

Health. The council was promised financial assistance for the maintenance of the area but nothing has been received. I am not certain what the Department of Health requires in regard to the land. Land which has been set aside for the purpose of a cemetery in the area bounded by Evell and May streets, Glenroy is close to the Glenroy annexe for the Yooralla Special School for Crippled Children.

Some years ago representations were made to the then Minister of Health, Mr. Rossiter, to have this area of land made available for residential purposes or open space and to develop a larger area of land farther north as a cemetery. No matter what happens, cemeteries will always be with us. The larger site farther north would be preferable, and the present land could be used for residential purposes and open space.

In 1969 the Education Department purchased land in North Street, Glenroy, for a special high school. Since that time, nothing has been done with the land except to allow artichokes and thistles to grow on it. Indeed, my first question on notice in this Parliament referred to this matter and I hope some decision will be made concerning the land. Education is the whole basis of our society and it is up to the State and Federal Governments to provide the maximum assistance. Consideration should be given to the development of the land in North Street for educational purposes because earlier a proposal to use another area of land in Almurta Avenue, Coolaroo, for educational purposes was rejected. Unfortunately the chance has been lost. I suggest that land which has been set aside for public purposes should not be disposed of but should be used for the benefit of the people.

All members have been elected to look after the people in their electorates and they will be judged not on what they say, but on what they do. It is a matter of actions and not words.

*Mr. Culpin.*

**Mrs. PATRICK** (Brighton): I should like to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your re-election to your high office in this House. I should also like to congratulate the mover and the seconder of the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech, and all honorable members who have spoken before me in this debate.

I am very proud and humble to be sitting in this august House as the member for Brighton and I should like to pay tribute to my predecessor, the Honorable John Rossiter, former Chief Secretary and soon to be Agent-General for Victoria in London who was reported in the Age newspaper of 2nd August, 1975, as saying—

I enjoyed the Chief Secretary's job best of all. It got down to human problems like the fire brigade and the Police Force.

The words "It got down to human problems" sum up John Rossiter's attitude to life. I know personally how much he did for his electorate and in particular how very ready, willing and able he was to deal with all problems, whether large or small facing the electors of Brighton. He is still helping the people in Brighton despite his imminent departure for London.

Turning to His Excellency the Governor's Speech, I should like to say that as a Brighton city councillor shortly to retire I am extremely interested in the concept of federalism in which there are three arms of government—Federal, State and local—in which the powers and functions are distributed to achieve maximum continuous response and to provide an effective barrier against centralist authoritarian control. If effective government geared to the needs of the 1980s and beyond is to be achieved, if the great issues of national and local concern such as education, health, housing and urban development and social welfare are to receive maximum intelligent attention, if all our resources including human talents

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are to be effectively harnessed, our forms of government must be restructured.

The proposal to ensure the State's permanent access to revenue raising through personal income tax is exciting, and the proposition to earmark a fixed percentage of personal income tax for distribution through the States to local government is extremely exciting. The money is for two distinct purposes—*per capita* grants to all local government bodies and equalization or topping-up grants. The special purposes grants will also be retained. This will be a vital, new reform for local government. Municipalities and shires will have revenues of known dimensions to assist future budgeting. As a councillor I know well the problems facing local government today. Local government depends almost solely on rates for raising revenue and continually is unable to achieve all it would wish to achieve, especially in the field of social welfare, because it is restricted by its dependence on rates.

In my electorate many people are on fixed incomes and to raise the rates unduly to provide for the needs and desires of certain sections of the community could cause extreme hardship to these people who have lived and worked in Brighton all their lives. It could force them to sell their homes and move away. If local government is to be a viable form of government it must get down to brass tacks and recognize the needs and wants of the community. It is in an ideal position to assess these needs and wants as, of the three arms of government it is the arm closest to the people.

The new federalism policy will assist in this. An example of the federalism concept is the proposed co-operation between the Federal and State Governments in the funding of the widening of the Nepean Highway from Cochrane Street to South Road. The widening is a pressing and urgent matter in the electorate of Brighton; it is essential for the better flow of traffic and for the improvement of

residential streets by diversion of heavy vehicles onto the improved highway. I am informed that it will take two and a half to three years for the preliminary planning design amendments to the planning scheme and for property acquisition to be carried out before construction could actually be commenced. I sincerely trust that adequate funds will be made available immediately in order that the construction will indeed be commenced in two and a half to three years from now.

As a former member of the Victorian Consumer Affairs Council I am interested in the new market court which is to be set up to deal with undesirable trade practices, advertising which conflicts with good commercial standards and contracts for goods and services which contain terms and conditions which are unfair to the consumer. I look forward to the establishment of this court which will again put Victoria in the forefront in consumer protection. In this connection it is interesting to note that in February of this year the Federal Minister for Consumer Affairs was quoted as saying—

We have neither the desire nor the intention nor the power to take over the role of the States in consumer affairs.

As a woman—I am very proud to be the fifth woman to take her place in this Parliament—I shall be watching closely the anti-discriminatory legislation which is shortly to be introduced into this Parliament. I trust this legislation will assist women to have equal opportunity, to take an equal place and to accept equal responsibility with men in every facet of community life.

I pledge myself to represent to the best of my ability every man, woman and child in my electorate. I stress "child" because I believe that sometimes the rights, needs and desires of children are overlooked. The child is tomorrow's citizen and we look to the responsible citizens of tomorrow to carry on the great democratic traditions that we uphold today.

Finally, I offer to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, the loyalty and devotion of the people of Brighton.

**Mr. B. J. EVANS (Gippsland East):** I should like to congratulate the mover and the seconder of the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to His Excellency the Governor's Speech on the opening of this Parliament and also all honorable members who have made their maiden speeches during this debate. In particular I refer to the honorable member for Brighton, who has just made her maiden speech in an excellent fashion. I am certain that she will be an adornment to this place in more ways than one.

I should like to express once again the loyalty to the Crown of the people of East Gippsland who have chosen to support me to represent them for another term. It may be of interest that in 1978 it will be 100 years since the seat of Gippsland East was created. During that time only four persons have represented the seat. By the grace of God in two years' time I shall have the honour of seeing out the century of representation. The first member who occupied the position from 1878 until his death in 1902 was Mr. Foster, from Omeo. He was succeeded by James Cameron, from Orbost, who held the seat from 1902 to 1920, when he was defeated by my illustrious predecessor, Sir Albert Lind, who represented the seat from 1920 until his retirement in 1961, a period of 41 years.

It may also be of interest to know when one thinks about the future of the National Party that in the new boundaries under the recent redistribution there was an increase of 10.21 per cent in the total number of voters. That indicates that Gippsland East is continuing to grow in spite of the lack of Government interest. Gippsland East ran fourth as a region to Barwon, Mertopolitan and East Central in the percentage gain in population, according to the figures of the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the year ended June, 1975. That increase of 10.21 per cent meant an increase

of 2,378 voters and I am delighted to report that the number of votes for the National Party increased by 2,384, which is a fair indication that the National Party still enjoys the strong support of the people whom I endeavour to represent to the best of my ability.

In spite of that I must say I have never felt so apprehensive or despondent about the future of rural Victoria as I do at present. On past performances the Hamer Government seems to be ignorant of what is going on in the country, too lazy to find out, too incompetent to find solutions and too complacent to be worried about it anyway. The Government is confident that it will continue to be re-elected on the argument that Dick Hamer is a nice bloke and will do nobody any harm, not like those terrible Socialists. Yet, in the main the solutions found by the Government to the problems which confront it from time to time seem to be basically Socialist solutions. The Government has a well-tried formula. If a problem arises, it sets up an inquiry to look into it, then an authority to organize and regulate it, and then it charges a permit or licence fee for people to carry on doing what they were doing for the past 100 years. That is how the Government operates. I shall deal more with that later.

Members of the Government party have double standards. They go out to the electorate claiming they are paragons of the free enterprise system but their basic solutions to all the problems are Socialistic. Perhaps somewhere in the crop of bright new faces on the Government benches there will be somebody with the courage of his convictions who will be strong enough to face up to the realities of the situation, brave enough to buck the party discipline and be prepared to stand up for what the Government espoused during the cut and thrust of the election campaign.

The National Party believes that individuals do not need to be pushed or pampered or persecuted by the Government. However, they need to