

of Victoria so far as increased productivity of rural industries is concerned. When soldier settlement has been concluded, the Government will go ahead with a plan of general land settlement. It is unfortunate that in this country, which prides itself on the fact that a large percentage of its national income is derived from primary production, no young man can settle on the land, irrespective of what farming experience or training he may have had, unless he is provided with Government assistance or some other financial backing. It has often surprised me that a co-operative farming scheme on similar lines to co-operative housing societies has not been established in order to make it easy for persons to purchase farms.

I believe that steps should be taken to enable prospective farmers to take up land on the payment of 10 per cent. or 15 per cent. of the purchase price of a livable area and to repay the balance over a period of 30 years. I have little doubt that the proposed general land settlement scheme will be a great boon to many young Victorians throughout the State.

The Government intends to continue with its support of youth clubs and other youth organizations. It will continue to finance youth leadership courses and to provide grants for youth clubs. The inquiry conducted into activities at Langi Kal Kal was of great benefit to the Government in its fight against crime and juvenile delinquency. The inquiry concerned itself not only with the security and administration of this penal establishment for youthful offenders on the Ballarat-Beaufort road, but, also with the problems of youthful offenders and methods of training at, and examination of penal establishments generally. Judge Nelson's report will assist the Government in its fight against juvenile delinquency and crime generally in the State. This problem is not solely the responsibility of the Government; it is also a responsibility of the community. Last year crime cost the people of Victoria more than £6,000,000 indirectly, and therefore the fight against the evil affects everybody. The building of expensive youth clubs and

the training of youth leaders does not itself solve the problem of juvenile delinquency. These clubs require the interest and the help of the parents themselves. There is still great truth in the saying that there are no juvenile delinquents, only delinquent parents.

I join with His Excellency in trusting that our deliberations may, under Divine Providence, advance the welfare of the people of Victoria, and I sincerely hope that I and the other members of this House can contribute in some way to the happiness and well being of every man, woman, and child in the State of Victoria.

The Hon. K. S. GROSS (Western Province).—It gives me much pleasure formally to second the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech. It is a great honour to me to have this opportunity and it is also an honour to the people of the Western Province of which I am a representative. As a member of a country district, it is pleasing to me to learn that the Government has seen fit to undertake work designed to help agricultural production. Dookie and Longerenong agricultural colleges are to be greatly expanded and that work will be of great benefit to Victoria in assisting more young men to receive training in farming practices. Over the last three years the Government has also increased the number of scientific officers in its employ but even more are needed. Many problems troubling our farmers are as yet unsolved. There is much work still to be done in connexion with pasture development and many other matters, despite the fact that research stations have been expanded and new ones erected. The economics of farming under modern conditions demand that the agricultural community should be given the answers to the problems that are confronting them. At the present time a plague of cockchafer grubs is infesting the Western District and doing an immense amount of damage. Departmental officers have not as yet complete knowledge of the habits of these grubs or methods of controlling them. In the last twelve months prices obtained for our wool have

declined greatly and our wheat has been difficult to sell. Costs of production in this country are high, and if we can find some effective means of controlling diseases which trouble primary producers, it will lead directly to better pastures and more bags of wheat per acre.

His Excellency mentioned that at the present time Victoria supports a record number of sheep, dairy and beef cattle. I cannot stress too highly that we should do all in our power to ensure that we have the means not only to maintain that record number of stock but also to expand the figure in the near future. Primary production is still the main revenue source of Australia and we must maintain that state of affairs.

Reference was also made to water distribution. I was very pleased to see the work undertaken for the enlargement of the Eildon reservoir and for the increased distribution of its water in the Goulburn Valley area. When the distribution works have been completed, revenue from the area served will be increased by approximately £20,000,000 a year. A most essential survey of underground water has been commenced. It is not always practicable nor financially desirable to provide surface water supplies. There may be immense supplies of underground water in this State. I believe that the survey being undertaken will be of untold benefit to Victoria. It is essential that every town and city in the country, as well as the metropolitan area, should have an adequate water supply. It has been proved in the past that despite the possession of ample stocks of food in towns, if precious water is not supplied to the community all is lost. Many dismal failures have occurred through lack of adequate supplies of water and the Government is to be commended for its activities in connexion with the provision of supplies of this essential commodity.

I was also pleased to learn that the Government, as part of its policy of decentralization, has decided to press on with the completion of the port of Portland. It is a strategic port, and in

The Hon. K. S. Gross.

the next few years it will handle a greatly increased volume of shipping. The exports which passed through Portland during the last financial year totalled some 18,000 tons, consisting mostly of wool, skins, frozen meat and barley, worth approximately £4,000,000. In the same period, the imports have risen to 20,000-odd tons, valued in the vicinity of £1,500,000. Work on the completion of the port is progressing according to schedule, and it is hoped that early next year the first of the berths will be opened to overseas shipping.

Portland has suffered from lack of a good water supply and a shortage of cheap electric power, but in the past three years, action has been taken to remedy that situation. We all know the success achieved when the deep drilling tests were made at the first attempt to strike water. A good supply was found—one that will be ample for many years to come for a greatly increased population in the town. The electricity supply is now assured, and it is with pride that I say that the people in the Portland district have oversubscribed their area loan. It is hoped that in the very near future they will be connected to the State Electricity Commission system. Having an assured supply of good water and plentiful power, Portland has the two basic requirements for industry, and I believe new industries will be attracted to the district. That will be a boon to the people of the Western District.

As I said earlier, Portland is a strategic port easily accessible by road and rail. The area adjacent to the township contains many thousands of acres of Crown land which I firmly believe is suitable for settlement. If the Soldier Settlement Commission desires some of that Crown land, I urge the Government to allow it to develop as much of it as possible. An increase in our rural population means greater primary production and a bigger demand on services in towns and cities. In my opinion, this is the proper way to promote decentralization. Whenever a demand is created, there must be industry to supply it.

In conclusion, I should like to say once again that it has been a great privilege for me formally to second the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply. This will always be a memorable day for me. I trust that we, as members of this Chamber, will at all times work for the benefit of Victoria as a whole.

The Hon. J. M. WALTON (Melbourne North Province).—Mr. President, in adding my contribution to this Address-in-Reply debate, I remind members of the growing importance in our community of local government. Most people throughout the community—and, indeed Governments—are placing further responsibilities on municipal councils. Many of these local bodies are accepting those responsibilities, but frequently it is to the detriment of other works that councillors were elected to have carried out for the benefit of the people. Municipal councils were formed primarily to deal with roads, sanitation and various other matters that the State and Federal Governments cannot handle because they are not close enough to the people. At present, those in municipal life are being asked by the Commonwealth and State Governments to do various things. For example, councils are requested to make available large pieces of land for housing purposes, and to provide parking spaces on big tracts of valuable land in close proximity to industry, shops and centres of commerce. I mention all these matters to prove that local government to-day is growing rapidly in importance.

However, the method by which municipal representatives are elected is still not democratic. I strongly believe, and will take a great deal of convincing otherwise, that every person who is liable to the laws of a city should have the privilege of taking part in the selection of a candidate at a municipal election. Why is it that the owner of a property is entitled to vote whereas another person who resides in the same house and who contributes considerably to its upkeep is precluded from voting? Why is it that our laws permit one man to have three votes and another only one

vote? We live in a democratic country; this Parliament is a democratic institution; yet our statute-book contains laws that allow the things I have just mentioned. The Government should legislate to provide for adult franchise for municipal elections. It necessarily follows that, if a municipal councillor is elected on an unfair franchise, the trusts, corporations and Boards of which he is a member are also not elected democratically. In this connexion, I mention the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, various cemetery trusts, the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board, and all other Boards and trusts consisting mainly of members who are municipal councillors.

One of the main problems facing our society to-day is the demolition of habitable homes. All members of my party believe that local governing authorities should have authority regarding the demolition of dwellings in their areas; at present they have no control whatever in this matter. They had such power in the past, and I have had the privilege of seeing municipal councils preventing good homes from being destroyed.

His Excellency the Governor stated in his Speech that a new Ministry of Local Government and Town Planning would be established. Members of my party agree that there should be a Ministry specially dealing with local government affairs. I should like provision to be made for the establishment of regional councils so that where, for example, four municipal councils adjoin one another and have common problems, they may be permitted to integrate their activities and, by combining their resources, reduce their financial and physical worries. An instance that comes to mind is the disposal of garbage. Some cities are favoured with large holes in which garbage can be placed. Other cities have to pay large sums of money for the deposit of their garbage in those places. One city may be favoured by having large and costly workshops containing expensive equipment, but that equipment may be used for only two or three hours a week. If the other councils in the district were allowed to use