wollongong area has been overcome and all the backyard sentry boxes have disappeared.

The Hon. E. P. Pickering was quite correct when he said that a severe shortage of nursing homes for aged people existed in the city of Wollongong. However, he conveniently failed to say that the Wran Government is doing something about that matter. This Government, and in particular the Minister for Health, recognizes the need for proper planning and sufficient beds to care for the aged in Wollongong. No fewer than 408 aged persons who have lived their lives in Wollongong have been obliged to seek geriatric care on the tablelands or in Sydney or Newcastle. For eleven years the former Government ignored the plight of aged people in Wollongong.

Under the Wran Labor Government the Health Commission is on the move in Wollongong. An 80-bed nursing home is being built at Woonona. A 40-bed nursing home is under construction at Kiama. A 40-bed nursing home is being built at Gerrington, and a 40-bed nursing home is being built at Bowral. Additionally, an 80-bed private hospital is under construction at Nowra. A licence has been issued for the construction of a 150-bed hospital at Figtree. An application to build a 120-bed hospital at Woonona is before the Health Commission.

Dr Max Diment, Illawarra regional director of health, has recommended that a geriatric surgical hospital be built at Dapto where a suitable site is available. Next year it is proposed to build a 40-bed hospital at Warilla and a 40-bed hospital at Milton. The Wran Government programme that I have outlined is a far cry from the utterings made last week by the Hon. E. P. Pickering in another place. It is expected that within eighteen months the shortage of nursing home beds for the aged in Wollongong will be overcome. A new 120-bed hospital is soon to be commenced at Shellharbour. This will take the strain off hospitals at Wollongong, Bulli and

Port Kembla. At Coniston a 120-bed surgical hospital has been commenced. **At Figtree** a 120-bed surgical hospital is under construction and has reached roof level. These are the magnificent achievements of the Minister for Health and the Wran Government.

The Legislative Council was told by the Hon. E. P. Pickering that there is a serious shortage of beds in the Wollongong region. I have taken out some figures relating to the situation last week. Wollongong Hospital had occupied 349 of its 412 available beds. Port Kembla Hospital had 129 of its 179 available beds occupied. Bulli Hospital had a bed occupancy of only 64 per cent. The honourable gentleman in another place grossly distorted the facts and I am putting the record straight. He said that the New South Wales Minister for Health had ordered the closure of fourteen beds at Bulli Hospital. What he failed to say was that his own colleague in Canberra, the federal Minister for Health, had ordered the closure of those beds and that that order was supported by the New South Wales Minister. The fourteen beds in question were located on a verandah which was considered unsuitable and substandard.

The Hon. E. P. Pickering did not mention that following modern additions, an extra twenty-three beds were put into use at Bulli Hospital prior to that verandah section being closed. He failed to mention also that the hospital was ordered to keep within its budget. Last year Bulli Hospital made no attempt to keep within its budget and went over it by \$624,000 or 33 per cent. The hospital has widened its area of intake to include **Albion** Park in the south and Helensburgh in the north in order to maintain a high bed occupancy. The fact is that there is no waiting list at any of the three hospitals in the city of Wollongong.

I congratulate and offer thanks to the Minister for Health and the **Labor** Government on their magnificent achievements in public health services, particularly in upgrading Wollongong Hospital by the installation of a renal unit, field of view gamma cameras and modern x-ray equipment, involving expenditure of many hundreds of thousands of dollars. The need for these advances was ignored by the former coalition Government.

Another subject referred to by the Hon. E. P. Pickering in his address in another place was what he referred to as the Safcol fiasco. I received a mention in his discussion. It is true that I was heavily involved in an endeavour to get Safcol to process fish at Port Kembla. With my experience on the parliamentary select committee inquiring into the fishing industry and my association with the fishermen's co-operative in Wollongong over the past thirty years, I recognized the need for a local fish-processing plant which would offer employment to some of the unemployed women in the Wollongong region. The Hon. E. P. **Pickering**, made a number of misleading and incorrect utterances. He suggested that the socialist **Labor** Government had virtually made it impossible for a fish-processing industry to be established in the Wollongong area. That is far from the truth.

The facts of the matter are that Safcol's interest in Port Kembla goes back to 1973 when the former coalition Government was in office. I have correspondence to support what I say. More than three years before **Labor** came to office Safcol contacted the former Minister for Decentralisation and Development, the Hon. Sir John Fuller, about establishing a fish-processing plant in the Wollongong district. Some time ago I spoke to Safcol and offered to make representation to the coalition Government on its behalf in an effort to establish a plant in the Wollongong area. I suggested a site at Port Kembla outer harbour, which was eventually supported by the consultants, Soros, **Langworth** and **McKenzie**.

It is wrong to attempt to blame the **Labor** Government for Safcol's refusal to accept the terms offered to it. The previous Government had three years in which to do something about establishing the industry, but it did absolutely nothing except write some letters. When the **Labor** Government came to office some delay was occasioned through the need to obtain support of fish co-operatives along the coast. Because of the policy of the Fish Marketing Authority it was necessary for the Government to write to all the fishermen's co-operatives along the New South Wales coast to get their acquiescence in Safcol setting up a fish-processing plant in this State. Finally agreement was obtained.

Safcol told me in the early days that all they needed was a lease of land and a wholesaler's licence and they would be able to process and market fish in New South Wales. The Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports agreed to give Safcol a lease of land near the old No. 1 jetty, which had been the coal jetty at Port Kembla. The former Government thought that a site at No. 4 jetty would be the most suitable for the purpose. It was wrong. That site would have required something like \$4 million worth of fill, and its use for fish processing would have cut off an area that is used by many boat owners, owners of pleasure craft, fishermen and the like.

Finally, and contrary to the statement made by the Hon. E. P. Pickering, **Soros** Langworth and **McKenzie** were appointed by this Government at considerable expense to consider the project. They recommended that the site be at No. 1 jetty. The Hon. E. P. Pickering said that it was swamp land. I do not know whether it is possible to build railway lines over swamp land, but I have known the area ever since I was a lad, I have been there often, and I know that it has always been serviced by rail, not by submarine. There is a rail link near the jetty. The company said that it would cost something like \$200,000 to repair the jetty, and argued that even though it did the work, the jetty would be used by everybody. The company said that the New South Wales Government should repair the jetty at public expense. The Government ultimately agreed to spend \$43,000 on the jetty, as well as undertaking to ~~make~~ the site ~~habitable~~, to attend to the access road, and to provide power and water. The Government had agreed to spend \$93,000 on works around the proposed plant. Still the company was not satisfied. It then wanted the Government to construct the factory building **and** to provide all the necessary machinery. Who would not want a start in business like that?

The Minister for Decentralisation and Development and Minister for Primary Industries was most concerned to help the company, as was the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports. I just about drove them up the wall worrying them about the matter. The Minister for Conservation and Minister for Water Resources also was most helpful in trying to have the factory established at Port Kembla. I learnt later that one of the major reasons why Safcol would not go to Port Kembla was the company's fear that the supply of **gemfish** would not be enough to keep the plant operating for more than five months a year.

Safcol wanted the Government to lease it land, to give it a wholesaler's licence, to build the factory, and to put in the machinery, even though the company is one of the biggest of its kind in the world, and certainly the biggest in Australia. If the company had got into financial difficulties, it could have walked out and left the Government holding the bag. In another place, the Hon. E. P. Pickering said that the **socialist** Government of New South Wales had chased a fish processing plant out of Wollongong and that there was no longer a plant of that sort on the South Coast. That is wrong. As you know, Mr Speaker, you and I, at the request of the Minister for

Mr Ramsay]

Decentralisation and Development and Minister for Primary Industries, who was ill, opened a fish processing factory in Wollongong area only four or five weeks ago. That factory is operating successfully. Over the past several weeks, the factory has processed something like 122 tonnes of **gemfish**.

Another interesting point is that Latty Associates is prepared to set up a consortium to process fish in Port Kembla. It claims it can borrow up to \$100,000 for the purpose. Discussions about the matter have been held with the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports, and he has agreed that if Latty Associates can form a consortium, he will lease them the land set aside originally for Safcol. The Hon. E. P. Pickering said that in view of the help given to the fish processing plant at Unanderra, the Government through the Minister for Decentralisation and Development and Minister for Primary Industries had spent a fair amount of money on this development. In other words, he admits that the Government has helped in every way in trying to develop that type of industry in the Wollongong area.

The Hon. E. P. Pickering said also that the Government has spent \$1.4 million on little places like Yenda and Yanco. I spoke to the Minister for Conservation and Minister for Water Resources about this matter and he said that that was the first he had heard of it. He added that if he knew that sort of money was available, he could have made good use of it. Further the Hon. E. P. Pickering said that in Wollongong, and in particular in the electorate of Corrimal, which you represent, Mr Speaker, and in my own electorate of Wollongong, work had virtually stopped on the Mt Ousley Road and that all the money the former Government had put into it to complete the work would be of no avail. I have been assured that work will continue on the Mt Ousley Road and on to Gwynneville to the bypass.

Over the past ten years road users in New South Wales have paid the Commonwealth \$2,000 million in fuel excise, but the Commonwealth has returned less than \$1,000 million of it to the State for road development. That is incredible. The Hon. E. P. Pickering talked about the plea of the citizens of Wollongong for a freeway. The northern distributor has been under consideration. Only a tiny part of it would be in my electorate; most of it would be in the electorate of Corrimal. The Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways told me today that the northern distributor will continue, and the work will get under way a year earlier than originally planned. I am sure that will be pleasing to the people of Wollongong and of the South Coast in general.

The Hon. E. P. Pickering referred also to what he called the coal loader bungle, stating that twelve months after the Government came to office it decided not to go ahead with the Botany Bay coal loader, but the Government still did not know whether there would be a coal loader at Port Kembla. Further, he said that the Government did not know whether it would be an offshore loader or an inshore loader. I point out that the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports has stated that it will be an inshore loader. The Hon. E. P. Pickering went on to say that if it were an inshore loader, it would be able to take vessels of only up to 10 000 tonnes. A man of his experience in the coalmining industry would know better than that. The truth is that when the previous Government deepened Port Kembla harbour the only part it did not deepen was the coal berth. That meant that for the fifteen years that coal berth has been in operation, the vessels that came into load coal and coke could take only a maximum of 55 000 tonnes. That is still the position because the previous Government failed to appreciate the need to deepen the coal berth. As a result, if a vessel takes on 55 000 tonnes at low tide it can touch the bottom of the harbour, and has to wait for a fairly high tide to be able to float off. That is a serious situation.

The Hon. E. P. **Pickering** also mentioned ship repair facilities. The Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports has indicated that when the coal loader is well on the way at Port Kembla, work will commence on a new **deep-draught** or multi-purpose berth, where it will be possible to take some of the largest ships **afloat**. Further, this berth will be used for ship repair. In the meantime, while the coal berth is being built, other facilities in the Port Kembla harbour will be used for ship repair.

I now come to one of the greatest lies of all time. The Hon. E. P. **Pickering** said in the **local** press that no contacts had occurred and no offers had been made to the previous Government to finance the coal berth. I refer honourable members to a letter dated 19th March, 1975, written by Mr Austin, the chairman of the Combined Collieries Association, to the Hon. Leon **Punch**, who **was** then the Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports. That letter, in part, stated:

It is evident from the summary that the existing loaders practical capacity is exceeded by future contracted tonnage, not to mention tonnage outside the consortium which will continue to use Port Kembla until an alternative is available.

The understanding of the consortium in regard to Port Kembla development is that Government funds for the work are unlikely to be available to allow an immediate beginning for the project. As it is important for the works to proceed as soon as practicable we have sought guidance from financiers, the principal advice coming from the Australian Industry Development Corporation. Whilst there is more detail available on alternative schemes of financing, we set out below one basic proposal summarised from the **AIDC's** letter of 11th March, copy attached.

First—management. Derived from the **financing** scheme hereunder it is suggested that the entire coal loader facilities, employees, maintenance arrangements, etc., be leased to a corporation owned by your Government (50 per cent) and private interests (50 per cent). Operations would continue on a common user basis, all employees maintaining their present rights and conditions. The corporation would borrow funds to build the new land and marine structures on the leased site. As the landowner your Government would reclaim sufficient land for the facilities, the cost of reclamation being met by an increase in user fees over a three-year period.

The Hon. E. P. **Pickering**, a member of this Parliament, denied that there had been any contact between the Liberal—Country party Government and the colliery owners, but it is clear that the colliery owners approached the Government in an effort to help finance such a scheme. The Hon. E. P. **Pickering** claims that this did not take place, whereas we have evidence that it did. Also, this Government is going ahead with the development of a coal berth at Port Kembla. I assure the Government that the Miners Federation does not need the Hon. E. P. **Pickering** to tell them what they should do and what they want. They are quite capable, and have been for the past 100 years, to determine their own future. The four State members in the Illawarra area believe that the coal berth should go ahead with the strictest environmental control, for it will help the viability of the industry and the economy of Wollongong and New South Wales as a whole.

Never have I seen a speech containing so many inaccuracies and misleading statements as I have in that of the Hon. E. P. **Pickering**. For example, he said that I, together with representatives from the trade-union movement, tried to get a conference with the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports, but was fobbed off to the Metropolitan Water Sewerage and Drainage Board. I assure him that

Mr Ramsay]

no approach was made to the Deputy Premier. Off my own bat I asked the chairman of the water board to meet representatives of the Miners Federation with a view to ascertaining the policy of the board. It was a very successful meeting, but at no time did the Minister fob us off to the water board.

I am pleased that the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports has agreed to the development of Wollongong harbour. Within a few weeks a contract will be let for water to be laid on to the area for the fishermen. Although the previous Government allocated money to Country Party and Liberal Party electorates for the provision of power to individual vessels in harbours, this Government is not allocating money for this purpose in Wollongong harbour. Also, sewerage services will be laid on. I am pleased that the Minister has agreed to the improvements for pleasure craft in the Wollongong area, and also at Bellambi in the Corrmal electorate. In a short time \$400,000 will be spent on these purposes. This will be a great boon to the people with pleasure craft in Wollongong, and also for those who come from other areas to enjoy this type of sport. Concern is being expressed about the police rescue craft at Wollongong. The police want a bigger craft to cope with the high seas they experience from time to time. At present they have a 19-foot boat, but it is giving some concern in those conditions. I hope that the responsible Minister or the Premier will see that they get a larger boat so that they can give the highest standard of service when performing their search and rescue work.

Mr SCHIPP (Wagga Wagga) [9.19]: I welcome to this Chamber the mover of the motion, the honourable member for Earlwood. While I express disappointment at his winning the seat at the recent by-election, I am sure that the tide will turn and he will not be here for long. I hope that his stay here is pleasant but short. While I have been listening to speakers on the Government side in this debate I have been wondering what they would have had to talk about if they had not attacked honourable members on this side. I should have thought that Ministers who have spoken would have turned their attention to the Address given by His Excellency the Governor and expounded the programme that was so grandly announced when the session opened, but that has not been the position. Senior Ministers have, in effect, been electioneering for members in neighbouring electorates in relation to whatever they are responsible for. As well, they have attacked honourable members on this side. Unfortunately they have not made any constructive contribution to the debate. We heard the general Address but we have had no detail given to us. I believe that is a sad commentary on this Government.

I should have preferred to hear what the Minister for Lands had to say before speaking in this debate. In March this year he gave an assurance to this House that during the recess he would turn his mind to preparing a policy on national parks and on his portfolio generally. That assurance can be found in *Hansard* but we have heard nothing from him about what he has done to give effect to his promise. He has not spoken in this debate. I believe the people of this State are still wondering exactly what the Government's policy on national parks is all about. If this debate is cut off before the Minister for Lands addresses the House I do not know when he will honour his commitment to prepare and deliver a White Paper on the Government's policy on national parks.

Before dealing with the Governor's Speech I want to say a few words about my own electorate. It is really not correct to call it the Governor's Speech because, as we all know, it was prepared for him by the Government and it turned out to be nothing more than a propaganda statement in preparation for the election. I admired the Governor's composure while he delivered that Speech, with great presence, as

part of his duties. I could not help looking at the faces of some of the members of the **Labor** Party on the other side of the Chamber while the Speech was being delivered and seeing the smirks on their faces because they knew the Speech was a lot of ballyhoo. There is no doubt about that.

Mr Flaherty: That is a shocking thing to say about the Governor's Speech.

Mr SCHIPP: I am speaking about members of the **Labor** Party who could not keep straight faces while the Speech was being read because they knew that most of what was stated would never come to fruition, and the balance was pure electioneering.

Wagga Wagga is Australia's leading natural growth centre and I believe that has been recognized by the present Government as well as by the federal Government. If one refers to the census figures for the period 1971–76 one sees that the growth rate at Wagga Wagga, 3.7 per cent, exceeded that in **all** the other inland centres of this State and throughout the nation. Wagga Wagga's growth rate is more than three times the national average of 1.2 per cent. That is one reason why I am pleased with the performance in Wagga Wagga in the past three years. I do not know whether the capital works money being spent there represents small leftovers of commitments from the previous Government, but I hope we shall continue to work together to keep Wagga Wagga going. The area has proved itself by performance and it would be sad if anything were done to restrict the natural growth that is occurring there.

Mr Flaherty: It will continue but Wagga Wagga will be better represented after the next election.

Mr SCHIPP: The growth that has occurred has placed a great strain on local government. I believe this Government should assist local government in the area to raise funds to provide for the future needs of the area. When a city is growing at well above the average rate, local government services must be provided accordingly and this Government should see that the necessary funds are made available to enable Wagga Wagga to continue to progress. A disturbing feature has been the rate of unemployment in the city. In the past two years unemployment there has grown by about 70 per cent. My approaches to the Premier for an allocation out of the \$8 million set aside for unemployment grants were to no avail. I was told that when the unemployment figures for Wagga Wagga exceed the figures for the rest of the State it will share in those funds. The Government still denies us a share of this money.

Generally speaking, as I said before, I am satisfied with the progress that has been made. Quite a large sum of money has been spent on the base hospital in preparation for the next major stage of its development, which I hope will be announced in the next financial year. The schools of the district have been kept in good shape. Large sums of money have been spent that will result in three new schools being brought into operation. A number of announcements have been made about schools in the Wagga Wagga area but whether they will be funded in the present programme remains to be seen. I hope that the Government has been sincere in making these announcements and that it will carry out its promises. What induces me to express concern is that in the latter part of 1976, during the first year of office of this Government, so many announcements were made about a certain school that I started to think that there would be schools on every street corner. The same building programme was announced on about ten different occasions and it demonstrates **how** well the Government's propaganda machine was working and still is working. I am a little concerned about whether **all** the grand announcements that we are now hearing will ever come to fruition. I believe that we shall have to keep the pressure on the Government to get the goodies that it has promised.

Expansion of the technical college at Wagga Wagga is urgently needed. The present technical college would be one of the largest in country New South Wales but it is bursting at the seams. This has come about following a great increase in **pre**-employment courses. It should be remembered that Wagga Wagga technical college is now servicing a great regional district as well as the city itself. The city now has a population in excess of 36 000 in a very densely settled district and a number of small outlying towns. The pressure on the technical college is great. I hope that money will be provided quickly to enable the expansion of the technical college to be undertaken. We know that the Government has been spending money in certain electorates, throwing out a line in an endeavour to win seats, but it must be remembered **that** the Government cannot electioneer with all the money that it spends. Government funds should be distributed on the basis of needs and I assure the Government that the needs of the Wagga Wagga technical college are very great indeed.

A residential technical college could be set up there without the expenditure of very much money, by conversion of the southern campus, which has been vacated by the Riverina College of Advanced Education. That would give sufficient room to cater for the rural studies courses that are becoming popular in country technical colleges. I believe these courses are an excellent idea. They provide instruction tailored to the type of job opportunity in the locality. At present this college has no land available for agricultural purposes. The introduction of a farm apprenticeship course, which is part of Liberal-Country party policy, as part of the technical college system would require additional land.

The building of stage 2 of the Wagga Wagga base hospital is urgently needed. It was very high on the previous Government's list of priorities but this Government has allowed it to slip. The present Minister for Health asked us to cool it for twelve months and said he would make sure that it was included in this funding programme. At the time he gave the excuse that the bulk of the department's funds were being expended at **Westmead** and said that when the Government got that off its plate the Wagga Wagga project would be restored to its priority. I have been concerned when I have seen works proceed in the electorates of Murrumbidgee, Monaro and Gosford ahead of priorities that were laid down by the Health Commission. I trust that the Minister will now keep his promises and restore to its former priority phase one of the second stage of the Wagga Wagga base hospital, which is estimated to cost \$9 million.

At Wagga Wagga a major regional referral hospital is being developed which will bring sophisticated health services to the country and will save country people travelling to the city. Major hospitals at Griffith and Wagga Wagga will give a good spread of health services in that locality. I have been advised that the first building priority of the Health Commission in the Riverina is for the next stage of the Wagga Wagga base hospital, I hope that the Government does not on this occasion by-pass that for election purposes. The other large project that is planned for Wagga Wagga, which is very much needed to allow the city to adjust its planning for the growth that is occurring, is the Gobba bridge across the Murrumbidgee River downstream from the present Hampton bridge. This bridge will be slightly shorter than the bridge that crosses the Murrumbidgee River at Gundagai, which is a few feet longer than the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Prior to the 1976 election the Labor Party promised that the Gobba bridge would be commenced in three years. Anyone who gave any thought to it at all would know that it was only a Labor Party throw-away line, because a bridge of that dimensions takes from three to five years to plan. There was no hope that it could be started. The present Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways

was not Minister then—he was Opposition spokesman for transport and highways—but I was surprised that he let his name be used as supporting that proposal. However, I record here that the location has been approved and the Minister for Transport and Minister for Highways has agreed to a meeting in eighteen months' time to talk about financing this project and to discuss its priority; that is, if he is still the Minister. I hope that he will not be, and that I shall be meeting a Minister of my own political persuasion.

Another matter of concern is the slowing down of the Housing Commission programme. Figures indicate that in the past twelve months this Government has completed approximately half the number of houses that were completed in the previous twelve months. That is a disappointment for people who are waiting for homes. I have not calculated it completely but the number of notifications of new homes becoming available in Wagga Wagga indicates a dramatic slowing down of the housing programme. I am pleased to say that a 17-unit aged persons accommodation block is being completed at the moment. A new subdivision, planned to be opened soon by the Housing Commission, will provide much needed building sites. The other area of concern in the city is geriatric or frail-aged nursing accommodation. Though that may appear to be a federal responsibility, my information from the federal Minister for Health is that this Government has a part to play in funding this type of accommodation. Despite the efforts of the federal Government in funding projects put forward by The Haven in Wagga Wagga, assisted by the Lions Club and the Baptist Church, which is spending \$1 million on aged persons' accommodation, and Calvary base hospital which is about to enter that field of accommodation, there is a great need for frail-aged nursing accommodation. That comes about because, once accommodation is built for normal aged persons, people from outlying areas and other towns are attracted to the city. As those people grow older and have a need for nursing accommodation, they have nowhere to go. One of the great difficulties and dramas of a family's life is that when relatives reach an age when they need permanent nursing care, having been taken away from the family home earlier, suddenly they have to go back into the home. Most honourable members would recognize how difficult it is. I should like this Government to turn its attention to the provision of frail-aged accommodation. There is a great need for it.

Another problem that worries us in Wagga Wagga is the amalgamation of councils. When something is too hard for the Government it is swept under the carpet and allowed to lie there, with the idea that if the Government does not ruffle the feathers, it will have a smoother run at the elections. That has become the style of this Government—do nothing; say nothing; if it is too hard, put it into the too-hard basket and bring it out later. Council amalgamations will not go away. We cannot have local government authorities losing confidence because they do not know how big they will be, what is to happen to them and what funding they will need. This has been a bad exercise on the part of the Government, not only in the Wagga Wagga electorate but also right across the State. In almost all electorates one finds the same problem. Local government authorities are unable to carry out their jobs properly because they do not know which way the Government will jump. Two years ago a statement was made here, "No pussy-footing on amalgamations," yet we have had this fiddling and fooling around. The chairman of the Boundaries Commission is operating on the Government's instructions to force these amalgamations through but he has been told, "Just lay off for a while until the election is out of the road and we can get on with the job."

Mr Schipp]

The opening part of the Governor's Speech dealt with constitutional democracy. I adhere to the judgment that I arrived at prior to the recent referendum, when I said that it would be the rawest deal the country people have ever experienced. This so-called constitutional **democracy** will see a great diminution of country representation in this Parliament. There is no doubt about that.

Mr Kearns: The Country Party.

Mr SCHIPP: I am **talking** about country representatives. I back my judgment that soon country people will regret that they ever supported that referendum proposal. One only has to look at the figures of where the population lives. If one looks at the list of candidates put forward at this stage they will reflect a fair proportion of country people, but I am sure that the city vote will win out in the long run. Where you look for the votes is where the candidates will come from. This will react very much against country people. It was a false campaign. Members on the Government benches know very well that in any fair campaign the yes-no arguments are publicized. The managers of the free conference and the Premier, as well as the Minister for Planning and Environment in the other place, said that a proper yes-no campaign would be prepared and distributed well in advance of the referendum. We know very well that no such campaign was prepared. I do not know how many members are aware that 150 country newspapers protested to the Premier a few days before the referendum that they had had no advertisements whatsoever inserted in their pages on any aspect of the referendum. No attempt was made to distribute a valid no case at all. Country members had the no case sitting on their desks——

Mr Rogan: Would it have made any difference?

Mr SCHIPP: It could have made a deal of **difference**. I do not say that it would have won, but it would have awakened people to what should have been obvious to them.

I was interested to hear the comments of the honourable member for **Sturt** regarding redistribution, which is the big question. We shall handle the first problem, but if redistribution is carried out under **Labor** Party policies six country representatives in this Parliament will be eliminated. The balance of representation will revert to the Sydney–Newcastle–Wollongong bloc. I call on the Premier to announce on behalf of the Government prior to the election what will be done by way of redistribution under his guidelines. I know that the Government's numbers man is supposed to be the Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Mines and Minister for Energy. We observed how he tried to have adopted the horrible list system of voting for the reformed upper House. It was designed with one purpose in mind: to have a **Labor** government entrenched in New South Wales for as long as possible. If the Minister has his way he will attempt to do the same thing again.

Under a **Labor** Party redistribution six country seats will be eliminated. If the Government goes to the extreme and reverts to the one man one vote nonsense up to ten country seats will be eliminated. Country people must be awakened to the situation. It is up to the Government and country members of the Australian **Labor** Party to say where they stand with redistribution. One observes a federal electorate running from **Griffith** and **Leeton** to Broken Hill. People in those areas will be battling to see their member once in three years. As their present representative is a member of the **Labor** Party they will be battling even harder. That is the type of representation that Government supporters are trying to thrust on country people.

Mr Kearns: That was your redistribution.

Mr SCHIPP: I do not think it was. If it was our redistribution I do not agree with it. Country people should have ample opportunity to contact their member and talk to him. In the cities the parliamentary representatives can walk from one end of the electorate to the other. The other matter I wish to highlight is the so-called integrity in government. I observed the smiles on the faces of Government supporters when His Excellency the Governor swallowed hard and said the word integrity. Government supporters knew that it was not correct. The honourable member for Dubbo referred to the integrity in government of the Minister of Justice and Minister for Housing. The honourable member referred to the Minister employing a Labor candidate. According to the honourable member for Dubbo, this particular candidate has not done one minute's work. The Minister's aim was to have him not carry out his function as a police prosecutor but to let him do his campaigning. Every day the Premier misleads the Parliament when answering questions put to him. He races round the country **grandstanding** on country issues,

Mr Wran: It is a pity the honourable member was not in the country more often. He is always in the city.

Mr SCHIPP: The Premier should prove it. I am in the country.

Mr Wran: He should look after his constituents.

Mr SCHIPP: The Premier should not talk about being in the country. He runs round with Cabinet meetings. I remind the Premier of the occasion when a Cabinet meeting was to be held at **Albury**. The newspapers said the Premier was ill in Sydney. They described the resulting Cabinet meeting in the Premier's absence as a sham and a farce. The Cabinet did not have its grand leader present so there was nothing left to do. That incident did not attract a good editorial. What I am saying is not against the Premier but against the balance of the Cabinet. The matter on which I wish to comment particularly about that Cabinet meeting is that the local parliamentary representative and the mayor of Albury had to sit in the body of the hall but the Labor Party candidate was trotted up to sit on the stage. If that is not a misuse of authority I do not know what is.

One hears announcements of grand programmes for particular electorates. They are but normal programmes with a little bit of icing on the top. The Government's attitude is to try to sell them to the people, continue with the bally-hoo and show that it is doing a great job. All the other electorates are receiving a similar deal, but particular electorates receive a few extra dollars here and there to make the Government's efforts sound grand. I do not believe that country people are gullible. Country people to whom I have spoken after these great Cabinet meetings have been held have said that they will take the goodies but they know that it is all a front. If Government supporters think what they are doing will do them a great deal of good they are in for a sad shock.

Mr Wran: That is an insult to country people.

Mr SCHIPP: I am not insulting country people. They are sufficiently wide awake to appreciate what is happening. Typical of the Government style of doing things is its announcement in respect of three schools in Wagga Wagga. Announcements were made about each school separately and then they were made about the schools collectively. That happened about ten times in something like twelve months before work on the schools got under way. One would be excused for thinking that there was to be a school on every corner.

I am disturbed by the attitude of the news media. When one asks representatives of the news media in this Parliament and elsewhere how they think the Premier is going they say, "Great." When one asks them what he is doing, they say, "Nothing, but he is doing it well." It is a sad state of affairs when the news media condones this do-nothing, sweep-it-under-the-carpet type of government. They condone it as being smart. We know that the Premier's great propaganda machine is costing the State some \$1 million a month. One hears stories of the great extravaganza each week for the main purpose of having the press present, to woo them and get them on side to sell them the story. It is said also that the Premier has make-up on permanently in expectation of a television camera being within short distance. It is all a sham, a front and bally-hoo. If one asks the news media, "If you take Mr Wran away who is left sitting on the benches?" their answer is, "Very little." All that is left is the tired old men of the Government with no initiatives or new ideas. The bureaucracy is running out of control. When the Parliament resumes after a long recess honourable members have to sit about while the Government pads its programme, as it has no legislation prepared. Then when the parliamentary session is coming to an end legislation is pushed through with the request that it pass quickly through the House otherwise this, that or the other will be held up. I recall when legislation concerning trotting came before the House honourable members were asked not to block it or it would hold up this or that. The Opposition referred to the problems that the legislation would bring about.

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

Mr KEARNS (Bankstown) [9.49]: I join other honourable members in congratulating the honourable member for **Earlwood** on his maiden speech at the commencement of which he moved the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. The honourable member for **Earlwood** had an electoral victory of great magnitude. It is an indication of the ability of the voters in **Earlwood** to assess the **worth** of their new member and a remarkable expression of confidence in and endorsement of the Premier and his Government. For the past two and a half years that Government has had the responsibility of governing New South Wales. During that time it has drawn increasing support from the community as a result of its constructive, responsible and reasonable approach to governing New South Wales and overcoming the many problems in the community.

Having listened to the **efforts** of members of the Opposition in this debate, I say with confidence that the Premier and his Government will occupy the Treasury benches for a long time. The honourable member for Wagga Wagga, **who** has just concluded his speech, gave a meandering performance that took honourable members over a large area, but he said nothing. He mentioned the Address by the Governor when opening this session of the Parliament, and the honourable member alleged that it was an election policy speech on the part of the Government. I remind the honourable member for Wagga Wagga that the most notorious example of abuse of **this** type of speech **was** when the former Premier of New South Wales, the Hon. Sir Robert **Askin**, used the Queen in her speech at the opening of the Sydney Opera House as a means of opening his election campaign. It is improper for the Opposition to accuse the Government of actions of which it was guilty but of which the Government has not been guilty.

I draw attention to the remarks of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition this afternoon. If they were an example of what can be expected from the Opposition as a policy for the future of New South Wales, the reason why Liberal Party and Country Party members are occupying the Opposition benches here and will continue to do so is quite obvious. It was the most disgraceful exhibition I have witnessed in **the** House for many years. It reflected no credit on the Deputy Leader of the Opposition

or on those honourable members who formed the chorus behind him in his hypocritical and disgraceful enunciation of alleged offences of this Government. The performance of the Government is in direct contrast to the performance of federal colleagues of honourable members opposite in this House. Results that flow from the actions of the Government are much more in the interests and to the benefit of the community than their actions, typical examples of which were seen in the recent federal Budget.

Mr Cameron: It was a courageous document.

Mr KEARNS: The only courageous thing about it was that anybody should have the effrontery to present it to the community as a cure for the ills that beset the nation and can be directly attributed to the policies of the Fraser Government. The performance of the New South Wales Government is in direct contrast with the policies and performance of Prime Minister Fraser. His main occupation in recent weeks has been to try to restore his shattered credibility and vainly to endeavour to conceal from the public the divisions and factions within the ranks of his Government. Malcolm Fraser and his Ministers—those to whom he still speaks—engage in petty politicking while the problems of grave concern to the community are ignored and neglected.

Time does not permit me to canvass all the trials and tribulations confronting people because of the policies of the Fraser Government, but I must draw attention, as was done earlier in the debate, to one factor in those policies that concerns all honourable members. It is the failure of the average citizen to respond to the so-called economic panaceas of the Prime Minister as he pursues his objective of zero inflation. People are afraid for the future. That includes the future of their jobs—those who are fortunate enough to have jobs. The Premier has said that he has regretted that the Commonwealth Government's one-sided attack on inflation is deliberately aggravating unemployment.

The State Government has successfully pursued a balanced economic policy aimed at reducing inflation and unemployment. The Premier intimated publicly a few days ago that it is the intention of the Government to continue those policies. Consumer price index figures for the June quarter show that New South Wales has the lowest inflation rate of all the States and is the major contributor to lowering the national average rate of inflation. At the same time, New South Wales has the most impressive record of all the States over the past years in containing unemployment. In the past year unemployment grew by only 2 per cent in New South Wales, but in the other five States it increased by 30 per cent. The New South Wales Government rejects the negative policies of Canberra in favour of positive policies to lower inflation. In 1976 the New South Wales Government introduced a 20 per cent cut in fares on public transport. The initiative has been the subject of criticism from the Opposition.

Mr Cameron: It did not work.

Mr KEARNS: What does the honourable member for Northcott mean? It worked to the extent that the people who patronize public transport are now paying the fares that were paid in 1971 during the time of the former Government. If that is not an indication of a positive initiative, I have yet to be told what is. The people who are able to buy their weekly rail tickets for work, or the housewives who pay 20 per cent less for tickets to go shopping, are convinced that the fare reduction is a good thing. Their convictions **will** be reflected at the ballot-box when an opportunity is afforded them to vote on the merits of the 20 per cent reduction.

[Interruption]

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

Mr KEARNS: Ratepayers have had to face a rise of about 6 per cent in local government rates on average, in each of the past two years. A maximum increase of 12 per cent and 9 per cent respectively in those years occurred in water rates. That was in marked contrast with the last two years of the former Government. Doubtless the honourable member for Northcott would like to say that the increases were justified because at that time council rates rose by 17 per cent and 31 per cent for the two years respectively, and water board rates rose by 30 per cent in the last year of the Liberal Country party Government. The Government can be proud of the fact that in the two budgets it has introduced no tax increases have occurred. I do not doubt that that record will be continued in the third budget that the Government will introduce. That is in striking contrast with the two budgets of the former Government which increased stamp duty, poker machine tax, racing taxes, payroll tax, liquor licence fees and tax on cigarettes. The former Government kept up with its federal counterparts in that regard.

Every housewife and motorist will applaud the Minister for Consumer Affairs and Minister for Co-operative Societies in his efforts to contain the prices of basic, everyday commodities, especially bread and petrol. Motorists should compare his efforts with what was contained in the last Fraser horror Budget. The comparison would reflect very much to the credit of the Minister because of his realistic appreciation of the burdens under which the community is suffering. The Wran Government has shown that it is not necessary to be negative in endeavouring to control and contain inflation.

We should not be negative about unemployment, which is probably the greatest social issue confronting the community today. The general trend of unemployment in Australia is discouraging. It is widely acknowledged, even by members of the Fraser Government, that the Commonwealth should give a controlled stimulus to the economy. But far from doing this, the recent Commonwealth Budget gave no stimulus, controlled or otherwise. Notwithstanding that, the unemployment position in New South Wales is improving by comparison with other States. In the past twelve months the level of unemployment in this State has risen by only 3 per cent whereas the lowest percentage increase in other States was in Victoria, where the increase was 21 per cent. It is no accident that New South Wales now has a level of unemployment lower than the national average. Since the Wran Government took office in May, 1976, it has been concerned at the level of unemployment in this State. More than that, it has been aware of the hardship, the suffering, the economic loss and the social consequences of unemployment.

This Government has been aware of the impact of unemployment not only on the community in general but also—and more importantly—on the individual. This Government has taken, and it is still taking, many initiatives to ease unemployment. I propose to mention a few. In March 1977 the Government instituted a special \$30 million unemployment relief programme. In the same month it set up a payroll tax rebate scheme for country industries. The Government's 1977–78 capital works programme amounted to \$1,850 million, an increase of 18 per cent on the previous year. The last State Budget contained payroll tax exemptions in respect of young person employed in their first job. Moreover, it provided an additional \$15 million for housing. That Budget contained provision for \$8 million for local government employment programmes and payroll tax exemptions for small companies. Further, it provided for extra employment opportunities for apprentices and young people employed by government instrumentalities. A great number of other actions taken by this Government contributed towards a reduction in unemployment.

Although it is recognized that there will be no significant reduction in unemployment without a change in the federal Government's economic policies, it can be said that this Government, under Premier Wran, will continue its efforts to increase employment. A reduction in unemployment in this State must come through a recovery in the private sector. The Premier has already shown his wish to assist this recovery. The Government's efforts in this respect will continue in the future. I am certain that industry generally will recognize the Government's goodwill in this regard and will help ensure that the Government is given the opportunity to continue these efforts will into the future.

I said that time does not permit me to mention everything done by the Fraser Government to the detriment of the citizens, not merely in New South Wales but throughout the whole of Australia. Surely the uncertainty, confusion and concern created by the federal Government's major changes to the national health scheme in the past three years must be condemned. Though the new health proposals are to commence on 1st November next, already the federal Minister for Health is preparing us for another change in the scheme within twelve months of the start of the new scheme.

The acting president of the New South Wales branch of the Australian Medical Association, Dr Ian Collins, and David Neely, president of the New South Wales branch of the Australian Association of Social Workers, in separate letters to the editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald* last Friday severely criticized the new proposals. Their criticism is endorsed and enlarged on by the community generally. Dr Collins claims correctly that patients and doctors are utterly confused and he describes the present situation as an administrative bungle. Yet the Commonwealth Department of Health had full-page advertisements in Sunday's newspapers—and they were repeated yesterday and probably today—featuring Australia's so-called new easy-to-understand health benefits plan.

The Commonwealth Minister for Health, the Hon. R. J. D. Hunt, in his own public statements has admitted that the new plan is not easy to understand. In fact, he does not understand it. He cannot define a socially disadvantaged person. He intended to leave this sixty-four-dollar question to the judgment of individual doctors but has now decided he cannot trust the doctors—who do not want the responsibility—so he has decided to put guidelines into legislation to define the socially disadvantaged. The way the health scheme is going it will be easy to define the socially disadvantaged—we will be all socially disadvantaged.

If I may refer again to the federal Minister's grand advertisement of last Sunday, in big bold black type, it boasted about a 40 per cent Commonwealth medical benefit for everybody and free standard hospital care. He did not say that the Whitlam Government provided 85 per cent of the doctor's schedule fee and even the Fraser Government until now has provided 75 per cent. In this so-called great leap forward we are to receive a mere 40 per cent. What about free standard hospital care? Is this to be without a means test? May I have the doctor of my choice, if I can pay for him, and still have standard hospital care?

About 43 per cent of the population pay the medibank levy. They will all have to register with a health fund. Many people currently insured will be tempted to gamble on their health and opt out of health insurance. They do not want to encounter the trials and tribulations of registering with a private health fund. Most important, there is no guarantee that these rules will stand. In fact the federal Minister for Health has already warned that more changes may be expected in a matter of months. We may be sure that those changes will not be to our advantage. The new health scheme is a

Mr Kearns]

cynical exercise of the Prime Minister, who is anxious to create confusion and anxiety amongst people who want adequate health cover in order to influence falsely the consumer price index and create the illusion of an inflation downturn which is not soundly based.

The Medibank mess is only the latest example of the Fraser Government's neglect of the health need of the community. In the last year of the Whitlam Government the amount allocated to New South Wales for hospital development was \$37.7 million. In 1976–77 it was \$36 million, in 1977–78 it was reduced to \$15.81 million and this year 1978–79 New South Wales will receive nothing.

The New South Wales Minister for Health will, on behalf of this Government, maintain its hospital development programme but its efforts will be considerably constrained by the policy implemented by the Commonwealth Government. It would be in the interest of New South Wales if members of the Opposition were to pay some attention to the downturns in the financing that this State receives from their federal colleagues in Canberra rather than engage in the negative exercise of knocking the Wran Government where there is no real cause for criticism.

Another difficulty confronting New South Wales in providing health services is that the Commonwealth Government has intimated its wish to base the 50–50 cost-sharing agreement in regard to hospitals on a 5 per cent reduction of the 1977–78 bed utilization rate per head of population. If the Commonwealth cannot be persuaded to abandon that proposal, the result must be a reduction in hospital beds. The cutback in Commonwealth funds for school dental services, which the Premier mentioned in reply to a question earlier today, will cost this Government an extra \$2.5 million this year. It will lead to a reduction in trainees in this necessary service for the children of the State. It will reduce training facilities and, most important, it will reduce the provision of additional school clinics. That will **affect** country electorates even more than electorates in the metropolitan area, though even there the effect will be serious. The federal Government has not even provided sufficient funds to help the States to meet costs that have been incurred by the States as a result of Commonwealth policies.

Mr N. D. Walker: Such as with migrants?

Mr KEARNS: Indeed. The honourable member for Miranda had an excursion to Greece recently and found on returning that he had to advertise widely in his electorate to let people know that he was available once again to represent them.

Mr N. D. Walker: I met two of your colleagues there.

Mr KEARNS: That may well be, but let me tell the honourable member this: the Greek people who have migrated to Australia, like other non-English-speaking groups, have contributed substantially to the development of this country, but they need interpreter services, particularly in hospitals. It was and still is the intention and wish of the State Minister for Health to see that adequate interpreter services are available to ensure that migrants to this State receive proper treatment when they are admitted to a hospital or go to a hospital for help. The fact still remains that the deliberate policies of the federal Government have **resulted** in limiting the ability of New South Wales to provide the necessary interpreters in hospitals and in other places where their services are required. Interpreter services are vital in hospitals. As a result of the federal Government's cutback, it is clear that migrant interpreter services cannot be expanded to match the growing need in areas where there is a substantial migrant population.

In all these ways one can see where the policies of the federal Government have acted to the detriment of the State. If they are to the detriment of New South Wales, they will certainly be to the detriment of the other States, and therefore to the detriment

of the whole country. Despite that, the New South Wales Government can stand on its record over the past two and a half years, a record that was endorsed by the people in the Earlwood by-election, and is endorsed by the unprecedented acceptance of the present Premier within the community. The Government's record is highlighted by the failure of the Leader of the Opposition both here and outside the House to make any impact on the electorate, and by the barrenness of the policies of the Opposition as demonstrated this afternoon by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The record of the New South Wales Labor Government is one of outstanding success despite the actions of the Fraser Government in Canberra. The Speech of His Excellency the Governor in opening the first session of the Forty-fifth Parliament not only recapitulated the Government's achievements of the past two and a half years but also laid down plans for further progress in New South Wales.

The State Budget, and the Loan Estimates that were introduced into this Chamber today, are designed to advance the State, to meet the needs of the community, and to give the State's economy a controlled stimulus, which is lacking at the national level. I can only say that, if there is to be an early election, the Government can look forward confidently to an increased majority, and to the result of the Earlwood by-election being repeated and enlarged upon. For my part I look back with a great deal of satisfaction at the last two and a half years of Labor government in New South Wales and I look forward with equal satisfaction to many more years of Labor administration in New South Wales, during which the Government's policies will enable the State to move into the 1980's with great benefit for the community as a whole.

Debate adjourned on motion by Mr Caterson.

MR PETER ANDERSON

Personal Explanation

Mr Mulock: Mr Speaker, I wish to make a personal explanation in regard to some remarks made earlier today by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Mr SPEAKER: Has the Minister the indulgence of the House?

Mr Coleman: Yes, certainly.

Mr Mulock: Peter Anderson, the Labor candidate for Nepean, has been employed by me for twenty-one months, since December, 1976. He has been a member of my personal staff, originally being seconded from the New South Wales police force. Peter Anderson was chosen by me when I may have chosen anyone in Australia. He was chosen because I have for some years recognized Peter Anderson as a young man of outstanding ability, drive and integrity. During 1977 he resigned from the New South Wales police force, in which he had earned as a prosecutor a reputation for integrity and fairness. He gave up his superannuation rights—a big decision for a young family man to make.

Knowing of the depths to which people like the Deputy Leader of the Opposition were likely to sink as they clutch at straws to try to save the seat of Nepean, both Peter Anderson and I, as is our repute, have been scrupulous to ensure that there has been a clear distinction between time spent as a member of my personal staff and on his personal commitments. His record will show many days of leave taken to meet his personal commitments. Neither I nor Peter Anderson has anything to fear from any inquiry. If every Minister in this Government or any other government has had the type of dedication, loyalty and service to electors that Peter Anderson has provided my constituents and me over the past twenty-one months, they

would indeed be fortunate. Governments and this Parliament will be the richer for the presence of Peter Anderson as the honourable member for Nepean in the not-too-distant future. The Parliament's gain will be my personal loss. Peter Anderson went on leave on Monday, 21st August last. Not one specific allegation was made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I reject his cowardly, mealy-mouthed attack as a last desperate and despicable act to try to save the seat of Nepean for its present inept Liberal Party incumbent, who is almost as inept as the honourable member for Miranda.

House adjourned, on motion by Mr Einfeld, at 10.20 p.m.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

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

BYRON BAY BEACH EROSION

Mr BOYD asked the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports—

- (1) What progress has been made in beach erosion investigations in the Byron Bay area?
- (2) Has the research provided any new material on beach erosion?
- (3) When will the findings of the research be made public?
- (4) What is the cost of the research to date?

Answer—

- (1) The investigation is essentially complete. The report is now being prepared but I expect that several months will elapse before this is completed because literally thousands of pieces of data have to be carefully integrated into hundreds of pages of narrative.
- (2) Yes. The investigation has identified a long-term natural recession of the shoreline and has discovered an off-shore sand loss mechanism caused by an inter-action of off-shore currents with the varying alignment of the coastline in the region.
- (3) I expect that this will be possible before the end of the year.
- (4) As at 1 June, 1978, the cost of the investigation was \$151,000.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT LAND ACQUISITIONS

Mr MOORE asked the Minister for Local Government—

- (1) What area of land was compulsorily acquired for what purposes at what total value by all local government authorities in 1976 and 1977?

(2) If this information is not available, what statistics are kept by his department on compulsory acquisitions?

(3) What is the basis of collection of such **statistics**?

Answer—

No statistics are kept by my Department on the area of land resumed by councils under the Local Government Act. This also applies to the purposes for which it was resumed and its value.

However, the Governor by notification in the **Government Gazette** authorized councils to publish notices of resumption in the **Government Gazette** and the local press in respect of 80 parcels of land in 1976 and 58 parcels of land in 1977.
