

re-thinking on the financial relationships at present existing between the Commonwealth and the States.

It has been suggested that the actual rate of income tax to be established as a Victorian State tax may level out at somewhere around 1d. in the £1. I should hope that in considering the rate of tax to be imposed the Government might perhaps give some thought to increasing the rate that has been suggested. In putting that forward, I am not proposing that of necessity the people of Victoria should be taxed more heavily, but it is my belief that if, by increasing the rate of personal income tax, the Government is enabled to remove some other forms of taxation which I believe are obnoxious to the great majority of people, the Government might, perhaps, be doing even greater service to the State.

The Hon. P. V. FELTHAM.—That would be even better still if it proposed to put a tax on companies instead of a tax on personal incomes.

The Hon. G. J. NICOL.—That may well be so. I am not going to deny the possible validity of that thought. I personally do not like taxes which impinge directly on industry so that inevitably they are incorporated in the cost structure of the production or distribution of goods. Every time a tax is imposed on industry, it inevitably tends to result in an increase in the prices of goods to compensate for the burden. I believe that if income tax, whether personal or company or both, is imposed and some of the direct impositions of industry can be lifted, there may well be a tendency for prices to at least stabilize if not come down. If by such action the Government could achieve some degree of stabilization or reduction in prices, then the proposal to reintroduce State income tax will be more than worth while for the people of Victoria.

The Hon. M. A. CLARKE (Northern Province).—In speaking on the Address-in-Reply debate for the first time, I wish to join with other mem-

bers in expressing my loyalty to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. I also wish to pay a tribute to Her representative in this State, His Excellency the Governor and Lady Delacombe, for the assiduous and hard working way in which they are attending to their duties, and in particular for the manner in which they are visiting the country centres of this State. I refer particularly to visits they have made during recent weeks to Echuca and Wedderburn, where I have been able to observe the keenness and energy that they put into this particular type of work and how interested they are in meeting the local people and discussing their problems.

I am very pleased to see you back in the chair, Mr. President, in what I hope, is good health and what, I also hope, will continue to be good health. But I do regret that Mr. Chandler, the Leader of the House, is absent and is in ill health. You, Sir, and Mr. Chandler are the only two members of this House who were members at the same time as my father was a member of this Chamber. It may be of interest to members to know that Mr. Chandler was successful in a contest with my father in 1937 when there was a re-distribution of electorates. I have pride in informing the House that members of my family have now served in the Legislative Council for a period of 110 years. My great grandfather, my grandfather, my father and two uncles collectively served 110 years in the Legislative Council and the age of the House is 108 years from the date of responsible Government. So my family is just ahead of the House.

It is with much pride that, in association with my colleague, Mr. Feltham, I represent in this Chamber the Northern Province of the State. It is indeed a great compliment to be elected with a very substantial majority at one's first attempt to enter Parliament. I have every intention of representing that province to the best of my ability and to contribute in a constructive way to the

debates in this House. I am particularly happy to be here as a member of the Country Party, because, as a member of an independent party, I feel free to offer criticism to both the Liberal Party and the Labour Party. I feel that an independent party is a very valuable asset to this Legislative Council of Victoria.

I now wish to refer to some problems that exist not only in my own electorate and not only in the Victorian countryside, but also throughout the State of Victoria. I refer particularly to the lack of houses for rental purposes. I know it is the very laudable ambition of the Minister of Housing that as many people as possible should own their own house, but there are quite a number of people for whom this is difficult, if not impossible. I refer particularly to such persons as school teachers, bank officials, railway employees, and post office employees who, during the course of their careers, are required to transfer from one place to another, more particularly when they take promotion.

If a school teacher is posted for three or four years only to a particular town or district it is not feasible for him or her to purchase a house in the area. So I think it is essential that houses for rental should be made available for people who are in a way transients in the course of their careers. I think this lack of houses for rental is quite a vital factor limiting the development of Victoria as a whole.

I think the Minister would agree that, when houses for rental have been built, occupants have arrived pretty smartly to occupy them. I not only refer to houses but believe also that the construction of blocks of flats would be desirable in country towns. I should like the Minister to consider this proposition.

I turn now to the question of education, of which I had some brief experience as a teacher. The Government is doing its best in many

respects by providing extra classrooms and more teachers to improve the situation, but there is a great lack of progress in country technical schools in northern Victoria. I refer particularly to the fact that the Echuca Technical School is accommodated to a large extent in old and outmoded buildings. I hope to develop that theme at greater length on another occasion. The Shepparton Technical School, although it is fairly new, has 200 more pupils than it was designed to hold. There is no technical school at Kerang, from which town pupils have to travel a considerable distance to Swan Hill or Echuca. I urge the Government to give special attention to technical education in the country because it is so desirable. I refer only briefly to that question now and shall return to it at a later date.

One important subject which I think should be aired at this stage relates to apprenticeship supervisors who come under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Labour and Industry. For the whole of Victoria outside the metropolitan area there are four apprenticeship supervisors. It will be appreciated that each supervisor covers a large territory. The supervisor who is situated in Gippsland has been provided with a Government car. I understand that last year he travelled 21,000 miles in that car and that financially the move was a success. However, the supervisors at Bendigo, Ballarat and Geelong have no Government cars available to them, and I think their car allowance cuts out at something like 2,500 miles for the year. After that, they must travel by public transport.

The supervisor at Bendigo has to travel to Melbourne by train and then up to Benalla in order to visit apprentices in that town. When the apprenticeship supervisor takes the comparatively simple trip from Bendigo to Echuca, he gets out of the train and is then on his own two feet because that is the end of public transport. I understand that, if he

travels by taxi in Echuca, he either has to pay out of his own pocket or has difficulty in recouping his expenses. It is particularly difficult for an apprenticeship supervisor to move around a country town because he has to go from one place of employment to another and then may have to visit parents of apprentices, and so forth. Therefore, he has a fair amount of travelling at the end of his journey. I urge the Government to provide cars for the apprenticeship supervisors who are stationed in Bendigo, Ballarat and Geelong. I believe this would double the number of visits they make to the apprenticeships which they have to supervise, this being an important job in our educational and industrial system.

In regard to water supply, I do not think the question of irrigation is as fully understood by all members of this Parliament as we in the north of the State would like. There are two divisions of the seasons. There is, as it were, the wet season and there is the dry season, and I refer to the water that falls from the heavens. In the winter, particularly, drainage is required because the farms are wet, and in the summer irrigation is necessary because the farms are dry. When irrigation was first brought to northern Victoria, the main consideration was to get the water onto the land when it was dry in summer. Unfortunately, the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission failed to provide adequately for drainage, with the result that the water tables in some irrigation areas have risen very steeply and the situation is becoming even more dangerous because salting is occurring.

At Kerang, great damage has been done to pastures and to land by salting. The salt is pushed up by the water table to the surface of the land, and the pasture and the herbage are then killed. The position at Kerang has been bad for some time, and a similar situation is developing at Kyabram. Perhaps it is even more dangerous at Kyabram because valuable crops, orchards and land which

*The Hon. M. A. Clarke.*

have had a large capital investment put into them, are being affected. This might be termed high-priced land—not that the land at Kerang is poor by any means, but the damage caused by salting may be greater at Kyabram than elsewhere.

Recently a research station was opened at Kyabram, and one is also operating at Kerang. These stations are supported, to a large extent, by the local communities, although the Government has from time to time been reasonably generous in its support. I urge the Government to treat this as a matter of great importance, because in this land water tables continue to rise, and, if the salting progresses to affect many hundreds of acres, a great deal of damage will be done. Therefore, it is most important that the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission should give a high priority to drainage. I have discussed the matter with Mr. East, the chairman of the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission, who has informed me that it is a question purely and simply of money. That being the case, I urge the Government to provide sufficient money so that the land may be drained and the damage being done by high water tables and saltation lessened.

In conclusion, I wish to refer to the final report of the Distribution of Population Committee. In my opinion, this report contains a pattern on which Victoria can be developed in a balanced manner. I am happy that the Minister of State Development is so readily available in this House. I believe it is a compliment to this House that the additional portfolio was given to a member of this Chamber. I have no doubt that we will make full use of his services. I ask the honorable gentleman to keep the report of the Distribution of Population Committee by his bedside so that he may from time to time tick off the items which have been completed. I thank honorable members for their indulgence, and hope that for many years to come I shall

be associated in a friendly fashion with you, Mr. President, and with the other members.

On the motion of the Hon. I. A. SWINBURNE (North-Eastern Province), the debate was adjourned until the next day of meeting.

### ADJOURNMENT.

The Hon. L. H. S. THOMPSON (Minister of Housing).—By leave, I move—

That the Council, at its rising, adjourn until Tuesday next.

The motion was agreed to.

The House adjourned at 6.27 p.m. until Tuesday, September 22.

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## Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, September 16, 1964.

The SPEAKER (Sir William McDonald) took the chair at 4.11 p.m., and read the prayer.

### STAMP DUTY.

#### COLLECTIONS ON MARKETABLE SECURITIES.

Mr. TURNBULL (Brunswick West) asked the Treasurer—

What amount of stamp duty was collected in respect of duty on marketable securities in each of the last five financial years, and what is the estimated revenue from stamp duty on marketable securities for the year 1964-65?

Mr. BOLTE (Premier and Treasurer).—In asking the honorable member to repeat this question, I should like to explain that the use of adhesive stamps makes the framing of an answer difficult. The answer that I had prepared might be a little confusing, so I shall confer with the honorable member with a view to ascertaining exactly the information he seeks.

### STATE FINANCES.

#### INTEREST AND SINKING FUND CHARGES ON DEFICITS.

Mr. CLAREY (Melbourne) asked the Treasurer—

1. What annual contribution was paid by the State during the last financial year for interest and sinking fund charges in respect of the total revenue fund deficits of the years 1956-57 to 1958-59 inclusive?

2. What amount was paid during the same period in respect of revenue deficits of previous years?

Mr. BOLTE (Premier and Treasurer).—The answers are—

1. £879,265.
2. £945,469.

### PAY-ROLL TAX.

#### PAYMENT BY GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES.

Mr. CLAREY (Melbourne) asked the Treasurer—

What total amounts were paid in respect of pay-roll tax last financial year by—(a) Government Departments; and (b) semi-governmental and statutory authorities?

Mr. BOLTE (Premier and Treasurer).—The answers are—

- (a) £2,515,239.
- (b) £1,536,973.

### LAKE TYERS ABORIGINAL STATION.

#### POPULATION: HOUSING.

Mr. HOLDING (Richmond) asked the Chief Secretary—

1. What is the present population of Lake Tyers Aboriginal Station, giving age and sex groups and the number of family units?

2. How many houses have been removed from Lake Tyers Aboriginal Station in the last eighteen months?

3. How many houses are now on the station, and how many of these are—(a) occupied by aborigines; (b) occupied by staff; and (c) vacant?

4. How many aboriginal families have left Lake Tyers to be rehoused elsewhere by the Aborigines Welfare Board, giving the names of such families and the locations at which they have been rehoused?

5. Whether any of the families referred to in question 4 have returned to Lake Tyers; if so, how many families?