

foresee the time when the outer ports would be the major ports of Victoria. I recently read in the daily press a comment by the Chief Secretary to the effect that a large number of tenders were to be let for the construction of a port at Westernport. This is justification of my contention that there is a necessity for the construction of ports away from Melbourne. It is now the overseas practice to build large vessels, up to a capacity of 400,000 tons, particularly for the transport of petroleum products and grain. It will not be necessary to have special wharves for these huge vessels, because they can anchor a mile offshore, and their products can be expeditiously discharged by means of pipe-lines.

These are not idle pipe-dreams, as this type of vessel is now being built. It would be impossible for such a vessel to come into Port Phillip Bay unless a larger passage were blasted through the Rip—in which case the water might drain to the ocean. Port Phillip Bay can accommodate vessels of up to only 100,000 tons. Great developments are taking place in the field of engineering and transport. In the near future it will be possible to travel by tube railway from Melbourne to Sydney at 400 miles per hour, and there will be no need for aeroplanes. There have been greater developments in science and engineering in the past twenty years than took place in the previous 2,000 years, and they are altering all aspects of our lives.

There is a bright future for the outer ports of the State and the expectations of a few years ago have been greatly exceeded. If any criticism can be levelled at the port of Portland, it is that it was made too small; it should have been built three or four times larger to cope with the needs of the future. It is not yet too late to rectify this position. A Country Party Government initiated the system which permitted the port of

Portland to raise funds for its development, and the events in the past few years have justified the actions of that Government. My party supports the Bill.

**The Hon. C. A. MITCHELL** (Western Province).—It is a great moment in my life to address this House. I pay tribute to the late Ron. Mack; I knew him well; he was held in high esteem, and his passing was a great loss to the Liberal Party.

Much has been said about the port of Portland, but I wish to speak on the subject of transport, which is vital to this port. The lack of adequate rail facilities from Portland to the surrounding districts is holding back the development of the area, and is particularly affecting the Cresco fertilizer works at Portland. The transport of superphosphate by train to the Mortlake area necessitates a journey of some 50 miles to Hamilton, a turn back to Warrnambool, a journey to Terang and thence to Mortlake. There is only one train a week from Hamilton to Warrnambool, and there are three trains a week to Mortlake.

What hope is there of this area being served properly with the existing transport facilities? A similar situation applies in regard to the carriage of wool. The woolgrowers live about 90 miles from Portland, but the same route as used for the transport of wheat must be followed. By using road transport, a load of wool can be taken to Portland and a load of superphosphate brought back on the same day but, when rail transport is used, it could be weeks before the supplies of superphosphate were received. It takes up to a fortnight to get a load of superphosphate to Heywood from Geelong, so what chance is there of having a load taken quickly to Mortlake from Portland? The only way by which Portland can go ahead is by having unrestricted road transport for everything, but principally for wool and superphosphate which are the two main commodities with which Portland is concerned.

I appreciate that it is easy to criticize and, having fought for the development of Portland over a long period, I may be apt to voice criticism of various deficiencies in public services in Portland. After wool sales at Portland were established, following a long fight, and Portland had got on its feet, rail freight rates for wool from Condah to Geelong were reduced \$2.40 to \$1.50 a bale. Unfortunately, we lost the benefit of this reduction because the railways decided that interstate transport was interfering with the trade. I do not believe that was the real reason; it was just another move to stab Portland in the back. Over the years, I have objected to actions of this type.

Melbourne is growing too big, and Portland must be developed further. I invite the Government, later in the year, to examine closely the transport position to see what can be done about it. I am sure that, if the parties get together, it will be possible to iron out something that will help Portland to go ahead, and, instead of Parliament being asked to approve a Bill to raise the Portland Harbor Trust's borrowing limit by a few million dollars, it will be necessary to enact legislation to increase the Trust's borrowing authority by many millions of dollars.

There are many other matters concerning Portland to which I can refer. For example, additional educational facilities are required in the Western Province. Whenever young people in that province are selected for teacher training in the Education Department, they must enter a teachers' training college in either Geelong or Melbourne. Why should there not be teachers' training colleges in country areas? If development is to take place in country areas, consideration must be given to these matters.

As a primary producer, I appreciate that growers are faced with a serious problem because of the inadequacy of existing grain terminals. Primary producers are carrying the

major burden of the devaluation of the £1 sterling. Although the Country Party and the Liberal Party form a coalition Government in the Federal sphere, I feel that in this respect the Commonwealth Government is letting primary producers down badly. Primary producers, who are faced with rising costs, are receiving lower prices for their produce.

The port of Portland is essential to primary producers if they are to derive the benefit of reduced costs. I know that the saving which will be effected by this development will not be great, but every saving means something to primary producers. I take the same view concerning land tax and other taxes that are imposed upon primary producers. Furthermore, because of the present price of wool, it is inevitable that more farmers will turn to grain production. Obviously, additional grain storages will be required. If there are two or three good seasons in the production of grain, producers may encounter serious difficulties. I know from experience and from discussions with members of the Australian Wheat Board that the existing grain terminals will prove inadequate. The more grain that can be put into storages the better it will be, because droughts will continue to occur from time to time.

The good work of the former chairman of the Portland Harbor Trust, Mr. Keith Anderson, has been mentioned during the debate on this Bill. I know Mr. Anderson well. When I went to Portland seventeen years ago, he was then struggling to assist in the development of the port, and I decided that I would get behind him and work with him. I do not know whether I should mention this fact, but Mr. Anderson informed me that the harbor has cost him between \$40,000 and \$50,000 out of his own pocket. I think honorable members should know this fact because Mr. Anderson devoted much

of his life to the development of Portland. We must do our best to ensure that the development continues in the future.

**The Hon. K. S. GROSS** (Western Province).—I join with the previous speakers in supporting this Bill, which will increase the borrowing powers of the Portland Harbor Trust from \$20,000,000 to \$25,000,000. Only recently, the Commissioners of the Portland Harbor Trust submitted a proposal to the Government to double the present grain storage capacity at Portland, and to this end I believe a sum of \$300,000 will be appropriated next year to enable the work to be commenced. The provision of enlarged storage capacity has become extremely necessary, particularly when it is remembered that the original installations were provided primarily for the storage of oats and barley. The capacity of the silos is such that they will take virtually only one reasonably sized shipment. In fact, in a few years' time, because of the use of large ships, the existing capacity of the silos will be equal to only a small shipment.

Victoria is passing through a bad drought. Nevertheless, it is clear, having regard to the land that has already been prepared for sowing, that with favourable climatic conditions during this year there will be a tremendous increase in the quantity of grain that is likely to be shipped from Portland, Geelong and elsewhere. I regret that the extra facilities will not be available before the next harvest. However, big harvests have been handled at Portland in the past and, with the knowledge gained by the Commissioners, and others concerned over the years, I am sure they will be able to cope with this year's harvest, although there must necessarily be some delays.

It is also proposed to utilize some of the extra loan money for the purchase of a second tug. For the past four or five years, the port of Portland has been operating with only one tug and, whilst it has proven of

immense value, it is now apparent that two tugs will be necessary to handle the larger vessels that will be using the port. Furthermore, dredging is to be undertaken, particularly at the K. S. Anderson wharf, and also at the new No. 6 berth, which is about to be used for the first time for a shipment of phosphatic rock. The dredging will extend the depth of water to enable certain berths to cope with the larger vessels that will be used in general trade at Portland.

A good deal has been said concerning the former chairman of the Trust, Mr. Keith Anderson. On previous occasions, I have paid him a tribute for the tremendous work that was undertaken by him on behalf of the port of Portland. At the same time, I should not like it to be forgotten that Mr. Anderson's successor, Mr. Theo. Jarrett, who served his apprenticeship under Mr. Anderson, is carrying on in the best possible tradition the good work of his predecessor. He has proved himself to be an equally vigorous fighter in his desire to ensure that the port of Portland is developed, at least to the standard of other ports in the State.

In his maiden speech, Mr. Mitchell referred to the question of unrestricted road transport and certain freight rates. Despite the fact that there is no unrestricted road transport and that wool freight rates were reduced at one stage, I do not think these factors have mitigated against the successful development of Portland. In fact, the trade through the port has been increasing at the rate of 15 per cent. per annum, and even this year, with lighter wool sales and, of course, reduced grain shipments, the port trade has more or less kept up to that level. If last year had been a normal season, I believe there would have been a further increase over and above the average 15 per cent. increase in the trade of the port. I believe Portland will succeed because it is situated in the area that it serves. It is a rich area. As more land development takes place and better