

## Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 19 August, 1981

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Petitions—Government Record: Vote of Censure (Urgency)—Questions without Notice—Rural Unemployed (Urgency)—Prison Escape by **Eric James Murray** (Adjournment S.O. 49)—Governor's Speech: Address in Reply (Fourth Day's Debate)—Adjournment (Captains Flat Sewerage Scheme).

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

Mr Speaker offered the Prayer.

### PETITIONS

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

#### Primary School Staffing

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

- (1) We call on the Government to revise the system of appointing teachers and ancillary staff to primary schools in New South Wales.
- (2) We further request and support the principle of a reduction in face-to-face teaching in primary schools.

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

Petition, lodged by Mr Gabb, received.

#### Cleveland Street Boys High School

The Petition of the parents and citizens of Surry Hills, Redfern and Darlinghurst respectfully sheweth:

The New South Wales Education Department proposed closure of Cleveland Street Boys High School not proceed and that the school remain open as a co-educational school in view of the following:

- (1) It is in the best interests of present and future students.
- (2) Schools in close proximity to place of residence mean more after-school activity involvement.
- (3) Schools in one's place of residence add to community spirit

- (4) This school was a key institution in the history of its area and plays an essential role in the continuing development of the community.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House not proceed with the New South Wales Education Department's proposed closure of Cleveland Street Boys High School and that this School remain open.

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

Petition, lodged by Mr Barraclough, received.

#### Moral Standards

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

That we, the undersigned, having great concern because of the spread of moral pollution in our State call upon the Government to introduce immediate legislation:

- (1) To give positive support to the Lord Mayor of Sydney and other local government authorities in their attempts to clean up moral pollution in our communities.
- (2) To give local government authorities the power to reject applications from individuals or companies for moral pollution centres which are against the public interest such as so-called sex shops, live sex shows, blue movie cinemas, massage parlours (brothels), escort services (prostitution) et cetera.
- (3) To tighten up the standards used by the New South Wales Indecent Publications Classification Board so as to include the total prohibition of any pornographic publication or film containing child pornography, bestiality, sodomy or violent sex acts against women, such as rape and pack rape, sadism and torture, et cetera.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House will protect our society, especially women and children from moral pollution and its harmful effects.

Petition, lodged by Mr Barraclough, received.

#### Teacher Discrimination

The Petition of certain citizens of New South Wales concerned with the employment conditions of women in the infants teaching service in New South Wales primary schools respectfully sheweth:

That gross discrimination is being continued against women in the infants teaching service in New South Wales primary schools, and that delay in overcoming these discriminatory practices greatly exacerbates the disadvantages suffered by those women.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House remove immediately any regulation in the Teaching Service Act which discriminates against women in the infants teaching service in New South Wales primary schools by excluding them from promotion to the position of

principal of a school, and ensure that those women receive equality of opportunity in appointments made to primary school promotions positions for the 1982 school year.

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

Petitions, lodged by Mr Brereton, Mr Durick, Mr Gabb, Mr Smith and Mr A. G. Stewart, received.

#### Westfield Miranda Fair

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

That we, the undersigned, being residents of the Sutherland Shire wish to protest at the proposed extension to the Westfield Miranda Fair. We refer to the proposed extension over the railway line to back on to Karimbla Road, more than doubling the retail space of the centre and the volume of traffic. We consider this project will cause a major deterioration of the environment for a very suburban street in the area, cause major pollution and traffic congestion in an already congested area, and affect the livelihood of many small traders in Miranda and the smaller retail centres of the Sutherland Shire.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House will request the Minister for Planning and Environment to reject this application should it come before his notice.

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

Petition, lodged by Mr Robb, received.

### GOVERNMENT: VOTE OF NO CONFIDENCE

#### Urgency

Mr McDONALD (Kirribilli), Leader of the Opposition [2.18]: I move:

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

That because of the New South Wales Government's broken promises, declining credibility, failures, misdirected priorities and its deliberate misleading of the community over projected increases in charges for basic government services, it no longer has the confidence of this House.

I move this motion of urgency because yesterday in this House the Premier and Treasurer continued to deceive the public of New South Wales by denying that there would be sharp increases in charges for electricity, water, sewerage and transport. This Government thinks it can get away with saying anything without being challenged. Yesterday's example was another in a constant stream of deceptions and exposes its questionable credibility. It highlights the fact that in the lead-up to an election the people of New South Wales are being conned by a Premier determined to whitewash the failures of his Government and its broken promises and to gloss over ever-widening gaps in its credibility. No longer can ordinary people suffer the deception contained in the answer given by the Premier and Treasurer yesterday, for over

the past five years the string of broken promises and failures has placed New South Wales users of health, education and basic services, such as electricity and transport, in an intolerable financial position.

Mr Mallam: On a point of order. The Leader of the Opposition is making a political speech. He has mentioned urgency only once. He spends his time gallivanting round the country trying to get publicity. These matters are not urgent. He had the opportunity last week and earlier this week to raise these matters. However, he did not do so. I submit that the business of the House should not be interrupted by a phoney urgency motion of this kind perpetrated by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! No point of order arises.

Mr McDONALD: Labor's broken promises are clearly on the record. The cry in 1976 was, "Labor will put this State in better shape". However, the standards in health, education and roads have fallen drastically, and with 40 000 extra government employees there are not enough police, teachers, nurses and other essential personnel. The Premier and Treasurer also said in 1976, "Let's get land and housing costs down". However, the median price for house and land has increased by 113 per cent, or over \$40,000. The Premier and Treasurer also said, "We are developing a comprehensive energy policy". However, we have had the first blackouts caused by an inadequate generating capacity for the first time in more than twenty years. He said that his Government would "ensure full employment for all qualified teachers". However, since that promise was made the number of unemployed teachers has increased from 3 000 to 7 500.

The Premier and Treasurer said, "Let us get prices down". However, since Labor came to power, food prices in New South Wales have risen faster than inflation. Sydney is the inflation capital of Australia. The Premier and Treasurer said also that his Government was a government that listens to the voice of country New South Wales. However, country representation was slashed by six seats. Country New South Wales has 43 per cent of the State's unemployed. Freight rates are up by a large amount on many items. Little priority has been given to capital works. Decentralization is a lame duck.

Mr Egan: On a point of order. So far the Leader of the Opposition has been debating the substantive motion. He has not addressed himself to urgency.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! If the Leader of the Opposition is endeavouring to link his preliminary remarks to the question of urgency, he is in order.

Mr McDONALD: For the benefit of Government supporters, I shall make the position clear. It was because of the failure of the Premier and Treasurer to respond in an honest and correct way to the question I directed to him yesterday that I have moved this motion of urgency. The greatest deception of all was in 1976 when the Premier and Treasurer said, "We will fulfil every commitment we have made". Even for a glib politician, that must strike at the core of credibility. This matter is urgent because the Government's word can no longer be trusted. Honourable members can no longer accept the Government's promises to redevelop the Mater Misericordiae Hospital; guarantees that there would be no electricity blackouts; statements that local people would be involved in local decisions when wholesale amalgamations of local councils were pushed through with the stroke of a pen; and Government promises that all concerned citizens of the State would have their say in decisions affecting the environment before a final, irreversible decision is made. What unmitigated treachery.

How long will the people of New South Wales continue to **suffer** the failures of the Government in education, where the standards of discipline, spelling, writing and mathematics continue to decline? This is evidenced by a trend to send children to private and church schools. There is no respect for an education system that **allows** children and subversive elements to run the State's schools instead of allowing teachers, parents, employers and those with the responsibility for the future to determine education guidelines for this State.

The matter is urgent because since 1977 the Government has transferred \$30.5 million from the Commonwealth capital grants to everyday running costs of schools. This is because the Government does not consider it a high priority to replace the leaking roofs, the dangerous playgrounds, the inadequate toilet facilities, and the thousands of temporary classrooms that have sprung up throughout the State, and to provide remedial and special teaching centres, new schools and libraries in the State's growth centres. The Government has failed to give proper attention to overcoming teacher unemployment.

It is urgent because this Government continues to impose health care cutbacks. Will the people of New South Wales believe the bleatings of the Minister for Health that the cutbacks are a result of federal Government decisions? I challenge the Minister for Health to release the King report into the rationalization of the hospital system, which is a secret report drafted well before any decisions were made by the federal Government, and upon which the Minister for Health based his attack on country hospitals, the Mater, and Parramatta, as well as numerous cutbacks across the board, without regard to the health and welfare of the people of New South Wales.

Mr Walker: On a point of order. I have been listening with a great deal of care to hear what the Leader of the Opposition might say about urgency. The purpose of an urgency motion is to seek the opinion of the House as to whether the business of the House should be set aside at this time so that the subject of the substantive motion might be dealt with. Every word that the Leader of the Opposition has uttered either has been delivered already in his speech in the Address-in-Reply debate, or is being delivered by one of his colleagues in that debate. The Leader of the Opposition is seeking to set aside the Address-in-Reply debate—the widest debate that this Parliament has. In that debate honourable members are entitled to raise every point that the Leader of the Opposition has raised today. The Leader of the Opposition has not addressed himself to any particular urgency. All he has sought to do is raise matters that honourable members are properly entitled to raise in the Address-in-Reply debate. The Leader of the Opposition is not complying with the strict rules that apply to an urgency motion. Therefore, he should be ruled out of order.

Mr Cameron: On the point of order. Put succinctly, this motion, which alleges that the Government no longer has the confidence of the House, is one of the most important to come before it. The Leader of the Opposition is presenting reasons for **the** motion to be debated as a matter of urgency and is completely in order.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! In speaking to the motion, the Leader of the Opposition has endeavoured to highlight the Government's alleged broken promises, declining credibility, failures, misdirected priorities and deliberate misleading. Points of order were taken early in the comments of the Leader of the Opposition. Certainly the Leader of the Opposition has spent a long time trying to prove the point that he wishes to make. However, he still has to show why the matter is so urgent that

the business of the House should be set aside to deal with the contention that the Government no longer has the confidence of this House. I ask the Leader of the Opposition to come back to urgency.

Mr McDONALD: The core of the Government's approach is the way it raises money and deceives the public in the process. How can one believe the Premier and Treasurer, who says that there will be no sharp increases in electricity, water, sewerage and transport charges? What credibility does he have when the Sydney County Council has received extra increases in the bulk energy tariff?

Mr Walker: On a point of order. I draw your attention, Mr Speaker, to notices of motions and orders of the day, where there is an amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition to the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor. The amendment **h** in these terms:

We also desire to inform Your Excellency that because of this Government's misdirected priorities and financial mismanagement of the State, and the failure of the Government to ensure that the benefits of a strengthening economy and the developing resources boom result in a higher standard of living, then the Government does not have the confidence of this House.

The Leader of the Opposition moved a motion that is identical to the amendment that he has moved already in this House. I submit that the standing orders do not permit any honourable member to move a motion in precisely the same terms as a motion that has been moved previously. On that basis I submit that the motion of urgency moved the Leader of the Opposition is out of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! It is correct that the business paper contains an amendment to a motion moved by the honourable member for Heffron. However, it is competent for any honourable member to take the most effective action to achieve a result, provided that it is within the standing orders. The Leader of the Opposition has moved urgency as the most effective means of bringing about the result sought by the amendment to the motion moved by the honourable member for Heffron. I rule that the Leader of the Opposition is in order. The Leader of the Opposition has exhausted his time.

Mr WRAN (Bass Hill), Premier and Treasurer [2.28]: Normally, if a motion of the kind moved by the Leader of the Opposition were supported by anything of substance, the Government would immediately agree to suspend the business of the House to permit debate on it. As the matters raised by the Leader of the Opposition are flimsy and misdirected, the Government does not wish to agree to the suspension of the business of the House, which would deprive honourable members of the opportunity to contribute to the Address-in-Reply debate. I should have thought that if the Leader of the Opposition were to do anything today he would have apologized to the House and to the public of New South Wales for his describing last night this woeful federal Budget which has been forced upon the people of Australia as "a good budget for the man in the street". It may be a good budget in that street near Waverton to which the Leader of the Opposition goes frequently, where there is a double-storey house and a swimming pool. I suppose it is a good budget for the man in the street provided he is not buying or building his own home, as interest rates are rising and a sales tax is to be imposed on building materials; he does not have the telephone installed or write letters, as telephone and postal charges are being increased; he has enough furniture, as there will be increased sales tax or a new sales tax on drapery, soft furnishings and so on; he has not more than two children, as

there will be no increase in family allowances for the first two children; he does not have children who have left school and cannot find a job, as unemployment benefits for people under 18 years of age have not been increased and the special youth employment training programme has been abolished in relation to government employment. It is also a good budget for the man in the street provided he is not on a fixed income or on a low wage, as the budget will add to inflation; and it is a good budget for the man in the street if he does not pay income tax.

Mr Cameron: On a point of order. The Premier and Treasurer is not replying to anything that was raised by the Leader of the Opposition but, irrelevantly, is discussing the federal Budget that was introduced last night. Members of the Opposition will debate that matter at any time, but it has nothing to do with the motion before this House, which is directed at the failures of the Premier and Treasurer of New South Wales.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! No point of order is involved.

Mr WRAN: The federal Budget is a good budget for the man who does not pay income tax, for it gives no income tax relief and in the next twelve months will result in the average Australian wage and salary earner paying \$10 a week more. It is a good budget for the man in the street if he does not read newspapers or books, for sales tax has been imposed on those items. It is a good budget for the man in the street who does not need a television set or radio, because they will be subject to sales tax. It is a good budget for the man in the street if he does not own a car, for sales tax will be imposed on motor vehicle components, or if he does not have any pets, as pet foods and supplies will be taxed.

I should have thought that if the Leader of the Opposition had his priorities right, he would have addressed his mind to those matters and would have apologized to the House and to the public of New South Wales for them. What disturbs me most about the Leader of the Opposition and some of his cronies—and he does not have many of them left, especially after the incident in the party room yesterday with the honourable member for Bligh—is the unabashed and wilful way that he is willing to tell falsehoods and the way that he is willing to tell untruths.

Mr Arblaster: You would be the best judge of that.

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

Mr WRAN: The cost of electricity to domestic consumers in New South Wales is, and will continue to be, the lowest in Australia.

*[Interruption]*

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the Leader of the Country Party to order.

Mr WRAN: The cost of electricity to domestic consumers in New South Wales is 3.37c a kilowatt hour. That should be compared with the El Dorado provided by the Liberal Government of Victoria, where the cost of electricity is 4.82c a kilowatt hour and is still increasing. The broken-down developers, real estate agents and so on who occupy the Opposition benches are supposed to be the managers. It is no wonder that they are in Parliament. They would not be able to get a job anywhere else. The Leader of the Opposition has made a disgraceful attack on the State's education system. Has he forgotten that in the past five years the Government has been responsible for the employment of no fewer than 8 000 new teachers?

Mr Punch: That is another one of the Premier's broken promises.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the Leader of the Country Party to order.

Mr WRAN: Although the Leader of the Country Party seldom gets past the Double Bay *Courier*, which he reads when sitting on the front porch of his big plantation at Darling Point, I commend to his consideration two articles that appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald* last week that show a level of performance by this Government in honouring promises unmatched by any other government in the history of Australia. This small motion by a rather small man is typical of his deception and falsities. Neither I nor the Government would countenance an interruption of the important business of this House to debate such a frivolous motion.

[*Interruption*]

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

Question of urgency put.

The House divided.

Ayes, 35

Mr Arblaster	Mrs Foot	Mr Punch
Mr Barraclough	Mr Freudenstein	Mr Rozzoli
Mr Boyd	Mr <b>Greiner</b>	Mr Schipp
Mr Brewer	Mr Healey	Mr Singleton
Mr J. H. Brown	Mr King	Mr Smith
Mr <b>Bruxner</b>	Mr <b>McDonald</b>	Mr Sullivan
Mr <b>Cameron</b>	Mr Mason	Mr Toms
Mr J. A. Clough	Mr <b>Moore</b>	Mr West
Mr Dowd	Mr Murray	Mr Wotton
Mr <b>Duncan</b>	Mr <b>Osborne</b>	<i>Tellers,</i>
Mr Fischer	Mr Park	Mr <b>Caterson</b>
Mr Fisher	Mr Pickard	Mr Taylor

Noes, 60

Mr <b>Akister</b>	Mr Egan	Mr <b>McCarthy</b>
Mr <b>Anderson</b>	Mr <b>Einfeld</b>	Mr <b>McGowan</b>
Mr <b>Bannon</b>	Mr Face	Mr <b>McIlwaine</b>
Mr Booth	Mr <b>Ferguson</b>	Mr Maher
Mr Brereton	Mr Gabb	Mr Mair
Mr Britt	Mr Gordon	Mr <b>Mallam</b>
Mr Cahill	Mr <b>Haigh</b>	Mr <b>Mochalski</b>
Mr Cavalier	Mr <b>Hatton</b>	Mr Mulock
Mr <b>Cleary</b>	Mr Hills	Mr Neilly
Mr R. J. Clough	Mr Hunter	Mr <b>O'Connell</b>
Mr Cox	Mr <b>Jackson</b>	Mr <b>O'Neill</b>
Mr <b>Crabtree</b>	Mr Jensen	Mr Paciullo
Mr <b>Curran</b>	Mr Johnson	Mr Petersen
Mr Day	Mr Johnstone	Mr Quinn
Mr Degen	Mr <b>Keane</b>	Mr Ramsay
Mr Durick	Mr Knott	Mr Robb

Mr Rogan	Mr Walker	<i>Tellers,</i>
Mr Ryan	Mr Webster	
Mr Sheahan	Mr Whelan	
Mr A. G. Stewart	Mr Wilde	Mr Flaherty
Mr K. J. Stewart	Mr Wran	Mr Wade

Question so resolved in the negative.

Motion of urgency negatived.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### SPECIAL YOUTH EMPLOYMENT TRAINING PROGRAMME

Mr A. G. STEWART: Will the Premier and Treasurer confirm that the Commonwealth Government has decided to discontinue subsidies to State governments under the special youth employment training programme? What effect will that have on the New South Wales Government's youth training programme?

[*Interruption*]

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The question has been addressed to the Premier and Treasurer, not to the honourable member for **Sturt**.

Mr WRAN: The honourable member for Manly has directed my attention to one of the most miserly aspects of a somewhat mean federal budget, for I regret to say that what he says about this unemployment scheme is true. One of the federal Treasurer's announcements last night—not in his speech, of course, for it is tucked away on page 178 of the Budget Papers—was that the Commonwealth Government would no longer pay the special youth employment training programme subsidies in respect of trainees placed in State government establishments. Honourable members would be aware that, since the inception of that programme, this Government has co-operated in the scheme, which gives on-the-job training and work experience in State government and local council establishments to young people who have experienced difficulty in obtaining full-time permanent employment. This Government has also been actively involved in placing trainees in permanent employment at the end of the 17-week training period.

Since the scheme commenced, 5 000 young people in New South Wales have received assistance from the State Government in this way. New South Wales has met the major costs of the scheme, including those of local councils. In return it has received a subsidy of \$55 a week for each trainee. Now that subsidy will be discontinued to be paid to State governments. With an intake of 1 000 trainees, it will mean that the New South Wales Government will have to find an additional \$1 million. This is yet another example of the mean, penny-pinching approach of the federal Government; it is another example of its determination to dump more and more responsibility on to the States and, at the same time, provide them with less financial assistance. That attitude is symptomatic of a government that has set about victimizing young, unemployed people.

Once again the federal Government has refused to increase the level of unemployment benefit for young people under eighteen years of age. That benefit still stands at \$36 a week—the same as it was in 1974. The federal Government has announced that it has abolished the community youth support scheme. That scheme provided valuable support for young people who were unable to find permanent

employment. That is another example of the federal Government's pulling out of a scheme and leaving responsibility with the States, as it has done with the school-to-work transition programme, the women's refuge programme and many other schemes.

Honourable members will be aware from last night's federal Budget that, despite that Government's total outlays increasing by 12.6 per cent and its receipts rising by 16 per cent, its total payments to the States will increase by only 8 per cent—much less than the predicted inflation rate of 10.8 per cent. In other words, the States will be paying for the generous income tax cuts that Mr Fraser and Mr Howard clearly plan for 1983. This has clearly posed great difficulties for all States in framing their budgets. I assure the House that the New South Wales Government will not neglect its obligations to the young people of this State. Despite the meanness of the federal Government, the State Government will be making provision in its budget for a further intake of trainees under the special youth employment training programme.

I congratulate the honourable member for Manly who, in the three years in which he has been in this House, has shown a special interest in youth unemployment—indeed, a special interest in the welfare of young people generally. It is consistent with the interest he has shown—not only generally but in particular in the Manly electorate, which he so nobly represents—that he brings out this deceptive miserliness displayed by the Treasurer in last night's federal Budget. The honourable member for Manly can be assured that, by pointing out this deception and harsh sanction imposed upon young people, he can take the credit for the quick action the Government will take to restore this training programme for young people in New South Wales.

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## RURAL UNEMPLOYED

### Urgency

Mr PUNCH (Gloucester), Leader of the Country Party [2.51]: I move:

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

That because of—

- (a) the critical unemployment problem in country areas of New South Wales which is rapidly deteriorating, especially among young people, and
- (b) the Government's failure to actively promote, through its policies, the establishment and expansion of industries in country areas, as job-creation tools—

this House calls upon the Government to immediately review its policies so that the unemployed in country areas receive equivalent assistance and support as that being extended to the jobless in the western Sydney area.

*[Interruption]*

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PUNCH: This matter is critically urgent because country communities are carrying a disproportionate share of the jobless, and the situation is deteriorating further. Rural areas, which account for about a quarter of the population, have 43 per cent of the State's unemployed, a proportion that has been increasing steadily in this Government's five years of office. The matter is urgent because adult unemployment in country areas has increased at two and a half times the rate of the increase

in the city area, while youth unemployment in the country has increased **at** more than three times the rate of city areas. The matter is urgent because a State Government, if it were determined to fight such critical unemployment in the country, would be pursuing appropriate policies to rectify the situation. They would be policies to assist manufacturing and service industries to set up in country areas and to help small businesses, all of which activities generate job opportunities. The proof of the Government's neglect is in a statement made by the former Minister for Decentralisation who said, in referring to the Department of Decentralisation:

The department will not actively promote the relocation of industries from city to country . . . In the present economic circumstances, the relocation of a factory from the city to the country might create unemployment in the city.

That policy has the support of the Premier and Treasurer. The proof of the Premier **and** Treasurer's dismissal of decentralization initiatives is contained in his statement that such initiatives produce only the shells of factories in country areas of the State.

Mr Day: On a point of order. The Leader of the Country Party is purporting to quote a statement made by a former Minister for Decentralisation which contained a policy for dismissal of decentralization initiatives and was said to be supported by the Premier and Treasurer. I ask you, Mr Speaker, to direct the Leader of the Country Party to give the House the origin of that quotation.

[*Interruption*]

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Day: I submit that when an honourable member quotes from a document he is normally required to identify it and give its date. I ask that the Leader of the Country Party be directed to identify the document from which he is quoting.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! It is in order for the Leader of the Country Party to refer *to* statements made by other members.

Mr PUNCH: That policy has the support of the Premier and Treasurer. The proof of the Premier and Treasurer's dismissal of decentralization initiatives is contained in his statement about those initiatives producing only the shells of factories in country areas of the State. How can he dismiss decentralization initiatives when figures prepared by this Government, but covering the period of the Liberal Party—National Country Party's Government, indicates a reversal of population settlement trends which had been traditionally from country areas to coastal cities?

The matter is urgent because the withdrawal of funds shows clearly that this Government has failed to pursue active decentralization policies which could open up job prospects in country areas. In this House yesterday the Minister for Industrial Development and Decentralisation claimed that in the past five years the Government's expenditure through the Country Industries Assistance Fund had been \$100 million. What he said was completely untrue. This Government has allocated only \$66 million to the fund, including the 1980–81 estimates from consolidated revenue and general loan account moneys. Moreover, that allocation has been decreasing in the past few years. It has gone from \$17 million in 1978–79 to \$15 million in 1979–80 and to \$11.25 million last financial year, a drop of 33.8 per cent.

The industrial development and decentralisation portfolio was the only portfolio—reflecting on the competence of the Minister, I might say—to receive a reduced budget share in 1980–81, exposing the low priority afforded it by this Government.

The matter is urgent because this **Labor** Government has deliberately slashed job opportunities in the important decentralized industries of forestry and sandmining. It **has** totally undermined confidence and investment in the timber industry and has been willing to sacrifice the jobs of timber industry workers to quell the wail of extreme conservationists. Between 1 200 and 1 500 jobs will be affected, directly or indirectly, if **Washpool** is not logged.

So far as sandmining is concerned, the policies of **Labor** are leading to the demise of this important industry. One major company—the largest rutile producer in the world—has revealed that it intends to phase out its last 130 jobs, close its operations in New South Wales and move interstate because of the denial of mineral sands leases in this State. One of the only two remaining sandmining companies is also phasing out its operations in New South Wales to move to Queensland because of too much regulation and interference by the State Government.

The matter is urgent because in the past two years this Government has presided over the closure of more than twenty abattoirs, and about 2 500 workers—and that is a conservative figure—have lost their jobs. If this had happened in the city, the **Labor** Government would have taken emergency action to do whatever it could to ensure that the workers' jobs were kept. The matter is urgent because this Government has failed to recognize the role that small business plays in generating jobs. It has flagrantly discriminated against small business in country areas by refusing to extend drought assistance; by burdening small businesses with excessive and increasing freight rates; by denying them permanent access to advisory services provided by the Small Business Agency; and by being tightfisted with financial assistance under its loans guarantee scheme.

The matter is urgent particularly when it comes to youth unemployment. This Government has seen fit to set up a special employment assistance scheme for young people in the western Sydney area. Where is the same kind of scheme for country youth? Where are the members of the **Labor** Party, representing country and Newcastle electorates, pressing for such a scheme? Why should young people living in Auburn—where there was one job for every thirteen young people in March 1981—be given special assistance when job prospects are much worse in Nowra, where there were 199 young people for every job vacancy, or in Narrabri where the ratio was 1:182 or in **Murwillumbah** where it was 1:99?

Sydney youths, even in the worst pockets of unemployment, can go for jobs almost anywhere in the city. Many young people in country areas have no choice but to leave home permanently if they are to have any chance of employment. The matter is urgent because this **Labor** Government has made no direct contribution to expanding the worthwhile school to work transition programme, a scheme designed specifically to divert early school leavers into further training so that their employment prospects will be enhanced. The Minister for Education in another place claims that his Government will not contribute because of fears that the federal Government will dump the scheme, leaving the State to fund it. That claim is farcical in light of the fact that the federal Government has doubled its allocation for 1982, compared with the previous year, because of the unprecedented success of the programme.

**The** matter is urgent because the Government has failed to spend allocated finances on schemes to relieve unemployment. More than half the allocation in the special apprenticeship training initiatives special deposits account remained unspent as at March 1981, while there was an unspent balance of \$2.3 million in the account for schemes to promote youth employment and employment generally.

For all these reasons, this matter requires urgent debate. This Government has the power of remedy in its hands but has failed to use it. It has failed particularly in the key job-generation area of decentralization. It is devoid of any initiatives to encourage industries to settle outside the Newcastle–Sydney–Wollongong complex. Only recently, a successful Newcastle company was refused assistance to establish a second workshop at Bulahdelah when a suitable building and suitable manpower were available.

Mr Day: That is not true.

Mr PUNCH: Except for the \$250 the company was offered. And let us not forget the sorry saga of the decentralized industry in Young, which lost a contract to build silos in country New South Wales to a Victorian company. Why was that? It was because this Government failed to apply properly the country preference loadings. It is urgent that these policies be reviewed and every country Labor member in this House, particularly those outside Sydney——

[Interruption]

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PUNCH: It is urgent that these policies be reviewed. Every Labor member in this House, particularly those outside Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong, should be willing to support such a review and the introduction of schemes to help young people over the entire State to receive similar consideration to that received by young people in the western Sydney area.

Mr WRAN (Bass Hill), Premier and Treasurer [3.1]: No one would ignore the seriousness of youth unemployment in Australia. No one who gave honest and objective attention to the facts could do other than applaud the achievements of the New South Wales Government, which has by far the best record in the reduction of youth unemployment of any State in Australia. I regret that the Leader of the Country Party—who acknowledged that some country members do not live outside Sydney—has endeavoured to use the misfortune of young persons who have been thrown on the unemployment scrap-heap for a variety of reasons, not the least of which have been the heartlessness and the regressive policies of the **Fraser–Anthony** Government. The Leader of the Country Party has used them as pawns in a shabby attempt to misrepresent a series of easily ascertainable statistics. In the years 1976 to 1980 the population growth of Sydney was 1.1 per cent. For the remainder of New South Wales— and, for the information of the honourable member for Darling Point, that would mean country New South Wales—the population growth was 1.3 per cent.

Mr Punch: You did not even get a laugh out of that.

Mr WRAN: Wait for it. In 1979–80 Sydney's population growth was 1 per cent. The growth for country areas of New South Wales was 1.8 per cent. The Leader of the Country Party is out of touch to an alarming extent with what is happening in this State. It is all very well for the honourable member for Lane Cove to shake his head, but it is common knowledge that there has been a tendency for population to move to rural areas in New South Wales. Many persons are anxious to leave the concrete jungles for the country. The honourable gentleman referred to the failing logging industry. That is another fallacy. Recently the Minister for Lands, Minister for Forests and Minister for Water Resources made it clear that sawlog production in 1975–76 was 1.37 million cubic metres in New South Wales. By 1980 that had increased to 2.61 million cubic metres.

In regard to the Country Industries Assistance Fund, I thought that yesterday my colleague the Minister for Industrial Development and Minister for Decentralisation put the case to rest when he highlighted the pithy promise of the Leader of the Country Party and demonstrated that in the past five years \$100 million has been made available to country industries through that fund. The honourable member **seems** to have ignored the fact that Australia, especially the east coast of Queensland and of New South Wales, has just emerged from the worst drought in the nation's history. He omitted to mention that in the process of coping with that drought the Labor Government of this State committed \$76 million—a big sum by all yardsticks; indeed, the greatest sum ever committed for drought relief in the history of New South Wales.

The Leader of the Country Party had the temerity to speak about the problems of country abattoirs. He ignored the fact that when the Cabinet recently met in Mudgee—which will be the new seat for the member for Castlereagh—it allocated \$25 million over the next four years to prop up ailing country abattoirs. That again is record support for the meat industry of this State. The honourable member, a former Minister, mentioned what he called unspent moneys in accounts. When the Liberal Party–Country Party Government lost office, he even took the paper fasteners from the ashtray on the table in his ministerial office.

Mr Hills: He knocked off the silverware out of his office, too.

Mr WRAN: The Liberal Party–Country Party Government cracked and broke more cups and saucers than did any government in the history of this State. **The** Leader of the Country Party should know that it is nonsense merely to point to **sums** of money remaining at the end of a financial year. What counts is money and resources committed to the organizations that promote and encourage employment. During the past financial year the Government has spent every cent committed to the encouragement and promotion of employment schemes and help for the unemployed. I wish to make clear that the New South Wales Government is and has been concerned with the level of youth unemployment. It has been and will continue to be concerned with job creation programmes for all members of the community, whatever their age group. It is our boast that even though New South Wales had the highest level of unemployment of any State when we came to office, it now has the lowest figures for unemployment in Australia. That applies to country New South Wales, too.

Mr Punch: Absolute rubbish.

Mr WRAN: There are pockets of unduly high unemployment in the country areas of New South Wales as there are high pockets of youth unemployment in city areas in the metropolitan conurbations of Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong. But with a continuing policy directed to promoting country industries and of attracting investment to New South Wales, and with commitments of \$24 billion, we look forward confidently to the future. Unlike the knockers and intimidators of this State, we look forward to every citizen of New South Wales being given a fair share of **the** cake. If there are any unusually large pockets of unemployment, whether in the western suburbs or any other part of New South Wales, I pledge that this **Government** will tackle the problem.

Mr Punch: I shall give the Premier a list of where they are.

Mr WRAN: That is what is being done to generate investment, industry and employment.

Mr Punch: This is all wind.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the Leader of the Country Party to order.

Mr WRAN: On all those grounds, the Government will not agree to urgency.

Question of urgency put.

The House divided.

Ayes, 36

Mr Arblaster  
 Mr Barraclough  
 Mr Boyd  
 Mr Brewer  
 Mr J. H. Brown  
 Mr Bruxner  
 Mr Cameron  
 Mr J. A. Clough  
 Mr Dowd  
 Mr Duncan  
 Mr Fischer  
 Mr Fisher  
 Mrs Foot

Mr Freudenstein  
 Mr Greiner  
 Mr Hatton  
 Mr Healey  
 Mr King  
 Mr McDonald  
 Mr Mason  
 Mr Moore  
 Mr Murray  
 Mr Osborne  
 Mr Park  
 Mr Pickard  
 Mr Punch

Mr Rozzoli  
 Mr Schipp  
 Mr Singleton  
 Mr Smith  
 Mr Sullivan  
 Mr Toms  
 Mr West  
 Mr Wotton

*Tellers,*  
 Mr Catterson  
 Mr Taylor

Noes, 60

Mr Akister  
 Mr Anderson  
 Mr Bannon  
 Mr Booth  
 Mr Brereton  
 Mr Britt  
 Mr Cahill  
 Mr Cavalier  
 Mr Cleary  
 Mr R. J. Clough  
 Mr Cox  
 Mr Crabtree  
 Mr Curran  
 Mr Day  
 Mr Degen  
 Mr Durick  
 Mr Egan  
 Mr Eield  
 Mr Face  
 Mr Ferguson  
 Mr Gabb

Mr Gordon  
 Mr Haigh  
 Mr Hills  
 Mr Hunter  
 Mr Jackson  
 Mr Jensen  
 Mr Johnson  
 Mr Johnstone  
 Mr Jones  
 Mr Keane  
 Mr Knott  
 Mr McCarthy  
 Mr McGowan  
 Mr McIlwaine  
 Mr Maher  
 Mr Mair  
 Mr Mallam  
 Mr Mochalski  
 Mr Mulock  
 Mr Neilly  
 Mr O'Connell

Mr O'Neill  
 Mr Paciullo  
 Mr Petersen  
 Mr Quinn  
 Mr Ramsay  
 Mr Robb  
 Mr Rogan  
 Mr Ryan  
 Mr Sheahan  
 Mr A. G. Stewart  
 Mr K. J. Stewart  
 Mr Walker  
 Mr Webster  
 Mr Whelan  
 Mr Wilde  
 Mr Wran

*Tellers,*  
 Mr Flaherty  
 Mr Wade

Question so resolved in the negative.

Motion of urgency negatived.

## PRISON ESCAPE BY ERIC JAMES MURRAY

Adjournment (S.O. 49)

Mr SPEAKER: I have received from the Leader of the **Opposition** a notice under Standing Order 49 of his desire to move the adjournment of the House to discuss a specific matter of recent occurrence and of sufficient public importance to warrant urgent consideration, namely, the escape of Eric James Murray from **Kirkconnell** Afforestation Camp.

Mr O'Connell: On a point of order. I submit that under Standing Order 49, read in conjunction with Standing Order 39, the motion cannot be entertained at this time. Standing Order 49 provides:

(a) No Motion for the adjournment of the House under this Standing Order shall be entertained until the Formal Business shall have been disposed of——

Standing Order 39 provides:

No business beyond that which is of a formal character shall be entered upon before the Address in Reply to the Governor's Opening Speech has been adopted——

The Address in Reply to the Governor's Speech has not been adopted.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Peats should read the remainder of Standing Order 39, which lists certain exceptions. Standing Order 49 is included in those exceptions.

Mr McDONALD (Kirribilli), Leader of the Opposition [3.17]: I move:

That this House do now adjourn.

*The motion being supported by five other honourable members,*

Mr Walker: On a point of order. This motion presents difficulties under the *sub judice* rule. The matter is of the greatest public interest and should be debated in Parliament. As the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, I have a duty to put to you certain facts to enable you to decide whether the *sub judice* rule applies.

Mr J. A. Clough: You have a duty to keep criminals in prison.

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

Mr Walker: The person involved is Eric James Murray. I am informed by Detective-Sergeant Clarke, the officer-in-charge of the case, that this morning **Murray** was charged with a series of offences, namely, murder, indecent assault, escape from lawful custody, three counts of abduction, and break, enter and steal. It would be difficult to debate those charges without breaching the *sub judice* rule.

Mr Cameron: You are letting them walk out of prison.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! If the honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition wishes to speak on the point of order, he should seek the call.

Mr Walker: One of the charges presents extreme difficulty in complying with the *sub judice* rule under the Westminster system of government. I refer to the charge of escape from lawful custody. The Leader of the Opposition says that he wishes to debate a matter of great public interest dealing with an escape from lawful custody.

Unfortunately, that is the offence with which Murray was charged this morning. To debate that matter would be to canvass in all respects the matters to be dealt with by the court. I am concerned about this motion because part of the *sub judice* rule deals with whether the public interest is so overwhelming that even the interests of justice and that a fair trial should be put aside so that Parliament **might** debate **the** matter. It would be for the Chair to decide whether that should be done. The charges are most serious. I submit that this Parliament would be debating all the facts that must be presented to the jury. It is for you to decide, Mr Speaker, whether after the Leader of the Opposition has made his speech the accused could obtain a fair trial. I doubt it. On the other hand, there is a great deal of public interest in this matter. I leave it to you to make a decision.

Mr McDonald: On the point of order. I appreciate the comments of the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice. I in no way intended to breach the *sub judice* rule. I recognize, as does the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, that the matter I have raised is of great public importance and concern, particularly to country people, who have suffered as a result of the transfer of the convict to whom I referred, who has a **criminal** record of some thirty-three offences. They have suffered as a result of his transfer from Parramatta gaol to Kirkconnell Afforestation Camp from where he escaped after two days, and they have suffered as the result of the activities of other prisoners such as Stratton, who escaped recently from Goulburn gaol. They are concerned that a criminal whose previous convictions include rape, escaping from lawful custody, and assaulting a prison officer, could have been moved from a maximum security gaol to what is virtually a rest home and within two days allegedly commit terrible crimes. That is the substance of the reasons why I wish to raise this matter of great public importance and great public concern to the citizens of New South Wales.

Mr Dowd: On the point of order. It is obvious from the terms of the motion that a justiciable question, namely whether there was an escape from lawful custody, could become the subject of debate, and that if it did you, Mr Speaker, would have to consider the effect of the arguments advanced. It is obvious also that the motion is broad enough to cover a discussion of prisons and of transfers of prisoners generally, none of which would touch on a *sub judice* question of escaping from lawful custody. You have been clear on previous occasions in stating that the *sub judice* rule must not be allowed to prevent debate in this Parliament on matters of general public interest. Obviously the charges of murder and so on are not a subject of the motion and ought not to be discussed. However, the one of escaping from lawful custody, narrowly defined, could impinge on the *sub judice* rule, and if you allowed the debate to proceed, you would have to deal with that eventuality.

Mr SPEAKER: Is the honourable member for Lane Cove suggesting that debate should be permitted on the subject of escapes generally?

Mr Dowd: No. I am saying that in relation to this prisoner it would be open to an honourable member debating the motion to deal with the whole of the circumstances of the transfer of that prisoner and the places in which he is kept, for they would not be issues in considering the charge of escaping from lawful custody. Therefore, I submit that it is not necessarily incompetent to have the motion framed in its present terms. It is for the Chair, by the proper use of the *sub judice* rule, to prevent the discussion in this House of issues that ultimately go before a jury. This is a matter of public importance and the House must not be treated as subordinate to the newspapers or the courts. We must ensure that the public, as the Attorney-General

and Minister of Justice has acknowledged, has the benefit of a proper debate about the circumstances in which a person such as the one referred to by the Leader of the Opposition was transferred.

Mr Hatton: On the point of order. Standing Order 49 provides one of the few means by which honourable members may bring a subject of great public importance before the House. Beyond question the matter raised by the Leader of the Opposition falls within the provisions of Standing Order 49. It is a matter of great public importance and it is a matter suddenly arising. I submit that the objections raised by the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice do not apply to these circumstances. The deficiencies or otherwise of the prison system and its administration, which may or may not have made it possible for a person to escape from gaol, are of supreme public importance, a fact highlighted by a recent event, and therefore they should be debated.

Mr Osborne: On the point of order. The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice suggested that two courses were open to you, Mr Speaker. One of them was to decide that the need to discuss the matter in the public interest was greater than the need to observe the *sub judice* rule. I suggest that your decision should be based not on public interest but on public horror—certainly in my electorate—which should place that consideration above your ordinary duty to apply the *sub judice* rule, which may arise but has not yet arisen.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I have heard enough discussion on the point of order. The honourable member for Lane Cove urges the Chair to rule that to allow debate on the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition would be to allow a general discussion on the transfer of prisoners from one establishment to another. The motion refers to the escape of Eric James Murray from the Kirkconnell Afforestation Camp. It does not refer to the transfer of prisoners. The honourable member for Lane Cove submits that Parliament should not be subordinate to newspapers. I read carefully today's news reports on this matter and noted that although they referred to a man whom the police allege is a prison escapee, to a gunman entering a house, forcing a woman at gunpoint to do certain things, taking hostages, and so on, they did not mention Eric James Murray. Apparently the Leader of the Opposition has information that he believes identifies the offender. If he intended to use it, he would be seeking to try that man in this House.

In making this ruling I am guided by a decision of a former Speaker, the honourable member for Northcott, who held that if substantial damage and prejudice would arise as a result of matters being discussed in the Parliament or, by the debate, suggestions were carried to the minds of untrained jurors serving in a criminal trial concerning aspects of the matter before them that it was entirely improper, on evidentiary standards, for them to be considering at all, such debate should not be permitted. The matter referred to here will come before a criminal court, where a person will stand charged with a serious offence. The evidence put before the jury in the trial will be limited by the strict application of the rules of evidence, and they will exclude hearsay and other matters deemed insufficiently reliable to go before a jury. In those circumstances the House should not proceed to a debate that would infringe the *sub judice* rule. The motion is out of order.

Mr Osborne: Mr Speaker, I seek guidance on whether I may move dissent from your ruling.

Mr SPEAKER: If the honourable member for Bathurst reads Standing Order 161, he will learn the procedure that is available for moving such a motion.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH: ADDRESS IN REPLY

Fourth Day's Debate

Debate resumed (from 18 August, *vide* page 263) on motion by Mr Brereton:

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 Air Marshal Sir JAMES ANTHONY ROWLAND, Knight Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, upon whom have been conferred the decorations of the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Force Cross, Knight of Grace of the Most Venerable Order of St John of Jerusalem, Governor of the State of New South Wales 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, 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.

Upon which Mr McDonald had moved:

That the Address be amended by the addition of the following words to stand as paragraph 3:

"We also desire to inform Your Excellency that because of this Government's misdirected priorities and financial mismanagement of the State, and the failure of the Government to ensure that the benefits of a strengthening economy and the developing resources boom result in a higher standard of living, then the Government does not have the confidence of this House."

Mr GREINER (Ku-ring-gai) [3.30]: I join with other honourable members who have spoken on the debate in wishing His Excellency the Governor a long and distinguished period of office in New South Wales. I have no doubt that his period in office will be long and distinguished. I should hope that the Speech that he is given by the Government's advisers to present to the House will be briefer in the future and more distinguished. The Governor's Speech does not contain any legislative programme or give any outline of the direction in which the Government is taking the State. It does not suggest the direction in which the State should be heading or the priorities of government administration. The Speech represents a litany of praise for a series of pronouncements that have been made several times; it is a regurgitation of a series of capital works, some of which are under the direct control of the Government, others having little or nothing to do with the administration of the State. In no way is the Speech a coherent statement of direction or intent on the part of the Government for the future of the State.

The first paragraph of the Governor's Speech states that we have been **called** together to consider the Government's legislative and financial proposals. I **suggest** that if one examined the remaining thirteen pages of the Speech, one would **find** it difficult to locate any detailed analysis of the Government's **financial proposals**—indeed, even the trend of the proposals that will be made next Wednesday evening. To some extent it is misleading to say that the main work this session will be a consideration of the Government's financial proposals, for they are not referred to in the Governor's Speech. I **am** pleased to join with the Leader of the Opposition and to second the amendment that he has asked to stand as paragraph 3 of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

The main thrust of my remarks will relate to the New South Wales economy and to some of the comments by the Premier and Treasurer during question time today. Some of his comments were similar to those made by the Governor in his Speech. I shall, first, point to some notable omissions from the supposed legislative programme that the Government will, doubtless, put before the House. One might well ask, after five years, where is the Minister for Health's mental health bill? **After** all that time, where is the legislation that people from both sides of politics in New South Wales believe to be overdue? That legislation is necessary to right some of the most drastic wrongs ever **done** to any individual in New South Wales. No mention is made of that proposed legislation, although the Government has made a number of promises to introduce it.

In the dying days of the parliamentary career of the Minister for Consumer Affairs where is a landlord and tenant bill—or a residential tenancies bill if, woe betide us, that is what the Minister chooses to introduce? The Government has made no attempt to look after the **30** per cent of the New South Wales population who **do** not own their own homes. The Government purports to represent those persons and to be concerned about them. Almost a year and a half after the Minister for Consumer Affairs has received the first report of the committee he set up to investigate aspects of landlord and tenant relationships, no legislation has been introduced in that area; the Government has been silent on the proposed landlord and tenant legislation.

I shall move closer to matters related to the economy. If one reads the reports of any pundit, any expert in either the State or federal sphere, one sees universal agreement that the greatest single problem facing the Australian economy—and obviously the New South Wales economy—in the next twelve months or eighteen months, or indeed longer, is in the field of industrial relations. Not one word in the entire thirteen pages of His Excellency's Speech deals with the Government's approach to a wages policy or to industrial disputation. If there is a single area of policy that will prevent the people of New South Wales from reaping the benefits of some of the developments about which His Excellency's Speech dealt at length, and if there is a single element to which the Government should be directing its attention, it concerns industrial relations and wages. However, the Governor's Speech fails to refer to those issues.

Any responsible government should be concerned about its monetary policy **and** the sum it **will** be able to borrow. Surely that is **an** overriding **and** tremendously important matter upon which the Government should have some views and in respect of which it should outline its policy. No mention is made of public and private sector borrowing and the desirability of a short-term borrowing programme that the Government and its statutory authorities have decided to undertake. The Government has given no commitment to providing further and better information on its overall loan programme. All of those matters should have received attention and been outlined in the Speech that his Excellency was asked to read. Instead, there has

been a thundering silence and a recapitulation of announcements, many of which have been made three or four times but will amount to nothing. If any of this administration's promises are fulfilled, most of them will owe little, if anything, to the Government's actions.

I shall deal briefly with that part of the Governor's Speech that referred to the Commonwealth Government. This Government criticizes the federal Government continually. In almost every answer given to a question without notice in this House, Ministers knock the federal Government. They fail to mention any initiatives by that Government. They certainly do not tell the House how this Government is responding to federal Government policies. Ministers fail to tell us how the Government protects the people of New South Wales, if it thinks that they should be protected. Australia has a single set of taxpayers—a single set of people—who receive the goods and services provided by government. The same people are concerned, whether the finance is provided by the State directly, by the federal Government or paid by that Government to the States. A single set of taxpayers provide the necessary money. A single capital market provides the necessary finance, and one group of recipients receives the services.

The argument that State Premiers on both sides of politics love to advance is without rationale or logic. The real argument should be about the level of public sector requirements and government activity. It matters little ultimately whether the State Government or the federal Government gets the kudos. It does not matter whether the State Government or the federal Government raises the money. The question that should be considered by the Premier and Treasurer and those who wish to criticize the federal Government is, where should changes occur in government activity in respect of the Australian community? What are the choices? One choice is to increase the amount of public sector borrowing. Even the economic illiterate, who poses as the Treasurer of the State, would agree that further increases in public **sector** borrowing requirements, regardless of which government is concerned, can have the effect only of increasing interest rates. After all, that is exactly the matter about which the Premier and Treasurer vilified the federal Government today. Does the Premier and Treasurer suggest that New South Wales should increase substantially public sector borrowing? I suspect that he does not suggest that. One alternative would be for the Premier and Treasurer to tell the House which area of federal government spending he and this Government would like to see reduced. That is one option available to any government. Perhaps this Government would want the federal Government to reduce welfare benefits, defence spending or expenditure on welfare housing.

Mr Crabtree: The federal Government has done that—by \$20 million.

Mr GREINER: I should be delighted if the Minister for Police and Minister for **Services** or any **other** Government supporter would tell the House the areas of spending announced in the federal Budget that they would seek to see reduced to allow more scope for increased spending in New South Wales. Another alternative would be to increase federal taxes. Perhaps the State Government would like to follow that line of logic. Perhaps Government supporters will suggest that it is possible to increase federal taxation and thereby provide additional funds to the States. One suspects that the New South Wales Government would not like that option either. There are no easy options; there are no easy ways out. It is not a question of the States against the Commonwealth. Rather, it is a question of the level of services to be provided by governments, whether local, State or federal. It is up to those who want to spend more at a particular level to provide the additional funds at the State level and to state clearly and unequivocally how they propose to finance that

extra spending. Though it is possible to do that, none of the options is economically attractive. I suspect that, regardless of which side of the political fence one is on, none of the options is electorally attractive either.

I challenge any Government supporter to try to tell me how the federal Government ought to be financing the further spending that the New South Wales Government would like to do. I should have thought that somewhere in His Excellency's Speech there might have been just one word of praise for the success of the federal Government's economic policies. I should have thought that perhaps there would be some suggestion of co-operation with the federal Government.

*[Interruption]*

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Ku-ring-gai is entitled to be heard in silence.

Mr GREINER: I shall examine briefly the performance of the federal Government over the past twelve months. Before doing that, let me say that on this day last year the Leader of the Opposition in the federal Parliament, the Hon. W. G. Hayden, described last year's federal budget as an anti-growth budget. He said the federal Government had, to use his words, "given up on inflation" and "given up on unemployment". In the absence of the Premier and Treasurer, the Assistant Treasurer said that the federal Budget was pathetic and defeatist, that unemployment would increase and the reduction in inflation would, at the best, be small. I shall look now at the realities of the Australian economy in the past twelve months. Last year the increase in non-farm gross domestic product was the strongest since 1973-74. The Leader of the Opposition in the federal Parliament calls that anti-growth. Private final consumption expenditure increased by 3.2 per cent in real terms—the highest increase for more than six years. Apparently the Leader of the Opposition in the federal Parliament describes that also as anti-growth. One of the favourite indicators of the Premier and Treasurer, the private gross fixed investment index, which was mentioned during question time today, has increased by 21 per cent in real terms this year. Does the Government call that anti-growth? Is that defeatist and pathetic? I suggest—and all international comparisons agree with me—that it is one of the strongest performances of an economy anywhere in the world.

I shall examine further the economic performance of the Australian economy in the past twelve months. Private fixed capital investment, at 11.8 per cent, was higher than any year in the 1970's, as a percentage of gross domestic product. Employment—a matter I shall return to later to demonstrate the nonsense that the Premier and Treasurer likes to trumpet in this House—increased by 2.6 per cent, the fastest rate since those figures have been published. Unemployment fell to its lowest level in five years. The Assistant Treasurer said that inflation would probably not alter. He said that if inflation decreased, the reduction would be minor. The consumer price index fell by almost 2 per cent below the rate for the previous year. That represents about a 20 per cent reduction in inflation. However, the Assistant Treasurer claims that there will be almost no reduction in inflation. Most importantly, in terms of the well-being of our citizens, real incomes, after inflation, increased by almost 4 per cent in the past year. That is a record of which all Australians should be proud.

Mr Crabtree: Does the honourable member say that the inflation rate was 8.8 per cent and incomes increased by 4 per cent?

Mr GREINER: I shall not bother to respond to the Minister's interjection for his knowledge of economics is somewhat less than that of the Assistant Treasurer, and we have seen the extent of that Minister's knowledge of the subject. Whatever criteria is used to compare our economy with that of comparable countries overseas, **one** can conclude only that the results are favourable to Australia. That highlights the record of the federal Government in macro-economic terms in the past twelve months. It would have been appropriate for the Premier and Treasurer to have balanced his carping criticism—if there has to be carping criticism—with an acknowledgement of the real successes of the federal Government. Those successes are not disputable; they are a matter of record, regardless of the criteria used to assess them.

Major decisions relating to federal–state relationships were **announced some** time ago. It is the height of hypocrisy for the Premier and Treasurer to trot them out again now as being some new tightening-up on the States. Those arrangements were made by the Loan Council some time ago. The fact that those arrangements have been settled has enabled the Premier and Treasurer to bring down his Budget within a few days of the federal Budget being introduced.

I should now like to turn to employment programmes. I should not like to go unchallenged the remarks made by the Premier and Treasurer during question time in response to a so-called brilliant question by the honourable **member** for Manly. The Premier asserted that the federal Government has abolished funding to the extent of \$1 million for an employment assistance programme. That may be true, but the fact needs to be seen in context. I refer now to a part of the federal Treasurer's **Budget** speech, which is in these terms:

Expenditure on programmes designed to expand the supply of skilled labour . . . and to assist young people in their search for employment is to be increased by 22 per cent to \$203 million in 1981–82.

Even the great mathematician, the Minister for Police and Minister for Services, could understand that a 22 per cent rise in funding for employment assistance **programmes** is an increase of about 12 per cent, 13 per cent or 14 per cent in real terms overall. The Treasurer's Speech continued:

That total includes \$65 million—\$24 million more than last year—to assist young unemployed persons to obtain prior work experience and practical job skills, or otherwise prepare themselves for employment.

Though it is true that one programme has been cut, any sensible, objective look at the overall thrust of federal Government spending on employment and training programmes could lead only to the conclusion that the Commonwealth Government is **doing** what the State Government and the Opposition would like it to do, that is, increase the amount of money spent in assisting young persons to prepare themselves for jobs.

I turn now to the basic question of employment in New South Wales. The Premier and Treasurer consistently nominates rising employment opportunities as his most outstanding achievement. With what could only be described as ritualistic monotony, he proclaims that New South Wales had the highest unemployment rate when Labor came to office and that it now has the lowest rate. Though that part of the Premier's statement is correct, the corollary in terms of job creation and employment opportunities is not borne out by the facts. To point out the reality of the situation, H

**shall** quote from the *Australian Bulletin of Labour* issue of January, which established clearly that New South Wales is, "in the middle of the pack, with performance roughly in line with the overall national average". The article continues:

Queensland and Western Australia stand out as the high fliers. . . .  
Labour force growth is well ahead of growth in the working age populations, implying increasing participation rates. And the population growth rates are above the national average, which is both a symptom of current economic growth and a stimulus to more rapid future growth.

That article establishes that New South Wales is in the middle of the pack with *a* performance roughly in line with the overall national average. That is not my opinion; those are the statistical facts. I seek leave to incorporate in *Hansard* this table, which I have shown to the Minister for Police and Minister for Services.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I regret that the honourable member for Ku-ring-gai did not show me the table in my chambers before he commenced his speech. If he had done so, I may have given him approval to have it incorporated in *Hansard*. I cannot now give that approval, for I have not had an opportunity to peruse the material contained in the document.

Mr GREINER: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I apologize for my lack of courtesy. I shall nevertheless read those conclusions. The table comes from the latest economic bulletin of the Commonwealth Banking Corporation. Doubtless, the Government and the Minister for Police and Minister for Services would accept the validity of statistics published by that corporation. The figures reveal that the population growth of New South Wales for the year ended June 1980 is the same as the national average, but less than the figure for Queensland and Western Australia. The bulletin states that the growth in the labour force in New South Wales is almost equal to the Australian average. Employment, which is the key point of the statistics, far the year to May 1981, increased by 2.6 per cent in New South Wales, 4.3 per cent in Queensland and 4.8 per cent in Western Australia. The overall Australian average increase in employment averaged 2.8 per cent. In other words, in New South Wales the rate of new job creation—the real test of the Government's performance—is below the national average. I am willing to make this bulletin available to the Premier and Treasurer, the Assistant Treasurer and the Minister for Police and Minister for Services.

The Premier and Treasurer is correct in stating that the unemployment rate in New South Wales has decreased. His claim is based on a comparison between those who are out of work and those who are available for work. In fact, the labour force in New South Wales has not been growing fast; the participation rate of people in the work force in New South Wales has been decreasing. The decrease is not due to creating new jobs. The slower growth of the labour force is the reason why the rate of unemployment is lower; there is no other possible explanation for it. I shall look now at other indicators. The consumer price index shows that New South Wales is still the **inflation** capital of Australia. New South Wales has, by a long way, a higher rate of increase in consumer prices than the Australian average. The rate of increase is greater in this State than in Queensland and in Western Australia. Those States are doing far better than New South Wales in respect of creating new jobs.

The Premier and Treasurer is selective in pointing out that, in respect of retail sales and building approvals, New South Wales is in a satisfactory position. However, I wonder whether the Premier and Treasurer will take credit for the present slump in home construction. I suggest that the logical answer is that when things go well the Premier and Treasurer says that is so because the Government had a part in it.

With a reduction of 9 000 units in the rate of construction of dwelling units in New South Wales in the current financial year, the Premier and Treasurer now says that is nothing to do with this Government; he says it has no control over housing. When there is a boom, the Premier and Treasurer suggests that this Government has an influence, but he says that it has no control over housing when there is a slump in that area. That is a brilliant approach.

The Premier and Treasurer likes to suggest that the critics like to belittle the performance of New South Wales and its economy over the past five years. What **the** critics belittle—and so do I—are the Premier and Treasurer's grossly extravagant claims in respect of the role that he and his Government have played in the State's economic performance. Though some statistics show that New South Wales is doing better than average and others show that it is doing worse than average, the real question is, what evidence is there that State policies have contributed to that situation? How much better could the economic performance have been if the Government had behaved differently? I have referred previously to the words of the permanent secretary of the Treasury, who admits that the impact of the New South Wales Government on employment is, at best, minimal. It is simply not credible for the Premier and Treasurer to claim credit for the employment situation in New South Wales.

The key factors behind the growth in the economy of New South Wales are structural, as Alan Mitchell pointed out in the *Sydney Morning Herald*. The economy of New South Wales, assisted by our strong beef and wheat industries, has benefited from the rural boom in respect of price and volume of production. In economic terms, values of coal have risen because of events in the Middle East. Surely the Premier and Treasurer would not claim credit for what has happened in the Middle East and the actions of oil sheiks. It is interesting to see what causal factors in the Government's policies are brought forward by the Premier and Treasurer to try to explain how his policies have contributed to employment or unemployment. The only issue the Premier and Treasurer even mentions was raised in a speech he made to a meeting of the Executives' Association on 13th July, when he said:

The biggest single decision made by the New South Wales Government to achieve economic recovery in New South Wales in the past five years was to maintain the highest level of capital growth spending our resources would allow in the face of massive cutbacks by the federal Government.

That is the Premier and Treasurer's normal ritualistic bleating. To claim that this Government's capital spending has been the principal motivating force in the New South Wales economy is to talk nonsense. Any one of the Premier's economic advisers will admit that the strength of the Australian economy has been due, almost entirely, to private sector consumption and investment, not to public sector investment, as is suggested by the Premier and Treasurer. The New South Wales Government's capital spending has been no greater on a *pro rata* basis than that of any State government. I invite the Minister for Police and Minister for Services to do some homework on that aspect for time does not permit me to expand on it now. The only argument the Premier and Treasurer can advance about what he has done to improve the State's economic performance is to claim that capital spending has increased, but that claim is false. In the course of his speech to the Executives' Association the Premier and Treasurer made some remarks that are reflected in the Speech delivered by His Excellency. They concern the relationship between infrastructure investment and other capital works. In response to an article in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, which pointed out that senior State government economists were concerned about the future of capital

expenditure in health, education and housing, as a result of the Government's high involvement in resources and development, the Premier and Treasurer said:

It is entirely false and misleading to assert that by meeting its inescapable obligations to provide infrastructure the Government is cutting back on education, health and capital spending.

I shall make a couple of fundamental points about that, in view of the Premier and Treasurer's failure to answer the Leader of the Opposition when he asked a question about that aspect yesterday. Obviously the vast bulk of infrastructure investment is not inescapable. There is evidence of private sector willingness to become involved. One has to look only at coal exports from New South Wales as compared to the position in Queensland. In Queensland, infrastructure is already available. In fact, it exceeds by far the coal exports from that State. On any set of figures, this State is far behind in terms of putting in place the infrastructure necessary to make the coal export industry work effectively. There is clear evidence to show that the private sector would undertake a lot of that investment with far greater efficiency and cost effectiveness than the public sector.

The Premier and Treasurer seems to establish some sort of higher motivation for government spending. In fact, the greater part of his reasoning is ideological and political; it is not economically based. For example, the Port Kembla coal loader is located in that area for political reasons—to protect some Labor Party seats near Botany Bay. If that decision had been made on economic grounds, the coal loader would not have been at Port Kembla, and a whole range of infrastructure investment by the Government would not have been necessary. A comparatively small sum is involved in investment funds in this area; in New South Wales the proportion is about 20 per cent. Some \$200 million of infrastructure is tied to specific projects.

The real argument of the Opposition in respect of priorities is spelt out in the amendment to the motion; it concerns the allocation of the remaining 80 per cent of those investment funds. It is on that score that the Premier and Treasurer, rightly, comes under criticism—even from his own party—for emphasizing optional investments. That was evident at the State Labor Party conference on housing. At that time the Premier and Treasurer was emphasizing optional investment in things that do not relate to matters the Government can do better—or best—particularly in respect of infrastructure spending in the Hunter Valley. That spending occurred at the expense of health, education and housing. The Leader of the Opposition has shown clearly that the Government has its priorities in the wrong order. The Governor's Speech does not spell out a coherent plan for changing the priorities so that the things the people of New South Wales expect—and should expect—the State Government to do can be done.

Mr FACE (Charlestown) [4.0]: I congratulate the Governor and Lady Rowland, who, since taking office, have already made a fine contribution to New South Wales. It is evident from the ease with which they converse with the people of this State that they will endear themselves to all the citizens of New South Wales. This debate upon the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply to the Governor's Speech is important, for it is the last such debate before the impending State election. I wish to say something of a positive nature on the development in the Hunter region, about which honourable members have heard so much in recent times—especially since the Government came to the Treasury benches. I shall, first, say something about the gloom and doom preached by the Opposition in respect of the development of the Hunter region.

It is obvious from what I have heard from Opposition supporters—certainly in the past eighteen months—that they cannot make up their minds whether they really want that development. The only thing they are good at is stirring up the emotions of the people, many of whom have had the unfortunate experience of being unemployed for considerable periods. **When** the former Government held office it was not willing to do anything about that development.

Honourable members should cast their minds back a little to **1976** when the Wran Government was elected to office. It is ironic that Opposition supporters now express concern about Newcastle when they—including the Leader of the Country Party—were quite willing to sell off or close up the State Dockyard and thus throw many thousands of workers directly and indirectly on the scrap heap. I say that mainly because of the remarks made in this debate by the Leader of the Country Party. My speech in **1976** in the Address-in-Reply debate refers specifically to that and I need elaborate no further. If it had not been for the Wran Government and specifically the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports, that dockyard would no longer be there.

The most amusing part about the matter is the sudden interest that Liberal Party and Country Party supporters have shown, supposedly, in the Hunter region **and** the Newcastle region. It does little credit to the Liberal **Party** that its members come to Newcastle—especially a man of questionable character, Mr Greg Bartels, the State secretary of the Liberal Party—and describe the seats in Newcastle as hard luck **Labor** seats, because they were hard for the people living there. They were hard for the people living there prior to **1976**. I shall quote remarks made by Mr Bartels as recorded in the *Lake Macquarie Post*:

**Labor** has done nothing for them and they are generally starting to wake up to this.

That is an aboslute figment of his imagination. However, knowing Mr Bartels as I do, he probably needed a road map to get to Newcastle. His statements reveal an abysmal ignorance of the Newcastle and Hunter regions. That is not surprising in the light of his party's attitude towards that area. I take exception to Mr Bartels—my colleagues can speak for themselves—casting aspersions that I do nothing for my constituents. I have been a member of this Parliament for almost nine years. Though I have been able to get a few things done while a member—mainly by highlighting the serious neglect that had taken place under the former coalition Government—there were several major undertakings that the coalition parties just would not commit themselves to doing.

If it had not been for the **Labor** Party coming to the Treasury benches, some of the things I have mentioned might have never come to pass. It is typical of the Leader of the Opposition—he has become well known for his outbursts—to speak about things of which he knows little. Let us examine the track record of the Liberal Party and Country Party when in government from **1965** until voted out of power in **1976**. At every election those parties talked about the electrification of the Gosford to Newcastle railway line. They made that promise in **1965** but did absolutely nothing about it. When the **Labor** Party came into government there had not been one bit of planning towards that project, yet the Leader of the Opposition now has the hide and audacity to criticize this Government about it.

Honourable members should look at another piece of brilliant planning by the former coalition Government—the State Office Block. The former Premier, Sir **Robert Askin**, talked about what he would do and would not do about a State Office Block.

We even picked out a site where the Newcastle police station stands, well knowing it would be classified by the National Trust. He said then, "If you do not have it there, you will not have it". The truth is that when the Labor Party came into Government and perused the file relating to the State Office Block, it became obvious that there had never been an intention to build it. The former coalition Government did not even have a site earmarked. If it had not been for the action of the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports there would not be a State Office Block in Newcastle. Newcastle had been given no priority whatsoever.

A moment ago I talked about the police station at Newcastle. It is a hotchpotch of old buildings that should have been preserved for history. They were historic buildings, but of not much use to work in as a police station. Members of the Opposition had started the ball rolling with the planning, but the project was given no priority. Once again, the Wran Government was responsible for the construction and the building will be completed by the end of this year. I could go on about the achievements in Newcastle of the Labor Government since coming to office and the things that were not done—and certainly were not likely to be done—under the former coalition Government.

The Liberal Party–Country Party coalition has come up with their old theory that there ought to be a couple of borderline seats in Newcastle to keep things moving in that area. That theory does not stand up to examination, though often it has been quoted in the columns of the Newcastle *Morning Herald*. I shall say no more other than that some people are absolutely paranoid about that. The person to whom I am directing my remarks will know exactly what I mean.

Mr Booth: The coalition Government had three Ministers from the Newcastle area.

Mr FACE: Yes, that is right, and still they could not get anything done in the area. As I said earlier, under the previous coalition Government I could not get things done in my electorate. In fact, I could not even get a hearing. When the Labor Party was elected to office it found that there had been no planning for the eastern bypass round Charlestown. It had not been under consideration for the foreseeable future. Traffic lights through the same shopping centre at Charlestown had not received any priority but were subject to possible consideration in that year's Budget. No school assembly halls had been built in the electorate, though one was built at Raymond Terrace, in the electorate of the honourable member for Maitland. I remind honourable members that that was in a period of eleven years. However, since the Labor Party was elected to Government two assembly halls have been built in high schools in my electorate.

I could go on and on about other things that have been achieved by the Labor Government in my electorate. Both the Charlestown police station and the Adamstown police station were old fire stations converted but the former Government would not do a thing to improve the situation. There are other examples of the Liberal Party and Country Party when in government refusing to carry out essential works in that area. It amazes me that the Leader of the Opposition and Mr Bartels are crazy enough to listen to the remarks and criticisms of some people. In 1976 when the Wran Government was elected Newcastle was on the brink of disaster. Unemployment in my electorate was not only the highest in New South Wales but also the highest in Australia. The former Government was not doing one thing about it. Yet, during this last half decade the Wran Government has done something about it and brought economic revival and the optimism that exists today. For the Leader of the Opposition and Mr Bartels to go stomping round the Hunter region with all the doom and gloom

that they are talking about is just ludicrous nonsense. They say one thing one day and another thing the next. The Hon. Virginia Chadwick has stated that the development is good but at a transport seminar recently she said that it was not so good. They should hang their heads in shame for the lack of respect that they show for the unemployed and disadvantaged in the Hunter region, yet they criticize the Wran Government for doing something about it. That suggests to me that the Liberal Party should get back to running gambling nights, where it is obviously more successful, and stop muckracking and besmirching decent people.

In recent times local Liberal supporters have written a considerable number of letters to the *Newcastle Morning Herald*. That is an example of how the Liberal Party and its candidates in Newcastle—especially Mr Denis Dolan of Swansea, who should put his own house in order—put themselves up as people of integrity. I shall quote from *Hansard* of 24th March, 1976:

Bruce John McDonald was described in the Supreme Court of Queensland in a case involving Community Developments Pty Limited in these words: "I would not describe Mr McDonald as a reliable witness".

I shall be interested to hear Opposition candidates comments on that statement. How could one believe anything he says when it has been said in a court of law that he could not be described as a reliable witness? In 1978 Prime Minister Fraser told the New South Wales Government to get on with developments. The New South Wales Government was already doing that. In the most recent loan council the Prime Minister welshed on his promises to make loans available for development. The New South Wales Government in an attempt to get things rolling in this State—especially in the Hunter region—finds itself in considerable trouble following the Prime Minister's welshing. The Prime Minister has broken yet another promise—and this is another of his claims to fame, even more so than his comment, "Life wasn't meant to be easy".

Before I conclude my remarks on the prophets of doom and gloom, and the reliability of those spouting it out, I shall say something about the honourable member for Upper Hunter. The other day the honourable member for Upper Hunter had something to say about dams. It is interesting to know that throughout the term of office of the Liberal Party—Country Party in Government it did not start the construction of even one dam. The honourable member for Upper Hunter is on record as saying that he would not oppose construction of the Glennies Creek Dam. Much of the member's comments have been constructive but also he has made some destructive comments. I certainly do not cast aspersions on him. However, a few other people in the Upper Hunter region should be careful that they do not get their hands caught in the till in relation to land deals.

I shall inform the House about some of the achievements of the New South Wales Government. A record 13.8 million tonnes of coal was shipped overseas from Newcastle in the year ended 30th June. This was a rise of 17.5 per cent on the 11.8 million tonnes shipped in 1979–80. These figures disclose the accelerating growth in that important industry. The growth is underpinning the revival of the Hunter region's economy and will strengthen the prospects of New South Wales. That growth is likely to continue accelerating in the next few years.

In this financial year Newcastle's annual coal exporting capacity will be lifted from 15 million tonnes to 18 million tonnes, with the upgrading of the Port Waratah Coal Services coal loader. This company has a third stage of development, due for completion in December 1982, which will see the construction of a third coal loading

*Mr Face]*

berth on the steelworks channel of Newcastle harbour. This development will bring the port of Newcastle's annual coal shipping capacity to 25 million tonnes, almost double the tonnage that went through the port last financial year. Those figures contradict the ill-founded statements of the honourable member for Ku-ring-gai. A third coal loader, in which Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited, Howard Smith, the Maritime Services Board, regional coal mining interests and Japanese buyers will have interests, is to be built on Kooragang Island. This loader will take coal exports into yet another era involving 50 million tonnes a year. I give this emphasis to coal to illustrate two points about the Hunter region that often are lost sight of. The first point is one of perspective—a matter of understanding the scale of investment and development taking place, and understanding the firm commitments private and public enterprise have made to the development of the Hunter. There are those who would seek to undermine that commitment and confidence, either for short-term political advantage or because they reject the idea of growth as the best way to protect and improve the welfare and standards of the entire community. The second point illustrated by my earlier statistics on coal is that coal has a future undreamt of even five years ago. That future was recognized early by this Government and consciously exploited by the Government for the benefit of the State.

By this time all members are familiar with the reasons for the interest in our major energy resource, coal, and the investment this resource has attracted from national and multinational corporations and the public sector. The principal reason lies in the price and supply policies of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, and in the consequent worldwide shift to coal as an energy source. We are extremely fortunate in the Hunter region that our major natural resource, coal, is in demand internationally. But in addition to that, over the past five years the State Government has been singularly successful in attracting large-scale, energy-sensitive manufacturing industries to establish within the region. The Government has successfully marketed this region's energy resources internationally as an inducement to manufacturing industry. It is not difficult to see Australia and specifically the Hunter region as a major and increasingly important exporter of energy. This is a role more familiar in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, but there should be no doubt that we in Australia are in the same game. The name of the game is use of energy resources to develop the national economy for our national advantage.

The Hunter region, with the encouragement of the Wran Government and the co-operation of the private sector, has already achieved what the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries have set out to do: to exploit an energy resource in a way that diversifies and strengthens the regional economy. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries used an aggressive pricing policy to accumulate funds for other investment, particularly in the manufacturing sector. They wanted to bolster their national economies to create more employment and wealth, and creation of opportunities for their populations. The coal exporting nations, of which Australia is a major one, have taken advantage of the price-supply hiatus occasioned by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries' tactics to sell more coal. The result for New South Wales is that its prime energy resource is in demand internationally, with benefits to the balance of payments, a major determinant of our national standard of living. But in addition to this we have succeeded in creating an additional and immediate benefit in the form of new industry and employment opportunities which diversify and strengthen the regional economy. In other words, we have sufficiently exploited our market advantages to achieve something that the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries is on the way to doing at enormous cost, through inflation and conversion technologies, to the western industrialized economies. We cannot use prices and supply in the way the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries has done, as our political and

economic systems are not as centralized as those in oil producing countries. As a coal producer we have had to take advantage of an unexpected market opportunity and we have been very successful.

We have a resource that others want. Regardless of what happens to oil supply or nuclear power, coal is part of a more diverse energy demand and supply structure. This new structure involves the creation of new processing, conversion and energy transformation technologies to meet social and environment requirements. It is against this background that the situation in the Hunter region, and indeed in this State, must be considered. The doom and gloom merchants, and the hyped-up hypocrites who attack the course of events in the Hunter region, chose to ignore that background; they chose a far more selective, narrow and backward perspective. They forget that in 1977, only four years ago, a regional planning committee in the Hunter described the region as exhibiting the symptoms of economic stagnation. The planning committee estimated that 20 000 jobs would have to be created in the succeeding five years to soak up the then unemployed and young people leaving school. The task looked hopeless, and particularly so because it had taken the decade of the 1960's to create that number of jobs. Though still 11 000 people are registered for employment in the region, there are labour shortages, particularly for skilled tradesmen, and the position could become more acute. More than half the State's major new investment projects are in the Hunter region.

Figures released earlier this year by the Department of Industrial Development and Decentralisation indicated that about \$7,000 million worth of major investment was under way in the Hunter. About \$2,146 million was in the manufacturing sector, \$2,100 million in mining and \$2,500 million in government projects. Service industries accounted for about \$222 million. Undoubtedly these figures will soon be updated again by the department. I should point out, however, that these large aggregate figures refer to major projects; that is, projects worth more than \$5 million each. This cutoff point gives some indication of both the scale of the investment in the Hunter and the fact that many significant, though smaller, projects tend to be overlooked when these figures are discussed. And in any event the figures do not include projects listed as being in their preliminary stages, including the coal liquefaction project for which the Government recently called for the registration of tenders.

Studies by the Hunter Development Board show that the region can expect a total growth of about 9 000 new operational jobs, between 6 000 and 7 000 additional construction jobs and between 7 000 and 15 000 indirect and induced jobs created as a result of the major new projects. These are jobs related only to the major new projects, that is, those worth more than \$5 million. A more broadly based study by the Hunter Valley Research Foundation suggests that by 1985 the regional work force will have increased by 58 000 to 218 000. As a result of the major development projects, natural growth, and the spin-off effects of regional economy, there will be 58 000 additional jobs in all industry sectors. Initially the big demand for labour and skills will be in the mining, manufacturing, building and construction industries. In the meantime other industry sectors will begin to feel the benefits of the development boom. The Hunter Development Board's manpower development executive, Mr Mal Davies, in a recent speech analysed the demand for workers when he said:

In the professional and technical fields the demand is for engineering of one kind or another, metallurgists, industrial chemists, draftsmen, mechanical engineering technicians, metallurgical technicians, accountants, computer programmers and systems analysts.

*Mr Face]*

In the trades and trade related fields the greatest demand appears to be for boiler makers, metal workers, fitters and turners, machinists, welders, experienced tradesmen's assistants, electricians, plant and motor mechanics; and to a lesser degree, plumber and gasfitters, bricklayers, carpenters and joiners, tilers, plasterers, reinforcers, concrete workers and finishers, and form workers.

Clearly, with the demands for skilled labour, and the regional shortage of such people, the district will have to cope with a significant influx of people. On the other hand these demands have opened up whole new areas of opportunity for females to join the work force. In the immediate future, in the Hunter region, job opportunities are and will be in the traditionally male-dominated areas. But is there such a thing today as traditional men's work? There is increasing evidence of women successfully holding down jobs that not too many years ago were considered suitable for men only. About 5 500 women and girls are looking for work in the Hunter Valley. This is a big pool of potential employees. The majority have the necessary qualifications to train in a wide variety of trade and unskilled areas. The employment of local female labour will help reduce social dislocation and infrastructure costs associated with the large scale importation of labour, and will go some of the way towards adjusting the imbalance that exists in so far as employment prospects are concerned.

In years gone by, especially during the previous coalition Government's term of office, the only way anyone sought to overcome female unemployment was by starting up a clothing factory. This happened in many country areas, especially the Hunter region. That system was tried and failed, leaving disastrous effects upon the employees when they were put out of work. The solution to overcome the problem of female unemployment in the Hunter region has not been provided by setting up clothing factories. For many years the manufacture of clothing has benefited from tariff protection so that it might continue. This type of undertaking had a poor track record for financial success, and many companies have collapsed.

For a number of reasons special programmes are being developed to attract girls and women—the major groups unemployed in the Hunter—into jobs traditionally taken up by males. If we are to take full advantage of the development now under way in our region, we must encourage many more women and girls to broaden their job options and we must persuade employers to be active in encouraging females to enter hitherto traditionally male-dominated job domains. There are people in the community, and in this House, who would like us to believe that all these matters are left to chance; that we are being overwhelmed by development; that our future is made uncertain rather than shored-up by developments in the Hunter region. Such people choose to ignore the basic realities of the region.

The Hunter region is not an isolated area. It has a settled population, existing infrastructures and existing institutions, many of which are well-entrenched and politically competitive. The Hunter has not one or two local councils, but thirteen, each of whose aspirations have to be taken into account. The Hunter has a complexity and spread of mining and manufacturing that is found in no other single region in the country. It has a regional identity and regional voice with which its view can be put to government and to the corporate sector. The structures and mechanisms that exist in the Hunter region for co-ordination, promotion and dialogue have been constructed to take into account the political and bureaucratic reality of how things work in the area.

When I went to Western Australia nearly four years ago and spoke to industrialists and people in business, they knew very little about the Hunter or what sort of business was done here, what sort of capacity we had, who were the manufacturers

and what they did. On my return I spoke to Alec Young, who is now the chairman of the Hunter Development Board about the formation of that board. Anyone who has seen the wonderful publication about the capacity of the Hunter region which has been sent far and wide throughout this country and overseas will be aware that people now know, through the medium of the Hunter Region Directory, what things are available, where to get in touch with people, what our capacity is, what backup we have, what ancillary things and what infrastructure there are in the whole of the region, without having to run all over the place in order to ascertain this information.

There is simply no point in saying that decisions can be imposed on the Hunter from above by an all-powerful authority or plan. There are three basic realities: they are, first, that the situation in the Hunter is dynamic and constantly changing; second, institutions, including local councils, that are well established in the region must be respected; and, third, the region is developing a mature voice that insists on having a say in what is going on. The Government has recognized these needs and realities. On the one hand it has ordered that all coal-related developments in the region—and throughout New South Wales for that matter—be referred to the Minister for Planning and Environment for assessment and approval. The objective here is to bring some co-ordination and order to coal-related projects that may, for one reason or another, be beyond the resources of local councils to assess and manage. It is designed to be helpful to the councils and I believe that most have come to see it in this way, despite some early rhetoric on the subject by the doom and gloom merchants of the Opposition.

In addition, the Hunter Development Board was set up in 1977 to promote industrial development and deliver to decision-makers in the private and public sectors the broad views of the regional community. It serves as a link between the Government, the business sector and the regional community. Its membership is diverse and representative of regional interests. It is active in co-ordination by bringing people together to sort out difficulties, to promote the region, to create job opportunities and to assist industry. In the longer term it is looking at strategies to provide more job opportunities in five or six years when the construction period in the region begins to decline.

The State Government has appointed a co-ordinator of government infrastructure who has access to the Premier and Treasurer, and works closely with the development board, government departments and, most important, with the existing local government and bureaucratic framework and with corporations. Yet the Opposition suggests the Government is not doing this. Then there is the Hunter Region Parliamentary Panel consisting of members of this Chamber—including the Minister for Sport and Recreation, Minister for Tourism and Assistant Treasurer, and myself—who have the good fortune to represent electorates in the Hunter region. The panel includes both Government and Opposition members. Its job is to oversee developments and to help sort out problem areas. It is part of the process of genuine dialogue and co-operation that must exist if the Hunter is to prosper.

The parliamentary panel, under the chairmanship of the Minister for Sport and Recreation, Minister for Tourism and Assistant Treasurer, is a non-partisan device to bring local interests and the Parliament together to broaden our appreciation of each other's views and to resolve issues that concern members of the panel. In addition, the panel gets things done. Last November when it visited Muswellbrook, for example, that town and the municipal authorities, were virtually paralysed. The town appeared to be hemmed in by coalmines and there was nowhere to go. Cartoons appeared in the press showing Muswellbrook perched on an apple-core of land with the coal-grabs eating away the land around it. That is the way Muswellbrook felt at the time, and probably rightly so, but the parliamentary panel changed that. Within a few months the

Government had resumed at South Muswellbrook land with the potential of providing 700 building blocks. On 6th August when the parliamentary panel visited Muswellbrook the Lands Commission was well advanced with roadworks and associated works on the estate. In addition, that visit of the parliamentary panel in November led to the release of Crown land at Denman which will provide some 300 blocks. I emphasize the time scale. The parliamentary panel met with the council in November; officers of the Department of Lands and Muswellbrook shire council discussed the matter on 1st December, and on 2nd February the announcement of the release of Crown land was made. Within three months many of Muswellbrook's potential housing problems had been resolved, following the intervention of the parliamentary panel.

On 6th August the panel returned to the upper Hunter. Council officers admitted to members of the panel that they had been impressed by the visit in November of the previous year. Within days of it, they said, things started to happen. The meeting in Muswellbrook on 6th August was a fruitful one. It concentrated on the water and sewerage infrastructure of the Muswellbrook, Singleton and Scone shire councils. The submission from these councils was presented to the panel by the Hunter Development Board. It was examined in detail and the discussion that followed was pertinent, informative and—most notably—amicable. I believe I speak for all members of the panel when I say that the August meeting proved that people can work together in a non-partisan way to understand each other's problems, to be constructive for the benefit of the region and to help resolve the issues in the best possible way for everyone.

This is not an idle or soft approach to the problems of the Hunter region. It is realistic as it allows these issues to be discussed and resolved with dignity, mutual respect and mutual benefit. It was particularly encouraging to the people of the Hunter region that members of the panel themselves made the suggestion that we should meet more often with the councils to discuss problems that can be taken directly to the Government for consultation and resolution. It was equally encouraging that the councils expressed their interest in working with the panel to bring issues to the attention of the Government. It is this sort of co-operation, non-partisan and non-political, that holds wonderful promise for the balanced development of the Hunter.

That outline of the situation is in stark contrast with the gloom and doom that for so long the House has heard from honourable members opposite. There is a recipe for disaster. The Government's programme is one of some optimism. The other day the Leader of the Opposition visited Newcastle. In this Chamber he has already painted a picture of his desire to be a Reagan style administration. He has really been overcome by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition who is paranoid in his belief that private enterprise can do anything better than the Government can do it and that all government employees should be sacked. If one goes to the Hunter region one will see a good example of co-operation between the Government and private sectors. This refutes what the Leader of the Opposition was trying to convey to the Chamber of Commerce in Newcastle. He went down like a lead balloon with the members of that chamber. Speaking specifically as a member of the parliamentary panel, I view the prospects of the Hunter region with optimism. I commend the Speech of His Excellency.

Mr WOTTON (Burrendong) [4.30]: The Speech presented to this Parliament by the previous Governor contained nothing but blatant politicizing. It was sad that the Governor of this State should have been obliged to make such a speech. The Speech made recently by the present Governor did not contain such glaring politicizing but it presented a lacklustre programme of the present Government. Traditionally the Governor's Speech outlines programmes for the future, but in this

year's Speech the future was forgotten. The Speech gave an extremely poor resume of the Government's cosmetic performance over the past five years. The Government in more ways than one is led by the greatest exponent of cosmetics since Helena Rubinstein.

When the honourable member for Cessnock spoke in this debate recently he said, "We have a good Government and a straight Government". He is entitled to say it is a good Government if he believes it is, but to say that it is a straight Government is a different kettle of fish. He said that the Government deals off a clean pack and always produces the necessary aces. History records that those who produce the necessary aces usually have marked cards and deal off the bottom of the pack. The type of headlines that one reads in the newspapers concerns me. One was, "Wran's strength weakens democracy". That is true. The article following that headline stated, "It is rare to find a Minister or Minister's staff who have not been intimidated by the Wran machine. Most of them seem to be quite overawed."

Though the Labor Party prides itself on its democratic structure, many members of caucus would no more dream of challenging the proposals or decisions of the Premier and Treasurer than they would of joining the Liberal Party. The Premier and Treasurer dominates politics in New South Wales but few citizens realize the extent of his control. His dominance is so overwhelming that there should be real concern about the health of the system of government in this State. Wran may be a benevolent dictator, but that is not good enough. The political structure that he has established contains within it the potential for the abuse of power.

In politics, information is power. The Premier and Treasurer has drawn together all the important strands of information. The figures buried in the grey mass of the Budget Papers tell the story. Total expenditure in this State has grown from \$2.7 billion in 1975-76 to \$5 billion in 1980-81. In that period the allocation for the Premier's Department has grown from \$15.2 million to \$81 million. When the Premier and Treasurer assumed office his department's allocation was \$4.3 million. Now it has grown to \$40 million. Ladies and gentlemen—no, Mr Speaker—

Mr Egan: You are not on the hustings yet.

Mr WOTTON: Twelve months ago I told you, Small Change, that I would spend you if you kept interrupting. Some promises that the Government has made have been kept. I refer to the abolition of death duties, the amalgamation of some local councils, the gradual reform of the Legislative Council, council rates and electricity charges rebates for pensioners, and an entertainment centre to cost \$20 million. Some of those promises have been partly kept. But what of the promises that have not been kept? I instance the reduction in the loss sustained by the State's transport system; the commitment to keep down land and housing prices; the reduction in public transport charges; and the electricification of key country rail services. I could go on.

Honourable members hear from the Premier and Treasurer and his Ministers continual carping criticism of the federal Government. When the honourable member for Heffron spoke in this debate he indulged in that type of criticism. The Leader of the Opposition has given a succinct story of the Electricity Commission and the massive increase in charges to consumers, sweetheart deals and so on. One wonders how much the Premier and Treasurer, in his hollow log purge, took from the reserves of the Electricity Commission that were being held for future construction works. Was it \$80 million, \$90 million or \$100 million? Honourable members should be given the figures.

Honourable members were treated to a fanfare over pensioner rebates for electricity charges. That was a good thing, but if the Government gives an undertaking, it should honour that undertaking. Why make other consumers pay for what the Government purportedly gives to pensioners? County councils have carried that burden for twelve months. This being an election year they have received part payment. In my electorate alone the Government owes county councils almost \$70,000 in rebates. The county councils and other consumers must carry that burden. That is part of the continuing saga of deceit in which this Government is so expert. To rub salt into the wounds, the Electricity Commission, following protracted discussions with the county council and the coalmines in Ulan, asked for a capital contribution of \$2.5 million to power the Ulan coalmine operation. Is the Minister running the Electricity Commission or is it running him? Soon no one will be able to afford to use electricity. This Government thrives on deceit, denigration and vilification.

The proceedings in this House this afternoon reminded me of the Muppet Show. When Kermit the frog pulls the strings, all the puppets laugh. That is what happened this afternoon when an attempt was made to bring two serious matters to the notice of the public. When will the Premier and Treasurer tell the public that the entertainment centre at Haymarket will cost \$80 million or more and not \$20 million as he has been saying so far? No doubt he will make that announcement after the elections, but my prediction is that the cost of the centre will be in the vicinity of \$80 million. The Leader of the Opposition has given the lie to the fictitious figures on the solving of the housing problem as promised by the Government. The facts are simple. When this Government came to power 18 000 families were on the waiting list. Now there are 40 000.

When the Minister for Local Government and Minister for Roads was Lord Mayor of Sydney, he was affectionately known as **Headline Harry**. With his retirement, this Parliament will be the poorer and he will, of course, **surrender** his nickname to the purveyor of illicit headlines, the Premier and Treasurer. What has happened about the Ford factory at Ingleburn that was said to cost \$150 million? Not one posthole has been dug. Prior to the last elections the Government promised a sports complex at Homebush to cost \$80 million. That project has been cut by half. These are all described as Wran Labor Government projects. I shall have more to say later about the Windamere **Dam**. Another headline is: "Drugs, drink, sex. Wran ready with vast legal changes" — "More money, less pollution" — "Wran slams on the lid". That was in connection with the increase in the number of public servants, but the Premier and Treasurer did not slam on the lid until he had a staff of 382 in his own department. "Wran pledges health care for pensioners" — "Wran to look at Daylight Saving" — I am sure the electors of Castlereagh were impressed by what he did on daylight saving. A further headline was "The art of doing nothing and staying ahead". The Premier and Treasurer is a past master at that. Windamere Dam was described as a Wran Labor project. The people of New South Wales are sick to death of hearing the Minister for Lands, Minister for Forests and Minister for Water Resources say that the previous Government stopped work on Windamere Dam. One has only to refer to the speech of the former Treasurer when he presented the Loan Estimates in 1976. He said:

After providing for these works we had no option but to defer letting contracts for other major projects such as Windamere and Cudal Dams.

This being an election year, the money is Rowing. At the Cabinet meeting at Mudgee which the Premier and Treasurer spoke of today it was stated for the third time that no contract is to be let. Five times we have been told about the huge coal deposits in the Gunnedah basin. Prior to the 1978 elections the honourable member for

**Phillip**, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Energy, announced the existence of the deposits with a fanfare of trumpets. Now the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Technology is talking about the same thing. The Premier and Treasurer has announced coal deposits in the Gunnedah basin three times. Any landholder in the Breeza–Gunnedah district could have told him 50 years ago that coal was mined in that area. That was more deceit and denigration.

I have spoken before in Parliament about a member who in his former employment had access to the confidential records of statutory authorities, including those of the Rural Assistance Board, and who took advantage of his position to have a question asked here about a matter in which I was involved at a time when I was not even a member of Parliament. He did not have the courage to ask the question himself. He needed a lot of help, and got some poor fellow from a city electorate to do it.

The Premier and Treasurer referred to the Cabinet meeting that was held recently in **Mudgee**. I wish Cabinet had met there again this week. **Mudgee** is about 430 kilometres from Bathurst, and because of what happened in Bathurst this morning the telephone lines to and from **Mudgee** have been running hot. The Leader of the Opposition said that New South Wales is the strike capital of Australia and that Sydney is its crime capital. That may be so, but why should it be so? A few weeks ago three persons were apprehended and charged in Gunnedah court with growing marihuana. Two of them were convicted and were sentenced to penal servitude for eight or nine years. What happened to the third accused? The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice filed a no-bill. I should like him to tell the House the name of that third person and why a no-bill was filed. These are the sorts of matters that cause concern.

Another cause for concern is the way in which the Government breaks its promises. The honourable member for Bathurst asked what had happened about the police academy that the Government promised it would establish at Bathurst. The Government's record is not good in all sorts of areas, not the least of which is the administration of our prisons. The Government has made a joke of the system. How could a man get out of gaol and commit horrific crimes of the sort now alleged? Members of the Opposition want answers to questions like that; they want an opportunity to debate them. Government supporters will live to regret their decision earlier today not to allow that matter to be debated in this House. The fact is that the electors are concerned about the failure of the Minister for Corrective Services to do what should be done.

During the past few days the people of Narrabri, Gunnedah and Coonabarabran have been most interested in what is happening at Narrabri gaol about the housing of women prisoners. It appears that when prisoners cannot be controlled at Silverwater and Mulawa, they are sent to country towns. The Premier and Treasurer and the Minister for Corrective Services do not like people making waves, but there are certainly some waves being made about this matter. The Government must not transfer intractable women prisoners to Narrabri. This is one of the decisions it must make on Friday next when, among other matters, it will be considering what it should do about the **Mater** Misericordiae hospital and about Narrabri gaol. My prediction is that the Government will back off on both issues because it does not have the guts to do anything else. The transfer of prisoners with lengthy police records for violence to institutions not designed to cater for them is totally unacceptable to persons in isolated rural communities. I do not care whether they are men or women. They are the scum of society, which the State of New South Wales is not willing to house in the established gaol systems.

The lives of innocent rural persons are being put at risk by the pandering attitude of this Government to vicious intractable criminals. I am not willing to put at risk the lives of those persons to allow the incompetent management of the State's prison system to find a way out of its difficulties. I wish the Cabinet meeting was in Mudjee this week because the people of Mudjee would be delighted to receive this cosmetic Premier and Treasurer and the Minister for Corrective Services and have them state what they are doing in allowing criminals to walk out of what is nothing more than a holiday camp. It is a wonder that the escapee did not seek to ring up from a red telephone. Perhaps there is one in the afforestation camp.

The Government did not win too many friends when Cabinet met in Mudjee because its announcements had been made many times before. The Government will lose friends after today's events in Bathurst. Young mothers and parents are horrified at what this Government has allowed to happen. The morale of members of the police force is at an all-time low, particularly in country areas. Resignations of thirty to forty a month are received. One wonders what is happening to law and order in New South Wales. The morale of teachers is similar to that of members of the police force. The honourable member for Bathurst said that he received a reply from the Minister for Education and Vice-President of the Executive Council about the Eglinton School. The honourable member for Bathurst was lucky because the Minister usually does not reply to letters.

On ethics and standards, or lack of them, the Minister for Education surpasses even the Premier and Treasurer. I wish he would come to my electorate every week. He sends his watchdog. The only time he came to my electorate was while I was attending my son's wedding. He took my opponent with him. I was not notified of his proposed visit. He goes down in my electorate—to coin a phrase from the honourable member for Charlestown—like a lead balloon. I refer to the interesting saga of the Gunnedah South school. Two years ago it burnt down and the present member for Castlereagh, after he was elected at the by-election, visited the area and it was reported like this:

#### NEW WING FOR SOUTH SCHOOL

The Department of Public Works will be calling tenders immediately for the construction of a new classroom block at Gunnedah South Primary School to replace the building destroyed by fire 12 months ago.

The announcement was made today by Mr Jim Curran, Member for Castlereagh who contacted Departmental Heads after inspecting the school on Tuesday. Mr Curran told the *Independent* yesterday he was shocked at the condition of the school building and the fact that it had been allowed to stand for so long.

Mr Curran flew to Sydney yesterday morning and immediately contacted the Minister for Education, Mr Landa. He was told planning for the new accommodation was well advanced and the Department of Public Works would be calling tenders within a few days.

More deceit. It is an election year and I am certain that the new school at Gunnedah South will be notified before long. This year the motto no longer is "Wran is our man". Now it is "It's got to be Wran". It is the same circus but with different clowns. The top clown should use a modern photograph, showing that he is nearly 60 years of age. He should not try to maintain an image of a person 50 years of age. He has been using the same photograph since he first entered this Chamber.

Mr Punch: He is more than 60.

Mr WOTTON: I was being generous to him. The Leader of the Opposition has dealt capably with the Opposition's policy on roads. It will be a sad occasion when the Minister for Local Government and Minister for Roads leaves this House, for he is one of the few Ministers who has maintained the dignity of this Chamber. I suppose that is because he is one of the old school of Labor politicians. He is a top debater and is always polite. He usually says no so nicely that honourable members on this side of the House like him. Parliament will be so much poorer for the absence of the former Lord Mayor, the Minister for Local Government and Minister for Roads.

Mr Bruxner: The Minister is a nice fellow, but he has not built many roads.

Mr WOTTON: Indeed. The Leader of the Opposition has outlined the Liberal Party's policy on roads. It is useless blaming the federal Government all the time for the lack of funds. I am sure the people of Coonamble and Baradine are still waiting for the Government to honour the promise the Premier and Treasurer made during the Castlereagh by-election that money would be provided for the sealing of main road 129.

I regret that Opposition members have not been able to ask the Minister for Transport some questions. If I had the opportunity, I would ask the Minister whether he was aware that recently another young man was killed at Carooona when he drove his car into a blacked-out coal train. For years the Minister has procrastinated about decisions by committees and authorities on whether it is possible to put reflectors on coal trains and freight trains. I ask the Minister to inform the House of the cost to the State Rail Authority of the accident at Carooona. I hope the Minister will tell honourable members the truth, for I know the approximate cost. Is the expense of putting reflectors on coal trains more important than saving lives, simply because it might cost a few miserly dollars? Let the transport deficit increase a little more. I am sure the people of the Carooona district will be interested to hear the Minister's response.

The Government has been in office for five years and should accept the responsibility of governing. Though Government supporters continually criticize the federal Government for failing to allocate sufficient funds to the State, the New South Wales Government in fact has money running out of its ears. More than \$5,000 million has been given to the State, including \$2,000 million in unpaid grants that the Government may spend as it chooses. That amount includes a 12 per cent increase in the allocation for hospitals. The Government determines its priorities. If it chooses to spend \$50 million or \$80 million—and I think it is nearer to \$80 million—on the entertainment centre at Haymarket, that is the Government's decision. The people in rural areas of New South Wales who have to drive on poor roads will not forget that decision and will not allow the Government to forget it. New South Wales country districts are suffering from the effects of the drought which, as the Premier and Treasurer said today, is the worst in the history of New South Wales. Many have no water or sewerage and inadequate hospitals.

I shall refer to another exercise by the State Government which says it looks after rural communities. In 1929 the residents of a little village called Tambar Springs felt that the community was so isolated that something should be done about health care services. The community is still isolated, but the roads are somewhat better today than they were in 1929. The village is about 50 miles from the nearest doctor. Between 1929 and 1974 residents of the village financed and built a bush nursing establishment at Tambar Springs and paid the wages of a nurse. Then big brother came into the act in 1974, when the Health Commission of New South

Wales took over the Tambar Springs bush nursing association. I suppose the people of the village are lucky that the organization lasted for six years. The nurse has now left the village to get married.

I hope the Health Commission will prove my information wrong, but I understand that it is not intended to replace the nurse at Tambar Springs because other areas in the north-western region have greater needs. I have heard about the freeze being lifted on the employment of public servants, but I understand that it has been lifted only to the levels that existed at 30th June. The Opposition pre-empted most of the Government's election gimmicks at Mudgee. Perhaps they can pre-empt them again before the next election. The Health Commission might have second thoughts about providing a replacement nurse for the Tambar Springs community. It was no joy recently for the parents of a 3-year old boy who suffered serious brain damage when a heavy truck tyre fell on him. The boy had to be transported some 40 miles to obtain the services of a doctor, as no nurse was in attendance at Tambar Springs.

Often in this Chamber honourable members have heard the Premier and Treasurer resort to vilification, denigration and deceit. That is the name of the game being played in this House. In one adjournment debate the Deputy Leader of the Opposition told the House about some of the things that are happening in New South Wales. He was doing fairly well until points of order were taken and he was not able to deal with all the matters that he wished to raise.

Mr Maher: That is right.

Mr WOTTON: The truth hurts. The honourable member for Drummoyne should not do the same thing again. He knows that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was correct. I shall tell the House what the Premier and Treasurer said in 1974. The Premier and Treasurer is good with throw-away lines, but his memos) does not go back very far. On that occasion he said:

What is needed today is not some economist's theory, but a great mood of unselfishness in a great country, a great realization in our country that unless we are prepared to be on the list of contributors, we can complain not a bit of other people's purely selfish interest.

They are fine words, and the Premier and Treasurer spoke them well, but like most of the things he says, he pinched them from someone else. Originally those words were spoken by a great Australian statesman, Sir Robert Menzies. They must have had an impact on the Premier and Treasurer for him to quote the words of a Liberal Prime Minister. I invite the attention of honourable members to the abhorrence of people to the sort of thing that happened in Bathurst this morning. I have received three phone calls today from people in the Mudgee district about that matter. If the Government condones the actions of prisoners with long records who walk in and out of holiday camps, that is its prerogative. It will have to cope with that sort of issue being raised in the election campaign. The people in Bathurst who rang me this morning——

Mr Maher: On a point of order. Mr Deputy-Speaker, earlier the Speaker ruled that the matters being canvassed by the honourable member for Burrendong were *sub judice*. I ask you to direct the honourable member to cease referring to the escape of prisoners.

Mr Wotton: On the point of order. I mentioned the Government's record of allowing criminals to escape from what I would call holiday camps. I did not mention any names. One does not need a university degree to work out what happened at Bathurst this morning. Everyone in the State knows about it. I did not give names and I did not say anything that could remotely be suspected of being *sub judice*.

Mr DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Burrendong was in the Chamber when Mr Speaker gave his ruling. I ask him to bear that ruling in mind in the course of his remarks.

Mr WOTTON: The honourable member for Drummoyne and those who are so keen to let these people out are the guilty ones. I hope they build a gaol at Drummoyne and the honourable member can have the pleasure of prisoners being let free in his electorate.

*[Interruption]*

Mr DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Raleigh to order.

Mr BANNON (Rockdale) [5.0]: Anyone in New South Wales, gearing to the fact that an election is in the offing, would need no more evidence of that than that in the past half hour honourable members have listened to a speech by the honourable member for Burrendong. Something appears to have got under his skin and caused him to rise to his feet. He addressed the House on some matters that were not relevant to his electorate or to the electorate for which he will fight and be defeated in a few weeks' time. As the honourable member for Burrendong concluded his remarks he said that he supported the amendment that had been moved by the Opposition. He did not utter the few words that might have been fitting for his departing speech from the House.

I join with other honourable members who have paid tribute to His Excellency the Governor, Sir James Rowland, on his opening of the session of Parliament. I pay tribute to him and to Lady Rowland for the part they have played so far in the affairs of New South Wales. I recall vividly that in his Speech of acceptance in January Sir James intimated that he intended to move round New South Wales and make himself familiar with the needs of the State. Those who have followed the activities of the Governor through the vice-regal column of the *Sydney Morning Herald* will know that the Governor, with Lady Rowland, has made himself part of the community and has played a significant role in the affairs of the State.

Before dealing with some matters in detail I wish to place on record—I may not have the opportunity to do so later—my appreciation of the work and the courtesies extended by the Minister for Local Government and Minister for Roads and the Minister for Consumer Affairs, both of whom have intimated that they will not contest the forthcoming election. It has been acknowledged by earlier contributors to the debate that their contributions to the Parliament have been quite notable. Each of them goes out of the Parliament on a high note—I am sure with the good wishes of all honourable members. If I speak about some matters on which I have addressed the House before I crave indulgence. It may appear to be tedious repetition but the matters I have raised before remain, and will continue until they are finally resolved, as matters of intimate concern to the residents of the Rockdale electorate and a number of electorates which adjoin the Rockdale electorate by virtue of their proximity to Sydney (Kingsford-Smith) Airport, to Botany Bay and to the development that has taken place in that area. That has been touched upon today by the honourable member for Ku-ring-gai.

In about July 1979 the Government set up an inquiry into road facilities to service Port Botany. Mr David Kirby, Q.C. was appointed by the Government to conduct an inquiry. A few months ago he delivered his final report to the Government, for consideration. In the past twenty-four hours I have had the opportunity of speaking again with Mr Kirby about his findings and recommendations. I intimated to him

yesterday that I do not necessarily agree completely with what he has suggested. He has sifted through the evidence and is quite certain that the establishment, and upgrading, of the rail link to Botany, if properly utilized, will service adequately the needs of the port. He has suggested also that the corridor for the Kyeemagh–Chullora road, which has been planned for a number of years and for which quite a lot of land has already been acquired, should be retained for four years by which time future road needs should be known. It is my firm belief that the rail link must be upgraded to its maximum capacity but, as I intimated in my submission to Mr Kirby when the inquiry commenced, there will have to be a road, as well as the rail, to service the area. It should be the road from Kyeemagh to Chullora.

Mr Caterson: That is not what the people of Earlwood have been told.

Mr BANNON: The honourable member for The Hills does not know. I shall send a copy of the pamphlet to him. Though it is now two and a half years old it may bring the honourable member for The Hills up to date.

Mr Pickard: The Opposition knows all about that.

Mr BANNON: I shall refer to two options, the Bexley Road option, as it is referred to in the pamphlet, and another option. I shall refer to the findings of Mr Kirby in his report to the Government on those options. He said that the Bexley Road option uses the existing road network, Bexley Road, and tacks on a bypass on either end. That option can be broken into three elements. There is the bypass of Rockdale which has been shown on planning maps for thirty years or more and includes the Bestic Street–Villiers Street suboption and the Bay Street–Harrow Road suboption. The commissioner, Mr Kirby, said:

We will not mince words. We find the Bexley option quite unacceptable. It will achieve little in transportation terms. What it does achieve is undesirable, and the human cost is disproportionately high.

That was basically the theory I put forward at the start of the inquiry. I submitted to Mr Kirby that the suboptions were totally unacceptable. Let me look at what could take place. If it had been done by way of the Harrow Road option forty-nine homes would either have been demolished or moved. If it had been the Bestic Street suboption ninety-one homes would either have been demolished or moved as well as homes partially acquired in the area—about eighty on Harrow Road and eighty-six with the Bestic Street suboption. I am at a loss to know why these suboptions were ever part of the inquiry. They have always been totally unacceptable. Mr Kirby intimated that they are unacceptable to him. He also said, in terms of the Rockdale bypass, which has been there for some years:

Having recommended against the Bexley Road option the inquiry is obliged to consider the retention of the Rockdale bypass corridor.

His recommendation is in these terms:

The inquiry is not in a position to recommend the corridor's removal. There are strong arguments for its deletion. The inquiry urges the Department of Environment and Planning and the Rockdale council to reconsider the matter in the light of the findings made in this report.

It is my ~~firm~~ belief that that bypass should be deleted from further planning consideration. During the course of the inquiry many people asked me how it was progressing. They wanted to know what effect there would be upon their homes. Some wanted to build additions to their homes, some wanted to sell and some wanted

to buy. They were restricted because the inquiry had not been completed. Now it has concluded and the report is in the hands of the Government. As soon as the inquiry concluded I wrote to the Minister for Transport and invited his attention to the findings of the inquiry concerning the suboptions. People still approached me to ask about the position, for some still wanted to sell and, conversely, others wished to buy homes involved with suboptions.

The roadways will not be constructed. It is probable they will not receive much consideration. I appeal both to the Minister for Transport and the Minister for Planning and Environment, for the inquiry was jointly ordered, as a matter of urgency, to come to a decision about the suboptions. Apart from any other considerations concerning retention of the corridor for the Kyeemagh—Chullora road or the alternative route, they should tell the people of the area that those suboptions are not required and that their homes will be free of risk of demolition or partial acquisition. They should tell those people they are free to go about their business of making some additions or buying or selling homes, as the case may be. That would be only fair, for they have had this matter hanging over their heads for several years. It is only right that they should be released from further worry about whether their homes will be demolished or resumed. It is clear the Government will not be proceeding with the proposal to build the roads.

Any speech in this House from a member presenting Rockdale, especially in an Address-in-Reply debate, would not be complete unless Sydney (Kingsford-Smith) Airport were discussed. Therefore, I intend to give the House the latest details as to where local people stand on the issue of extending the airport. In the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 23th July, not so long ago, the Premier and Treasurer said he had written to the Prime Minister and had told him that New South Wales did not accept the Commonwealth plan to build a close spaced parallel runway at Mascot. The Premier and Treasurer called upon the federal Government to select a site for a second airport. That statement is basically in line with what has been said consistently by the State Government about the airport issue. At all times the Government has opposed the expansion of Sydney (Kingsford-Smith) Airport.

Although the Opposition has said the Government should do something about expanding Sydney (Kingsford-Smith) Airport it is clear that decision rests solely with the federal Government. That was the effect of the Premier's letter to the Prime Minister in July. He said the federal Government should get on with the job and, if decisions were needed, that Government should make them. The Premier and Treasurer said also that the Prime Minister, in correspondence, had made no reference to the length of time it would take to construct a close spaced parallel runway at Mascot. But his own advice had been that the close spaced parallel runway would take at least as long to construct as a second international airport. That has not been refuted by anyone.

Mr CATERSON: That is wrong. It is refuted now.

Mr BANNON: When I take any notice of the honourable member for The Hills, and his judgment on any matter, I shall go back to kindergarten and start learning again. It is clear the honourable member does not know much about the matter.

Mr CATERSON: I know a great deal more about it than the honourable member for Rockdale.

Mr BANNON: It is time that the honourable member for The Hills and the people in his electorate were given the opportunity of sharing the wealth. It is time they had an airport of their own to worry about. A million people live within the

environs of Sydney (Kingsford-Smith) Airport. They will back me to the hilt in what I say. They will support me hoïus-bolus. The former Leader of the Opposition, when in Government, wanted airport facilities increased at Dubbo. He was quoted in this place as wanting to expand Richmond as a second airport and relocate the air force facilities from Richmond to Dubbo. He was quite happy to do that. Now it is time for the honourable member for The Hills to offer the hand of friendship to the Prime Minister and tell him that the people of The Hills would welcome an airport. The honourable member for The Hills would soon find out what people in his area think of such a proposal.

A representative of East-West Airlines said that country people would be adversely affected by having the airport located elsewhere than at Mascot; that rural people would prefer a new runway built at Mascot as distinct from a second airport being built. In his letter to the Prime Minister the Premier and Treasurer put this line when he said, "I see continued access by all New South Wales country services to Kingsford-Smith Airport as an essential part of any airport strategy for Sydney". Residents are resigned to the fact that the airport will remain there. They do not expect to have Sydney (Kingsford-Smith) Airport lost to them, as some people have suggested. But we will certainly continue the fight until it is won by the local people. They do not want to be subjected to any further increase in noise or more displacement of their normal living than has been already brought about by the airport.

In reply to the Prime Minister's assertion that it was the fault of the State Government that an impasse had been created, the Premier and Treasurer pointed out that until December 1980 Commonwealth officials of the Major Airport Needs of Sydney committee had failed to supply State officials, with information they had requested in September 1979. Government policy is that it is the responsibility of the federal Government to make the decision as to where to site any new airport. With that policy in mind it is difficult to equate what was said by the Opposition about the airport. In the same article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 23rd July the Leader of the Opposition took the Premier and Treasurer to task for not having the guts to act on Sydney's airport needs. But it was not for the Premier and Treasurer to make that decision. That responsibility belonged to the federal Government. And on the same controversial issue the Leader of the Opposition said he would not announce the Opposition's policy before this year's election.

All of the people in the electorates affected by airports were expected to consider voting for Liberal candidates apparently on the basis of the statement of their leader, but he had announced no policy on this most vital issue that affected them and in many cases their livelihood. That appeared to be a remarkable situation but the Leader of the Opposition corrected it. He announced the policy of the coalition parties in this State on Sydney (Kingsford-Smith) Airport. In the television programme "Nationwide" on Wednesday 12th August he made some amazing statements. That was the day of the opening of Parliament. Parliament did not sit on that night and I was at home. I watched "Nationwide". He was quoted as saying that the Premier and Treasurer was trying to pass the buck and to "blame the Commonwealth Government, certainly over the course of the last five years". A little later on that night the Leader of the Opposition made this statement:

I very much believe that the short and close space parallel runway is the course and option that should be taken——

Mr Catterson: I agree.

Mr BANNON: The honourable member for The Hills agrees.

Mr Caterson: I agree with that statement.

Mr BANNON: The honourable member's name can be added to the list. The statement by the Leader of the Opposition continued:

a n d to that extent I believe the Premier of New South Wales has been just bloody-minded, I think, in his refusal to accept the inevitability of that.

When asked if he thought that would make him unpopular with the people who live near the airport and whether that worried him, he replied, "Well, I don't see why it should". In the next few weeks I hope to hear an announcement of policy by the Liberal candidate for Rockdale. I hope that when he makes one of his first statements to the press he will state his attitude towards the expansion of Sydney (Kingsford-Smith) Airport. The electors of Rockdale are entitled to know, if they decide to choose a Liberal Party representative, what his policy is. They know my policy. I have stated it at many public meetings. The issue is not dead.

Another public meeting is to be held late this month at the Rockdale town hall. The town hall will be overflowing with people protesting against any expansion of the airport. The Liberal candidate for Rockdale should say whether he believes the airport should not be expanded. If he does so, he will be in conflict with his leader, his party and their policy. He may embrace the policy of the party he hopes to represent in this Parliament and favour the extension of the airport. He must say one thing or the other. He can have his choice.

The same question may be put fairly to the Liberal candidates for the electorates of Maroubra, Heffron, Marrickville, Earlwood, Kogarah, Georges River, Miranda, Cronulla and Heathcote. The candidates for Bankstown and any other electorate in the environs of Sydney (Kingsford-Smith) Airport should be included. Liberal candidates for those electorates should be invited to state their policy on this vital matter. Yesterday the Leader of the Country Party joined forces with the Liberal Party. He said that the airport should be expanded. When the Leader of the Country Party made that statement, apparently he forgot that, living at Darling Point as he does, he will be more adversely affected by aircraft noise and pollution than he is at present. Yesterday morning at ten to one, having finished with the Australian cricketers, I was on my way to bed when an aircraft, which subsequent inquiries revealed was a Lear jet or that type of aircraft, took off on freight business. It roared through the sky disturbing all of the people in the district, yet some people say there should be no curfew at Sydney (Kingsford-Smith) Airport.

No one alleges that Rockdale municipal council is a strong Labor council; it is a moderate council. It has begun a campaign, "Say no now". Residents of Rockdale do not want the present curfew restrictions lifted, even for a trial period. Evidently the airline companies want to have jets roaring through the skies in the middle of the night. That is not acceptable to the people of Rockdale. They will continue their fight against lifting the curfew. Ansett Airlines of Australia has announced that it intends to improve its service to the fewer people who will be travelling in 737 aircraft when they come on line. Trans-Australia Airlines has the airbus which carries 290 passengers. Depending on the number of first-class passengers in the 737's the number of passengers carried will be between 110 and 120. That means that for every airbus that takes off with 290 passengers, two and a half 737s will be needed to carry the same number of passengers. It would be completely unacceptable to have 737 aircraft

roaring through the skies in the middle of the night. Mr J. MacCowan of Wolli Creek Road sent me a piece of poetry entitled "Mascot Airport, 1981—a Prayer", part of **which** reads as follows:

Protect us from those men who dare  
 Impose regardless, great noise, horrendous din  
 On countless thousands . . .  
 All heedless of the torment their legislation brings.

The issue is very much alive in the electorate of Rockdale. I make no apology for raising the matter again and dealing with it at length. I regret that I could not deal with it at greater length, but time does not permit me to do so. I should have liked to make further reference to the statement made earlier today by the Opposition in support of the coal loader in Botany Bay. This House debated that question earlier this year. The Opposition stated its policy, which has been noted by the people who live round Botany Bay. Those people have noted also the Opposition's policy on the Sydney (Kingsford-Smith) Airport—put everything that is rotten and dirty into the Botany Bay area.

Mr PICKARD (Hornsby) [5.30]: I extend felicitations to the Governor, His Excellency Air Marshal Sir James Anthony Rowland. This is the first opportunity that I have been able to do so in debate in this House. I wish to add to what other honourable members have said, not only about His Excellency's Speech, but also about the Speech of a former Governor concerning the way in which governments are tending to use the Governor's position generally so that he becomes not just the person who announces a legislative programme, but a voice of the government in announcing what is effectively the first lead up to an election.

As I read His Excellency's Speech, and having listened to it beforehand, I am able only to repeat what others have said, that the Governor was compelled to present a catalogue of minutiae with no real programme for the future, no real vision where this State should go, particularly in mineral development. Mineral development is entering what should be called the new golden age, or the gold rush age. If there is a development that will give New South Wales any hope for a real economic growth, it must be in minerals or base metals. Honourable members have just heard a recitation by the honourable member for Rockdale, who reminded us, once again, of the failure of the Wran Labor Government to provide a replacement for the discontinued Botany Bay coal loader. The fiasco still occurs of thirty or more ships standing off Sydney's two ports waiting to dock. New coal orders cannot be accepted because the facilities are not available to load the coal for shipment.

Despite all that the Premier and Treasurer said about large scale investment by private enterprise in mineral development, much money has been invested in risk research programmes, but not in new proposals. The developments coming on line at Drayton and Saxonville have been in planning for eight years. One wonders what will happen when suddenly the State is required to find \$15 billion for an electricity programme. A limited loan market is involved. The Government must offer a premium rate on a gilt-edged security, which must draw funds away from those who wish to borrow to build homes, and place the funds into the Government or semi-government sector.

While listening to the Governor's Speech I began to consider the things that are still waiting to be done in the Hornsby electorate, which were promised by this Government but which have not been completed or commenced. I refer to sewerage works. It was interesting to hear the honourable member for Rockdale state that there would be a packed meeting at Botany to discuss the proposed new airport facilities.

I suppose the honourable member for Wentworthville and the honourable member for Parramatta and other members would not agree with the honourable member for Rockdale that a proposed new airport should be readily available to persons in the electorates of Hornsby, The Hills and Northcott. The funds are not available to build a \$2 billion or \$3 billion airport in close proximity to those electorates instead of upgrading the present facilities. If that were done, the traffic in the Rockdale electorate would be reduced. Except for fifty hours in the year when the wind is blowing at a certain speed from the west, aircraft would not have to travel over the city.

One day somebody will be honest about this matter and realize that a vast amount of money need not be spent. Reference has been made to low-flying objects. Members of my electorate are familiar with them. They come along the road every night, putting on their brakes. There is light after light after light. No curfew applies. My constituents know something about the problems caused by low-flying objects. When I heard the Governor speak about achievements in providing sewerage I thought of Hornsby Heights. Next Sunday more than a thousand people will meet and will then ask the Government to honour a promise that it made in 1978, in 1979, in 1980, and again in July, 1981, that sewerage would be installed in that area.

Mr Mallam: They should get a new member

Mr PICKARD: It is most interesting that the honourable member for Campbelltown should say that my constituents should get a new member. The Labor Party candidate in my electorate has spoken to several persons who will be at the meeting and said, "I have spoken to the Premier and Treasurer and he has told me to tell you that you will get sewerage in Hornsby Heights after the election only if you vote for the Labor candidate." I hope that Government supporters remember these things. I hope they remember also that in the first two and a half years in which the former coalition government occupied the Treasury benches, sewerage was installed in Normanhurst, Thornleigh, Waitara, Hornsby, Asquith, and to the edge of Mount Colah and Hornsby Heights, with an allocation of \$50 million. The Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports and his agencies announced that \$50 million would be made available for sewerage over five years, but not one major connection has been made in that time.

Mr Mallam: The honourable member for Hornsby is a failure.

Mr PICKARD: I was hoping that the honourable member for Campbelltown would comment because when he says that he applauds the Government's record, he is saying that the health of the children and aged persons should not be considered, and that he does not give a damn about such things, so long as political blackmail goes on. The Wran Government has not honoured its promises. Everything is promised but nothing is delivered. The Wran Government does not care about the health of children. It cares nothing about the environment that is being despoiled or about the \$1,200 that every family struggling to meet its mortgage payments must find each year.

Mr Mallam: The honourable member for Hornsby is a failure. Campbelltown has sewerage.

Mr PICKARD: The money that was allocated for Hornsby must have been used to provide sewerage for Campbelltown. The Government must have taken that money from the people at Hornsby and given it to the people at Campbelltown. In education there has been a good deal of political jobbery. The Minister for Education directed two senior staff members from the Department of Education—public servants

—to travel for several days with the Labor candidate in the forthcoming election, visiting all schools. They travelled in a departmental car paid for by the department. The Minister for Health sighs in mock surprise. The Opposition will remember things like that. The Minister for Health is one member of the Government who has treated me with decency and courtesy. At least he informed me when he was intending to visit my electorate and invited me as the member for Hornsby to be present at various functions. That is what I believe the Parliament should be about.

In the two and a half years when I was member for Hornsby while the Liberal Party—Country Party coalition was in Government \$18 million was spent on major school additions. Since the coalition parties have been in Opposition no major school building programme has been undertaken in the Hornsby electorate. Some of the schools in that electorate were listed as having priority. In particular I speak of the Waitara Primary School and Asquith Girls' High School where a third section of the building programme was discontinued, the construction team taken off the job and the funds diverted to another school outside the electorate and in a Labor electorate. I speak also of the Hillcrest, Berowra school and especially the Clarke Road Special School where the students have been sadly neglected in recent times. I have pleaded with the Government to build a covered and heated pool for those children. Such a pool is necessary for the development of spatial awareness and self-confidence in dealing with the environment. My requests have been refused constantly. At the same time, I have noted that some secondary high schools in Labor-held electorates have been given swimming pools.

The building programme at Normanhurst boys' school was discontinued, the construction team taken away from the job, and the finance diverted to another area. If the Minister for Education were to visit schools in the Hornsby electorate, he would be surprised at the response he would receive. Local residents do not know that the Minister suddenly discovered their just demands had been ignored, because the present Minister and the former Minister for Education turned all their attention to Labor areas and forsook the priorities that had been allocated by a gentleman who is held in great respect, the former director of properties, Mr George Conom. I have a copy of the list of priorities and am aware of how they were changed.

If the Minister takes the opportunity to visit some of the private schools in the Hornsby electorate, he will be surprised at the reaction of parents to the real 20 per cent per *capita* grant that was given to all students attending schools. The grant has been well below 16 per cent during almost the whole period that the Government has been in office. I was surprised that the Premier and Treasurer took unto himself certain powers and responsibilities relating to health without even consulting the Minister for Health.

Mr Cameron: Mr Machargh is the new minister for health.

Mr PICKARD: That is what I am talking about. I have respect for the Minister for Health as a man who has his priorities right, even though he did not honour the promise made to the Mater hospital. No one compelled the Government to make that promise. The people of Hornsby are still awaiting the fulfilment of a promise made to them. In 1976, before the coalition parties left the Government benches, a promise was made that Hornsby hospital would be granted \$1.25 million to extend the emergency centre by the construction of a 24-hour operative day-care unit and an additional children's ward. In the meantime, the Labor Government came to office and for some unknown reason, withdrew the permission to build the extension to the hospital. The hospital board was compelled to submit special plans and to forgo having its own architect.

Several plans of the buildings and of the site have been submitted by the new architects. They were prepared at a cost of approximately \$400,000; but still nothing has been done. Each time the Minister for Health has visited the hospital he has promised that a start will be made. Health Commission officers have told the hospital board about the funds required for all the work on the hospital. The amount has increased from \$2 million to \$3 million, to \$7 million. The latest information received by the hospital is that the work will cost \$1 million, if the hospital spends the \$750,000 that it has raised. However, the work planned in 1974 cannot be done for that amount. I appeal to the Minister to ensure that this matter is dealt with urgently and that the hospital is given the right to spend its money. It ill behoves the Wran Labor Government to talk about a shortage of funds for hospital works, when all over those years the Government has denied Hornsby hospital the right to use money that was raised to give the necessary health care and services to the people of Hornsby.

Furthermore, an additional \$1 million has been raised by the efforts of those involved with the hospital. The hospital board wants to use the additional funds to put in a CAT scanner, a gamma camera and other equipment. That will not require the employment of one extra member of staff but will give the hospital the possibility of extending better health care to the people of the Hornsby district. The hospital has not been able to spend the \$1 million raised by people living in the Hornsby district, for health care services in that area, in the Hornsby hospital. No one would gainsay that Hornsby hospital is one of the finest in the land.

The condition of roads is one of the great social problems in the Hornsby district. In his Speech the Governor said that the Newcastle to Sydney freeway is to be extended from Berowra to Pearce's Corner. I was pleased to learn about that. At one time, out of absolute frustration and disgust the people of Hornsby intended to stop traffic for ten minutes to show other people what they must endure day in and day out. At that time it was said that I was totally irresponsible. When I asked the federal Government to supply funds to extend the road I was told that I would not get anywhere and was putting on a political stand. The money has been allocated and the roadworks are to commence on that section of the freeway about which I complained. It is interesting to note now that everyone wants to jump on the band-waggon.

I am disappointed with the Minister for Local Government and Minister for Roads. I have known him for some years. I know his son and daughter-in-law. I was surprised when he made available to the local Labor Party candidate what I suppose is a secret report from consultants. The candidate took it round the electorate claiming he had achieved something great. I have not yet been able to get a copy of that or even to look at it. When letters are sent to me from the Minister's office, following many telegrams asking for information, I receive a letter minus the map that the letter says is with the letter. The provision of a new expressway is essential. It is cruel and despicable that the people have had to wait so long for it. The Minister for Transport arrived with two carloads of officials and spent the whole day with public servants, the Labor Party candidate, a press officer and a photographer —

Mr Mallam: The honourable member for Hornsby is scared.

Mr PICKARD: No. The supporters of the Government must be running scared if they have to use these tactics. I hope they realize what is being done to the democratic process. I warn Government supporters that they are destroying parliamentary

privilege and the rights of duly elected members. They are also ignoring the local residents. Many constituents have asked me to speak to the Minister about road problems and traffic light problems. Those constituents have been disgusted that the Minister did not let them know that he was coming to the area—perhaps even apart from his telling me.

The Minister went with the Labor Party candidate to the site. In today's paper the Labor Party candidate announced that traffic lights will be installed. I have made representations about the site for four years. The people know that. They do not respect the Minister or the candidate for what he has done. The Minister is ignoring the people and their vote that has been duly exercised in the democratic process. The Labor Party candidate announced that \$60,000 worth of lights would be installed. Last Thursday, on the same day as the announcement was made and was delivered to the local press, the Traffic Authority met to talk about the place where, even today, as I drove in, a serious accident had occurred. Four years ago lights were promised at Alexandria Parade. Today a person was taken to the hospital and three cars were towed away. Last Thursday the announcement was made that no money was available for those lights.

At Bridge Road a truck loaded with highly explosive chemicals ran across on to the railway line. The Minister may remember that I raised this matter in the House just before Easter. At about that time a child was travelling with her mother who was trying to get through the lights. The child had a marble stuck in the throat and was almost dying. It took ten minutes to cross that section of the road. Lights were promised at that intersection. It is the only road with free access to the hospital from Galston Road. The lights were promised four years ago. Since that time lights have been promised again. Last Thursday the Traffic Authority announced that no money was available for those lights. Today an announcement by the Australian Labor Party candidate has appeared in the press to the effect that the Minister has informed him that lights will be installed at Glenview Avenue, at a cost of \$68,000.

I bring to the attention of the House an issue that arises from the Governor's Speech. It is the question of the protection of the environment and land for housing. I am always puzzled why governments want to chew into the beautiful valleys in the Hornsby electorate. I fought my own party on this issue when the coalition parties held office and received a promise from the Minister that no Crown land below the 400 feet contour would be taken. The proposal was to make those lands, not closed national parks, but open parks so that children might be able to use the area. I used to be able to do that and doubtless other honourable members remember leaving trains and walking or camping in the area. Despite one or two vandals, why should the majority of people be kept out of these Crown lands in the valleys? The Minister gave his word at that time but now I see pegs going in right down near the Benowie Walk. The Housing Commission is starting to peg out that area. That is a desecration. The cost of a block of land will be astronomical. The price of the last block that was serviced and sold was more than \$58,000.

I cannot understand why vast sums of money will be spent there when it is not possible to get services connected to homes already in the area. The Government takes funds from there to spend in other places. Those beautiful valleys should be kept for the enjoyment of future generations. They are about to be despoiled. Some areas have already been spoilt. Around the back of Mount Ku-ring-gai, down towards the Chase, areas that ought not to have been touched have been despoiled. I protest, not only that the Minister is usurping the democratic rights and privileges of honourable members, but also that the Labor Party candidate has announced

himself in the press as the "MP for Hornsby". Some old people have become completely befuddled because he speaks about an electoral office and having a voice in the government. I am glad to hear the honourable member for Gosford laughing at that.

Mr McGowan: The Liberal Party candidate in my electorate is doing it to me.

Mr PICKARD: Old people have had to make four or five phone calls to lodge complaints about difficulties they are experiencing. I notice that the honourable member for Bankstown smiles. Does he condone that sort of misrepresentation by a man who calls himself a member of Parliament? I shall beat that candidate for election. I shall be back in the House but what will have happened in the process?

Mr K. J. Stewart: The surveys do not suggest that.

Mr PICKARD: The Minister for Health knows that the surveys fell off the Labor Party's own truck. He should not try to put that over me. The amount of \$40,000 is being put in—I do not know where it is coming from—at least \$10,000 will come out of the pockets of the people. I shall be back but will Government supporters be able to face themselves, if they allow this sort of conduct to pass unchallenged?

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

Mr MCGOWAN (Gosford) [7.30]: I join with other speakers in congratulating the Governor on his Speech and his delivery of it. I must confess, though, to some amusement when listening to the contribution of the honourable member for Hornsby. He suggested that the Government, somehow or other, was bringing about the decline of western democracy through the actions of candidates opposed to him. I might say the same of Liberal candidates opposed to me. In my electorate they are doing exactly the same thing as the honourable member for Hornsby accuses Labor candidates of doing in his constituency. It is even more amusing when one learns that the honourable member for Hornsby is the gentleman who advises the Liberal candidate for Gosford on how to conduct his campaign. Apparently western democracy is threatened only when a Labor candidate does something and not when a Liberal candidate does that same thing.

The section of the Governor's Speech dealing with education was extremely interesting. It contrasted with the policy for the school certificate announced by the Leader of the Opposition. As chairman of the Select Committee Upon New South Wales School Certificate Assessment Procedures I spent some time, after the report was delivered, speaking to various educational groups. I spoke to members of the Catholic Secondary Schools Association, the Education Policy Committee of the New South Wales Branch of the Australian Labor Party, members of the New South Wales Principals Association Conference, the In-service Course for Deputy Principals and the Conference of Principals of Catholic Schools. I have been heartened indeed by the way in which the report was received; a positive response has come from quarters where I would not have expected it. It augurs well for the future of education. The report dealt with whether there should be an external examination, or a 50-50 combination, or some other percentage. The report sought also to consider what is happening in our schools, how things are taking place and whether we can better organize our schools or whether they can more easily organize themselves. The committee recommended that schools should be encouraged to organize themselves as far as possible.

The few words spoken about education by the Leader of the Opposition revealed that the Opposition has adopted some of the report's recommendations for its policy. Mention was made of cumulative profile reporting for other subjects. The main problem with the Opposition's policy concerns its recommendation that there should be external examinations in four subjects combined with internal assessment in one way or another. I do not know whether members of the Opposition know very much about this subject but the cost of doing what they suggest would be approximately \$5 million in the first year, and there would be probably a recurring sum of \$4 million in the years thereafter. That would be without taking into account the other school costs for the provision of books and so forth, which must be provided within a prescribed curriculum. The Opposition has not weighed the economics of its policy. It has simply attempted to come up with a popular policy. It is unworkable. The Opposition says external examinations should be instituted in four subjects and that those examinations will bring about a return to standards.

Standards have not fallen. The Opposition seeks to bring a return of standards, but the only way in which one can conduct an external examination and introduce standards is by having an arbitrary cut-off point. That is what happened with the former leaving certificate. For a particular subject the authorities must decide where the cut-off point comes; if at the 80 per cent mark, 20 per cent would fail. That would ensure some degree of standards. It must be remembered that already there is an external examination for the higher school certificate. To have a cut-off point in the school certificate in an age cohort of 80 000 pupils the Liberals' policy would fail some 16 000 children a year. That failure would mean they would not be able to progress to Year 11. What would they do? Presumably they might stay on for another year. That would mean that in the following year, if they did not improve much, some 32 000 students would fail for not having reached the standard. And so the number would increase. Those children would know, quite early, that they had been thrown on the educational scrap heap: thrown into a society where they had no qualifications and no hope of qualifications. All they could do would be to remain unemployed, with little prospect of work. Is that the sort of education system the Liberals want? Certainly, that is the implication of their policy announcements to date. Those are the sorts of things they are talking about.

Turning from the subject of education, I move briefly to speak of some of the developments within my electorate of Gosford. One of the principal problems of my electorate, which is a fast growing area, is roads. We are fortunate to have a Government that has recognized some of the most pressing problems. The **Minister** for Local Government and Minister for Roads has undertaken to provide 50 per cent of the \$1.3 million cost of redeveloping the road to The Entrance. That work will duplicate the road to the Punt Bridge and also the road between the Punt Bridge and the Avoca turnoff. But, because the Gosford city council was committed to heavy expenditure for sewerage and water works, and could not provide the remaining 50 per cent of the cost, the Government said it would meet the council's 50 per cent and that the council could repay it. Road improvements are urgently needed. The Entrance Road from the Avoca turnoff to the Terrigal turnoff should be made wider. Many people have come to live in the area and the roads are inadequate for their use. More money for roadworks must be put into the area as quickly as possible.

Bearing in mind the growth rate in the electorate the Government must eliminate the possibility of traffic jams that have been predicted to be commonplace occurrences in five or ten years' time. It is imperative that the Government should consider construction of the east-west bypass. That bypass would come from the Kariong interchange to north Gosford and then Erina. It is fortunate that recently Landcom

*purchased 120 hectares at Erina to develop building sites. First home owners will eventually be provided with land at cheap cost. The 8 000 building sites at Erina will make it even more imperative that the east-west bypass should be built quickly in order to get people out of the Gosford bottleneck. Also, there is an urgent need for shopping facilities in the area. I ask the Government to proceed immediately with the development of the Bateau Bay shopping complex which has been in the planning stages for some five years. The proposed site is Crown land and the concept should go to tender as soon as possible so that the shopping centre might be built for people to use. They will not then need to shop as far away as Gosford.*

*A regional shopping centre should be established at Erina. Grace Bros has owned land at Erina for seven or eight years and there has been consistent demand from the community that that company be allowed to develop a shopping centre there. Grace Bros has never lodged an application but local residents have approached that company. The Erina progress association took up a petition and secured 4 000 signatures which it presented to the Gosford city council asking council to approve of a shopping centre, with a Grace Bros store in it, at Erina. Council refused. Council has a shopping hierarchy and will not budge from it. It failed to appreciate the strength of feeling of my constituents.*

*Gosford is landlocked and it is difficult to find a parking spot when one wishes to do the shopping that people must do in a modern society. The people want level parking and one-stop shopping. In other words, they want a major regional shopping development at Erina. If Gosford council cannot be convinced of that by argument, I am willing to try to convince it by taking up a petition for presentation to council. I am sure that 20 000 people or more will call for a shopping centre at Erina. I hope that will persuade the Government, if necessary, to override the decision of the Gosford city council. That council is concerned only about the business interests of the shopkeepers in Mann Street, not the feelings of shoppers.*

*Gosford city council has a narrow bureaucratic approach and is blocking the development of the shopping centre, thus enabling the Gosford city centre to continue to take all the money coming from surrounding areas. At the coming election, if need be, I shall seek the endorsement of the people for my stand in favour of a shopping centre. The Liberal candidate for Gosford has opposed Grace Bros and the land development. I shall take the matter to the people and let them decide what they want. I am sure that 99 per cent of the people will say they want a modern shopping complex at Erina.*

*I congratulate the Government on the excellent job it has done to improve schools in the Gosford electorate. Terrigal High School is a completely new school, beautifully designed and appointed. It is waiting to be officially opened. Wamberal has a beautifully designed primary school that fits well into the environment. With the exception of Gosford Primary School, major additions have been made to every school in my electorate. The honourable member for Hornsby complained that nothing has been done for schools in his area. He said that all of the money is going to Eabor electorates. That is not true. When he was Minister for Education he starved the central coast of funds for schools to such an extent that one of the first representations I was obliged to make when I entered Parliament was in respect of the Lisarow school. It required septic toilets instead of the disgusting pan system that it had at the time. The honourable member for Hornsby, as Minister for Education, visited the school at election time and bravely told those concerned that funds were not available to provide septic toilets. The money was needed elsewhere. That is one of the reasons why the coalition parties lost government.*

**Mr McGowan]**

The central coast is growing at a fast pace and with Government backing through Landcom its future growth will be even faster. It is important that adequate funds be provided for schools so that the requirements of future students will be met. At present two primary schools and one high school have demountable classrooms. The high school is at Lisarow and a new high school is being built there. It is incontestable that the Government is doing the right thing by the central coast.

I urge the Government to give further consideration to the construction of a hall for Erina High School. I have mentioned that matter previously in this place. It is the only high school on the central coast that does not have a hall. The Entrance High School should have a free standing library, it being the only high school on the central coast that does not have that facility. Unfortunately the completion of the technical college has been delayed because of problems with a tenant in the area that was resumed for the building of the college. I understand the problem has now been resolved and that work will be able to proceed. It should be completed as quickly as possible. The need for technical college facilities on the central coast is great. I am aware that a college is being built at Wyong. Both technical colleges are urgently needed and as soon as they are finished it will be possible to begin stage III of Gosford Technical College.

The central coast was the leader in a new system for the zoning of rural land. I congratulate the former Government on introducing that system and the present Government for continuing it. I was extremely pleased that conservation zonings were put on the central coast. If they remain inviolate the central coast will be green. Environmentally sensitive areas will be preserved. Some government departments and the Gosford city council are posing threats to conservation land on the central coast. Government and local government instrumentalities should seek to use conservation land when they need a site for a new garbage tip. The land of which I am speaking should not be used for such a purpose. The Government should resist attempts to take conservation land and use it for other purposes. Land has been zoned conservation land because it is required for the future and because it is visually prominent. No government department or city council should be allowed to do as it pleases with such land and desecrate the environment.

The effects of the federal Budget have fallen heavily on the people of my electorate. Many of my constituents are young couples and new homeowners who have been hit already by increased interest rates. Yesterday a lady told me that in the past year the repayments on her house had increased by \$100 a month. She is now paying about \$432 a month. In addition she faces increased health charges brought about by the federal Government. Now she finds she will have to pay sales tax on her children's clothing, on television sets, home furnishings, children's shoes and even the chocolates she buys for her children on pay day. The sales tax on those commodities will be 17½ per cent. On furniture, floor coverings, refrigerators, freezers, mattresses and pillows the sales tax will be increased from 2½ per cent to 5 per cent. That is an appalling situation. Young couples in my electorate are struggling to get enough money to make a home.

Everything that has sales tax put on it is something that people who can least afford it require in their day-to-day life. Those people make high repayments on their homes. They cannot afford for the breadwinner, the spouse or their children to become ill, as many of them will not be able to meet health charges. They will not fall within the category that would enable them to obtain free health treatment. Inevitably they will seek increased salaries to make up for this lost money. Once more the inflationary spiral will be fed. When wage increases are granted, people will enter a higher tax bracket and the federal Government will take more of the money that workers have struggled hard to get. The situation is deplorable.

Most people living on the central coast own a motor vehicle; that is the way life in the area has been designed. Those persons will be required to pay increased sales tax when purchasing a motor vehicle. That tax has increased from 15 per cent to 17½ per cent. More money will be borrowed to purchase a vehicle, often at interest rates that will make repayments most difficult. People living on the central coast face the problem of spiralling rates. Fortunately the Government has acted to freeze rates. The Government should ensure that rates are frozen for each year and prevent an increase available but not taken up by a council from being transferred to the following year under some catch-up scheme. People should know what rates they will be required to pay each year. Rates should be pegged so that people might have some idea of how properly to arrange their finances.

As well as having many young persons in my electorate, I have many pensioners and people on fixed incomes. Those persons are caught in the inflationary spiral. Increased sales tax will limit their purchasing power. The federal Budget is a disaster for the people of my electorate. I am appalled by the introduction of a 2½ per cent sales tax on building materials. This tax will add \$1,000 to the cost of an average home. Persons building a home will be required to borrow an extra \$1,000 and pay high interest rates on that money. Homeseekers are being pushed out of a situation where they can afford to purchase a block of land to build a home. Building a home will be out of the question for many young people. It is beyond comprehension why the federal Government should put a sales tax on building materials. Does not the federal Government want people to be able to build a home? Even if a young couple built their home themselves, they would still have to pay sales tax on the materials.

The effects of the federal Budget upon the people in my electorate are almost incalculable. To some it will mean personal tragedy as they find they cannot afford to live on the central coast. Urge the Government of New South Wales to take every action possible to assist these people to ensure that they are given guidance, help and funds, and if necessary, to ensure they do not lose their homes. Above all, the Government must ensure that these people are able to continue living in a reasonable manner on the Central Coast.

Mr WEST (Orange) [7.55]: I congratulate the Governor, His Excellency Air Marshal Sir James Anthony Rowland, on his first opening of a session of Parliament. I welcome him to the position of Governor and pay respects and courtesies to him, not only on my own behalf, but on behalf of my constituents within the electorate of Orange. I welcome him particularly as a person who has served a long time in the Royal Australian Air Force. It is pleasing to see a person from that service gain such high office and distinction within the State of New South Wales.

It was a shame that the Governor's Speech reflected the hypocrisy that is perpetuated by the Government throughout the State. The Governor's Speech referred to the broader economic picture. It made mention of the vigorous growth, the strong business recovery, the new investment in resource development, and the marked reduction in unemployment. To many who may have read the Governor's Speech, the basic thrust of it might well be appealing and paint a rosy picture. With the greatest respect to His Excellency, I cannot share his enthusiasm; nor can I share his optimism. The Governor's Speech shows how the Wran Government continues to use the Governor and his high office to mislead the people. Though some may be enthused by the **colourful** scenes that have been portrayed in a speech that is really one of the Government's and not of the Governor, many persons in New South Wales, particularly in country areas, are now showing their disillusionment with this fancy talk continually put out by the Wran machine — talk plenty but do little.

The Governor's Speech refers to vigorous growth throughout the State. Except in specified areas, country communities are not reflecting this growth. One is left wondering whether the persons who wrote this Speech had visited only a few country areas in New South Wales. Certainly they had not visited my electorate, where the Government is not spending the huge amounts of taxpayers' money that it says it is spending in other areas. The Government is spending money in the Lithgow and the Hunter Valley areas where it is trying to buy votes. Money is being spent within the new boundaries of the electorate of Castlereagh. Earlier this afternoon the honourable member for Burrendong capably presented a picture of what is occurring in his electorate. These comments apply also to new investment in manufacture and regional development. The facts do not support the statement that development in these fields is continuing throughout the State. That is especially not so in the electorate of Orange. The Governor's Speech referred to strong business recovery. Again this cannot generally be seen in country areas.

New South Wales has just experienced what will go down on record as the State's most severe drought. People in business and on farms have had their incomes slashed. Their finances have been limited so drastically that it will take many years for them to recover. Though the Governor's Speech has spelt out how much was spent in drought relief, it does not reflect how many individuals were able to receive that assistance. I should like the Government to state not only how much has been spent on drought relief assistance, but how many individuals have been granted assistance. In my electorate of Orange the number of people who have come to me, written to me and telephoned me complaining of the difficulties in having applications approved for drought relief has been astronomical. Many of those persons were genuine farmers. Though farmers were able to apply for assistance, the small business man, who is the lifeblood of many of the State's communities, was not able to qualify for assistance. It is wrong to say that there has been strong business recovery. Recovery will take years, and it will be because of the fortitude of those persons concerned, not because of any help from the Government.

Unemployment may have decreased in the western suburbs of Sydney but no reduction in unemployment is evident in country areas of New South Wales—in fact, it is increasing. That is due to three main reasons. The first is the recent drought. Of course, the Government was not responsible for that, but it is able to provide assistance to those suffering from the drought. The second reason is the closing of country abattoirs. The abattoir at Blayney has reduced its staff. Only last week the abattoir at Orange closed for an indefinite period, throwing 250 men out of work. That means that the main supporters of 250 families have no income, and little or no prospect of obtaining another job in the immediate future. The third reason for increased unemployment in country areas is that proprietors of small businesses are experiencing financial difficulties and are having to put off staff. Where do those unemployed persons go? They have little or no chance of obtaining a job in the country unless the Government is willing to help them.

The Governor's Speech contained complaints about the Commonwealth Government's withdrawing or reducing its support for essential services. That is a continual catchcry of the New South Wales Government, which takes no real cognizance of its responsibilities for health and hospital services, education and housing. The people of New South Wales are sick of the Government's crying poor mouth. The fact that this Government will not accept its responsibilities for those matters is becoming even more disheartening. Though the New South Wales Labor Government complains about Commonwealth cutbacks, it is reducing its own expenditures. One such cutback has occurred in education funds. Those reductions in funds for

essential services are made at a time when the Government has more money than any former New South Wales government. The extra State revenue is raised from additional taxes and charges and increased grants from the Commonwealth Government, including tied grants, but more particularly general purpose revenue sharing grants.

During this Government's term of office the Commonwealth has increased untied grants to the State from \$940.6 million in 1975–76 to \$1,838.8 million in 1980–81. That is an incredible increase. The Governor's Speech emphasized that the Government has its spending priorities the wrong way round. Some developments to which the Government gives a high priority could be completed by private enterprise. Many companies that are making huge profits could be pouring these profits back into those development projects. The Government should be spending its money on essential services like health, education and housing to help those who are unable to help themselves to get just a little further ahead. It is necessary that the Government make a significant input in that respect.

The Government has broken a promise it gave the people of the Orange electorate to maintain most of its essential services. I shall take this opportunity to mention many of those services that have received little or no State government support. First, I shall mention hospital services. The Orange Base Hospital, which is a regional hospital, is experiencing special difficulties following the encouragement of its role as a regional acute care hospital. That hospital has co-operated fully with the State Government; it has reduced its average patient stay from 9.3 days in 1979 to 7.7 days as at 30th June, 1981. That hospital has complied with government calls over the past two years to reduce increasing costs. As a result of its compliance, costs have not increased in the past two years. However, if the present stringent financial conditions are to continue, the hospital will have a nil growth pattern of development in the future and it will be unable to maintain existing services. The result will be that the day care centre will have to be closed down.

Many other services, including the hospital pharmacy service, are in difficulties. Many of those services will be restricted due to their inability to meet demands for services. Those demands result from increased referrals to the base hospital consequent on changes taking place in the region's district hospitals. The number of specialists practising in Orange has increased, not only following increased demand for services by the public but also as a result of the medical and hospital facilities offered in that city. The people of the region are being offered a wider range of health services than has ever been available in a country area. The increase in the number of specialists in the area has led to a considerable pressure on the Orange Base Hospital to introduce new services, such as a renal dialysis unit, to carry out a reorganization of the casualty department, to provide a modern accident treatment centre and a nuclear medicine unit. Those services are important if the base hospital is to maintain its acute care role.

In the past twelve months five additional specialists have set up practice in the area. The extra services provided by those specialists will necessitate development of additional facilities by the hospital to meet demands made upon it. However, redevelopment planning has not been undertaken. An experienced and qualified planning officer should be appointed immediately to prepare the hospital to meet future needs. The hospital needs a ward for patients who have undergone acute surgery or treatment by specialists and require a period of convalescence. Patients from outlying regions, who received such specialist treatment, usually convalesce in their local district hospitals. The people of Orange are being discriminated against as their focal hospital is a regional hospital. As a result, some patients are sent home earlier than they should be. I know of one case in which the hospital

*Mr West]*

tried on three occasions to discharge an unconscious patient into the care of that person's family. Of course the family would not accept the patient in that condition. Those difficulties are being faced by the Orange electorate as a result of the Government's failing to provide necessary finance for hospital services.

The Orange polyclinic also needs assistance. When that polyclinic was established many years ago it had difficulty obtaining personnel to provide a full range of services. Now that the full complement of services is there, insufficient accommodation is available. Three years ago there were plans for the polyclinic to build its own permanent accommodation. Those plans have been shelved. On three occasions the polyclinic team has moved to different premises. The latest move was into the local baby health centre, which was built in the 1930's or 1940's with money provided by the local community. Now the mothers and children who attend the baby health centre are housed in a temporary building behind the premises now occupied by the polyclinic. Parents must push prams through mud and slush to get to the temporary building, which has second rate facilities. Accommodation is needed to enable the polyclinic and the baby health centre to provide better services for the people of the district.

My colleague the honourable member for Bathurst, in his contribution to the debate, referred to the Blayney hospital. In 1978 the Labor Party was anxious to win the seat of Bathurst. The Blayney division is in that electorate, but in the redistribution it will be included in the Orange electorate. When the Premier and Treasurer visited Blayney in 1978 he promised that a new ambulance station would be built within twelve months and that the extensions to the Blayney hospital would be completed within three years. Nothing has happened about those two promises. An election is looming, so I suppose the Premier and Treasurer will renew those promises. It is certain that in another three years not one sod will have been turned nor one brick laid on those projects. The Government should meet its commitments and honour its promises.

The Carcoar hospital was included in the Health Commission's rationalization programme. The Health Commission and the Government insisted that the hospital take on a new role. The staff, the board of the hospital and people in the community objected in the strongest terms but they were compelled to accept the hospital's new role under a threat from the Health Commission, and one would presume from the Government, that if the change were not made, the hospital's subsidy would be withdrawn. That is a terrible tactic. The hospital had to accept its new role, though the board was promised that it would be possible to maintain a 24 hour casualty emergency service to treat accident victims and acutely ill patients.

Last week a proposal was thrashed out with the Health Commission, which recommended that the hospital services would be available only for eight hours a day. How can one operate a 24-hour casualty service at a hospital that is allowed to remain open for only eight hours each day? The Government commitment was that the hospital would be allowed to maintain six holding beds for the observation of patients who had been treated in the casualty section. The board of the hospital was told that, as part of the new role, a domiciliary service would be introduced to provide home nursing care as well as alternatives to inpatient admissions where practicable. That has been done. In the financial year 1980-81, 4 467 domiciliary visits were recorded.

The second part of the Government's promise was that episodic care associated with the domiciliary service would be introduced. This involved eight beds for the provision of hospital services for patients suffering from chronic conditions, the provision of holiday relief to relatives who care for frail aged or invalid persons and for

the admission of patients who were in the final stages of some terminal illness. The hospital's activities have been reduced to eight hours a day and the Government has not honoured its previous commitment to allow the implementation of the episodic care programme. Carcoar hospital has served the town and surrounding district for almost 130 years. Though the traditional role of the hospital may not be maintained, the need for hospital services still exists. Again, promises have been made but not kept.

By its misdirected priorities, the Government has failed the people of the Orange electorate in regard to education, particularly in its capital works programme. Earlier in this debate the honourable member for Gosford said that only one high school on the Central Coast did not have a multi-purpose hall. The Canobolas High School at Orange has about 1 000 students enrolled, but it does not have a multi-purpose hall. For three years I have pointed out to the Minister for Education the need for such premises. It is not so bad for children on the Central Coast, who live in an almost tropical climate, but all honourable members would be aware of the severe winter conditions that prevail at Orange. Recently, the children at Canobolas High School had to assemble out in the open, in the snow. One wonders how they were able to participate in physical education and other outdoor activities. Those children have been discriminated against by the Government, which has avoided the issue.

During the previous session of this Parliament I put a series of questions on the *Questions and Answers Paper* in an attempt to find out the Government's priorities in essential services and, in particular, how it allocated funds to educational regions. I received no answers to the four questions that I asked; they were ignored by the Government. In the International Year of Disabled Persons the conditions at the Anson Street Special School are disgraceful. In three years enrolments at the school have increased from nineteen to fifty-five. The school has one toilet for boys and another for girls. The toilets are of the ordinary size, not the small toilets normally provided for children. No handrails are available for handicapped children. Surely those are basic planning requirements. No covered walkway is provided to help the handicapped children move between a portable building and the main section of the school. There are steps leading to the classrooms. That is the sort of crazy thing that is occurring. In a recent letter the Minister for Education said that plans would be prepared for improvements to be made at the school. He did not say when the funds would be available to implement the plans.

An examination of the Governor's Speech reveals a glaring omission in relation to the Government's energy policy. The Government lacks any real commitment to develop alternative energy sources. That lack of commitment is shown by the absence of any reference to an energy policy in the Governor's Speech and in the Government's failure to assist the APACE team in its research activities in the Orange district. Obviously, the Government is continuing to concentrate on the traditional energy sources of coal, oil and gas. It is interesting to note the reference to the supply of natural gas to Orange, Bathurst and Lithgow. I was surprised that the Government had the audacity to raise this matter at this stage. In 1976 the Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Energy made three important statements. He said:

I will say this on behalf of the Government, that we will introduce a special bill for the purpose of ensuring that the Australian Gas Light Company honours its obligations to provide natural gas to these country towns. . . to Bathurst, Orange, Lithgow and Wagga Wagga. I will give that undertaking to introduce legislation to compel the Australian Gas Light Company to honour its undertaking.

Later, on the same occasion, the Minister said:

After conferring with the Premier this evening, on behalf of the Government I announce that the Government will introduce that legislation next year.

That was said in 1976. Nothing has been done since, in spite of a number of deputations from councils in those towns. This is an election year, so the Government considers it convenient to raise the question of whether natural gas will be available in those three country towns. The Government's statement has been phrased so that there is no commitment to supply natural gas to those areas, rather that the matter is under consideration. That demonstrates that the Government does not have a real commitment to supply natural gas to any area, if the past is any example. The Governor's Speech does not reveal firm plans for the development of the State. The Government has failed to make adequate provision for housing. In Orange, 191 families are waiting for Housing Commission accommodation. They are low-income families that have no alternative means of obtaining homes without paying the exorbitant rents that apply in the private sector. Wellington has thirty similar families, Blayney fourteen and Molong five. The Government has no plans to build new houses in those areas. Those families have nowhere to go and no real prospects of obtaining accommodation. The number of families on the Housing Commission waiting list can only increase.

The Government has failed to provide adequate funding for roads. It has failed to provide the money necessary to seal and upgrade the road between Euchareena and Stuart Town. That road is an important access road for local people. Moreover, tourists use the road to go to the area around Burrendong Dam, which contains some of the most important tourist facilities in central western New South Wales. The Government has spent millions of dollars on upgrading tourist facilities in New South Wales. The Department of Sport and Recreation has built a number of holiday camps for schoolchildren. However, the road to that area has a sign advising motorists that conditions are so bad that caravans should not travel over it. How does the Government expect to attract tourists to that area?

The Government has failed to provide adequate funding for soil conservation projects. At Curra Creek near Wellington an agricultural scheme is under way. That scheme will effect about one hundred landholders. Those people need assistance immediately to help them to produce their crops and minimize soil losses. The Government has failed to provide the necessary funds to enable the Wellington shire council to carry out river stabilization works and minimize erosion on the Bell River. It has failed to provide adequate provision at the Kingsford-Smith airport to cater for the needs of country people travelling to Sydney by air.

Earlier in the debate my colleague the honourable member for Burrendong referred to the horrific murder of a lecturer at the Mitchell College at Bathurst. He said that Mudgea was close to that college. I assure the honourable member and the Parliament that Orange and Blayney are a lot closer to the scene of that murder and that people in my electorate are equally frightened. The Government must change its priorities on prisons and where to accommodate prisoners. It should ensure that prisoners are held in the appropriate places and that criminals with a record similar to the man involved in the Mitchell College murder do not escape.

Mr DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order! Earlier today Mr Speaker gave a ruling about the incident to which the honourable member for Orange is referring. He ruled that, as the matter is *sub judice*, it should not be dealt with.

*[Znterruption]*

Mr DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Young and the honourable member for Raleigh should know that it is discourteous for any member to interject while the Speaker or the Deputy-Speaker is on his feet. If they interject again, I shall take stern action. I ask the honourable member for Orange to observe the ruling already given by the Speaker.

Mr WEST: Thank you, Mr Deputy-Speaker. I have made my point. Over the past thirty minutes I have endeavoured to make clear how the Government has failed my constituents. My electorate is in need of development and improvement. I have worked to serve my constituents, as a member of the community and publicly. After three years of hard work, on my part, the Government has failed to honour its commitments. I shall fight the next election on the issue of the development of those projects in my electorate.

Mr MAHER (Drummoyne) [8.25]: I am delighted to have the opportunity to contribute to this debate——

*[Interruption]*

Mr DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Young to order.

Mr MAHER: ——and to comment on the Governor's Speech at the opening of Parliament. I congratulate the new Governor on an inspiring and impressive Speech, which set out the Government's programme of positive action and its successful record. I was interested in the Governor's comments on the Government's proposals for the Aboriginal community. For many years black Australians have been shamefully neglected by the States and the Commonwealth. Honourable members will recall that, at a referendum in 1967, the Australian people decided that the power to make laws about Aborigines should be transferred from the States to the Commonwealth. That power, which was previously vested in the State Government, unfortunately now languishes and lingers.

It was only when I travelled to the Castlereagh electorate for the by-election campaign and visited the towns of Bourke and Brewarrina, which are 400 or 500 miles from Sydney, that I saw the appalling conditions under which the Aboriginal community live. Each community had its own shanty town consisting of tin sheds and shacks with earth floors. I saw appalling ablution blocks for Aborigines. Those blocks provided the people with only the basic facilities. I was shaken and compelled to examine my conscience on what I was doing, as a member of this House, to improve the lot of black Australians.

I visited local schools, including the St Ignatius parish school at Bourke where I have a cousin who is a nun. I visited the kindergarten class at the school, which taught children five years of age. I asked a nun why Aboriginal children had their heads on their desks and the white children held up their heads. The nun replied that the black children probably had not had breakfast that morning or tea the previous night and that they may be suffering from malnutrition or were half-starved. I was stunned. I could not believe that in this State and country, which we are so proud of, black Australians would be half-starved. I congratulate the honourable member for Woronora and those members on both sides of the House who served upon the Select Committee upon Aborigines. Those members can do little; they can only point out the problems to the community and the Government and hope that the federal authorities can be jolted into doing something about the problems of Aborigines.

Later in my travels in the Castlereagh election campaign I visited Brewarrina on a pension day. I have never seen anything like it. The whole community was drunk. I could not believe it. I was warned not to go out on the street. I was absolutely ashamed of what I saw in Brewarrina. The incidence of alcoholism was appalling. The federal Government spends \$20 million annually on a programme of national pride—advertisements on television telling us to do the right thing and to dig in and give it a go. The World Council of Churches has reported that Aborigines in Western Australia have contracted leprosy. Far from being a State of excitement, Western Australia is a State of leprosy. Anyone with sensitivity or feeling would be overwhelmed at the report, which will be discussed and debated throughout the world. Australian tourists will be asked questions—not about teddy bears, koala bears or kangaroos but about the World Council of Churches report on Aboriginal health.

I believe every word of that report and every press story that I read about it. In Bourke and Brewarrina I saw the conditions under which Aborigines live. Mother Theresa brought out nuns from India to work with Aborigines. I could not believe that Australians were living in such conditions, that old Aboriginal men were living in tin sheds and being looked after by those nuns. India has population problems, disease and famine, yet Mother Theresa thought it necessary to bring her sisters to Australia.

The sisters are looking after old men in a tin shanty just outside the town. Other sisters run the afterschool programme at which children are given a sandwich to eat and are provided with supervision in doing their homework. Sewing classes are held for the women. The work that is done inspires and touches me. I am proud to mention it in the House. I am delighted that the Governor, in his Speech at the opening of the Parliament, emphasized that the State Government will not rest until the lot of black Australians is improved. I shall read a comment from the report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly upon Aborigines:

The Aboriginal citizens of this State mainly exist in conditions of abject poverty. Their housing is substandard and overcrowded. Their health and education, abysmal. Their employment, negligible. Their welfare and culture, ignored or deprecated.

Blatant discrimination based on race and the colour of skin is one of the reasons for the present intolerable situation in which Aborigines find themselves today. Apathy, indifference and ignorance by those who have the power to change the situation, are the others.

In the wealthiest State of one of the world's most affluent countries, there is no excuse for these deplorable conditions to continue to blight the lives of the descendants of the original Australians—the Aborigines.

Mr Caterson: What does the Government propose to do about it?

Mr MAHER: I intend to do everything I can about it. I hope that the members of the Liberal Party and Country Party will use their influence at party meetings and councils. I hope that they will remember the Aborigines and some of the things they saw in the electorate of Castlereagh and at other country centres. Aborigines live in disgusting, filthy conditions in unsewered areas, in shanties and shacks. Members of the Country Party should be ashamed to get into their comfortable beds in big country towns where they lead a life of ease. Thought should be given to the people who live in shanties and humpies on the edges of towns. They are human beings and they must not be forgotten.

The federal Government has responsibility for the care of Aborigines. Some quite incredible schemes operate. In order to afford experience, the wages of an Aborigine will be paid for a year. That is a wonderful scheme. Anyone can call himself an Aboriginal, as there is no test. An Aboriginal stenographer can be paid to gain a year's work experience. Employers will take on Aborigines because they do not have to pay wages for the year's work experience. I thought I would get an additional secretary for a year and that the federal Government would pay for her. I wrote to the Premier and Treasurer about the matter and he agreed. He thought it was an excellent idea. The Premier agreed to make a desk and typewriter available for a second staff member.

I could not get an Aboriginal stenographer, as no Aboriginal stenographers are available. This is a white man's scheme to train Aborigines. It was concocted by a desk-bound public servant in Canberra to improve the lot of the Aborigines. If one went to Brewarrina or Bourke or any country town, one would find hundreds of Aborigines who are unemployed. The Canberra scheme to fix the unemployment problem of Aborigines did not work: they could not give me anybody to come into my office to work as a clerk or stenographer who would qualify for the grant. The federal Government would have paid the wages of the employee for a year, with holiday pay and other loadings, but I could not get a stenographer. That is the type of solution that comes from the federal capital to assist Aborigines. Australians must re-examine their consciences about what they are doing for the black Australians, the original inhabitants of Australia, who have been neglected so shamefully.

Having painted on a broad canvas, I shall now touch on matters in the Speech of the Governor which relate to my electorate. The Governor referred to public transport. At times I have made difficult the life of the Minister for Transport by making numerous representations to him. I probably make the greatest number of representations on transport issues but the Minister is an understanding man. He has tried to promote public transport because, in the long run, it is the only solution. The Liberal Party and Country Party coalition has a policy of building expressways. That is done without regard to the dividing of communities. Honourable members who have seen expressways in the United States of America, in San Francisco, Los Angeles and other places, will know that they are not a solution for people who do not drive, the aged and tourists. Expressways are not the answer in the middle of the city where there is no parking. Public transport is needed in the middle of a city.

In order to carry people in and out of Sydney an efficient public transport system is needed. In my electorate I have been supported in my stand for public transport, as against the building of expressways. I stood on that issue in 1973. I asked the people of the Drummoyne electorate at that time whether they wanted the electorate divided by massive, concrete expressways, involving the demolition of hundreds of homes and enabling entry to the city by people from the outer suburbs who had nowhere to park when they reached the city. The people of the electorate rejected the expressways concept.

Mr Caterson: How will people from the outer areas get to Sydney?

Mr MAHER: A rail system runs to the Hills electorate. Railways run to Pennant Hills, Beecroft and Carlingford. Those areas are spoilt so far as public transport is concerned. Cottage development has gone right to the railway stations where high rise medium density housing should be located. The selfish attitude displayed by the councils on the North Shore will not allow high rise development around the railway stations. Public transport in my electorate and in the inner western suburbs, needs

more promotion and publicity. An express bus provides a 10-minute service, but people have difficulty getting timetables; they do not know when the buses run. People do not know when the services to Canada Bay run. Many new services have been started.

I am delighted that exit by the back door in 1-man buses will soon be allowed. People have trouble getting in and out of those buses. Most people stand near the front of the bus and will not move down the back. By the end of next month passengers will be able to leave 1-man buses by the back door. The Government will also call tenders for ticket vending machines on buses. That will allow people to enter and leave buses with greater expedition. I have made representations to the Minister for Transport for more express buses to cover the Haberfield area. People in that area have been rather disadvantaged since 1-man buses were introduced as no express buses now run.

Public transport is the only long-term solution. There is a commuter council for train travellers. There should be a similar commuter council for bus travellers. The majority of the 32 000 electors who reside in the area that I represent in this House choose to travel by bus when they wish to come to the city. Some from Concord, Cabarita and Mortlake, travel to Burwood by bus and catch a train from there, but the majority come to the city by bus. There should be more consultation and more public participation in transport planning.

Ferries are another aspect of public transport in my area. The electorate is bounded entirely on one side by the Parramatta River, which is a great natural expressway between Parramatta and the city. However, it is largely unused. There is no pollution from ferries. If the Government can successfully promote use of the ferries that it is planning, this will be a great step forward for public transport in this city. Wharves should be provided at Abbotsford, Cabarita, Drummoyne, Chiswick and Dobroyd Point. The Government has called tenders for the development of a prototype ferry to be operated by two men. The Urban Transit Authority should purchase a number of these vessels. It is essential that spare ferries be available in case of breakdowns. If a ferry breaks down and passengers are waiting at a wharf, a replacement ferry must be available to pick them up and bring them to town. Ferry services cannot be run cheaply. The Parramatta River, a natural highway running through our city, was the original source of public transport from the city to the developing suburbs along the river. It has been largely neglected, even for recreation. The Government has made funds available for the purchase of sites along the river at Chiswick and Mortlake Point so that large areas can be dedicated for public recreation and parks. I hope to see the river used for ferry services.

The only other aspect of public transport to which I shall refer is taxicabs. Honourable members may find it strange to hear me refer to taxicabs as a form of public transport, but they are an essential means of transport for many elderly and disabled people. I am often told by elderly ladies that when they have rung and ordered a taxi to go to a chiropodist, a hospital or a doctor, frequently the taxi does not arrive. One problem may be that house numbers are difficult for taxi drivers to see. There may be many explanations. However, people frequently complain to me that the taxi they ordered did not arrive and they were left stranded. People who are aged and unable to travel by public transport must rely on taxi services. I bring those aspects of public transport to the attention of the Minister for Transport. The Governor in his Speech dealt with the whole question of public transport.

I invite the attention of the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports to the problems caused to persons using Victoria Road, which carries all the traffic from Drummoyne, Chiswick, Russell Lea and many other parts

of the electorate, as a result of the opening of the Glebe Island Bridge, which occurs many times each day. I receive complaints that the bridge opens to allow small pleasure craft, such as a yacht, to pass, and delays are occasioned to bus travellers, motor vehicles and commercial traffic. These delays cause great distress, waste precious fossil fuels and annoy passengers and drivers. Many times I have written to the Minister who is responsible for the Maritime Services Board, urging him to reduce the number of occasions on which the bridge is opened and, if possible, to stop the mooring of pleasure craft in Blackwattle Bay. No one objects to the bridge being opened for large commercial shipping, for industry.

I support the Maritime Services Board policy of retaining industrial land along the foreshores of Sydney Harbour. Great pressure is being exerted on the owners of harbourside factories to replace the factory buildings with high-rise flats. This results in a quick sale and a quick profit for the factory owner, but in the long run when petrol supplies are exhausted we shall have to resume the carriage of goods by ship and the carriage of industrial goods by barge. I fully support the policy of the Maritime Services Board favouring the retention of industrial sites on the waterfront for industrial purposes. If a harbourside industrial site is to be relinquished because it is considered redundant, it should become a public recreational reserve and should be zoned as open space. These sites should not be sold for high-rise development. In my electorate a factory is moving out of an area at Cabarita at the end of Burwood Road and moves are afoot to redevelop the site for residential purposes, but not with cottage development though the site is surrounded by cottages.

The owners of the factory wish to develop it as a high-rise flat site. The owners of the factory on the other side of the road are naturally concerned that if the plan comes to fruition, a number of newcomers to the area will be living opposite a factory and in the near future moves will be made to close it down. They do not wish to move from the site. This is an appalling planning problem. I fully support the notion that if a factory, which may have operated on harbourside land for the whole of this century, wishes to move from that land, then the site should become a public park for public recreation.

The Governor in his Speech spoke also of the vital and sensitive area of education. Public education is the responsibility of this Government. For a few minutes I wish to canvass some of the basic issues in relation to education that confront me as a member of this House. The most basic issue is the inability of low income earners to pay school fees. I have mentioned this matter in the House before. The problem of school fees arises in State schools where service fees are charged and in parochial or Catholic schools where school fees are charged. There is not much difference between the fees charged in parish schools and the fees charged in State high schools.

After I spoke about this matter on the last occasion in this Chamber I was surprised by the comments that came to me about my speech. Many State high schools charge \$40 or \$50 a year in service fees and apply subtle pressure to parents to pay the fees. A single parent came to me and said that her child was at a State high school where the service fees were \$50 and if the fees were not paid she received a follow-up letter each month from the school concerned. She had only a widow's pension and had two children in State high schools. To her \$50 was a lot of money and she had great trouble paying it. Eventually she was so pressurized and embarrassed that she borrowed the money to pay the service fees. I was appalled.

Obviously headmasters have their difficulties. They use this money to buy books and additional sporting equipment to improve the lot of students. I call on the Government to examine the whole question of fees in Government and private schools.

The bursary system is no longer working. The cutoff income for a bursary to cover a child in a Government secondary school or a private school is \$6,000 but few families earn less than \$6,000. In the approaching election campaign I should like to see the Government commit itself to abolishing school service fees for children of parents who are low income earners. Some people simply cannot afford to pay them. A genuine commitment would look to the needs of the community.

Health care was one of the subjects of the Governor's Speech. Nursing homes come within the ambit of health care, and I invite the Government's attention to those operating in my electorate. Aged and senile folk are cared for in those homes, some of which can be described only as appalling rip-offs. I can vouch that the standard of care in nursing homes is both reasonable and satisfactory, for I have checked with Health Commission officials. But in some of them the monthly fees have risen to \$531. The policy of the federal Government is that every pensioner in a nursing home should be able to pay the necessary fees and still have a few dollars left. Despite that, two nursing homes in my electorate take all the pension of aged patients and also half, or more, of the pension of any dependent daughter at home. Women have come to me and told me that they are paying all of their mothers' pensions plus most of their own, to pay for attention in nursing homes. Many folk in nursing homes are in their eighties and nineties. The federal Government's cutback in staffing within the Department of Social Security has caused a lack of proper jurisdiction and supervision of fees charged by nursing homes. For many years the federal Government kept an eye on nursing homes to make sure they did not charge excessive fees. However, nursing home proprietors are now able to rip off elderly folk for their own private profit and gain.

The seriousness of this matter warrants an inquiry into the conduct of nursing homes. In many suburbs there is often no alternative to sending the aged parent to a local nursing home, and there may be only one or two such places providing a service. The Health Commission will not permit new nursing homes to open. Local church groups have been told they cannot open nursing homes because there are already too many beds available within their areas. The people who own those beds are interested only in private profit and gain, and not at all in the welfare of the elderly people in their care. The proprietors of these homes are made to look after the patients, and because of that they intend to extract every penny they can get from any pensioner or any member of that person's family. Some sad experiences have been brought to my notice by people with parents in nursing homes, people who are distressed financially simply because they must pay the fees for nursing home care.

I am concerned about this problem. It may be even an issue worthy of examination by a select or joint committee of Parliament. Care of aged persons in nursing homes is a matter that will concern us all in future years. Although the Governor passed over it in dealing with health care, it is of utmost concern to all members of the community. I congratulate His Excellency on his most impressive Speech.

**Mr DEPUTY-SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member has exhausted his time.

**Mr TOMS (Maitland) [8.55]:** I congratulate His Excellency the Governor, Air Marshal Sir James Anthony Rowland, upon his appointment as Governor of this, the greatest State in Australia. I wish to assure His Excellency, this State's representative of the Queen, of my loyalty as an Australian citizen and subject of Her

Majesty. I am proud to represent an electorate that is interesting, progressive, and law abiding. I shall be pleased to return to the next Parliament to represent the Maitland electorate which, on the revised boundaries, will be made up of Maitland city and Raymond Terrace. At the same time, I shall be sorry to lose from the electorate the scenically beautiful area of Dungog shire, an area in which I served for fourteen years as shire clerk.

Mention has been made a number of times of Labor candidates attempting to usurp the functions of elected members, a practice in which they are aided and abetted by the Wran propaganda machine. That is regrettable and represents a lack of respect for the value of traditions, precepts and codes of conduct that are well established and equally important to the fabric of society as is the law. I have been particularly concerned about this but I have not complained before, because I believed the candidates to be doing themselves more harm than good. The people of my electorate are able to judge the matter. They have a sense of fair play that will cause them to continue to express their resentment at this practice.

Maitland is known as the hub of the Hunter. Continuing references in this House to the Hunter region make clear its key role in the development of New South Wales. I shall speak of matters of great concern to my electorate and to the Hunter region in general. Within the Maitland electorate there are four high schools, many primary and infant schools and a major technical college. Unlike the position in many parts of the State, in my electorate student enrolments with consequent needs for new schools and additional facilities are increasing. A new co-educational high school is to be established at Rutherford. The target date for that is the beginning of the 1984 school year. It is most important that the planning, design and construction of that new high school be pushed ahead. In no circumstances should it come into operation later than 1984, because by that time there will be serious overcrowding of the Maitland Boys High School and Maitland Girls High School.

A new high school is needed in the Raymond Terrace district and the Minister has approved commencement of its planning. A new primary school at Rutherford is urgently needed and one planned for that area may have to be completed ahead of its target date, the Commencement of the 1984 school year. There are extensive educational needs elsewhere which I intend to pursue. Yesterday in the House I drew attention to the incredibly bad conditions at Maitland Technical College and to the need for immediate action. Conditions at Maitland are justly reputed to be the worst in the State.

A new technical college is to be built near **Metford**, in stages, the first of which the Government hopes to commence in 1985. The Government ought to be censured severely for the lack of co-ordination and communication within its departments which caused the earlier chosen site at Greenhills to be abandoned after planning and design work was well advanced. Much vital time was lost, and that has contributed to a technical education crisis in Maitland. In order to take in the constantly increasing number of students the technical college has had to expand into all sorts of rented premises at seventeen separate locations. The old drill hall at East Maitland is used for carpentry and joinery classes, including technical drawing, but without effective separation of those activities. I pay tribute to the teachers and students for putting up with shocking conditions caused by overcrowding, dust and noise, including traffic noise from the adjacent highway.

It is not possible to wait until the permanent new college is constructed, perhaps later than 1985. The greatest demand for jobs in the industrial boom of the Hunter is now, and it should not be beyond the wit of the Minister for Education to direct

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the interim measure of setting up a group of demountable buildings on an already serviced temporary site. It is not acceptable that the college should continue to operate: in so many locations and in so many unsuitable buildings, one of which is an old drill hall. The crisis in technical education in the whole of the Hunter region was evidenced at the technical and further education forum held at Kurri Kurri Workers Club last week. It is clear that the teachers are looking to the State Government for action and they will not be misled by attempts to blame the federal Government for the State Government's deficiencies.

The fact is that the federal Government's allocations to New South Wales for technical and further education have increased continuously and substantially in the past seven years, rising from \$12.67 million in 1973–74 to \$56.22 million in 1980–81. Clearly, federal assistance to the State in meeting this State's responsibility has increased at a rate that more than covers cost inflation. Similarly, the total federal allocations to States for education have increased from \$1,663 million in 1974–75 to an estimated \$2,867 million in 1980–81. That may explain why parents and teachers at a Catholic education forum I attended last week were singularly unimpressed with Labor Party attempts to "blame the feds".

Continuing on the subject of education, I wish to express support for the teachers' campaign for more of their work time to be available for preparation of programmes of instruction. I also support the teachers' campaign for restructuring of the primary school classifications and teacher gradings, to take account of declining enrolments and the need to provide appropriate career and professional advancement opportunities for teachers. The Government has delayed unreasonably in making these changes which would improve the quality of education. Understandably, the teachers are frustrated and angry. Though I do not support strike action, I believe that most teachers, particularly in the country, have so far exercised a good deal of restraint. To avoid the further risk of stepped-up industrial action which would be adverse to pupils and, unfortunately, raise public indignation against teachers, I urge the Government to honour, without further delay, these commitments made to teachers some time ago.

There is a growing housing crisis in Maitland and the upper Hunter, which affects particularly the low income earners and pensioners. Well-paid people moving into the Hunter are bidding-up market values and rentals. Notices to quit are being served on longstanding tenants, who are unable to meet the rapidly rising market rental figure. What are these people to do? They are the saddest cases with which I deal, and my personal efforts to find them alternative accommodation are almost doomed to failure. Some have provided me with their weekly income and expenditure budgets which show the hopelessness of their position. Some will be forced to live in sub-standard, even primitive conditions. There is no one answer to this problem and the present Government's much-advertised housing policy is achieving very little. The housing policy of the Opposition is more substantial and deserves careful study by the Government in the little time it has left. **What** is imperative is that the Housing Commission adopt a crash programme of new dwelling construction to increase its dwelling stock in Maitland and the upper Hunter. The present waiting time for new applicants is about two years. It takes no foresight whatever to realize that this waiting period will rapidly increase.

What is the Government's record? It has in the past three years constructed only forty new dwellings in Maitland and twenty aged persons' units. This is trifling with the problem and, although I raised this question in the House and the Minister for Housing subsequently wrote to me, he made no specific commitment to a planned

rate of construction. A total of one hundred houses should now be under construction. At least 200 additional homes including units for aged persons ought to be built each year until the crisis for low and moderate income earners is overcome. Again, I ask the Minister to give specific details of planned housing construction in Maitland and the upper Hunter.

It is understandable, though not appropriate, that the Government has not released the result of a survey of community health services in the Hunter region. The lamentable story told by that survey demonstrates great deficiencies in services to meet existing demands and indeed under-provision of services. The fact is that the Hunter is not receiving its fair allocation of funds from the State Government. The region is being exploited for its mineral resources and is making the greatest contribution of any region in Australia to the economy of the State and the nation. Maitland is at the bottom of the list, rating 157th out of 159 communities in a survey of child care facilities. Yet the Government refused a grant to the Maitland child care committee to establish a neighbourhood children's centre. This is an iniquitous decision and I call on the Government to reverse it without delay.

The Lower Hunter Prelude Parents Support Association is a group of parents of developmentally-delayed babies. The group was given a grant of \$16,000 to employ a specially trained teacher and to set up in suitable premises. An additional \$4,000 was afterwards made available so that the group could also take responsibility for teaching services at Muswellbrook. I appreciate that the Minister for Youth and Community Services agreed to meet, at short notice, a deputation from the association, but I wish to emphasize that the small amount of money made available has caused the association grave concern. The amount of money is not sufficient to employ a teacher and to rent premises. I ask the Minister to increase the grant substantially and to give a direction that a spare cottage at Yawarra youth training centre or other suitable premises be made available rent-free to the association.

Over the last session of Parliament, and again this session, I progressively presented petitions from constituents demanding upgrading of Maitland Hospital. The number of petitioners at this stage is about 3 000. Surely that says something to the Minister for Health. The new wards at the hospital, designed and approved by the previous coalition Government and carried to completion by the Labor Government, are a big step forward but further major improvements are overdue, including a new casualty section and operating theatre, new records section and air-conditioning of remaining wards. Through the Maitland Hospital a wide range of specialist services is provided to a wider district. The hospital is, in effect, a base hospital, but its importance does not seem to be recognized and Maitland, in common with many other hospitals, has suffered substantial reductions in bed numbers. In questions upon notice I asked the Minister for Health to give an assurance that no further reductions in bed numbers would be applied to the Maitland Hospital. I also asked for information about upgrading plans. No response to those questions has been made by the Minister. On a population basis Maitland should have 180 nursing home beds. It has none. It is a waste of time to look to the State Government to meet this need. I intend to support strongly local approaches to the federal Government for its two-thirds subsidy towards capital costs of nursing home and hostel accommodation.

Most people in the Hunter Valley are concerned at the failure of the State Government to ensure that necessary infrastructure and local works and services are provided to meet the demands imposed by industrial development. There is growing realization that development in the Hunter is poorly co-ordinated and out of

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sequence. A prime example of back-to-front sequence, with all the attendant risks, is that aluminium smelter development looks like getting ahead of the power stations needed for their operation, despite the fact that the State electricity grid was in real trouble recently. The construction of power stations looks like getting ahead of new major water storages needed to supply them with cooling water, despite the plain evidence of inadequacies of Hunter Valley water storages to meet present demands. We are in a long period of below-average rainfall. Even if additional storages are constructed fairly quickly, there is no assurance that they will fill in time to meet the vast water demand projected. I believe the Government is taking a large degree of risk and that groundwater and river sources of water supply to traditional users, such as farm irrigation, town consumers and industries are at risk. The Opposition has, of course, recognized the danger and has given priority to development of water resources in the Hunter basin. This is not a belated recognition: coalition governments have over a long period a better record on these matters, despite Labor claims to the contrary yesterday.

I wish now to deal with the subject of roads. Roads have not been given high enough priority by either the federal Government or the New South Wales Government. The cost to the community of poor roads is great and has been documented and canvassed for many years. The State Government should boost its allocations to the Hunter division of the Department of Main Roads and reduce the delay in opening a new route for the Pacific Highway, west of Lake Macquarie. Road conditions in Maitland are chaotic and getting worse. I had hoped that the Minister for Roads, following my questions in the House, would have shown greater alacrity in getting out the long-delayed environmental impact statement for the Maitland inner city bypass.

The exhibition of the environmental impact statement is only one more step in the long and tedious process towards getting construction work started. I have spoken before of the planning design bottleneck and I am sure people do not realize how many years it will be before traffic chaos at Maitland is overcome. Construction of the Maitland inner city bypass must be speeded up and be followed, without pause, by construction of an upgraded road link between Maitland and East Maitland. Those two works must be followed closely by the construction of a highway bypass to the south of Maitland. The people of a city of the size and importance of Maitland should not be expected to tolerate a 2-lane street through the central business district, continuing to serve also as the New England Highway. Conditions there have to be experienced to be believed. Again I ask the Minister for Local Government and Minister for Roads to direct that the investigation, planning and design for these road-works be pressed ahead and dovetailed to overcome the planning and design bottlenecks, and to ensure early construction of these long delayed works.

In my maiden speech in this House I spoke of the Lochinvar smelter and asked the Premier and Treasurer to take special action to ensure that the public inquiry into that project was not only scientific and objective but was seen by the people to be so. I felt that request was justified because of the extent of the feeling abroad that the Premier and Treasurer was so committed to the project's going ahead that government experts and advisers would be inhibited in giving evidence and that the inquiry would be a window-dressing exercise. What was feared became fact, with the result that the people are disenchanted and do not believe the inquiry served its proper purpose. Perhaps the commissioners cannot be blamed for the one-eyed and inhibited performance of some public service expert witnesses. Perhaps some of those witnesses cannot be blamed entirely for following the government line. The expertise of the Department of Agriculture was largely denied to the inquiry. Keep out of it, its officers were told. The Department of Environment and Planning failed

in its responsibility to remain objective. It went overboard in favour of the development and paid scant regard to the rights of surrounding property owners.

At the inquiry the department advanced a proposition that land use be regulated to an incredible extent in a massive area around the smelter, in addition to the land owned by the developer. In an area named zone B comprising agricultural land, the department recommended against almost all traditional agricultural uses but conceded that poultry and pig raising would be acceptable, provided that the activities were carried on indoors and that the stock were fed from outside the area. Think about that.

Alumax wasted no time in agreeing that these Draconian measures were just the shot to protect the company against what it termed unwarranted claims for compensation. Honourable members ought to ponder the significance of that. Such ideas and concepts lack regard for ordinary property rights and reveal a desire to replace courts with ministerial decrees. They are foreign to Australian thinking and must stand to the eternal shame of the Government, whose pressure and influence caused them to come forward.

When the people realized what was going on and raised their voices in protest, first the company and then the Department of Environment and Planning backed off and said that the land use regulations would not, after all, be needed. Several things are wrong with that. First, the public has been given no facts to show why the regulation was proposed and later withdrawn. Second, the withdrawal of the proposed regulation was after the public inquiry had closed. That gave a wrong basis for much of the evidence at the inquiry and denied the people the opportunity to be heard on the revised situation. That contrasts starkly with the commitment of the Premier and Treasurer at the 1976 elections to consult with the people on planning matters and to give them adequate opportunity to be heard. Today it was reported that the Premier and Treasurer had approved the Lochinvar smelter.

Mr Sheahan: I approved it.

Mr TOMS: Good man. That was done before an attempt was made to answer the serious questions raised by residents concerning the conduct of the public inquiry. This attitude reveals contempt for local opinion. Third, development plans and prospective sales and purchases of properties embraced in the original land use proposal are now blighted. Owners do not know what to think. The Government, if it has any respect for the property rights of ordinary Australians, must act decisively to clear the air.

Another major problem caused by the Government's ham-fisted approach to planning is the use of section 101 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act to remove from Maitland and Cessnock councils the right to deal with not only the smelter development but also any local development applications in a large area surrounding the smelter. This has resulted in many local people suffering loss and inconvenience and being thwarted in carrying out developments as mundane as the erection of a house or a shed, even on the edge of Maitland urban development. No action has resulted from my questions in the House on this matter and I call on the Minister for Planning and Environment to return to local councils for their approval all of the local development applications pigeonholed in the department. I ask Government supporters how they would feel if their rights were trampled in this way. The Victorian Government has set up a \$5 million infrastructure fund for the town of

Portland to help pay for needed works and services that cannot be financed from normal sources. The Government should have taken this action long ago. It is absolutely necessary in the situation existing in the Hunter Valley.

The large backlog of works and services in the Hunter Valley is partly due to inadequate provision by State governments in the past and partly to the demands now being created by industrial developments. The normal statewide priority lists of various departments are a positive impediment to quick and flexible action. A Hunter Valley infrastructure fund would place funds directly at the disposal of the Hunter Valley, unencumbered by the statewide pressures on individual Ministers, not tied to long-term priority lists or to cutoff dates for submission of various annual programmes.

Such a fund could be used, for example, to finance the augmentation of water and sewerage services in the upper Hunter, to establish child care centres such as that needed at Maitland but refused recently by the Department of Youth and Community Services, to build houses and so on. The fund should not be used for restricted purposes. It could be applied to any of the objectives of a State government, but principally capital works. The major developments that are placing stress on local services are not the creation of local councils. Local people cannot be blamed for lack of forward planning or for the lack of services. The State Government is clearly responsible and there is ample justification for the Government to set up a Hunter Valley infrastructure fund.

The Governor's Speech referred repeatedly to the Hunter region and highlighted its significance. I have touched on only a few of the issues affecting the Hunter Valley. The region deserves the continuing close attention of governments. It is estimated that in the next five years \$6,500 million will be invested in development in the Hunter Valley. It is right that private investors should seize development opportunities in the Hunter and that State and federal governments should encourage them to do so. The determined efforts of the federal Government to control inflation and the measure of success it has had have restored business and investor confidence, without which the Hunter would not be developing as it is. The Premier and Treasurer deserves credit for recognizing the value of the resources of the Hunter and for encouraging development that exploits those resources. However, many of us are apprehensive about the pace and the magnitude of development and are doubtful of the Government's capacity to plan and co-ordinate it and to ensure provision of the necessary infrastructure works.

I am sure that most residents in the valley are unhappy because the Government has not done enough to ensure that maximum job opportunities and a fair share of benefits of current industrial development to go to valley residents. The Government stands condemned for its failure to plan for and to provide to residents of the valley satisfactory community health services, low rent housing, roads, hospital services and so on. They are basic matters for which the State Government cannot escape responsibility. The continued attempts to blame the federal Government for the State Government's failures are increasingly rejected by the people, who are well aware of the misdirection of funds by the State Government to coal loaders and coalmining where private capital is available.

I urge the Government to act immediately to remedy, from its own resources, the deficiencies in the Hunter region in those works and services that are its clear and constitutional responsibility. If it does not do so, it will come to be known as an exploiter, lacking in the concern that it should have for the people of the Hunter Valley who comprise almost one-tenth of the State's population. We are a significant minority whose rights and lifestyle deserve more consideration.

Mr ROGAN (East Hills) [9.20]: I join with other honourable members who have contributed to the debate in congratulating His Excellency Sir James Anthony Rowland upon his appointment as Governor of the great State of New South Wales. I congratulate His Excellency also on the Speech he delivered on behalf of the Government. The speech recounted the positive programmes that the Government will be embarking upon for the benefit of New South Wales. His Excellency referred in his Speech to the continuing difficulties caused by the unprecedented severity of the drought. [*Quorum formed.*] I should have thought that Opposition members would have waited until I started wading into the federal Government before calling for a quorum. His Excellency said that the broad economic picture in New South Wales is one of sustained and vigorous growth, strong business recovery at all levels, significant new investment in manufacturing and resource development, with a marked reduction in the level of unemployment. Opposition members were a little touchy about His Excellency's reference to the fairly disastrous policies of the federal Government.

I thought the language used by His Excellency was rather temperate when one considers the way in which the people of New South Wales have suffered. His Excellency said also that despite renewed economic buoyancy in New South Wales, the Budget and the capital works estimates that the Government will present for the consideration of honourable members are being prepared in the context of exceptional financial constraints and stringency. His Excellency said further:

The Commonwealth Government has withdrawn or reduced its support from essential areas of government responsibility, especially in the fields of health and hospital services, education and welfare housing, and has transferred further responsibility to the States and severely restricted the Borrowings Programme.

I mentioned the restraints of the federal Government which, as a central government, has not honoured its responsibility to the people of Australia to provide economic management. I have a list of thirty-eight promises that were broken by the Fraser Government since its election in 1979. I shall remind the House of but a few of those promises. On 15th November, 1975, when seeking election, the Prime Minister said, "I can promise you honesty and integrity in government. I would like to have a government which people can trust." All honourable members must agree those promises have not been kept. On 27th November, 1975, the Prime Minister said, "We will maintain Medibank; the Australian assistance plan will be maintained; we will support wage indexation; under a Liberal-National Country Party Government there will be jobs for all who want to work."

Also in 1975 the Prime Minister said: "We will be generous to those who cannot get a job and who want to work; we will fully index personal income tax to inflation over three years; we will reduce the tax burden; we will put an end to Labor's tax rip-off; spending on essential education and health and welfare programmes will be protected against inflation; urban programmes will be continued; we shall ensure that no person is denied legal aid because of lack of means; our reforms will maintain the purchasing power of wages and ease pressures of wage demands.". Each of the thirty-eight promises was broken. That was mentioned in newspapers including the *Daily Telegraph* of 2nd July which had the headline, "Welfare Report shows millions in Poverty". That article stated:

Nearly two million people are living in poverty while struggling to survive on welfare payments, according to a report.

They include single parents, pensioners and unemployed people who are slipping deeper into financial strife as prices rise.

In some cases their welfare payments have not increased for 15 years—and many people have slipped below the poverty line set in 1975.

The report was prepared by the Australian Council of Social Service as a submission to the federal Government for increased welfare spending in the forthcoming Budget.

I regret that the expectations of these people were not met. The article continued:

The ACOSS report shows that despite Australia's reputation as a land of milk and honey up to one-seventh of the population have a miserable existence.

To make ends meet, they have to go to emergency relief agencies **for** basic necessities such as food and clothing.

The dependants' allowance for children of pensioners has not been increased since November 1975 and some allowances for children of lone parent pensioners have not been increased since October 1965.

"It is estimated that 1.4 to 1.9 million people live in or near poverty levels of **income**," the report says.

"The position of the unemployed, those renting and those with dependent children has been eroded significantly in recent years with the freezing or partial freezing of allowances."

A recent newspaper article reported Dr Graycar, director of the University of New South Wales social welfare centre, as stating that about 110 000 people work in the shadows of the Australian work force and do not earn sufficient to keep themselves or their families. Doctor Graycar said also that Australia had about 850 000 unemployed, more than twice the official figure of 400 000 persons. Last night all these people looked to the federal Government to provide in its Budget some relief from the misery that they were experiencing. This evening's *Sun* newspaper had the headline, "Tax Bill Blow to Families". The article then states:

Everyone, especially low-income families and pensioners, will be hard hit by sales tax changes announced in last night's Budget.

One of the estimates being made is that the average family with two children, a mortgage and car repayments will have to find an extra \$14.20 a week to live.

The *Sydney Morning Herald* also gave details of what has been described as the miserable federal Budget. I predict with confidence that the New South Wales Government's Budget that will be presented to the House next week will be a stark contrast to the miserable federal Budget. I was pleased to see in the Governor's Speech the following paragraph on the subject of transport:

The Government has completed its undertaking for a five-year programme for the revitalization of the public **transport** system of New South Wales. A second five-year programme, estimated to cost \$1.4 billion, is now under way.

This week I asked a question in this House about the duplication of the East Hills railway line. On other occasions I have referred to a link that would meet up with the main southern line at **Glenfield** and provide an invaluable service to my electorate and beyond. This programme was approved for federal funding in the 1974–75 federal

Government urban public transport approval programme. At that time it would have involved the federal and State Governments financing the project on a two-thirds, one-third basis over a 4-year term. Regrettably, the then State Liberal Party—Country Party Government was forced to divert its comparatively small one-third share of the money that should have gone to this project to the eastern suburbs railway and try in a short time to make up for the neglect that has been allowed to occur in public transport. Because the coalition Government could not proceed with that programme, the federal Government pulled out. The rest is history. Since then the federal Government has all but ceased to fund transport programmes, despite the fact that the daily average usage of the five railway stations between East Hills and Riverwood is about 9 000 persons, excluding children on free educational passes.

With the development taking place in the Menai area, it is estimated that for some 17 000 people the bridge that links my electorate with Menai will provide the shortest route to that railway. More persons will be using that railway. This highlights the need for the Government to press ahead with a duplication programme. Last year when speaking on the Loan Estimates I called for the duplication of the East Hills railway line. Realizing the heavy demands upon the Government at that time, I asked for duplication only between Padstow and Revesby, which would have allowed for time-tabling to phase out terminations that now take place at Riverwood railway station. Because of the nature of the river that divides my area from the other side of Riverwood, it is necessary for train commuters parking at railway stations to make a substantial detour involving them in more travelling time over a longer distance.

This week I called on the Minister for Transport to phase out the practice of terminating trains at Riverwood. I all but said that my patience and that of the East Hills commuters has been exhausted, not only by scheduled terminations, but also by unscheduled terminations. Following my repeated representations the Minister issued a directive that trains were to be terminated at Riverwood but of course only the most exceptional circumstances. Despite this direction, statistics before me reveal that an unacceptable number of unscheduled trains are still being terminated at Riverwood.

This year the East Hills line will celebrate fifty years of train service. I asked the Minister for Transport to advise me of the Government's proposal on this duplication programme. I was pleased to receive the Minister's assurance that proposals are being considered, including those for partial duplication from Riverwood to Padstow, or from Padstow to Revesby, as alternatives for total duplication. The Minister said he supported the programme and that he had asked the State Rail Authority to make money available for the planning of the duplication. The Minister said further that he believed initially the State Rail Authority would examine partial duplication. He assured me that money would be made available for the initial planning of the work and that I would be informed in due course of the progress. It is of interest to record the following history that I have culled from records held by the State Rail Authority and made available to me by the East Hills—Earlwood Railway Commuter Council, which I am pleased to say the honourable member for Earlwood and I established some eighteen months ago. It reads:

The first mention of a need for a railway to East Kils occurred during the investigations of the Parliamentary Standing Committee in 1916, when the proposed railway from Bankstown to Liverpool was being considered . . .

No further action was taken regarding the East Hills area until July, 1919, when a letter was received from the Town Clerk of Bankstown  
*Mr Rogan]*

Municipal Council requesting the then Secretary for Public Works and Minister for Railways, Hon. R. T. Ball, M.L.A., to receive a deputation regarding the extension of the railway line from Bankstown, adequate to meet passenger and goods traffic requirements to and from the southern portion of the municipality.

As a result in 1920, a deputation comprising representatives of the Bankstown Municipal Council, Bankstown Railway League, the Soldiers' Settlement Progress Association and others, were introduced to the Secretary for Public Works, Hon. J. Estell, M.L.A., for the purpose of urging the construction of a line to East Hills . . .

Attention was drawn to the rapid increase in population between Belmore and Bankstown since the extension of the railway to the latter place, and it was stated that similar results were expected from the construction of a line to East Hills.

The Minister, replying to the deputation referred to the favourable nature of the Railway Commissioner's report and promised that the proposal would be submitted to the Public Works Committee . . .

After fully investigating the proposal, the Public Works Committee on August 20, 1921, passed a resolution that the construction of the line be carried out. The estimated cost of the single track line 4.25 miles (6.839 km) long was \$90,160 or \$13,183 per kilometre . . .

Following on a request by the Dumbleton Tramway League in 1923, the Minister gave a direction for a statutory report to be obtained from the Railways Commissioners in regard to the Tempe to Salt Pan Creek railway proposal. At the suggestion of the Padstow Park Railway League in August that year the Minister, accompanied by the Hon. T. J. Ley and Messrs. Bruntnell, Bagnall, Arkins and Cann, M.L.A.'s, inspected the route of the proposed railway.

At Dumbleton (Beverly Hills) the President of the Tempe—Salt Pan Creek Railway League, Mr W. M. Gibson, presented a petition signed by 1,800 residents and ratepayers of Hurstville and Canterbury municipalities urging the construction of the line.

Some of the reasons put forward in the petition were:

- (a) It would alleviate the present congestion on the Bankstown and Illawarra Lines.
- (b) It would make accessible a vast amount of building land.
- (c) It would also make the historical water of the Georges River more accessible to the general public.

In the course of his reply, the Minister stated that, having inspected the route, he did not know of any proposition around Sydney that would better serve the district than the proposed line.

In response to a request by the Bankstown Railway League that the survey be continued across Salt Pan Creek to East Hills, the Railway Commissioners were asked by the Minister's direction to furnish a Statutory Report embracing the through length from Tempe to East Hills, and in November, 1923, the Minister accompanied by Mr. J. T. Lang, M.L.A., went over the route of the proposed extension.

The Minister promised to have the whole proposal examined by the Parliamentary Standing Committee, and this Committee commenced its enquiry on 2nd May, 1924 . . .

On August 27, 1924, the Committee passed the resolution recommending the construction of an electric railway from Tempe to East Hills, the Construction Act No. 62 was assented to on December 23, 1924.

The preliminary trial survey of the route was carried out during 1924, and in 1928, the permanent survey and staking of the line commenced, but it was not until late in that year that the actual construction commenced . . .

The electrification of the line was opened on September 21, 1931, from Tempe to Kingsgrove and extended to East Hills on December 17, 1939, one day after the opening of the Sutherland to Cronulla Line . . .

It is in that knowledge that tonight I call upon the Government to initiate a positive programme to bring about the duplication of the East Hills line from Riverwood to East Hills. I repeat; I can think of no better time to make such an announcement than the celebration of fifty years since the opening of the East Hills railway line.

I should now like to comment upon the reference to roads in the Governor's Speech. Last year the New South Wales Minister for Local Government and Minister for Roads told the annual conference of the shires that the Commonwealth had reduced its total road grant to New South Wales in real terms from \$247 million in 1974-75 to \$196 million in 1980-81. Over the past five years there has been a symptomatic and progressive cutback in federal finance for rural and urban arterial roads, to the point where in real terms the figure received this year will be less than half that received five years ago. The Commonwealth has decided on a 5-year programme from 1980-81 to 1984-85, with increases for those years of 11 per cent, 9 per cent, 7 per cent, 6 per cent and 6 per cent respectively. Of course, it is obvious that those increases will not keep up with the inflation rate, and the shortfall after the 5-year period will be about \$84 million. Despite those cutbacks, I am pleased that, following representations from the honourable member for Bankstown, the honourable member for Lakemba and me, extensive roadworks are to be embarked upon in my electorate.

Mr Brewer: Who will pay for those works?

Mr ROGAN: I have answered that query already. Any member of the Opposition who suggests that the Commonwealth has any part in the road programme of this State should look at the statistics. I have said already that New South Wales has suffered a cutback in Commonwealth funds from \$247 million in 1974-75 to \$196 million in 1980-81. Through the efforts of the New South Wales Government major improvements have been made in my electorate. Those improvements will result in the alleviation of traffic congestion that now occurs daily on Canterbury Road. Other works will include major improvements at the intersection of Stacey Street and Canterbury Road, incorporating the widening of the intersection and the widening of Canterbury Road to allow a right-turn lane from Canterbury Road into Stacey Street. It will include also an improved left-hand turn from Stacey Street to Canterbury Road, and an improved left-hand turn from Canterbury Road to Stacey Street.

Those improvements will lead to a substantial benefit in traffic flow at that intersection. In addition, Canterbury Road will be widened at its junction with Moxon Road to allow for the free flow of traffic in the two lanes travelling east. Work will commence at the junction of Fairfield Road and Canterbury Road. Initially that work will involve a left-turn lane on Canterbury Road for traffic travelling south. In the East Hills electorate I have the benefit of a river as a boundary. It is a most comforting thought at times of redistribution. However, it means that from the east there are only two roads coming into the area.

Mr Brewer: Does the honourable member have only two roads in his electorate?

Mr DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order!

Mr ROGAN: As a result of representations I have made to the Minister for Local Government and Minister for Roads this year major improvements will be made to Henry Lawson Drive. They will include the addition of a lane on the Saltpan Creek bridge. In a newspaper report following the announcement of the improvements to the roadway I paid credit to the engineer in charge of the western region and also to the Minister. Tonight I repeat my tribute to the engineer, who has used ingenuity to solve the difficulty problems in that district.

I shall deal briefly with federal cutbacks in funding for colleges of advanced education. The Milperra College of Advanced Education in the East Hills electorate is the only college of advanced education serving the southwestern region. The college is one of the victims of the federal razor gang. In 1981 funding for colleges of advanced education was to be provided at real 1977 levels. If that occurred, New South Wales would require an additional \$7.4 million in recurrent funds and \$31 million in capital funds. Though since 1977 the number of equivalent full-time students has increased by 12.3 per cent from 26 455 to 29 700, recurrent funding on December 1980 costs increased by only 6.1 per cent, from \$119.7 million to \$127 million. Recurrent funds for effective full-time students have fallen in real terms by 5.5 per cent, from \$4,524 in 1977 to \$4,275 in 1981.

Since 1977 the cumulative loss in recurrent funds to New South Wales colleges of advanced education has exceeded \$24 million. Since 1977 the cumulative loss in capital funds has been approximately \$77 million in real terms. In the past four years, the combined recurrent and capital losses exceeded \$100 million. That is the record of the federal Liberal Party-Country Party Government, which has demanded that the Milperra College of Advanced Education amalgamate with another college of advanced education. I understand that negotiations are proceeding to comply with that demand. The Milperra college would have preferred to maintain its existence as a single institution, but with the threat of the razor it has no alternative but to amalgamate with another college.

It is both interesting and rewarding to examine the New South Wales Labor Government's achievements in education. Today when the Leader of the Opposition moved a motion of urgency, the Premier and Treasurer demolished the honourable member's pathetic argument by referring to a set of figures. When the Leader of the Opposition had the temerity to refer to the State Government's education programme, the Premier and Treasurer said that since Labor came to office 8 000 additional teachers had been appointed. With the improvement in working conditions the Government has achieved more than 90 per cent—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member has exhausted his time.

Debate adjourned on motion by Mr Boyd.

## ADJOURNMENT

## Captains Flat Sewerage Scheme

Mr HILLS (Phillip), Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Energy [9.50]: I move:

That this House do now adjourn.

Mr BREWER (Goulburn) [9.50]: I am sorry that the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports is not present in the Chamber. I have been trying to contact him all night. The matter to which I shall refer is important and it concerns one of his portfolios. I realize that the Minister has not been well. Perhaps that is something to do with his not being here. Today I received a letter about a sewerage scheme in Captains Flat. There has been some anxiety about the scheme for a considerable time. The letter from the Yarrowlumla shire council follows a telephone conversation I had yesterday with the shire clerk. I shall read the clerk's letter, which details the matter. The letter is in these terms:

Dear Mr Brewer,

## CAPTAINS FLAT SEWERAGE SCHEME

On the 30th November, 1976, the Deputy Premier and Minister for Public Works and Ports, the Hon. L. J. Ferguson, M.L.A., advised per medium of yourself, that he was prepared to offer Council a subsidy of 75 per cent of the capital cost of the Captains Flat Sewerage Scheme.

This offer was gratefully accepted by Council on the 23rd December, 1976.

Since that date, Survey, Investigation and Design has been undertaken by the Department of Public Works in co-operation with Council.

That is the normal procedure. The letter goes on in these terms:

On the 17th March, 1980, the Department of Public Works advised that as Council is a minor borrower, it is therefore eligible for the Department's Alternative Method of Funding as outlined in the Minister's letter to the Local Member . . .

I draw attention to the fact that that passage refers to me as the member for Goulburn. The letter continues:

On the 17th March, 1980, the Department of Public Works advised that as Council is a minor borrower, it is therefore eligible for the Department's Alternative Method of Funding as outlined in the Minister's letter to the Local Member in January, 1979, and suggested that Council make provision in its Borrowing Programme to cover the total expected expenditure of the Scheme.

On the 28th April, 1980, the Department of Public Works submitted details of the Alternative Funding Procedure to be adopted in the construction of the scheme amongst which were the following conditions:—

- (6) The above scheme is possible under Section 493A of the Local Government Act which provides that the Treasurer, on the recommendation of the Minister for Local Government, may enter into an agreement with the Council to make payments towards meeting its liabilities in respect of Borrowings.

(7) The Legal Officer is currently preparing an appropriate agreement.

On the 26th February, 1981, the Department of Public Works indicated that an amount of \$235,000 was to be forwarded by the 1st August, 1981, and \$420,000 by the 1st November, 1981.

So it was well and truly on the priority list. The letter further states:

It further advised that the Scheme is programmed to commence subject to the availability of funds in August, 1981 and Council should therefore programme for loans on the above basis of the above call ups as the Department has in the past years been embarrassed by a shortage of working funds resulting from late remittance and/or non-remittance of requested moneys by some Councils.

There is a distinct warning by the Minister that council should have its funds available. I notice that the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports has now entered the Chamber. The letter continues:

Accordingly, if sufficient Government funds are available to allow the Scheme to commence construction at the proposed time, Council will be required to forward its contribution in full on or before the finally nominated dates. The Department also indicated that it is essential that at all times Council meet its share of the Scheme costs during the course of construction.

It will be noted that the Department advised on the 28th April, 1980, that the Legal Officer is currently preparing an appropriate agreement but to date this has never been received despite several verbal requests for it and Council has no information as to the cause of the delay.

Acting in good faith, Council, after lengthy negotiations, was able to arrange a loan of \$235,000 to be taken up on the 1st August, 1981, and \$420,000 by the 1st November, 1981.

All legal documents covering the loan of \$235,000 were completed and the lending authority indicated that this amount would be paid into Council's Bank Account on the 5th August, 1981, but this arrangement had to be cancelled due to the failure of the Department of Public Works to complete the necessary agreement with the result that if and when construction of the Scheme commences, it will be necessary for Council to renegotiate the loans.

No positive dates can be given by the Department of Public Works as to when the Captains Flat Sewerage Scheme will commence or when the money will be required and this has put Council in a very embarrassing position when one considers the difficulty of obtaining loan moneys at the present stage.

When this information was presented to the last Council meeting, Councillors were staggered by the news and they resolved that the matter be referred to the Minister per yourself with the request that the current position of the Captains Flat Sewerage Scheme be investigated immediately and Council informed.

If desirous of further discussing this matter, you are invited to contact me at your convenience.

The letter was signed by the shire clerk, E. D. Buchtman. Tonight I received a telephone call from the shire clerk who conveyed to me a report that appeared in the *Queanbeyan Age*, which reads:

Sewerage scheme is arranged. The Captains Flat sewerage scheme should get the go-ahead following a meeting late last night between the ALP candidate for Goulburn, Mr Bob Stephens, and the Minister for Public Works, Mr Ferguson.

It is apparent that the normal procedures within the department and the Minister's responsibility have been flagrantly neglected and delayed for the political advantage of a candidate. Once the procedures have been followed and normal negotiations have taken place, it is proper for the Minister to forward the agreement to the council and for the agreement to be signed. The council has negotiated the loan. The necessity has arisen for the loan to be renegotiated for the sake of political expedience—for the benefit of a candidate who supports the Government. That is disgraceful. I want an immediate answer from the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports. According to the press release only an intimation that the scheme might go ahead has been given. I want an assurance from the Minister that he will approve the scheme. The project was approved in 1976. I want the Minister's final approval that an agreement will go to the council and be signed and that any cost of the delay will be the responsibility of the Government and not of the council or the people of Captains Flat.

Mr FERGUSON (Merrylands), Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Ports [10.0]: I apologize to the House and to the honourable member for Goulburn who, I understand, tried to contact me in the hour before this debate began to tell me that he intended to speak in it on a matter that is within one of my portfolios. Unfortunately, I was unavailable, and unaware of his intention until my colleague the Government Whip contacted me after the honourable member began speaking. I heard the honourable member read from certain documents. I do not carry with me copies of every letter that I or the department writes, but I assure the honourable member that I shall have an immediate investigation made of his allegations and, might I say, of his insinuations. I hope the honourable member's assertions are more accurate than those that I read in the *Goulburn Evening Post* a few weeks ago after I made a statement about the Goulburn water supply.

Mr Brewer: I produce the letter from the council.

Mr FERGUSON: The honourable member has had his say. I am now having mine.

Mr Brewer: I am talking about the Captains Flat sewerage scheme.

Mr FERGUSON: I am stating facts. I take the view that if the Government proposes to do something in any electorate, the Government is entitled to take the credit for it.

*[Interruption]*

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr FERGUSON An interesting thing about members of the Country Party is that when the Government takes an initiative, they seek to take the credit. **When** the Government does not perform in accordance with their wishes, they want the right to attack the Government. The honourable member can attack the Government as much as he wishes, but the Government will tell the people of its achievements.

The honourable member made an outburst about my informing the local Labor candidate of what I proposed to do about the Goulburn water supply. I issued the statement. If the honourable member for Goulburn, had read the *Goulburn Evening Post* he would have realized it was my statement to which reference was being made, not that of the local Labor candidate. I take the credit for it. I did something for the people of Goulburn that was not done by the coalition parties when they were in government. For the reason I have given, and for which I have apologized, I did not hear all of the honourable member's contribution tonight, but he may be assured that first thing tomorrow when I get the *Hansard* report of the debate I shall read it and make inquiries.. He will have a reply ready tomorrow afternoon.

Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at 10.4 p.m.

