

The Hon. G. R. CRAIGE (Central Highlands Province) - Mr President, I thank you for the opportunity of making my maiden speech during debate on the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to His Excellency the Governor's Speech at the opening of the first session of the 51st Parliament.

I look forward to serving with the members of the Chamber. I am delighted to have the opportunity of congratulating you, Mr President, on your election and I look forward to working in the House under your guidance. Your knowledge of Parliamentary procedure is such that all honourable members will learn a great deal. I shall summarise what I have said about you by quoting the words of Lord Chesterfield: Politicians neither love nor hate . . . interest, not sentiment directs them.

It is with some apprehension and humility that I address the House, because I am fully aware that I do not have the experience of the more senior members of the House. But I do bring with me a great deal of enthusiasm and energy; and I hope in time that I will gain both experience and wisdom.

I have much to live up to in representing Central Highlands Province. The Honourable Jock Granter retired after 24 years of service in the House, not only as the representative of Bendigo Province-now Central Highlands Province-but also as the Minister for Water Supply and the Minister of Forests from 1973 to 1981, and as Minister for Police Emergency Services from 1981 to April 1982. Jock's door was always open to his constituents; he was always ready, willing and able to help. He is respected greatly by all who know him. I hope I can serve the people of Central Highlands Province in the same way as the Honourable Jock Granter.

I also pay tribute to my colleague in Central Highlands Province, Mrs Tehan. It will be a pleasure to work alongside such a respected member of the House. Marie came to the House following the early retirement of the Honourable Fred Grimwade, a man for whom honourable members have great respect.

Central Highlands Province is a region of approximately 25 000 square kilometres, a region that consists of rugged mountain terrain and sweeping plains. It is a mixture of the northern and eastern suburbs of Melbourne, of cities, and of large and small towns. Approximately 195 000 people live in the province, all of whom have needs and goals, and all of whom look to politicians for a sense of direction. Honourable members must resist the practice of attempting to solve every problem through the introduction of new regulations. Honourable members must unshackle the people and allow them to get on with living their lives. Governments cannot continue to burden private enterprise with legislation and regulation. If we are to prosper, then let us get off their backs