

roaming the street or having hitchhiked and got into trouble. They look to the Government and voluntary agencies provided by the Government for emergency accommodation. Of course, the Government should provide this accommodation, because what would happen to these young people if the Government did not provide it.

The rate at which homeless youth has been increasing in society is significant. If the Government could meet all the demands for emergency accommodation, and could continue to meet the demands at the rate at which the increase has been taking place over the past three years, then in 30 years time, 80 per cent of the youth of this community would be in emergency accommodation. The stage has to be reached now, when not only does the Government have to temporarily alleviate the problem and provide accommodation, a job and an opportunity for homeless youth, but also it must also tackle the problem at its real root source.

I do not propose in the limited time available to state how this can be done, but it is associated with a wide range of approaches and in the past Governments in this country have not tackled adequately the necessary preventative services. Preventative services are not only more economical than the treatment process which has to be provided later, but they also avoid the human traumas and hopelessness associated with homelessness. Without suggesting any abrogation of Government responsibility for these people, it is fair to say that parents in this State must have a very close look at themselves and their family. It would not be a bad idea if a standard adage was adopted by the parents of this State when they wake up at 8 o'clock each morning by which they ask, "Where did my 12-year-old daughter sleep last night, or where did my eleven-year-old boy spend the last two nights?" Too many of them are not asking these questions, and because of stress and strain in the family a child may feel compelled to leave for various reasons.

Parents are not sufficiently able to identify those stresses and strains. The inability to identify those problems means that those parents do not

approach the Department of Community Welfare Services or appropriate agencies for assistance and advice.

In the past few weeks two independent housing and welfare groups have expressed concern to the Premier and have written to the Minister for Community Welfare Services about the failure of the new Government to honour and discharge its responsibilities in the two areas on which it promised to act promptly and swiftly during the election.

**Mr Spyker**—We were left with a mess and we are doing our best.

**Mr JONA**—Through his interjection, the Minister of Consumer Affairs wants to throw aside the concern of organizations like the Brotherhood of St Laurence, the Victorian Council of Social Service, Shelter and other community groups that have been extremely concerned about the statements that have been made by the Government, especially by the Minister of Housing, who has refused to honour an election promise to spend \$47.2 million on housing and to provide an extra 2000 units of public accommodation in the Government's first year in office. The Minister is now on record as having said that because that money would have to come from the Victorian Development Fund, which will not be established in time, the Government will not be able to spend the money this year.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Wilton)**—Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

**Mr KENNEDY (Bendigo)**—Mr Deputy Speaker, I congratulate you and the Speaker on the distinction you have attained in being elected to your positions. The Speaker has acted correctly in dispensing with the paraphernalia of headgear and made his appearance more relevant to the people. I express my thanks to the people of Bendigo for the honour they have bestowed upon me in electing me to represent them in the Parliament. I have had the privilege of representing the people of Bendigo in the Federal Parliament and it is a great honour to return to politics and represent the people of Bendigo in the State Parliament.

Bendigo is a beautiful city with a magnificent historic heritage. It is one of the outstanding provincial cities in Australia and its name is well-established in the annals of this country. I congratulate those people who were associated with the highly successful campaign that was conducted by the Australian Labor Party to win Government in Victoria. The Australian Labor Party has had an outstanding team around its Leader. The election campaign was fought extremely well; the issues put forward by the Australian Labor Party were relevant to the people and the campaign was conducted in a way that was calculated to win the party success.

At present, the most important issue to the people of Bendigo is employment. There can be no doubt that the people of Bendigo have elected me to the Parliament to help create more jobs and to tackle the problems of unemployment in Bendigo. There were obviously many issues in the State election, but Bendigo has its own distinctive problems, which I shall outline.

There is an urgent need in Bendigo to stimulate the local economy and to generate more employment opportunities. The economy of Bendigo has gone through a slump in recent years. I shall refer briefly to some outstanding research work that has been done by the Senior Lecturer in Economics at La Trobe University, Dr Paul Langley, who in April 1979 conducted a unique and unprecedented survey of the Bendigo labour market and community.

Although the survey was conducted in 1979, no similar, detailed analysis has been done of the Bendigo economic and labour markets since that time. The situation revealed in the survey is just as applicable today. Indeed, there is no indication that the situation has improved. The most disturbing aspect of the survey was that 10.5 per cent of the work force of Bendigo were unemployed in April 1979. That means that one in nine of the working population of Bendigo were out of work. That is twice the unemployment level that applied throughout the rest of Victoria.

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Dr Langley indicated that the unemployment rate in Bendigo would be among that of the twenty centres with the worst unemployment rate in Australia. In the past three years there has been a serious fall in the work force participation in Bendigo. There has been a serious elimination of jobs. Dr Langley indicated that in the previous ten years in Bendigo there had been a net gain of 900 jobs. In the period between 1976 and 1979, he estimated that approximately 1500 jobs had been wiped out. That disturbing situation should have merited the attention of the State and Federal Governments. It is worth while to read briefly from a statement written by Dr Paul Langley on 9 November, 1979 because that statement is still relevant to Bendigo. Dr Langley, in commenting upon his survey of Bendigo's employment market, states:

The current slump in the Bendigo labour market, as detailed in my report on the April Bendigo Labour Force and Community Survey, is due to three interrelated factors. These are, in order of importance; firstly, a reduction in the overall rate of growth in the Australian economy; secondly, a continuing decline in "traditional" employment opportunities in the Bendigo region and, thirdly, a failure to maintain the momentum of job opportunity growth in the areas of community services, finance and wholesale and retail trade.

"If we take the 1966-76 period", said Dr Langley, "the City of Bendigo experienced an overall net increase of 900 jobs. This comprised a decline of some 800 jobs in the traditional industry groups—particularly manufacturing with a decline of over 400 jobs—set against an increase of 1700 jobs in areas such as community services (650 jobs), finance (270 jobs) and wholesale and retail trade (178 jobs)." Employment in building and construction also increased by almost ten per cent over this decade.

In the ten years up until 1976, Bendigo's economy grew. Dr Langley continues:

Since 1976 Bendigo, in common with many other centres, has experienced the effects of ceilings and cutbacks in public service employment—health and education in particular—and a massive slump in building and construction. Secondary effects of a declining level of economic activity are, of course, felt most acutely in finance, wholesale and retail areas.

I conclude with this extract, where Dr Langley states:

No community can view a slump of the magnitude outlined for Bendigo with equanimity.

Those significant statements indicate the disturbing aspects of Bendigo's economy of recent years. The statements made by Dr Langley leave no doubt that, over recent years, Bendigo's economy has been in a serious slump.

Dr Langley has indicated the serious situation of youth unemployment in Bendigo. At the time he assessed the situation, he discovered that in the youth group aged between fifteen and nineteen years more than 30 per cent of the young people were unemployed. Those figures represent a severe unemployment situation among the youth of Bendigo. Therefore, it is vital in Bendigo that every job be held on to and, where possible, that job opportunities be expanded. Of course, Bendigo's economy has been plagued by the curb that has been placed on public enterprises.

I come now to the second most important part of my speech. I speak on behalf of the 650 employees of the Bendigo ordnance factory whose jobs have been at stake since 30 April last year, when the Federal Government announced that it intended to sell the Bendigo ordnance factory. A series of policy statements has been made, few of which remain coherent in any way and all of which add up to a recipe for dismantling one of the finest ordnance factories in the world and cutting into vitally needed opportunities essential to the economic growth of Bendigo.

On 3 April 1981, a clear assurance was given by the Prime Minister that the Federal Government intended either to sell the factory as a going concern or to retain it as a Government ordnance factory. This policy was soon modified in December, when the Federal Minister for Industry and Commerce, Sir Phillip Lynch, indicated that the Federal Government was entertaining the possibility of closing down the ordnance factory. He said the Government might feel compelled to close the factory either partially or entirely.

In March, the Senate inquiry into the sale of the ordnance factory issued a report fully supporting the Liberal Federal Government's policy to sell the factory in part or as a whole, and if that could not be done, it was suggested

that the factory be closed down forever. This created a hot political climate in Bendigo before the State election when the Prime Minister came to Bendigo and said that if the Government could not sell the ordnance factory as a going concern, it would retain it as a Government enterprise.

However, once the State election was safely out of the way and a new policy was introduced, the Government said in April after the election was over, that the Government now entertained two possibilities—either to sell the factory or to lease it. None of these approaches by the Federal Government is acceptable to the people of Bendigo, because they want to retain the ordnance factory as a crucial part of Bendigo's economy and because it played a vital role in the creation of job opportunities in that city. I shall quote a few figures which I believe honourable members will not have heard before. These figures ought to have been heard since 30 April. These facts and figures have likewise not been heard in the House of Representatives in Canberra. The only place they have been heard is in the Senate, because the Labor Party there, in conjunction with the Australian Democrats, has mounted a continuous campaign to try to preserve the ordnance factory. Some of the figures I shall quote will indicate why the people in Bendigo are so concerned about the closing down of the factory.

The ordnance factory employs 650 people and at present employs some 143 apprenticed and unapprenticed youths, therefore it plays a key role in the training of young apprentices in Bendigo and the north central region of Victoria. It is interesting that every year, until recent times, some 300 youths applied to the factory for apprenticeships. The factory is as popular and important as that.

Since the factory was established in 1941, it has made a major achievement, in having trained 725 apprentices. We who value employment and training opportunities for young people will recognize that these figures show how significant the factory is to the people of Bendigo. The factory provides 42 per cent of all Commonwealth jobs in

Bendigo, up to 12 per cent of all State and Federal jobs in Bendigo, and 2·8 per cent of all jobs, both private and Government.

According to my estimate, a total of 1922 people are associated with the ordnance factory. That figure includes workers, spouses and children. An enormous number of people will be affected by the mischievous and irrational policy that has been introduced by the Government.

This population constitutes 3·2 per cent of Bendigo's population. Associated with the ordnance factory are also working spouses and children. This brings the total estimated number of pay packets to 1012. The total amount of money that would be spent by the workers there would be approximately \$6 million, and if one is interested, the multiplier effect they generate is approximately \$30 million in local economy.

In the 41 years since the factory was established, it has, on current costs, generated something like \$1000 million worth of spending power in Bendigo. If I am emphasizing these points, honourable members will realize it is because the factory has been so significant. It may be said the matter is not a State issue. Nevertheless, the fact is that the only way in which the people of Bendigo have been able to express their hostility towards the policies of the Federal Government is through the State election, and in the State election, the people of Bendigo left no doubt in the minds of the Liberal Party—whether in Victoria or Canberra—that they wanted the ordnance factory because they elected a representative of the Labor Party with a very high majority to ram that message home to the Federal Government.

Last year soon after the Federal "razor gang" decision was announced employees were given a questionnaire. A number of questions were asked to obtain definite precise economic data so that the economic impact of the sale of the factory could be estimated. The people of Bendigo were asked what they would do if the factory were closed and they lost their jobs; 84 per cent

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said they would have to leave Bendigo if they lost their jobs; and of the original figure, 40 per cent said they did not know where they would go. Once it had been worked out what number did not know where they would go, I and a group of economists, working with union representatives, worked out that about 53 per cent would go to Melbourne, 43 per cent would go interstate and 4 per cent would go elsewhere in Victoria. If there were a large-scale reduction of jobs at the Bendigo ordnance factory, there would be a massive transfer of population from Bendigo to Melbourne and from Bendigo to other places.

If all the jobs were eliminated, Bendigo would lose over 1500 members of its population. I cannot say at present what scale of population movement that would be, but there are certainly no grounds for optimism about the future of the ordnance factory under the present policies adopted by the Federal Government. We have received absolutely no assurances about the security of jobs under a private enterprise operation—call it what one will—under either a purchase or lease arrangement.

The people of Bendigo do not want this policy; they want to preserve the ordnance factory. I have come here to raise my voice on behalf of the people of Bendigo and the Bendigo ordnance factory to try to keep the factory going. The Federal Government's policy has been in operation for 13 months. The Government has not been able to sell the factory; it is now trying for the third time to sell it. The first time it tried to sell the factory, it received nine inquiries. Only one bidder even went to the trouble of filling out a small application form. The factory was thrown onto the market again. Since then no one has applied to buy it, and obviously the Government does not have a buyer for the factory, so it was necessary to put it onto the market again, on 30 April. It is about time the Federal Government recognized that it does not have a buyer and it should leave the Bendigo ordnance factory as it is and develop it as a centre of engineering excellence of benefit to Australia and particularly to the people of Bendigo.

My second main theme is to discuss briefly the Bendigo College of Advanced Education, as this is also vital to Bendigo's economy, to country educational opportunities and to the growth of Bendigo as a whole. Again, one encounters the problem of the Federal Government policy. On April 30 last year the Federal Government announced that it would phase out the engineering faculty at the Bendigo College of Advanced Education. This created an uproar in Bendigo because it is seen as attacking a long established part of Bendigo's way of life. Engineering courses have been part of the history of education in Bendigo, and were commenced in the first years of the development of the old Bendigo School of Mines and Industries, which was founded in 1873.

To put it in a nutshell, the Federal Government does not know whether it is coming or going, and its policies are rejected by the people of Bendigo and the Bendigo College of Advanced Education. At present all that is happening is that the Federal Government will allow the college to maintain a one-year course in Applied Science (Technology). After that, students will go from Bendigo to the Ballarat College of Advanced Education.

There is no guarantee that the year 1 course will flow on to year 2 or that it will be repeated as year 1 next year. The point is that the Bendigo college does not accept this approach. The former Minister of Education said he regarded this as a "satisfactory long-term solution to the problem". What problem? The problem created by the Federal Government. It is no solution. The Bendigo College of Advanced Education wants to retain the full range of engineering courses it has offered for many years.

There is some discussion that the Federal Government is happy to accept a two-year course at the Bendigo College of Advanced Education which would flow on to the third and fourth year at the Ballarat College of Advanced Education. The Bendigo college is firmly of the opinion that this course must be maintained because it is essential to its viability. If one removes such a key section of a tertiary institution, such

as the engineering course, one is amputating the whole college and there is a grave danger that an attack like this could affect the future viability of the institution.

I welcome the support of the State Minister of Education. I am delighted that he has shown such a positive approach. I am hopeful that the Federal Government will take a more positive approach to the important faculty of engineering.

There are other issues to which I shall refer. The first is the North Bendigo rail workshops. I would like to see those workshops develop over the next few years to bring them up to their former state. Those workshops presently employ 450 persons but ten years ago they employed 700 persons.

I am very happy with the Government's policy of developing public transport. That policy will provide more work for the railway workshops. It is to be hoped that the Bendigo railway workshops will be modernized to provide further employment opportunities.

I now refer to the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission central plant workshop at Golden Square, Bendigo, which provides important employment opportunities and should be modernized to compete for contracts so that jobs are guaranteed.

One of the most important things for a Government to do is to introduce new policies of regional development. Old policies have not been successful and have basically involved the scattering of important resources all over the State. What is required is a policy which concentrates development in a number of areas so that the resources that are so scarce are used for the maximum benefit of key areas. I am pleased that the Labor Party supports a policy of regional development.

Bendigo will obviously play a very important part in this policy of regional growth centres. However, Bendigo needs more help. Ask anyone in Bendigo and they will say that growth requires Government initiatives. If the State is to get out of the slump it has been in over the past few years, it can only be done by Government action. I welcome the

Labor Party's policy on regional development because it will make a significant difference to the growth of the city and the development of the economy.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I thank you for your patient attention. I am pleased to be here tonight. I have spoken about things that are fundamental to the ordinary people of Bendigo and I make no apology for doing so. I have spent a lot of time talking about the ordnance factory but I believe the people of Bendigo would want me to do that. The people of Bendigo made the right decision at the polls and they have a Government that will work for them; I have no doubt that their confidence in the Labor Government under John Cain will be amply justified over the next three years.

**Mr BURGIN** (Polwarth)—In rising to say a few words on the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech, let me state clearly my support and the support of the electorate I represent for the Governor and, through him, Her Majesty the Queen. It was very pleasing to live in a democracy and to receive the advantages that flow from the democratic system.

I congratulate the former Governor, Sir Henry Winneke, for the wonderful work he did over a long period for Victoria. The work and effort he put in travelling around Victoria and meeting people has been accepted by the people and tremendously appreciated. We wish him well for a long retirement.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the new members on all sides of the House. The numbers are a little one-sided as the Liberal Party did not get many new members. It is obvious from listening to the maiden speeches that this House received a great deal of benefit from the last election in the calibre of the people who have become members. I hope and trust they will enjoy their stay and will be able to conform to the traditions of the House. I know they will take part in the debates that take place and adequately put forward the views of their constituents.

I also thank and congratulate Mr Speaker for the way he is handling this House, Mr Deputy Speaker. My party

and I have always had a great deal of respect for you when you have occupied the chair. That respect will naturally continue. I am sure that when Mr Speaker is in the chair he will receive the same respect other Speakers have received in this House over many years.

There are a number of unique situations that are peculiar to the electorate I represent. For example, the beautiful coastline and magnificent area of the Otway forest are not outshone by any other area in Victoria, nor in the world if it comes to that. The people of the electorate are very proud of the area in which they live.

It is interesting to note from the speeches made by members of the Government party what they think should have been done in the past to create jobs and yet the Government has already taken action in the electorate I represent to ensure that the number of jobs will not increase. I will elaborate on that matter later.

In 1978 the Land Conservation Council brought down its report for the Corangamite study area. Prior to the report being made, the council thoroughly covered the features of Crown land areas within the Corangamite study area to determine the uses to which they could be put and certain recommendations were made. Those recommendations were accepted by the former Government. Certainly, I accepted them. I did not hear of any view really contrary to those recommendations.

I shall deal particularly with the recommendations on the multi-use of Otway Forest Crown land, while still preserving the unique beauty of the total area, which were accepted by everyone. Not one conservationist had anything detrimental to say about the recommendations of the council that 45 per cent of Crown land in the Corangamite Study Area be placed in national parks, State parks, regional parks, reference areas, wildlife areas, and so on. One realizes why conservationists had no complaint with the recommendations. Those recommendations stated also that 36 per cent was to be used for hardwood forests and