

Mr. SUTTON.—If I were the Honorary Minister, I would not mention previous associations, because the Country party does not admire the Government party for having associations and not having them. If members on the Government side read Karl Marx—which is not likely—they would understand that they are the people who, he says, will bring about Communism. They have a direct ideological affinity with the Communists.

Mr. BLOOMFIELD.—Do you rely on Karl Marx?

Mr. SUTTON.—I rely on him for his pitiless dissection of the capitalist system, and I could cite many people who would agree. I agree with him in this respect also—having heard the honorable member for Burwood—that small business people drown the loftiest aspirations of the human mind in the chilly waters of egotistical calculation.

Mr. WHEELER (Essendon).—First, I desire to express my appreciation to the electors of Essendon for having given me their support, with the result that I am the first Liberal party candidate to represent Essendon since 1950. I am proud of that fact. In answer to some remarks hurled at Government members to-night I may say that I am a businessman who represents a semi-industrial area. I congratulate the new Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition on their respective appointments, and I also congratulate the honorable member for Footscray because he is following in the footsteps of a very honoured gentleman.

Mr. SUTTON.—Very nicely put.

Mr. WHEELER.—I relate my remarks to the items on the Supply list which refer to the Public Works Department. For some years the electorate of Essendon has been represented by a non-Liberal member, and has been rather backward in developing. In the Broadmeadows area there has been terrific development within the last few years. This has been due, first, to the advance of the Housing Commission estate and, secondly, to development that has taken place due to industries moving into the northern part of the metropolitan area. Little or no heed has been taken of the necessity for highways in that area,

and bus services are very poor. However, the train service to Broadmeadows is equal to any in the metropolitan area. There are 104 trains to and from Broadmeadows daily, in addition to goods trains which travel through on the main Sydney line.

On a somewhat parochial matter, I mention the level-crossing at Strathmore. Plans were prepared for an overpass there as far back as 1928, but this has not eventuated. A census taken in March, 1955, revealed that 6,000 vehicles passed this spot between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. On 4th March, 1958, the figure had increased to 7,400 vehicles. The increasing number of motor vehicles in this industrial area would seem to refute the argument advanced by the honorable member for Fitzroy when he stated that there were 7,000 people on the dole in Victoria as a result of the labour position brought about by this Government. I am concerned at the delay occasioned to vehicular traffic at the Strathmore level crossing. Vehicles are delayed up to 8 minutes each time the gates are closed and at peak periods up to 140 vehicles are said, by an authoritative source, to be waiting to cross. It would be impossible to calculate the loss in man-hours and money occasioned by such delays.

The increase in population in Broadmeadows in 1956-57 compared with the previous year was 4,683 persons. In 1957-58 the increase was 4,876. Obviously, the time is opportune for some direct action to be taken in regard to the provision of this overpass. I do not know whether there was laxity on the part of the previous member for Essendon or whether he did not take correct action, because the Bolte Government has been in office only since 1955 and it would take much longer than three years to prepare a scheme such as is required to alleviate the existing position. An inter-departmental committee has been formed to plan for the abolition of level crossings in the metropolitan area. I am unaware whether the Strathmore level-crossing has been considered by that body, but if it has been discussed the

subject certainly has not been pursued to a satisfactory conclusion. I do not know the authority for the announcement, but in March, 1955, I read a statement in the press that the gates were there to stay. In June of the same year, it was stated that boom gates would not be provided at Strathmore. I cannot imagine who would suggest the erection of boom gates at that crossing; they would only add to the traffic hazards there. The only logical, commonsense solution to the problem is grade separation, the cost of which has been estimated to be in the vicinity of £250,000. However, I point out that such work would solve the problem for all time. For such a satisfactory solution the spending of £250,000, even to big or little businessmen, would represent little more than "chicken feed."

Motor registrations are increasing by 40,000 a year, and the Broadmeadows area is getting its share of industrial expansion. Barry's-lane has been reconstructed and an overpass is being erected over another part of the north-east railway line. These developments will increase by possibly 20 per cent. the flow of traffic along Pascoe Vale-road. Unless action is taken to overcome the bottleneck of the Strathmore level-crossing, police will have to be posted to divert the traffic elsewhere, and that will lead only to trouble in other parts of the district.

Prior to the advent of the Bolte Government, little had been done by previous Administrations to cope with the development taking place in the northern parts of the metropolitan area. It has been during the last three years only that steps have been taken to overcome years of neglect. The engineer of the City of Broadmeadows informed me that in the latter part of 1957, in the twelve hours between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. some 6,400 vehicles used the level-crossing, and to-day 7,325 vehicles are passing through it during the same period of time. Incidentally, five roads converge on this spot. If the figures I have quoted indicate the extent of the increase in traffic in the area, it is time that action was taken to provide for

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grade separation. I commend this matter to the attention of the Minister of Public Works.

Mr. LOVEGROVE (Fitzroy).—I wish to preface my remarks by congratulating the honorable member for Essendon on his maiden speech. I refer particularly to the excellent arrangement of the subject-matter, and above all, in all humility, to the temperateness of his utterances, from which I hope to draw some inspiration.

I wish to refer to a matter I raised on 1st October last concerning the National Gallery. During my remarks on the Supplementary Estimates, I made the observation that it had been alleged that for one extended period recently there was not one work by a living Australian painter of the traditionalist school hanging in the National Gallery. Due in part to a press report the following day, which omitted to include the word "living," some criticism of my statement was made by the chairman of the National Gallery Trustees, Dr. Leonard Knox and the Director of the National Gallery, Mr. Westbrook. I would like to make it plain at the outset that I do not in any way desire to join issue with those gentlemen on a subject about which I could not hope to claim anywhere near as much authority as I think they properly can. However, I do reserve the right as a layman—not any special right as a member of Parliament—to share with them the privilege of criticism and to reiterate the charges I made during the debate on the Supplementary Estimates when I stated that it had been alleged by the Fellowship of Australian Artists, who represent the traditionalists, or the realists in art in Victoria and in Australia that the administration of the Gallery was biased against them.

To-day I asked the Chief Secretary a question, and I wish now briefly to analyze the answer, because I believe there is room for some improvement in the administration of the Gallery, as it concerns the various schools of art throughout Victoria, in order to bring about some degree of impartiality. Of the 123 paintings which have been