

Mr. GARRISSON (Hawthorn). - Mr. Speaker, it is indeed an honour not only for me but also for the electors of Hawthorn that I have been chosen to second the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Speech delivered this afternoon by His Excellency the Governor to both Houses of Parliament. It is an even greater honour for me to be a member of the Forty-first Parliament of the State of Victoria. I trust that during its term of office a great contribution will be made to the welfare of all the people of Victoria.

The honorable member for Geelong West mentioned several points made by His Excellency, which mainly concerned country areas. I shall attempt to address myself to some of the matters which more closely relate to the metropolitan area. Before doing so, I point out that the Governor's Speech merely highlighted some of the legislation which the Government will introduce. Between now and the commencement of the spring session many other items will be under consideration and they will be used as a basis for the preparation of any necessary legislation. I am sure that when Bills are brought forward for general consideration, all honorable members will be pleased with their contents and the way in which the Government has handled them.

I think credit should be given to all those people who have had a hand in the reduction of the road toll in Victoria over the last twelve months. Although it is still at an alarming level, some progress has been made. This House of Parliament consists of 66 members. If one multiplies that figure by seven one obtains an idea of the number of road deaths in Victoria each year. I do not think that municipal councils should wait until the 1st November next before taking action concerning the erection of uniform pedestrian crossings. The winter months are a most dangerous time for pedestrians, and the sooner adequate crossings are provided the better. Many motorists, who are too impatient to wait 10 seconds for a pedestrian to cross a busy road, wait for an hour or more at the end of their journey to obtain tickets to admit them to some entertainment.

I feel that all responsible bodies in the community should co-operate in an endeavour to reduce the road toll in the coming year. I urge councillors in the metropolitan area to do their utmost between now and the date of the municipal elections to ensure that they have the full confidence of the people voting for them. One way in which this could be done would be to take steps to complete all proposed pedestrian crossings in their areas as quickly as possible.

There is a great need for uniform traffic signs on main highways, country roads and metropolitan thoroughfares throughout Victoria. At the present time, 40 per cent. of the migrants to this country settle in Victoria and a large number of these newcomers drive motor cars. In European countries there has been developed a standard set of signs which illustrate in an easy and understandable way what the driver will encounter. For instance, if one is approaching a bridge a sign on the roadside carries a small illustration of a bridge, and the driver of the vehicle does not have to wait until he is close enough to read three or four words before he knows what he is likely to encounter. The illustrated signs were developed in Europe because so many motorists travel from one country to another. I appreciate that most of the migrants driving cars in this country are able to read and speak English. Nevertheless, I feel that illustrated signs would be of value throughout Victoria and Australia.

The relief of congestion on our roads is another important matter, and I am pleased to learn that the construction of an overpass over Punt-road will be commenced shortly. As honorable members are aware, this will traverse South Richmond and Burnley which are important parts of

the Hawthorn electorate. I trust that the work will proceed with the utmost speed, and I shall take a close interest in what is done.

It is proposed to increase the borrowing powers of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works. This action, coupled with the appointment of a Minister for Local Government, will help to provide for closer co-operation with local councils and thus enable the development of the metropolis to proceed at a faster rate. It is pleasing to see that the population of Victoria is continuing to increase rapidly. It is only 170 years since Australia was struggling to commence and it is astounding to realize how many people have been settled here in such a comparatively short space of time.

Revenue from tourists is most important to the economy of many European countries. The Victorian Government is doing everything possible to attract tourists to this State, and the honorable member for Geelong West pointed out the importance of the duplication of the road from Melbourne to Geelong in that connexion. The establishment of an aerodrome capable of handling jet airliners will also be of the utmost importance, no matter where it is situated.

Members of the community should be more tolerant to one another in three important phases of life. I refer to the time when people are young, when they are sick, and when they are old. It is frequently said that the Government should do this or should do that, but the services required are not always the Government's responsibility. There is a part to be played not only by elected representatives, but also by those who elect them to Parliament.

So far as the young people are concerned, everything possible is being done in the sphere of education as well as in the provision of baby health centres, injections against poliomyelitis, and the prevention of diseases. It is pleasing to know that the Government is building at least 800 school classrooms annually, and that more teachers are to be appointed. The Monash University is in process of becoming a reality.

Mental health and general hospital facilities are strained to the full with the big increase that has taken place in our population. The whole community, as well as the Government, which is doing all it can to meet the needs, has a responsibility in this matter. The Housing Commission is building low-rental units for aged persons; this is most desirable, and should be continued so far as resources permit. The Commission has sold £12,500,000 worth of its properties in pursuance of the Government's policy of home ownership for the people. The rate of home ownership in Victoria, as most honorable members realize, is at a very high level, nearly 64 per cent of all occupied homes and dwellings being owned by the occupiers. This percentage is increasing at the amazing rate of approximately 1 per cent. annually - next year, the figure should be 65 per cent. That represents a big movement towards home ownership, which, is essential for good citizenship.

There has been an increase in the savings of Victorians, and these funds must eventually help in the provision of more homes. With the Housing Commission and general private and institutional lending, co-operative housing societies and the Home Finance Trust are doing much for home owners. I earnestly urge the lending institutions in this State to grant more funds for co-operative housing societies and the Home Finance Trust so that more and better homes can be provided for the people.

The Companies Act protects the investing public, and when it is recast much benefit will be obtained by the community as a whole and investors in particular. Last, but by no means least, I

should like to mention Industrial development in the State. The people have shown their confidence in the Government by returning it to office, and I am sure that many eyes, both in Australia and abroad, were on Victoria during the elections. Overseas interests were waiting to see whether the people had confidence in the Government, and I am sure that those interests will now be prepared to show their confidence. In the next few years we should see a large influx of population, money, and "knowhow" to this State, and this will further the welfare of the people.

Finally, I thank honorable members for the very patient hearing they have given me.