

Barry Beach is not yet well known and its importance is not yet matched by its size. It is here that the large oil rigs and oil rig platforms are constructed for the Bass Strait oil fields. It is also well known as the terminal for Esso supply vessels servicing the off-shore oil rigs.

Continuing along the South Gippsland Highway to Leongatha, one passes Welshpool, Toora, and Foster, which is one of the larger towns, with a population of 1056. Those towns service the surrounding farming activity and the tourist trade. Farther along the highway, one comes to Leongatha which has a population 3736. Surrounding Leongatha is some of the most productive and interesting country in this State. Dairying is predominant and the prices obtained on the sale of beef cattle often top the prices at the New-market cattle sales.

East of Leongatha is Mirboo North which is well known for its potato growing and I suggest in the future it will become a dormitory area for the Latrobe Valley, which is experiencing an expansion in population following the developments being undertaken by the State Electricity Commission.

At Yinnar, there is a big dairying area and this also is becoming an area to which many people from the industrial area of the Latrobe Valley are moving for a better life style.

At Rosedale there is the Nambrok-Denison irrigation system which services some of the largest and most productive dairying farms in Victoria. The coal fields around Rosedale will create exciting and massive developments in the future and I suggest the area will go ahead in the 1990s.

Tourism is becoming big business in the Gippsland South electorate, and to the west of Leongatha, from Inverloch to Wilson's Promontory there are some of the most beautiful beaches and magnificent scenery and views of the coastline and surrounding countryside that one can find anywhere in Victoria.

Mr Wallace

Only a few miles north one moves into the mountain country of the Strzelecki Ranges. There one can see beautiful parks and experience the magnificent scenery of the Tara Valley and the Bulga national parks, areas which thousands of people visit each year.

It takes me two and half hours to travel from one end of the electorate to the other and as honourable members have heard, my interests are many as I travel along the road and I never get bored.

I look forward to working with the Government to improve the electorate I represent and the State of Victoria. I extend to the Premier, his Ministers and all honourable members, an invitation to visit the Gippsland South electorate and to see for themselves this exciting area of Victoria.

I have spoken about the past, the present and what needs to be carried out in the area in the future. Our future really depends on the youth of today and I take this opportunity to bring to the attention to all honourable members the fact that this is the 75th year of scouting. As honourable members would know, the scouting organization is a wonderful movement and perhaps scouting is helping the youth of today to become the citizens of tomorrow.

I also congratulate all newly elected honourable members and those honourable members who have been returned to Parliament and I wish them well in the next three years.

Mr NORRIS (Noble Park)—I am honoured to rise in this Parliament as the elected member for Noble Park, an honour for which I am indeed deeply grateful. I thank the electors of Noble Park for the trust that they have shown in me and I promise them that I will work tirelessly on their behalf.

I congratulate you, Mr Speaker, on your election to the high office of Speaker of this House. I am sure your difficult task will be administered with the wisdom and wit for which you are renowned.

To His Excellency, the Governor, and to Lady Murray, I trust that their appointment is a happy and fulfilling one for them and the people of Victoria.

Mr Speaker, I come to the Parliament after working for the past 30 years as a professional actor. In fact, soon after I won pre-selection two years ago, a cartoon appeared in a television magazine. The cartoon depicted a fellow actor saying to me, "Why are you giving up acting to go into politics?" and it had me replying, "I can't think of a better way to continue my life of fiction, fantasy and make-believe".

All honourable members would agree that there is not much fiction, fantasy or make-believe in the daily work of a member of this place. The real world out there is a tough, grinding and relentless one for many people.

The Labor Government has come to power under the splendid leadership of John Cain, receiving a massive mandate from the people of Victoria. After 27 years in the wilderness it has been returned to Government with the hopes and aspirations of the vast majority of Victorians on its shoulders.

The responsibility left to the Government is enormous. The Government has asked for that trust, that responsibility, and it was given in abundant numbers, but its task now is to fulfil that trust. It will not be easy.

The Government has inherited not only a financial mess but also a State where the services have been run down, a State where there has been an air of despondency and depression, a State where the Government seemed incapable of making and even sticking to the simplest of decisions.

The electorate of Noble Park typifies an outer metropolitan suburban electorate. Its inhabitants typify the voters who turned against the former Government in such numbers.

What were the issues in Noble Park? Housing was at the top of the list, Noble Park is a young and rapidly growing electorate. The Australian ideal of home ownership had become

a nightmare for so many of those young people, in particular, the single-income families. However, these young Victorians showed remarkable maturity and restraint during the final weeks of the election campaign when they resisted the short-term solutions that were being dangled before them by a dying Government.

The "Home, sweet home" mark I special was the first. Then there was the desperate promise, "We will pick up your bill for the 1 per cent interest rate rise". It was a bewildering barrage of buy-offs, and the young home buyers in Noble Park did not fall for it. They clearly saw that the realistic and honest policy put forward by the Labor Party under Mr John Cain was preferable to the Jeffrey Kennett kaleidoscope of convulsive counterfeit.

The previous Government lost touch with the desperate plight of the home buyer. We must be sure that we never let that happen, but with our policies and a compassionate, practical Minister of Housing, we are on the right path. His hair may be grey, but his shoulders are broad.

Education was another of the major issues in Noble Park. As I said, the electorate of Noble Park is a young electorate. The electorate contains 17 State primary schools, and that must be at the top of the list for a metropolitan electorate. Noble Park has seven high schools, one of which—Chandler High School—is the second largest high school in this State. It has six independent schools and thirteen pre-schools.

The point I am making is that with all these educational establishments we have problems of swollen class sizes, lack of special needs teachers, and dilapidated class-rooms. For instance, the Coomoora High School in Springvale South, which is a large high school with 800 pupils, has no administration block. The principal does not have an office. He has what I would call euphemistically a cubby-hole. When a teacher wishes to interview a parent privately, the principal has to get out of his cubby-hole and stand in the corridor.

Patterson Lakes, at the other end of the electorate, has a primary school which was quickly whipped up in time for the 1979 election campaign and quickly forgotten afterwards. The school is completely relocateable; it is a core-plus school, without the core.

Noble Park Technical School, on the other side of the electorate, is a hotch-potch of buildings that would come close to winning the competition for the house that Jack built. It is a planning disaster that includes a section of portables that would do justice to Auschwitz concentration camp! It is terribly depressing. The essential school building backlog in the electorate of Noble Park is gargantuan.

Public transport was another important issue during the election campaign. In the growing community of Noble Park there is a railway line at the top edge of the electorate which serves two stations, Noble Park and Yarraman. It has a series of private bus services that meander through the electorate, with little or no co-ordinated plan or policy. After 6 p.m. and at week-ends one can forget it because without a car a person is marooned. This causes difficulties for housewives unless the family has a second car, because they are stuck in a house with children and are unable to get to local shopping centres. At week-ends young people, particularly teenagers, rely on Dad for transport, and if the family car is not available they run the risk of hitching rides. That is the transport set-up in Noble Park.

An issue that gained the Labor Party a good deal of mileage and support in Noble Park, as I found when I knocked on the doors of thousands of houses, was law and order. This is an issue on which the Labor Party has in the past been wrongly depicted as being soft. The Labor Party has been depicted as being an anti-establishment, anti-police party. That myth was surely laid to rest in this campaign. The Labor Party presented a strong and decisive police policy—a policy of greatly strengthening police numbers and providing funds for additional vehicles and equipment for our sorely pressed Police

Force to enable it to try to combat the frightening escalation of crime which is occurring at an annual rate of 10 per cent.

There is an unease in the electorate; people are worried and frightened. A classical example is that on a Saturday night an elderly pensioner couple had their fence smashed down by drunken louts. They telephoned the police, who took three hours to arrive. I am not blaming the police, because Noble Park is served by only one police station at Springvale; there is no police station in Noble Park. That may be another first in a metropolitan electorate. So the sorely pressed force at Springvale with a skeleton staff may take three hours to try to answer a call.

The Labor Government is on the side of the Victoria Police Force; on the side of law and order and of the citizens of the State who wish to live their lives free from the fear of criminal activity. To achieve this objective, we are prepared to put our money where our mouth is. If I may borrow a motto, what better than "We care"?

Naturally, an area to which I intend to devote a lot of my time during my term of office, is that of the arts. I think it was Herman Goering who said, "When I hear anyone speak of culture, I reach for my revolver". A kinder translation of what he said may be, "When I hear anyone speak of culture, I reach for my Browning"! He loved poetry.

Happily, successive Governments, Federal and State, have depoliticized the arts. Now it is more a question of interpretation of direction. The previous Liberal Government did a great deal for the arts in Victoria—there is no argument with that—but, as with many other areas of activity in this State, Victoria began to lose the edge in the arts. I take the performing arts as an example. Once Victoria led Australia in that field, without any shadow of doubt. In straight theatre Victoria had Australia's first professional repertory company, the old Union Theatre at the University of Melbourne, which is now the Melbourne Theatre Company. It has since grown, like Topsy.

There was St Martin's Theatre for the more popular overseas successes; the Emerald Hill Theatre in South Melbourne was the first of our innovative experimental theatres—it flashed across the scene. Later came the revolution in Australian theatre—the Australian performing Group at the Pram Factory in Carlton—which no doubt changed the face of drama in this country and was the nursery of the great revolution in Australian playwriting. Melbourne was the Mecca and was the envy of its rival Sydney.

The same applied to television and film. It was all happening here, in Melbourne. Unfortunately, that is no longer true. Over the past five years there has been a slide, a decline, a drift. Sydney was quick to grasp the nettle under Neville Wran and now clearly leads the way. The migration of so much of our finest performing talent to Sydney has been sad to see.

Why has it happened? Broadly, Victoria's flagship, the Melbourne Theatre Company, has grown progressively bigger and has required a bigger slice of the cake to feed it. No doubt the previous Government, seeing the Melbourne Theatre Company as the natural heir apparent in the drama field to the arts centre in St Kilda Road, was stuck with having put all its eggs into one basket. Virtually all we are left with now in Melbourne is one large conservative establishment theatre company, grooming itself and asking for more money for its move into the Arts Centre, the cultural showcase in St Kilda Road. However, this vast investment of precious arts funds will not necessarily lead to better or more stimulating theatre. Sadly, history shows that the reverse is often the case. The temptation in such a situation is for a theatre company to play safe. In the theatre there is only one thing worse than boring one's audience and that is to bore it with public money!

Australia has a great arts tradition. It has produced a prodigious amount of creative talent, much of it in days gone by was forced to seek a living abroad, and unfortunately many of the best artists never returned to our shores. In

those days, mainly through Government support, active private management and constant campaigning and pressure from Actors Equity, the Musicians Union and the theatrical employees association, the drift was stopped. It is now possible for a creative artist to earn a living in Australia, but we must ensure that the evacuation of artists from Victoria to New South Wales is halted and that Victoria regains its place as the performing arts capital of Australia.

Finally, I turn to what I believe is the greatest challenge facing the Government—the problem of youth. During my election campaigning I found that I knew little about the attitudes of youth, even though I am the father of three teenage children. I refer to youth unemployment, the hopelessness, the alienation and the resultant depression which is extremely disturbing. Unrealized expectations, the pressures of materialism, the inability of society to deliver the goods, and drugs, with much of the emphasis on hard drugs, are all part of the problem, but I regard alcohol as the greatest scourge of young people today.

I should like the Government to instigate a campaign based on the Life: Be in It campaign, aimed at persuading young people not to take to alcohol. Possibly famous sporting personalities and pop stars who do not drink could be used in this campaign. It could be along the lines of—Life: Be in It—Grog: Be out of it. If, through its policies, the Government can administer with firmness and compassion to give hope to the youth of this State, that alone will more than justify the election of this Labor Government in Victoria. Youth is the hope of the world and is certainly the hope of Victoria.

As I said at the beginning of my speech, I am proud to stand in this Parliament as the elected member for Noble Park. This historic Labor Government is led splendidly by John Cain. It has the policies, the leader and the team, and I am sure the next three years will be exciting and positive ones for this great State of Victoria.