

ficient period to enable me to be familiar with the situation, but almost immediately after becoming Minister of Labour and Industry I attended a conference in Perth. At that conference, earlier this year, the situation I have described was reaffirmed as the States could not reach unanimity. I have said that I am in sympathy with some of the views expressed by members of both the Opposition and the Country Party. The Government has not closed the door.

Mr. R. S. L. McDONALD (Rodney).

—The Country Party agrees that there has been an oversight on the Minister's part. However, it appears that the Minister is prepared to introduce a Bill which is not properly drawn and to then refuse to allow the measure to be improved. That is the object of the amendments which have been put forward. The Minister is well aware that twelve months ago a similar Bill was rejected in another place for the same reason.

In his second-reading explanatory speech, which appears at page 197 of *Hansard*, the Minister said—

The legislation has remained substantially unaltered since its beginning in 1916 . . .

I remind the Minister that tremendous progress has been made in the manufacture of footwear since then. This should have been taken into account in the preparation of this measure. The Minister also said—

This is one of those areas of government where it is seen to be desirable, both in principle and practice, that legislation should follow the same course throughout Australia.

In Queensland, footwear must be stamped with the words "Queensland made", and many firms have established plants in that State because they cannot tender for contracts unless that stamp is on the footwear which they make. I believe Victoria should take the lead in this field.

Mr. WHITING (Mildura).—I am amazed that this Bill has been introduced a second time in this House with the word "plastic" still

omitted. I realize that a new Minister should be offered some protection and I know that you, Mr. Chairman, would uphold the Standing Orders and the practices of this House to the best of your ability, but I suggested that progress should be reported because I wanted to give the Minister an opportunity to ensure that he moved the correct amendment and to enable copies of it to be available to members for examination.

The amendment was agreed to, and the clause, as amended, was adopted, as were the remaining clauses.

The Bill was reported to the House with an amendment, and passed through its remaining stages.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

The debate (adjourned from September 16) on the motion of Mr. J. A. Taylor (Gippsland South) for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech was resumed.

Mr. BORNSTEIN (Brunswick East).

—I desire to associate myself with other honorable members in this House, who, during the course of this debate, have expressed sentiments of loyalty to the Crown. I also express my thanks to the Governor for presenting his Speech to the Parliament.

I am mindful of the great responsibility and trust which have been vested in me by the party which I represent and by the electors of Brunswick East who have placed faith in me by electing me to this Parliament. I assure them that I shall do my utmost to live up to the trust that they and my party have shown. My electorate is largely industrial. It embraces Moreland, Brunswick East, Fitzroy North, Carlton North, and Clifton Hill, and has a particularly high migrant content in its population; approximately 52 per cent of the people in the area are migrants. It is not blessed—rather it is cursed—with the problem of poverty which is widespread.

The first substantive report on poverty in Australia was the result of a survey conducted by the University of Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic Research under the guidance of Professor Ronald Henderson. Brunswick was one of the areas examined during the survey. It was found that 30 per cent of Italians and 23 per cent of Greeks in Melbourne are living in poverty. A substantial number of both Greeks and Italians live in my electorate and, from the nature of the area, it is obvious that many people there are living in poverty.

This disturbing report showed that 7.7 per cent—that is one in thirteen—of the population of Melbourne were living in poverty. It was estimated that 42,300 children were living in poverty. The criterion used in the survey to indicate the poverty line was a family of four—mother, father and two children—with a combined income of \$42.40 at June, 1970. The report has rightly been described as a milestone in Australian social science history. The survey had its limitations. At this stage, it is not known how serious they are, but it is important that they should be noted. The survey relied basically on economic factors; the main concern was income inadequacy. Because of this the number of people in need was under-estimated, and I believe the extent of poverty in Melbourne was under-estimated.

Miss Janet Paterson, formerly the director of research and social action of the Brotherhood of St. Laurence—perhaps the best-known voluntary welfare agency in Australia—while addressing the 1969 Australian Political Science Summer School in Canberra on the poverty in Australia, made some pertinent observations. She also gave what I regard as an apt definition of poverty when she said that poverty was three-tiered. She defined the first type of poverty as traumatic. This was poverty which resulted when the income of a family was suddenly cut off because of accident or illness. However,

Mr. Bornstein.

when the family was a viable unit, with adequate assistance it had the strength to get back on its feet provided that its income was replaced or made up in time.

Miss Paterson defined the second type of poverty as the poverty of reduced circumstances, which affects mainly the old and retired when the normal level of income is suddenly reduced. Again, this was a group of people who, if their income could be supplemented, were able to cope with their problems. She defined the third type of poverty—the most depressing type—as inherited poverty. This was a far more complex form of poverty which involved a multiplicity of causes, effects and characteristics. It was described by Miss Paterson more as a way of life—in fact, a culture. Unlike traumatic poverty and the poverty of reduced circumstances, this degrading inherited poverty could not be overcome merely by supplementing income. It was not the result only of income inadequacy and required far more complex corrective measures which, in the long run, would probably be far more expensive, in terms of both money and welfare services, than other types of poverty.

It is important that we take note of this definition. Most publicity on poverty—and there was not a great deal until the survey was conducted by Professor Henderson—has been concentrated on income inadequacy. As a result, a false picture has been given to the community. When considering the more serious poverty problem, it is pertinent that the Government should take note of the limitations of the Henderson report.

Poverty can always be regarded as a relative concept. Obviously, the poverty of developing countries cannot properly be compared with the poverty which exists in industrial countries such as Australia, the United Kingdom or the United States of America. Inadequate income is one measure of poverty; in cases of inherited poverty, the income could

be adequate but a family might not be able to live on what others regard as a sufficient income, because of a social inadequacy.

The problem of poverty is also a problem of alienation. Many of the people who suffer poverty, particularly those caught in inherited poverty, are set apart from the general community not only by their lack of money and other assets but also by their general inability to live an ordinary life such as most of us take for granted. We also take for granted that most people can handle their affairs as adequately as we can. A very obvious characteristic of people living in poverty is their low morale and their inability to mobilize collective action.

As both the Government and the Opposition have pointed out, poverty often occurs in pockets in our community. It can be concentrated in areas such as my electorate, and also in areas represented by members of the Government party. The inability of people suffering poverty to conduct their own affairs adequately is a fairly logical consequence. Very often a lack of morale and a general inability in regard to the exercise of their rights is manifested in anti-social behaviour. It is easy for most members of the community, whatever their political or social beliefs, to react in a fairly summary fashion to what they see on the surface. If we really want to come to grips with poverty, we must understand that there are deep-seated causes for behaviour which we may regard as illogical, sometimes illegal, or as plain downright stupid. Perhaps some of this behaviour cannot be forgiven, but it still needs to be understood.

The problem of poverty is not just one of lack of money or wealth; it is also a problem of lack of power. This is a more important lack than the lack of money because it is self-reinforcing and is more likely to become permanent. Poverty is inequality and inequality is likely to

become permanent because primary social institutions are geared to serve and reward those who know how to use them best. I refer to such things as housing finance. Those unable to accumulate finance are usually placed at the bottom of the waiting list. When it comes to housing they are virtually dependent on the Housing Commission which has a substantial waiting list. Those who are able to accumulate money for a deposit on a house—and perhaps it is not such a small deposit that is required these days although relatively small in relation to the total cost of a house—are able to attract housing finance.

Legal representation is far more easily obtained by those on higher incomes than by those on lower incomes. The complexity of the legal system is often too much for those living in poverty. Poverty also affects consumer purchases. Those suffering poverty pay the most for their consumer goods because of their disabilities and because of their involvement in hire-purchase dealings. A sudden break in income or a sudden illness, such as often affects people living in poverty, can mean the speedy repossession of goods and a repetition of the old cycle.

Education is also involved. Many more experts than previously are now considering educational inequality. In my electorate there are a number of State schools, all of which are located in areas which are small in comparison with those of schools outside the inner-suburban area. Schools in my electorate have a high proportion of migrant children among their pupils. Few of the schools have sufficient teachers or proper facilities. The inequality of opportunity of children attending these schools is likely to condemn them to a lifetime of poverty. At one school in particular—Brunswick Girls High School—there is a substantial number of migrants, and the school is entitled to ten special teachers in English; yet, because of a shortage

of these teachers, none is available. What is the future of these children? I believe that all too likely they will grow up to be the poverty-stricken people of tomorrow.

Members of the Opposition welcome the announcement in the Governor's Speech that the Government is willing to tackle the question of poverty. His Excellency said that the Government intended to establish a separate Ministry of Social Welfare aimed at the removal of pockets of social distress amongst the young, the old and those suffering from illness. The Opposition welcomes the Government's willingness to at least profess to enter the war against poverty. For many years, the Government has failed to concede the need for a separate Ministry of Social Welfare and the matter has been left to individual social workers, voluntary welfare agencies, members of the Opposition, some of the more enlightened members on the Government side of the Chamber and, finally, even the Director-General of Social Welfare in his last annual report for the year ended 30th June, 1969. All of these people have advocated the creation of a Ministry of Social Welfare. It is gratifying that the Government has finally succumbed to this concerted pressure and has agreed to establish such a Ministry.

I think all honorable members have been very much aware of the great problems experienced by the Social Welfare Branch because the outspoken reports presented to this Parliament by the Director-General of Social Welfare, Mr. Whatmore, give eloquent testimony to the fact that no other Government instrumentality has been so hampered by lack of funds in its attempts to carry out its policies. In his report for the year ended 30th June, 1966, Mr. Whatmore spoke of the superficiality of his branch's role, its deteriorating standards and the crushing burden and overwork which caused many of his officers to

succumb to illness. In this remarkably outspoken report, Mr. Whatmore stated that the Social Welfare Branch needed considerably more funds if it was to cope with current needs without any expansion of functions or activities.

I wish to take just one aspect of the operations of the Social Welfare Branch to point out that although I am gratified, as are other members of the Opposition, at the Government's decision to establish a Ministry of Social Welfare, we are also rather pessimistic as to the nature of the new Ministry and its ability to really come to grips with the question of poverty. Since the Social Welfare Branch was established, the Government has spent approximately one per cent of its Budget on the Family Welfare Division, which is one of several divisions in the branch. This allocation by the Government is difficult to reconcile with the primary aim of the division, namely, that of "promoting family welfare to the community, preventing its disruption and mitigating the effects thereof." One per cent of the Budget for the maintenance of the family—the cornerstone of our society! This can be compared with 40 per cent of the Budget spent on education. Nobody is decrying the need to spend a substantial amount on education, but one per cent on the problems of the family seems incredibly small by comparison.

Understandably, there has been tremendous pressure on the social workers employed by the Social Welfare Branch in the Family Counselling Section of this division. This is a crucial part of the Social Welfare Branch concerned with counselling families who are in risk of breaking up. This section has been continually understaffed and, not surprisingly, the social workers in this section have been under tremendous strain because of their high case loads. It is not surprising that they have

been substantially unable to meet the requirements which these families place on them. The result has been not only strain on the social workers, not only resignations of social workers, but also the otherwise preventable disintegration of families.

During the past decade—that is the period 1960-1970—there has been a 60 per cent rise in the number of wards taken into custody in the State of Victoria, but at the same time there has been a 25 per cent population increase in the under sixteen age group. Nothing could more adequately demonstrate the substantial breakdown in families, a breakdown that could perhaps otherwise have been prevented, or largely prevented, by diverting far more of the Government's resources into this particularly worthwhile area of the Social Welfare Branch. Although the Government has intimated that it will establish a Ministry of Social Welfare designed to tackle the question of poverty, yet in the past decade—it was established in 1960—the branch itself, as a branch of the Chief Secretary's Department, has been in a state of poverty. There has been a chronic shortage of staff which has been exacerbated by a rigid quota system imposed on social studies applicants at the University of Melbourne. The Social Studies Department at the university was even in danger of being terminated at the beginning of this year. Fortunately, it is continuing operations, but it is producing far too few social workers for the requirements of the State.

The provision of buildings in the Social Welfare Branch is another area where unfortunately too little has been done. There is a pathetic situation at Allambie Reception Centre, which is the main reception centre for wards of the State, and is today geared to cope with 205 wards. At one period during the last Christmas holidays, the number accommodated at Allambie went up to 320—50 per cent above its

capacity. The latest report of the Social Welfare Branch contains pointed criticism obviously directed at the Public Works Department—without mentioning the department by name—because loan allocations to that department of \$250,000 were not spent—loan allocations that were earmarked for buildings. I hope this situation is not repeated in the coming year or in ensuing years.

The Social Welfare Branch operates a Research and Statistics Division. It was rather enlightening that, in response to a question on notice which I addressed to the Chief Secretary yesterday asking whether a central index of all persons in contact with and in care of the branch was currently under consideration, I received the following remarkable reply:—

The research officer recommended the establishment of a central index. The recommendation has been deferred indefinitely as existing staff is inadequate for any new undertakings in that division.

I say "remarkable" because that division is both a statistics and a research division. If the officers of the division are unable to carry out statistics one can only imagine the parlous state of research in the division. I believe little research has been carried out since the Social Welfare Branch was established. This a particularly important problem and a grave lack, particularly if the Government is bona fide in its announcement to eradicate or to attempt to wage a war against poverty. Without adequate research, how are we to learn who the clients of this branch are? How are we to evaluate the quality of services provided? How are we to discover the root causes of social problems so that they, and not just the symptoms can be properly attacked? How are we to increase in the community a general awareness of social welfare needs?

Looking at the operations of the Social Welfare Branch, it is not difficult to come to the conclusion that it has been providing little more than remedial services. Even if its aims were achieved, it would have meant little more than prevention of known

and obvious social problems, and members of the Opposition consider that that is too narrow a concept of social welfare. We believe a properly constituted Social Welfare Branch structure should affect every member of the community, should be available to every member of the community, and that it should not be a branch whose main orientation is purely punitive or remedial. I am pessimistic as to whether the Government is able to tackle the problem of poverty. The Budget brought down by the Premier yesterday gave no indication that upgrading of the Social Welfare Branch as part of the Chief Secretary's Department to full Ministerial status would mean more than the provision of its own Minister. I may be premature, but I was puzzled by the almost total absence of reference to social welfare in the Budget. Furthermore, the Budget Estimates for 1970-71 gave no indication that there would be any substantial increase in the expenditure in the field of social welfare other than the expenditure which takes in such contingencies as salary increases.

All honorable members are aware that the social welfare services of this country are shared on an *ad hoc* basis between Federal and State Governments, local government bodies and voluntary agencies, without a great deal of consistent planning or co-ordination. Obviously, such a system is wasteful and largely inefficient. Serious gaps exist in the welfare services provided to the community and a disturbing amount of overlapping is evident. Many services, which are provided only to people in particular categories, are not available as general community services. Some of the services represent a bureaucratic nightmare, which involve the members of certain families going from agency to agency and department to department to have their needs met. Unfortunately, the present *ad hoc* arrangement of the division of responsibility for the provision of welfare services encourages buck-passing. A classic example of

this is the Federal Government offer of a \$1 for \$1 capital subsidy to the States for nursing homes for the aged. Victoria is the only State which has not taken up that offer.

In reply to a question asked by me on notice regarding three major geriatric hospitals in the Melbourne metropolitan area—Mount Royal Special Hospital for the Aged, Greenvale Village for the Aged and Cheltenham Home and Hospital for the Aged—I was informed by the Minister of Health that the present number of aged persons on the waiting list is 5,199 representing an increase of 735 on the waiting list since 30th June of this year. In other words, in a period of only three months, 735 people have been added to the waiting list. I am aware of the serious financial problems of this State, but there is no excuse for allowing frail, aged and helpless people—the kind of people on these waiting lists—to be used as a political football while the Federal and State Governments work out their financial problems. The Government should see its way clear to reach some agreement with the Commonwealth on this matter despite its problems in the general field of financial relations, so that the needs of these vulnerable people can be adequately met.

Unless the whole welfare system is rationalized there is little hope of meeting the welfare needs of the general community and still less hope of meeting the far more complex requirements of those living in poverty. At present, an *ad hoc* system exists. The ideal system, which even the Premier at some stage has canvassed, would be for the Federal Government to finance welfare services, for the State to be a standard-setting body and a co-ordinator of these services, and for municipal and voluntary agencies to deliver these services at a local level to the recipients. The Government needs to take certain initiatives with the Federal Government in an endeavour to establish such a welfare framework. The Victorian Government should set

an example so that the Federal Government will agree with its setting up a broadly-based Ministry of Social Welfare. I may be somewhat premature at this stage because the Government, which is bringing down legislation in this field, may have a comprehensive plan for a Minister of Social Welfare.

Members on the Government side of the House are fond of referring to the desirability of individual initiative in the conduct of affairs in our society. This is the motor that powers the workings of our society. The more heretically disposed would refer to the same concept as the rat race. As all honorable members are aware, in any race there are winners and losers—the losers are the people living in poverty. Such a situation will always exist while the community's welfare requirements are subordinate to the exigencies of the market. Welfare principles and market principles are irreconcilable. They are always in conflict with one another and at no time is there a declared truce. On one hand the criterion is contribution to economic growth, and on the other hand it is social need. The late Aneurin Bevan brilliantly captured the essence of the unwholesome cohabitation of poverty and privilege when he wrote in his autobiography in 1961—

What are the most worthy objects on which to spend surplus productive capacity?... After providing for the kind of life we have been leading as a social aggregate, there is an increment left over that we can use as we wish. What would we like to do with it?

Now the first thing to notice is that in a competitive society this question is never asked. It is not a public question at all. It cannot be publicly asked with any advantage because it is not capable of a public decision which can be carried out. Therefore, in this most vital sphere, the shaping of the kind of future we would like to lead, we are disfranchised at the very outset. We are unable to discuss it because the disposal of the economic surplus is not ours to command. . . . The surplus is merely a figure of speech. Its reality consists of a million and one surpluses in the possession of as many individuals. . . . If we reduce the question to the realm where we have brought it, that is to say, to the individual possessor of the surplus,

the economist will provide us with a ready answer. He will tell us that the surplus owner will invest it in the goods for which he thinks there will be a profitable sale. The choice will lie with those able to buy the goods the owner of the surplus will proceed to produce. This means that those who have been most successful for the time being, the money owners, will in the sum of their individual decision determine the character of the economy of the future.

But . . . the kind of society which emerges from the sum of individual choices is not one which commends itself to the generality of men and women.

The SPEAKER (the Hon. Vernon Christie).—Order! The honorable member should not quote at such length.

Mr. BORNSTEIN.—I am just finishing the quotation, Mr. Speaker. I agree it is lengthy but it emphasizes the point I am making.

It must be borne in mind that the successful were not choosing a type of society. They were only deciding what they thought could be thought and sold profitably.

Only the criterion of social need is concerned with eradicating poverty because it measures the worth of a society by the manner in which it treats its weakest members. Only the criterion of social need attacks all attempts to measure people and their creative activities in cash terms. Only the criterion of social need demands a systematic, integrated assault on all areas of deprivation, whether in the fields of education, health, housing, employment or economic policy.

Mr. BROAD (Swan Hill).—In speaking to the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor, I, too, should like to express on behalf of the people I represent continuing loyalty to the Crown. I also voice my sincere admiration of the energetic and gracious manner in which the Governor and Lady Delacombe have performed their task of representing the Queen throughout Victoria. Loyalty means different things to different people, but the principle thought I have in mind when speaking of loyalty to the Crown is loyalty to the democratic and liberal principles on which the Crown and its