

people in the electorate that I represent. St Kilda comprises a wide cross-section of Victorian society and I am proud to be able to represent them in Parliament. I thank them for placing their confidence in me so clearly at the recent poll. I hope to serve the electorate energetically and represent my constituents effectively in Parliament.

Mrs RAY (Box Hill)—I am honoured to second the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor. It is an honour, not only for me, but also for the people of Box Hill whom I am pleased to represent in this House. I congratulate you, Mr Speaker, on attaining the important office you hold in this place and, on behalf of the people of Box Hill, I wish His Excellency Rear-Admiral Sir Brian Murray and Lady Murray a long and happy association with Parliament and the people of Victoria.

The Labor Party comes to Government in Victoria with few people in the electorate having any clear memory of life under a State Labor Government. Historically, in Australia, the Labor Party has been called to govern in times of hardship and disenchantment. It has traditionally stood alongside those who are the victims of injustice. In 1949 the Labor Party was described by Ben Chifley as protecting those who are helpless and without hope. He referred to this objective as "the light on the hill to which our eyes are always turned and to which our efforts are always directed". That social justice remains a strong tenet of Labor Party philosophy was indicated in the legislation outlined in the Governor's Speech—concern for those 118 700 people unemployed in Victoria as at the end of March, of whom about 29 500 are under the age of 21 years. Of those people a disproportionately high number are young women. The Labor Party is concerned at the failure of the Federal Government to assume responsibility for the provision of income security for those on low incomes and concerned for the 750 000 households in rental accommodation that are affected by laws that do not give tenants adequate protection.

The Government has concrete programmes to match these concerns and with sound financial management will carry them out for the benefit of all Victorians. The Labor Party in Victoria, as elsewhere in Australia, grew out of the realization that the only way of securing justice for the working class was through representation and legislation in Parliament. Thus, as early as 1859 the Political Labor League was formed, although it was not until 1891 that a Labor candidate won a seat. That was at a Collingwood by-election.

For today's purposes, a significant date in Victorian ALP history is 1917. That was the occasion of the election of the first John Cain to the Victorian Parliament. He was Premier for two years between 1945 and 1947 and for three years between 1952 and 1955. In that period the Labor Government, although troubled by divisions that led to the Australian Labor Party/Democratic Labor Party split, had an impressive record of achievement, which this Government inherits across a generation gap.

In two areas, namely, electoral reform and workers' protection, the present Cain Government will be building on the work of the last Cain Government. The 1952 election was fought on the issue of electoral reform. The ensuing Cain Government acted to ameliorate the gross electoral distortion that operated in favour of people with rural acres at the expense of metropolitan people. The present Government is committed to the long overdue completion of this process of reform. The Government will be legislating for a one vote, one value system.

A second major achievement of the Government of John Cain senior was the development of Victoria's workers compensation system, which the Labor movement has had to defend in recent times. The present Government intends to build upon that system by initiating a complementary system for the prevention of industrial accidents and the promotion of industrial health. Now, in 1982, the Labor Party has gained Government with an impressive majority. It is the greatest popular mandate in Victoria for more than 60 years.

Some of the pleasing gains have been in the eastern metropolitan area along the Maroondah Highway and radiating out from that area. I refer to them, as the seat I represent is among them. They are the electorates of Warrandyte, Ringwood, Mitcham, Bennettswood, Syndal, Ivanhoe, Noble Park and Box Hill, and the Legislative Council provinces of Nunawading and Templestowe.

Many people in these areas have never been represented by a Labor member, and their expectations are high. To those people—as, indeed, to all Victorians—the Cain Government brings the possibility not of miracles but a new method of decision making. This is perhaps one of the most exciting, if least understood, implications of the change of Government.

This Government, a social democratic Government, believes in consultation and negotiation with people as a means to finding solutions. It recognizes that participation in those areas that most affect one's life is crucial to being a satisfied human being and that real freedom means as full control over one's life as possible. Society has been conditioned over the years to distrust participation. People have become accustomed to decisions made at the top and imposed from the top.

People have been conditioned to believe that there are experts who know, or who ought to know, what is best, and if their decision does not suit us it leaves us free to complain about what is done.

Where there is genuine consultation and community input to the decision-making process, there is also a sense of responsibility for the final decision. It is the aim of the new Government to operate in this way particularly in the areas of industrial relations, community welfare, health and education. It is a very different way of operating from the previous conservative Governments which believed that the way to preserve freedom was by the hierarchical style with limited access and limited participation.

His Excellency the Governor has indicated the Government's intention to act immediately to improve the State's education system and to ensure that

children are adequately prepared for the employment opportunities of the future. However, in the future, whether we like it or not, work will be less dominant; there will be less of it available in the traditional areas and the community will need to adjust its attitude to the compulsory work ethic. In this process of adjustment to social and technological change education will be critical.

In recent times in this State there has been a tendency to define education in narrowly vocational terms. This no doubt has been exacerbated by the economic climate which has markedly increased competition for jobs. There is an urgent need to broaden our perception of education. It needs to be seen not just as bestowing the capacity to earn money but as a means of achieving personal development, creativity and the effectual use of one's time.

The Government will need to expand educational options for both children and adults. Many young people who leave school at the age of fifteen find they want to return later to a less authoritarian environment when they have discovered what they want to learn. Adults, too, need similar opportunities. The Government wants to encourage the idea of recurrent education so that people can "drop out" or "drop in" to education at any stage in life.

The technical and further education colleges, of which there are two in the electorate I represent, are a great community resource in this regard. Although technical in their emphasis at the moment, they can readily develop into highly accessible educational places for specializing, for retraining or for enabling people to gain new skills or pursue new interests in full-time, part-time or off-campus courses.

This Government recognizes the special value of neighbourhood learning centres which have been established through community initiatives. They represent a more informal learning alternative for adults, especially women, who have had difficulty in gaining access to education institutions. They

also provide an environment in which mutual support and encouragement can take place.

Finally, I want to refer to the fact that the 49th Parliament of Victoria has twelve women members. In this election 6 new women members have been added to the Government benches and from July there will be a total of 5 in the Legislative Council and 7 in the Legislative Assembly. They hold the seats of Boronia, Melbourne West and Melbourne North in the Council, and Ringwood, Frankston and Box Hill in the Assembly. Although this is a significant increase it should not make us complacent. In a Government which claims to be truly representative, and in a mature society, there should be equal representation of men and women. If women do not share equally in the decision making and the exercise of power, Parliament suffers because the whole range of human values is not expressed.

For women in the electorate, the increased number of women in the Parliament is very heartening. It is an indication to them that things which women hold to be important are being given some public value. It is also seen as an expression of belief by the electorate as a whole that women are competent to participate in the development of society in this way. In so far as it does this, it increases women's confidence in their own capacity to participate.

That three-quarters of the women members belong to the Labor Party is perhaps a hopeful sign that the traditional conservatism of women is weakening. This will accelerate as both men and women begin to experience increased flexibility and choice in their lives. With freedom to enter new fields, women are likely to become a powerful force for change.

The Government is aware of the women in our society who carry special burdens both economic and emotional. In the individual departmental programmes for the next 18 months outlined by the Governor, the Government is committed to strengthening the

women's refuge programme. Migrant women will also benefit from our policy to protect migrants against discrimination in employment and the increased status we will give to ethnic affairs.

I thank the people of Box Hill for the confidence they have shown in the Labor Party and in me. I look forward to representing them in this new Cain Government which is pledged to enhance the wellbeing of all Victorians.

Mr THOMPSON (Leader of the Opposition)—In formally speaking to the address delivered by his Excellency the Governor this afternoon, I should like to congratulate the honourable members for St Kilda and Box Hill for their interesting and informative speeches. I also congratulate all new members of the Legislative Assembly, regardless of the party they represent. Every member, when first coming to this House, comes with a feeling of apprehension, to a degree, as if he or she were walking into the lion's den. I wish all members a successful period in this House, without being precise about the term for which they should stay here!

Once again, Mr Speaker, I congratulate you on your elevation to the high office of Speaker of the Victorian Legislative Assembly. The "Edmundites" of Ascot Vale will welcome this decision by the Parliament, and, in a short space of time, no doubt you will also be given the freedom of the City of Essendon! It is interesting to note that the last Speaker but one also came from that municipality, and it appears that Essendon is a very good training ground for Speakers of the Legislative Assembly.

I think all honourable members of the Parliament are delighted at the manner in which His Excellency Rear-Admiral Sir Brian Murray, and Lady Murray are carrying out their important duties. Undoubtedly, they will become worthy successors to Sir Henry and Lady Winneke. In the Speech, reference was made to the work of Sir Henry and Lady Winneke. This is the first time that Parliament has assembled since the retirement of Sir Henry Winneke. Unfortunately, in the days of his retirement so far, he has not enjoyed the