

Mr COLE (Melbourne) - I move:

That the following Address-in-Reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor, to both Houses of Parliament, be agreed to by this House

YOUR EXCELLENCY:

We, the Legislative Assembly of Victoria, assembled in Parliament, wish to express our loyalty to our Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech which you have made to the Parliament.

I am fortunate enough to be the new member for Melbourne. As most honourable members will be aware, Melbourne was established when John Batman said, "This is a place for a village". After that being said, Melbourne developed and the native people became the victims of white settlement. The Kooris were killed and dispossessed to protect the life, liberty and property of the white settlers. The Koori people became the first victims of economic growth in this State. A culture that had existed for 40 000 years was not recognised and the people were dispossessed of their land.

The legacy of European settlement is obvious today. It is appropriate in an Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech, in the bicentennial year of the invasion by European settlers and of the opening of the 51st Parliament of Victoria, to pay homage to the Koori people and reflect upon the violence that was perpetrated against them in this State. It is lamentable.

Violence is an issue Parliament must address and must do so in an intelligent and compassionate fashion. Two weeks ago I was at home preparing for a new day in a new job when two friends came to my house to inform me that their brother had been shot dead by the police. I went to the police headquarters in St Kilda Road with my friends to confirm that their brother was the victim. The next day two police officers were assassinated for no other reason than the fact that they were police officers. What occurred on both occasions is an issue that the community and Parliament must begin to address.

The following week I attended the funeral of my friends' brother and subsequently the wake. That night the windows of the hotel where the wake was supposed to have been held were blown out by shotgun blasts. I feel privileged to be here tonight and feel lucky indeed.

Everyone has been appalled of late by the violence in our community. I commend to everyone the proposal by the Federal government to establish a committee to investigate the causes of violence within our society. I suggest to everyone that they pay special attention to the investigation into this matter by Professor Duncan Chappell and I urge the government and all honourable members to contribute in every way possible to the resolution of the problem of violence within our society.

I desperately request all honourable members to examine violence in a constructive fashion, to look not at the traditional mode of being hard on crime and down on criminals for the sake of victims but to legitimately understand the causes of violence within our community. Violence should not be confronted by violence; it should be dealt with compassionately; this has not been done in the past. Tough laws to overcome tough people should not be introduced. That has never worked in the past and it will not work in the future.

In my first speech, I must state that violence is a luxury the community cannot afford. Examining

this in the global sense, the necessity for the peace movement becomes more pronounced daily. Recently, nuclear ships visited Melbourne; I was pleased that the government took the stand it did against their entry into Victorian ports. It is understood that it is not the State government's responsibility but the defence powers of the Commonwealth that determine whether these ships visit our ports; we must adhere to that.

It must also be recognised that the State government legally has very limited powers or capacities to address the issue of nuclear war. What the government can and must do, and what the community must address, is the capacity to form and shape public opinion in addressing the issue. Only through world public opinion being vehemently opposed to nuclear war will nations be stopped from using nuclear weapons. It must start with us. Even those on the reactionary side of politics who suggest they support peace must agree.

Peace cannot be achieved by having more force and by threatening more than others to prevent the earth's destruction. I do not see the capacity of a country to blow up the world 70 times over as useful; perhaps, as a deterrent, it would be 69 times too many