

matter, and on contemplation, I am sure that honorable members will see that my ruling is the only ruling possible for the conduct of the House in the future. I interrupted the statement of the Leader of the Opposition to find out what it was about, and because of the nature of the caution I gave I allowed it to proceed. I must uphold my ruling. There is opportunity under notice of motion procedure for the same sentiments to be restated and for the matter to proceed in the correct fashion.

I must say that there is very great distinction between a Ministerial statement and a statement of personal explanation by another honorable member. Every honorable member has equal rights, which will be protected in this House, but Ministers have special responsibilities. In the interests of the charge which they have to conduct the affairs of the State, they need to make Ministerial statements and are in a special, privileged position. I must uphold my ruling, and I am sure that the House will see that it will work out for the best in the long term.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

The debate (adjourned from October 1) 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. CRELLIN (Sandringham).—In this, my initial speech in the House, I should like to commence by pledging my loyalty and that of my constituents in Sandringham to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. As the second member to represent Sandringham, I succeed Sir Murray Porter, who served ably in this House for fifteen years and is still serving Victoria as Agent-General in London. Sir Murray Porter was raised to Ministerial rank early in his Parliamentary career and was a member of Cabinet until his retirement early this year.

The services of Sir Murray Porter to Victoria in general and to the electorate of Sandringham in particular were recently recognized by Her Majesty in the award of his knighthood. I thank the electors of Sandringham who have shown their confidence in me by my election as their representative in this House, and I assure them that I shall do my best at all times to act in their interests. Sandringham, which has an electoral enrolment of 26,000, is mainly a residential area with the addition of some small industrial areas. The electorate has a very strong community spirit. I liken this community spirit to a bank, in that the community gets out of it only what it puts into it. The Sandringham electorate is fortunate in having within its boundary many people who go through life without necessarily being recognized for the contribution they make to this community spirit. These people are too numerous to mention individually, but they are worthy of recognition for the contribution they make to the electorate and to the State in general.

The western boundary of the Sandringham electorate, consisting entirely of coastline along Port Phillip Bay, contains many of our most favoured beaches, which are enjoyed by the citizens of Sandringham as well as many thousands of visitors from other parts of the State and other parts of the country. It is pleasing to note that the Government has taken an interest in this matter and has recognized the need to increase subsidies for beach cleaning. In the period between the 1st December, 1969, and the 31st March, 1970—a relatively short period of four months—1,648 cases of abrasions and cuts were treated by bayside lifesaving clubs. This figure, to which must be added the injuries treated privately, indicates the need for adequate beach cleaning, and I commend the Government for its interest.

In considering the subject of beach cleaning, some consideration should be given to why it is

necessary. The primary cause is people, but there is another cause to which some consideration should be given and for which the packaging industry has a real responsibility. The main problem, of course, stems from throw-away containers. The improper disposal of throw-away containers, particularly bottles, after they have been used is one of the main causes of the litter problem on our beaches. It was particularly pleasing to note in the Governor's Speech that the Government intends to create a Victorian Pollution Control Authority. This will provide an authority that is equipped with the necessary powers to overcome the problem of pollution in all forms.

I should like to compliment the Minister of Public Works for the action he has taken so early in his Ministerial career to implement strong measures to overcome the pollution of our coastline and coastal waters. A 24-hour telephone service to a section of the Public Works Department is being well used by the general public, and its value has exceeded original expectations. This was well illustrated last Sunday when, as a result of the 24-hour service, the department was given a prompt report of an oil slick which appeared off Beaumaris. The Public Works Department boat and equipment at Sandringham was immediately utilized to clear up the mess and prosecution of the offending party followed. This is first-class evidence of the attitude adopted by the Public Works Department concerning pollution and the department should be commended for it. Incidentally, the service in question is the first one of its type to be put into operation in Australia.

Workers residing in Sandringham, who travel mainly to Melbourne and other suburbs for employment, are particularly interested in the report of the Metropolitan Transportation Committee released last year. Because of my association with the transport industry, I have closely followed the committee's investigation, and I fully support the concept of a balanced system of transportation. In other

words, no special emphasis should be attached to any one form of transport. It should be recognized that each type of transport has a proper role to play and that trams, trains, buses and private cars must each be used to their best advantage.

One of the major recommendations in the report of the Metropolitan Transportation Committee is the construction of the underground rail loop for Melbourne. It is particularly pleasing to note in His Excellency's Speech that the Government intends to begin the construction of the underground rail loop in the near future. The proposed underground rail system has been the subject of some criticism, both in this Chamber and in other places, but it is a vital necessity to Melbourne's existing rail network, which is a very valuable asset. A facility of this type is lacking in a number of other important cities throughout the world. In this regard I refer to what has happened in San Francisco. The people of that city have decided that they need a similar railway system, which will cost \$1,290 million to construct. This huge outlay will provide 75 miles of twin railway tracks, together with allied equipment. Melbourne's existing electric railway network covers 186 miles. Electric trains, of course, provide an added bonus value in that they do not add to air pollution as do other forms of public transport.

Many of our suburban lines have a considerable reserve capacity to carry additional trains, and thus more passengers, but because of the radial nature of our system, traffic density is controlled by events in the central city area. The central city area tracks and terminals have now reached capacity. The congestion in the Flinders Street-Princes Bridge station area is now considered to be serious. A study of a railway map of Victoria shows that only one link exists between the two halves of Melbourne and, in fact, between the two halves of Victoria. I refer to the railway which traverses the Queens Bridge viaduct. If anything happened

to this viaduct, the railway system of Victoria would be effectively cut in two, which emphasizes the importance of the underground rail loop in the central city area to the whole of the railway system. From a commuter's point of view, the underground railway will provide increased frequency in the service and a tremendous saving in travelling time. The Government's decision to construct the underground rail loop has been particularly well received in all areas of Melbourne and, in fact, in all parts of Victoria. The underground rail loop, together with the new trains which are due to come into service next year, will help the Victorian Railways effectively to compete with private motor cars, the arch enemy of all public transport systems.

Another major item of transport policy recently announced by the Government is its intention to initiate an open inquiry into the transport regulation system. The current system was established when a prominent Australian was Minister of Railways in this House. I refer to the then Honorable R. G. Menzies. The system has been in force for quite a while. Since it was first established, road transport has developed to a degree that was not then envisaged. At the same time, the role of the railways has changed. The time is now appropriate for a review to be conducted with the widest possible terms of reference. This inquiry will be closely followed by all Victorians and particularly country people.

I turn now to the subject of road safety, which is closely allied to transport. This question is exercising the minds of all Victorians. The Parliamentary Road Safety Committee, which has done much good work in this field, has created an awareness of the problem, and the committee's investigations are continuing. I should like to offer some suggestions for consideration by the Road Safety Committee. It is appropriate that a firmer line should be taken in an effort to overcome the problems associated

with road traffic. A licence to drive a motor vehicle on a public highway is regarded as a right by all people who attain the age of eighteen years. It should be regarded as a privilege. If it were regarded as a privilege, the only deterrent to consistent road offenders, apart, of course, from a gaol sentence, would be the removal of that privilege. In today's affluent society, fines are an ineffective method of enforcing the road traffic laws. The removal of the privilege to drive a motor vehicle would have a major impact on driver attitudes towards road safety. The attitude of a great number of our drivers is a contributing factor towards the serious road toll.

The age at which drivers' licences are issued should also be examined. A young man or woman, upon attaining the age of eighteen years, can do two things previously denied him or her, namely, drive a motor car and legally drink alcoholic liquor. It might be wiser to separate these two ages, and perhaps bring the age at which a person can obtain a driving licence down to seventeen and ally this with a comprehensive driver-education programme, thus enabling our young drivers to acquire experience and some skill before they attain the age at which they are legally entitled to buy alcoholic drinks.

Last Sunday in Bathurst, New South Wales, the Bathurst 500 was conducted, a prominent motor sporting event in Australia. Because the prestige of winning this event has a profound effect on the sales of motor vehicles, the big three Australian motor manufacturers and other manufacturers competed in this event. A condition of entry for the Bathurst 500 is that the competing motor cars must be available for sale to the general public. Competition licences, which must be held by the competing drivers, are classified and strictly controlled. However, no restriction is imposed on the purchase of one of those vehicles and, on obtaining a normal driver's licence,

any person can drive them on a public highway. In other words, regardless of the time for which he has held a driver's licence and regardless of the driving skill that he possesses, a person can drive on a public highway the same type of car that has won this important motor event. Frankly, it frightens me when I see being driven on our roads, Ford G.T.s, Monaro G.T.S.s and Valiant Pacers bearing "P" plates. I have seen this occurring as late as this morning and on many other occasions.

A number of proposals, which could be introduced at little or no cost, would provide a substantial contribution to road safety in this State. Qualified licences for aircraft are accepted without question. A person who applies for an aircraft pilot's licence accepts a restriction on the type of aircraft he can fly. I submit that the same type of restriction should apply to high performance motor cars. My discussions with groups inside and outside the Sandringham electorate have indicated to me that the public opinion is firming on road safety and would now support strong, new measures to make roads safer.

I congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, and the officers of Parliament on the excellent documentary film, relating to the procedures, systems and history of our Houses of Parliament, which was shown on television last Sunday night. This documentary will do much to explain to the public of Victoria the workings of our Parliament, of which I have the privilege and honour to be a member.

On the motion of Mr. McCABE (Lowan), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until next day.

JOINT SITTING OF PARLIAMENT.

VICTORIA INSTITUTE OF COLLEGES:
MONASH UNIVERSITY: COUNCIL
VACANCIES.

The **SPEAKER** (the Hon. Vernon Christie).—I have to report that this House today met the Legislative

Council in the Legislative Assembly Chamber for the purpose of sitting and voting together to choose two members to be respectively recommended for appointment to the Council of the Victoria Institute of Colleges and the Council of Monash University, and that Cyril Thomas Edmunds, Esquire, and Robert Clive Fordham, Esquire, have been duly chosen to be so recommended.

LAND CONSERVATION BILL.

The House went into Committee for the further consideration of this Bill.

Discussion was resumed of clause 2, relating to interpretations.

Mr. **BORTHWICK** (Minister of Lands).—I thank honorable members for their contributions to the debate. In any debate on a Bill of this type there will be disagreements about principles. Fortunately on this occasion only a small minority of members disagreed with the purpose of the Bill. A number of points were raised during the second-reading debate and I shall endeavour to answer them now. One concerns what I believe to be a misconception about land controlled by water trusts. Land usage determination on water trust catchments has been the subject of decisions by the Soil Conservation Authority for many years.

Mr. **WILTON**.—Only if the catchment is proclaimed.

Mr. **BORTHWICK**.—That is so, but any catchment of any water supply authority in Victoria can be proclaimed and when this is done the Soil Conservation Authority has a right to make a usage determination for that land without public discussion. It is beyond my belief how any honorable member could think that a responsible body, such as the council proposed to be appointed by this Bill, would make a land usage decision that was detrimental to water supply. I cannot agree that any water trust that controls land has anything to fear from the operations of the proposed council.