

Of course, the efforts of those who have already undertaken the growing of softwoods are greatly appreciated. Since the introduction of the Act in 1964, 3,700 hectares of softwoods have been planted under the private farming scheme. However, the incentive which was originally offered and which was probably thought to be sufficient in those days is not in keeping with the monetary cost of growing either softwoods or hardwoods today.

The National Party supports the Bill, but I suggest to the Minister that, because of the urgent need to encourage more farming of hardwoods, there should be some differentiation and incentives should be offered to those who are prepared to undertake the growing of hardwoods.

The Hon. N. B. REID (Bendigo Province): Mr. President, I have been a patient man. I was elected to this Legislative Council on 20th March of this year, and having to wait until 29th June to be sworn in was quite an ordeal. The ordeal of waiting to make my maiden speech has lasted not quite but almost as long.

Firstly, Sir, I congratulate you on your election as President of this Legislative Council. I admire the manner in which you administer the business of the House. It was my privilege to meet your predecessor, the Honorable Sir Raymond Garrett. I was a great admirer of his and I extend congratulations to him on his work as President of this House.

It was difficult for me to choose a Bill on which to make my maiden speech. I considered this Forests (Advances) Bill 1976 closely before embarking on this speech else I should forever be referred to in this House as the new member for the Bendigo Province who could not see the wood for the trees.

I move on with some deliberation and concern. The year of 1851 was the year in which the Legislative Council in Victoria was constituted. It was a good vintage year because it was in that year that the town of

Bendigo, or Sandhurst as it was then known, was settled upon the discovery of gold in the area. So the year 1851 is of considerable import to me.

The new boundaries of the Bendigo Province extend from Echuca and Kyabram in the north through Rochester and Bendigo to Clunes and Daylesford in the south, to Maryborough and Avoca in the west and to Rushworth in the east. The province takes in the cities and towns of Echuca, Kyabram, Rochester, Rushworth, Elmore, Mitiamo, Dunolly, Bendigo, Castlemaine, Maldon, Maryborough, Clunes, Daylesford and Inglewood. It has been a great honor and privilege for me to be elected as the representative for the new Bendigo Province. For the first time the Liberal Party voice, the voice of the Government, is heard in a direct line from Bendigo to the River Murray. The line between Melbourne and the River Murray is almost complete and I look forward to the day when the Government's voice will be heard over the whole distance.

Over a period of many years the Bendigo Province has developed into a prosperous area. It has been only in recent times that extremely low incomes have been experienced in some sections of agriculture, particularly the dairying, beef, and fruit industries. The fruit industry is in a disastrous situation at the moment. To add to the problems of these industries, a serious drought continues in the northern part of the Bendigo Province. The drought has been overcome in many parts of the State but that area is still experiencing its effect.

As previous speakers have indicated, the Bill itself is simple. Its purpose is to widen the scope and update the financial provisions relating to farm forestry contained in section 94A of the Forests Act. Farm forestry was pioneered in Australia in 1964. It followed a visit by the Honorable Lindsay Thompson, then the Minister of Forests, to New Zealand, where he saw the activities of farm forestry management. He brought

the idea back to Victoria and it was on that basis that the scheme was introduced.

I agree with Mr. Bradbury that farm forestry is a long-term project. Like all long-term projects, it has to be started at some time. The scheme is good. This amending Bill will increase the total amount which can be lent to a farmer from \$5,000 to \$8,000 and the amount per hectare from \$125 to \$200. I agree with Mr. Bradbury that for hardwoods the financial incentive could be a little greater and the amounts a little larger.

Many people have participated in this scheme. There have been 139 agreements over a period of time and at present 66 are awaiting negotiation and finalization. One of the nice things about the scheme is that, although the loans must be repaid, for the first twelve and a half years they are interest free. The applications for loans must be investigated by the Forests Commission to ensure that the areas are suitable for this type of farm forestry. Technical assistance is given to farmers contemplating this move and the planting plan is prepared by the commission. Expert guidance is given to the farmers.

A farmer must plant 5 acres or more within two years. The trees are made available when they are one or two years old. They must be planted on freehold land or land which complies with tenure requirements.

There are natural forests within the Bendigo Province. At Bealiba, Maryborough, and Dunolly, grey box, iron bark, and yellow gum are grown. These hardwoods are used extensively for building materials and, in many instances, for railway sleepers. The area of Gunbower is famous for its red gum, which is used for fencing material and sleepers. At Daylesford and in parts of the Ballarat area in the southern part of the Bendigo Province a large amount of *Pinus radiata* is grown. This is used extensively in modern building techniques with the introduction of *Pinus* roof trusses and frames for new home building.

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The building industry throughout the Bendigo Province, particularly in the northern part, is moving at an extremely rapid rate. There are no signs of any cut-back or slowing down of building. The number of homes being built in these areas is probably the highest in the history of the Bendigo Province.

One of the side effects of the extension of this scheme will be the extra employment it will create. There will be a great variety of positions such as those of forest officers and others connected with the transportation of the timber and sawmilling, and with the diversification into building materials and veneers.

The area of Whipstick, which is to the north west of the centre of Bendigo, is designated as a forest park. It has flora and fauna which are unique in Australia. It is a marvellous scenic area, particularly in the spring. I commend a visit in that season to any honorable member who has the opportunity. Anyone who sees it will realize it is worthy of preservation. It is, of course, most important that we preserve areas such as this.

The conservation of the natural resources of the Whipstick area, like those of other areas, can best be ensured by controlled management. I do not like the "closed door" policy which some conservationists insist upon. The forests should be managed to provide good maintenance and adequate fire protection. Most importantly, access by track or road should be provided so that members of the public, for whom these forests and parks are being preserved, can fully enjoy them. It should always be remembered that it is for the people that forests and parks are conserved. At the same time, the most effective use should be made of the timber products and other resources in our forest parks and other reserves.

One of the side benefits of the small area known as Whipstick which has been of tremendous importance to Bendigo as a growing tourist centre

has been the number of tourists who visit the area year by year. They take the opportunity to see the sights of the Bendigo Province where we have our famous "talking trams" and many other tourist attractions. These attractions extend right up to the River Murray where steam paddle boats and port facilities are available.

One project which has aroused much interest and attention over a period of some three to four years is the Keep Australia Beautiful Campaign. Under this campaign, 32,000 native trees have been given away, each with a tag attached giving instructions on how it should be planted. I do not have a green thumb but even I am able to grow these trees successfully by following the instructions. This is a most worthwhile project which falls into line with the Government's policy that Victoria should be developed as the garden State.

I believe this is one way in which this can be encouraged. I have brought certain areas in my province to the Minister's attention and suggested that they would do nicely with the addition of perhaps 3,000 or 4,000 trees. One to which I refer is the well-known borough of Eaglehawk, which I am sure the Minister will agree would benefit greatly from the addition of a number of trees.

The addition of hardwoods to the scheme will increase the number of timbers that will be available to industry and to the building trade. The three hardwoods that it is anticipated will be grown are poplar, mountain ash and blue gum. The poplar finds its way into the familiar packet of matches and is developing into a cash proposition after a period of approximately ten years.

At this stage I pay tribute to two members of this House and one former member. The first of the two members to whom I refer are the Honorable Frederick James Granter, Minister of Water Supply and Minister of Forests, who was elected to this House in June, 1964,

and who is fondly known as Jock Granter throughout the area of Bendigo Province. Before entering State Parliament he was a bank officer. He was elevated to the rank of Minister of Water Supply and Minister of Forests in June, 1973, after having served a three-year term as Government Whip from 1970 to 1973 in the Legislative Council. He is well known as a farmer and secretary of the Heathcote Rural Fire Brigade. He is also a keen racing enthusiast, and I am sure there is probably a Jock Granter wishing to be in Bendigo today and another Jock Granter wishing to be in this House. At one time he was a very competent footballer for Bright and later for Heathcote. Jock Granter has given great service to the electorate of Bendigo Province since his election, and has carried out his duties in a most conscientious and responsible manner.

I also pay tribute to my colleague and running partner in the Bendigo Province of the old boundaries, the Honorable Frederick Sheppard Grimwade, who has represented Bendigo Province since 1967. He was also a councillor of the Shire of Pyalong and president of that shire in 1962 and 1963. He has been a most active member in the Bendigo Province since his election, and is well known for his interest in agricultural pursuits, particularly in the field of sheep and cattle breeding in which he is an acknowledged expert throughout Victoria.

I also pay tribute to the former member for Northern Province, the Honorable Michael Clarke, who previously represented a portion of the new Bendigo Province. Mr. Clarke's family has had a tradition of association with this House as members for more than 125 years. Six members of his family have been members of this House, including the original W. J. T. Clarke, who was a member of the first Legislative Council of Victoria. Mr. Michael Clarke was well known for his interest and expertise in all legal matters and was highly regarded and

respected for his knowledge. Mr. Clarke had a twelve-year span as a member of this House, trying to find fault with the proposed legislation brought forward by the Government. Sometimes he was successful, sometimes he was not. He is now occupied in the role of solicitor and has recently entered local government where he is still making a valuable contribution to the people in my area.

I am sure this House will continue to function for at least another 120 years and I should like to believe the name of "Reid" may appear in some portion of the next 120 years. As I have a son and three daughters, perhaps a family tradition may be established by my election to this House as representative of the Bendigo Province. Mr. President, I thank you for your forbearance and the courtesy of members of this House in listening to my maiden speech. I commend the Bill to the House.

The Hon. K. I. WRIGHT (North Western Province): I commend Mr. Reid for his maiden speech tonight and also remark on the fact that he is fortunate enough to be married to a charming girl who was formerly from my home town of Red Cliffs.

My colleague, Mr. Bradbury, in his usual fashion, has capably put forward the view of the National Party on this Bill on a State-wide basis. However, I should like to refer to this amendment as it affects the North Western Province. Honorable members will be aware that there is over-production in the primary industries in the area, particularly in dried fruits, of which 80 per cent are exported. Obviously, there is a need to branch out, as it were, into some other type of production. There is also a need for trellis posts onto which to train the vines. Honorable members will be amazed to know that 1 million of these posts are required annually. Most of these come from 300 miles away at Mt. Gambier. On behalf of the people in the district,

I have made voluminous representations to the Minister. I thank the honorable gentleman for supporting and encouraging the irrigated forests. These irrigated forests have commenced in various areas and most are producing various types of gum. Repeated harvests may be obtained from these gums. The Minister will be aware of the considerable amount of information that has been provided to him on this matter.

It is a fact that effluent from the Mildara winery is now being used in experimental plots of various types of gum. The Minister has encouraged this. The Mildura sewerage farm is using effluent for the production of these trees. However, Mr. Geoff Williams, a most capable officer of the Minister's department in Mildura, who is very helpful in these matters, mentioned that section 94 of the Act referred to softwood and that it would not apply to the people growing hardwood. This matter has been referred to the Minister. No doubt other people have also referred it to him. I commend the Minister and his department for the prompt manner in which this proposed legislation has been introduced.

The Minister's department and Mr. Williams have been most helpful with a project that has been encouraged by the Minister for State Development and Decentralization, the re-creation of the old Mildura homestead. The family of my predecessor, the Honorable Arthur Mansell, owned this property. Unfortunately, it was demolished in the early 1940s and now it has been recreated.

Mr. Bradbury referred to the Land Conservation Council.

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. W. G. Fry): Order! The House is debating the Forests (Advances) Bill. I do not know how the restoration of an old house relates to the Bill.

The Hon. K. I. WRIGHT: Thank you for your guidance, Mr. President. As you would be aware, Sir, the Land Conservation Council has brought out