

services which require funding from local government as well as funding by the government.

Many ratepayers are concerned that this transfer of responsibilities is continuing. Ministers visit municipalities with bright, spanking new offers, offers that are hard to resist. Municipalities are offered funding for one or two years. Often, after that time, the funding dries up and local municipalities are left holding the baby. If local government is to be treated fairly, and if ratepayers and property owners are to be considered, the system of funding must be redressed. If local government is to continue to be given the responsibility for providing the services to which I have referred, greater justice and equity must be demonstrated in both State and Federal government dealings with local government.

It is a great honour to represent Templestowe Province. I have always believed it would be a great privilege to serve in this House, especially after having served as a member of the Legislative Assembly. Only a limited number of persons have had the honour of serving the people of Victoria in both Houses of Parliament. I look forward to serving the electors of Templestowe Province for a number of years, as well as serving the Parliament. I intend to uphold the highest principles of our Parliamentary system—the Westminster system of democracy—which is better enshrined in this House than in any other House of Parliament in Australia.

Mr President, I again congratulate you on attaining the high office of President of the Legislative Council.

The Hon. B. E. DAVIDSON (Chelsea Province)—Mr President, I congratulate you on your election to the position of President of the Legislative Council. Although I am a new member, I have worked in and around the precincts of the House for the past seven or eight years. I am aware that you are held in the highest esteem by honourable members from all political parties for your honesty, your integrity, and your vast knowledge of Parliamentary procedures and practices. It is with both anticipation and pleasure that I look forward to my term in the Chamber under your direction.

Chelsea Province has been very fortunate to have been represented by such fine members as the Honourable Eric Kent, Mr Mal Sandon and Mrs Lyster. During the election campaign, I was pleasantly surprised by the number of people who approached me and asked after Eric Kent. They asked whether he was still working hard for the Labor Party and what he was doing in his retirement. Eric Kent was one of Victoria's best liked and most capable Agriculture Ministers. He left his mark in Chelsea Province as a genuine socialist and a caring, competent local member.

The honourable member for Carrum in the other place is well known for his work with the elderly and for his care for the environment, particularly Port Phillip Bay. During his time in the House he became known as the local member for Port Phillip Bay! With his help and advice I hope to continue his work in the House. I am sure he will make his mark in the Legislative Assembly.

Mrs Lyster is building a reputation as a fine and caring local member, especially because of the work that she does on behalf of disabled people, which is of great benefit to the community. The electors of Chelsea Province have come to know Mrs Lyster well. I hope to emulate the high standards that have been set by both Mrs Lyster and my other Labor predecessors in Chelsea Province. I thank the Labor Party for selecting me as the candidate for the Chelsea Province. I thank the electors of Chelsea Province for electing me and for continuing to support the policies of the Australian Labor Party.

Chelsea Province is a diverse electorate which extends from Moorabbin to Mount Eliza, from the seaside of Port Phillip Bay to the rural area of Baxter, and then north

to Keysborough. In addition to older established areas such as Mentone, Parkdale, Aspendale, Chelsea and Carrum, there are new housing developments in areas such as Keysborough, Botany Park, Carrum Downs, Baxter, and Lakewood in Frankston South, to name but a few. The problems and specific needs of Chelsea Province are diverse.

Because of the newer areas in Chelsea Province, there are concerns related to youth, such as schools. We also have to consider the special needs of the elderly because the area generally has an ageing population and those people must be looked after. The environment and needs of Port Phillip Bay have to be considered as well. Port Phillip Bay is arguably Victoria's greatest natural asset. During my term of office I intend to come to grips with all of the above matters.

Until early 1982, when the Cain Labor government came to power, the Australian Labor Party had governed in Victoria for a mere nine years since Federation, and during one of these brief periods it governed in coalition with the then Country Party. During most of that time Australia was governed by conservatives in Canberra.

The Victoria inherited by the Cain Labor government was very much the product of over a quarter of a century of entrenched conservative neglect and mismanagement. Our public transport system was neglected and run down; our public utilities were moribund; there was no tourist activity to speak of; our Police Force was ill equipped, and the prison system was an overcrowded shambles.

There was no city development that one could see; city developers were going broke. One could go on forever. The Garden State had become a decayed Liberal plot. A more fitting slogan might have been "Victoria—Comatose State".

It would have been better to inherit a Victoria which, even if it had not been managed in an equitable fashion—and it was not—had at least been managed with some degree of competence. However, it became perfectly obvious very quickly that the former Liberal government had been quite happy to preside over its Ministries and bureaucracies instead of getting in there and actually driving the machinery of government. Given this sorry state of affairs, the Cain Labor government found that Victoria had to be rebuilt before the new government could implement its own programs. The remarkable achievement of the previous two Cain Labor governments is that while the rebuilding process was in place the government was still able to fulfil most of the promises it made to Victorians. Those that have not yet been met are well on the way to being met.

The 1988 State election saw the electors of Victoria give the Cain Labor government a solid mandate to continue the reconstruction of Victoria and to implement new Labor policies for the benefit of all Victorians, including electoral reform for this House. The Labor government is prepared for the challenge, and we will get on with the job. Given our mandate, I hope and expect that this House will not be obstructive—a naive hope, I expect, from a new member.

In drawing to a conclusion, I wish to say that my election campaign was the product of very hard work by local members of the Australian Labor Party, particularly Mr Terry Grange, who gave up most of his annual leave to work tirelessly, and Mrs Jean Stemmer, who staffed the Frankston South campaign office.

No Upper House candidate will be elected without the hard work of the Lower House team. I therefore pay tribute to those members of the Lower House, Mr Peter Spyker, Mr Mal Sandon and Mrs Jane Hill, who helped in my campaign, and to Mr Tony Moore who, although not successful at this attempt, campaigned professionally and will in future become a fine member of Parliament, I am certain.

My campaign director and eldest son, John Davidson, probably worked hardest of all, especially in times of adversity. His drive and good humour kept us all working and on the straight and narrow, especially when we had had enough and wanted to knock off sometimes. I suspect that being campaign director for one's father imposes an even greater burden than usual. I have to thank him—but I thank all the members of my campaign team.

Finally, I wish to pay tribute to my family—first of all, to my father, Max Davidson, whose courage and strength in the face of long-term illness is a constant source of inspiration to me, as are the quiet wisdom, determination and commitment to working-class ideals of my parents-in-law, Clarrie and Josie Jordan. My two teenage sons, Jason and Robert, have had a lot to put up with over the past twelve months, and I thank them for their patience and support—although their patience was not always forthcoming, I have to admit!

My wife June deserves special tribute. Her patience, understanding and strength over many years have enabled me to embark on this career.

I commend the program of the Cain Labor government as set out by His Excellency the Governor, Dr Davis McCaughey, at the opening of the 51st Parliament, and look forward to my term in this House.

The Hon. G. H. COX (Nunawading Province)—Mr President, I come to this House at the opening of the 51st Parliament by His Excellency the Governor, Dr Davis McCaughey. I wish to congratulate you, Mr President, on being elevated to your high office. I know from personal experience and association with you that you will carry out this job with great dignity and adjudicate wisely over debates in this Chamber.

I also compliment the former President, Mr Mackenzie, on his service to this place. I have noted already from my brief presence in this Chamber that he is contributing again from the floor. I wish him well in his continuing career as the member for Geelong Province.

As a representative of Nunawading Province, I wish to pledge the allegiance of the people of Nunawading Province to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. I thank the voters of Nunawading Province who, through the democratic process, returned me to the Victorian Parliament at the last election. I wish to thank my electorate committee, headed by Mrs Louise DiGiusto, and the many members of the business community who contributed in many ways to our campaign.

I express my appreciation for the long and hard campaigning conducted by the four Legislative Assembly candidates in Nunawading Province who represented the Liberal Party: in Box Hill, Helen Shardey; in Mitcham, Matthew Starr; in Ringwood, Bruce Camfield; and in Warrandyte, Phil Honeywood, who was victorious. Mrs Varty has been a lone hardworking Liberal member in Nunawading Province, but through her work and effort we are now three.

In the years between 1979 and 1982 I served part of Nunawading Province as the member for Mitcham in another place. When the Cain Labor government came to office in 1982, virtually all of the Legislative Assembly seats in the politically sensitive eastern suburbs corridor were lost to the Australian Labor Party on promises, many of which have not been fulfilled to this day.

An often-quoted famous general said, "I shall return." Since 1982, that is what the Liberal Party and I have been about in the eastern suburbs. Today, much to the chagrin and dismay of the Labor Party benches, McArthur has not returned. Mr Laurie McArthur came to office in 1982 to serve one term as the member for