

this method of bringing in a Bill, but it is a method adopted by the Government. In the circumstances, I give notice that at the next sitting of the Council I shall move for leave to bring in the Bill.

#### MELBOURNE MARKETS BILL.

The Hon. G. J. TUCKETT (Minister of Lands), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to provide for the institution of proceedings in respect of markets in the City of Melbourne by an officer authorized by the council of the said city.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

#### GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

##### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

The PRESIDENT (Sir Frank Clarke).—I have to report that His Excellency the Governor attended the House to-day, and was pleased to make a Speech, of which, for greater accuracy, I have obtained a copy. As the Speech is printed, I take it that honorable members do not desire that I should read it to them.

The Hon. P. T. BYRNES (*North-Western Province*).—I move—

That the Council agree to the following address to His Excellency the Governor in reply to His Excellency's opening Speech:—

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY:

We, the Legislative Council of Victoria, in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign and to thank Your Excellency for the gracious Speech which you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

I am conscious of the honour conferred upon me by the Government when it invited me to submit this motion. I appreciate that it is a great privilege to be a member of this House, but I can say sincerely that the death of the Hon. Henry Pye robbed me of much of the pleasure that I should otherwise have felt when I was elected to the House. The late Mr. Pye was widely known in my part of Victoria for many years, and there was a strong bond of personal friendship between us. No man had a greater knowledge of the Murray Valley and the northern parts of the State which he assisted to develop, and there he will be very greatly missed.

The expression of loyalty in the motion is no formality in these times, but a matter of great significance. The British Commonwealth of Nations has suffered so many humiliations and defeats in the last twelve months that it is almost impossible for us to realize at the moment just where we stand. The real expression of loyalty to the King comes from the youth of this country who have gone into the fighting services and the civilian population which is playing its part in the war effort. The people of Victoria are playing their part stoutly, and are showing their loyalty to Australia in a practical way. In the past Australia has sent many distinguished citizens abroad to represent it, but it has had no better ambassadors than its soldiers, sailors, and airmen. They have won great glory for Australia, and have done more than anybody else to raise the prestige of this nation. Surely we at home have a double debt of loyalty—to our King and Empire, and to the youth of this country who, for the second time in a quarter of a century, have gone forth to defend our home land.

Sometimes I feel doubtful whether we are backing up our fighting youth as we should. Our armed forces have had to suffer from lack of equipment, and perhaps that fact reveals that the best possible is not being done for them. In these times we should not do or say anything by way of peevish criticism that might hamper the High Command. Certainly we feel disappointed when we lose, but we must realize that Germany has in the main used her air fleets to help her armies win battles. We know that at Warsaw and Rotterdam, and in France, the German infantry were following right behind the planes. Perhaps the situation for us in Libya to-day would have been better if we had had available there 1,000 bomber planes. In Russia Germany is using 1,000 dive bombers to attack one fortress—Sebastopol. I think one of the reasons why we are in danger of losing the war is the gross misuse being made by the High Command of our air power. We can stand more solidly behind the youth of our country by insisting on the proper use of our Air Force.

The Governor's Speech sets out an imposing list of works carried out in Victoria by the civilian population. I feel

sure that the people of Victoria should be proud of the achievement of the State Government in this respect. Many of the works are unobtrusive, but spectacular works are not always the most important. The Government is entitled to congratulations for its participation in the war effort and the carrying out of a number of projects which probably would not have been completed if the State Departments had not been equipped to undertake them. The Victorian State Departments have been of immense value to the Commonwealth Government, and without their co-operation the Commonwealth would have had to set up separate organizations and staffs. There is nothing spectacular in the work being done by the Education Department in instructing air force trainees before they are called up, but it is being carried out quietly by teachers in the schools throughout the State and it enables trainees to cut their period of training by six months. Thousands of men have been given training in the technical schools to equip them for skilled work in munition factories.

Officers of the Department of Agriculture are not doing anything spectacular when they go into country districts, even as far as Mildura and Swan Hill, to organize the production of vegetables, but it is a most effective activity. Honorable members are aware that there is a tremendous shortage of vegetables both for the army and civilian population. However, the organization being built up by the Department will bring into production many districts in which vegetables were not previously grown. In dried fruits districts, where there are dehydrating plants, onions and other suitable vegetables are to be dehydrated locally. A grazier to whom I spoke recently, who has irrigable land in his property, is cultivating 160 acres of vegetables. Three years ago there was practically no flax cultivation in Victoria, but to-day, owing mainly to the activities of the officers of the Department of Agriculture, 34,000 acres are under cultivation.

Another unobtrusive work was the organization for the evacuation of children from vulnerable areas in Melbourne and coast towns and their reception in a safe part of the State. This project

entailed an immense amount of detailed work relating to the transportation of and food supply for more than 250,000 evacuees. All these projects have been carried out without a fanfare of trumpets, but in the total they represent a vast contribution to the war effort. The three great State instrumentalities—the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission, the Country Roads Board, and the State Electricity Commission—have also materially assisted the war effort. Fortunately, these bodies were at a high pitch of efficiency when the war broke out, owing largely to the work of the Employment Council under the able leadership of the Minister of Public Works, Sir George Goudie, because the three bodies had been provided with funds for a bold policy of construction and expansion with the object of combating unemployment. They had modern plant, and their engineers, technicians, and staff were very efficient; therefore, the Commonwealth Government was able to make use of the staffs and equipment, thus obviating the setting-up of a separate organization and the training of a new personnel. It is difficult to estimate the total value of this work, but it is obvious that, without this active co-operation, the war effort would have been considerably retarded. The State Government has thrown its weight into the war effort, and has not sought praise or recognition. It has done no more than its duty, but it is well that its achievement should be emphasized as an answer to cheap criticism that the State Government has not been loyal to the Commonwealth Government in the furtherance of the war effort.

Reference is made in the Governor's Speech to the wheat industry, and I would point out that although last year's crop was 48,000,000 bushels, this year's crop promises to exceed it. Victoria never looked better than now. There is a carpet of green from the Murray to the sea, and I have never seen the Mallee looking so well. Everywhere there is the promise of an excellent season, and if there were no war, we should be looking forward to an era of prosperity. It will certainly be a calamity if the coming crop cannot be harvested. Tremendous difficulty will be encountered in securing bags from Calcutta, and it is doubtful whether any will be obtained this year. There are

still some districts where wheat silos have not been completed. The silos should be finished before the harvest because, if there are no bags, storage of wheat will become a problem.

In addition, it might be necessary for Government authorities to make advances of money and material to farmers to enable them to store wheat on the farm. Every grain of wheat will be needed after the war; therefore, the problem of storage must be grappled with. I hope the Federal authorities will be approached by the State Government, the Australian Wheat Board, and the Grain Elevators Board with the object of securing the facilities necessary for the storage of the wheat harvest.

Although no direct reference is made in the Governor's Speech to post-war planning, it is important. Our first duty is to win the war. I believe we shall win it. Some people say we will win in the long run, but I should like people to drop that phrase, and say instead, "We will win in the short run." After the war Australia will face a new era. Things will not be as they were. At the end of the Great War the Government had to deal with the tremendous problem of placing men on the land. Between 300,000 and 400,000 men, representing approximately 8 per cent. of our population, had to be accommodated, and the undertaking was not easily carried out. The chief European nations, however, had called up as many as 20 per cent. of their populations for war service, in addition to the millions employed in munition factories. Their post-war problems were increased by social upheavals, revolutions, and strikes, which were due entirely to the misery and starvation following the war and the demobilization of armies. Those who had served in the fighting forces had nowhere to turn for employment, and there was no food. Old forms of government were thrust aside, and new ideas taken up. Victoria was in a much more happy position, but had the Government been required to find civil employment for 30 or 40 per cent. of our population, it might have had an experience similar to that of the Governments of Europe. When the present war is concluded, however, instead of providing for 300,000 or 400,000 men, five times that number will have to be dealt

with. Our man power has been drawn upon for service in the fighting forces and allied works, and women are also doing their part in the war effort.

Melbourne to-day has a similar appearance to that of London in 1917, when one could see very few men in civil jobs; women were doing the work of cleaning in the railways, driving buses, and following tradesmen's occupations in factories. Our post-war problems cannot be assessed in terms of what happened after the Great War; we shall be faced with a new situation. When members of the fighting forces return they will not placidly sit down and wait for Governments to give them a dole; they will say, "During the war, you made boots, blankets, uniforms, and hats, and clothed and fed us; you made guns, tanks, shells, aeroplanes, and all the things required for the panoply and equipment of war. Why can you not do it now that peace has come? Why cannot we carry on and do something?"

I hope that Governments will not resort to the practice of giving a dole to unemployed workers. We must realize that not only the soldiers who return from the war will suffer, but that members of the younger generation who are now at school will suffer also if a post-war depression is allowed to occur. During the depression following the last war young men of seventeen and eighteen years tramped the country barefooted—I employed some of them—and unable to earn sufficient money to buy a suit of clothes. I hope a system of employment will be instituted that will absorb young and old. I would suggest three ways of bringing this about: The building of water storages and re-organization of irrigation and drainage systems in the Goulburn and Murray valleys and elsewhere; afforestation; and decentralization. The necessity exists for enlarging the present storages and irrigation systems in the Murray Valley, Goulburn Valley, Gipps land, and elsewhere. The population of this State cannot expand unless every drop of water that falls is conserved. A present the watersheds in our forests are by no means valued in terms of their true worth; some are leased for grazing purposes at £1 a square mile. One result is that irreparable damage is being done to forest and watershed. In one instance

where country comprising a watershed is let out, an estimate has been made of the value of water that could be diverted for irrigation purposes. Properly used, the water which falls on that square mile of country—leased at present at £1 a square mile—would have a productive value of £2,000.

The development of forests is a valuable and necessary undertaking. Several great projects are at present standing still through lack of money. Preliminary planning in broad outline is essential. One instance is the work necessary to increase the storage capacity of the Eildon reservoir. A sum of approximately £20,000 would be required to complete the survey of such work, but that is not the chief obstacle. The engineers and technicians who would carry out such a survey are at present serving in our defence forces. The Department concerned should seek an arrangement with the Commonwealth authorities so that immediately peace was declared those technicians and surveyors would be made available to do this preliminary survey work; then, with the general demobilization of the fighting forces, the detailed practical work could be put in hand.

The Hume reservoir has an insufficient capacity for the demands made upon it; its storage should be increased from 1,250,000 acre feet to 2,000,000 acre feet. The Rocklands reservoir needs to be built up, and other jobs undertaken, such as the harnessing of the waters of the Avoca river and the Thompson river. In the case of the Thompson river and the Hume reservoir, diversion of water from those sources could be so planned that electric power might be generated and supplied to surrounding districts; the revenue so derived would pay for the cost of construction and installation of the works. In the Murray Valley irrigation and drainage works are awaiting completion, and developmental works in the Goulburn Valley call for preliminary planning and survey.

The work of afforestation has never been adequately handled in Victoria; this is another field requiring the expenditure of considerable sums of money. The red gum forests along the Murray have been allowed to disappear. When I was a boy, I remember seeing one red

gum log being handled at a sawmill, which produced 4 tons of timber. To-day one could scarcely get a decent fencing post from that locality. The Employment Council sent men into the area during the depression to do some clearing work, but there is an overwhelming need for afforestation work to be undertaken on proper lines in order to restore the growth of red gum forests. Similarly, mountain ash forests have been disappearing from Gippsland. The work of re-establishing these timber assets could provide much employment in the post-war period.

Decentralization has been the subject of many pious hopes and resolutions, but it will not be achieved unless the price is paid for it. In country towns where factories and other industries were once carried on, workers have since come to the cities and those industries have ceased. If the State Electricity Commission would extend its power mains further and further into country areas, and if cheap railway freights were available, a greater inducement would be offered for the establishment of secondary industries in country centres.

I congratulate the Government on its decision not to bring forward contentious legislation during the session. We have not won the war, but we shall win it if we continue to have faith in our country, in our men who are fighting for us, and, above all, in ourselves.

**The Hon. J. M. BALFOUR** (*Gippsland Province*).—I second the motion, but before directly addressing myself to it, I should like to congratulate Mr. Byrnes upon his very informative speech. Honorable members appreciated it, and I think it has indicated that Mr. Byrnes will be an acquisition to this Chamber.

His Excellency said this was the third session of the thirty-fourth Parliament of Victoria. From the first session of the first Parliament of Victoria never has the message of loyalty to the Throne had a greater significance than it has to-day. This is the sixth year of the reign of His Majesty King George VI. Since coming to the Throne His Majesty has followed in the footsteps of his illustrious father, whose simplicity, honesty, and warm human sympathy won the affections of millions of people, not only in the British