

I have established an office centrally in the electorate of Sandringham, but, unlike the office of the previous honourable member, it is open six days a week. I am conducting street stalls in the electorate every fortnight so that I can deliver the message of the Government to the electorate and so that I can hear what the electorate is trying to say. I point out to honourable members on the other side of the Chamber that there will have to be a change in their attitude and they will have to listen to what the electorate is saying to them, rather than listening only to certain public servants if they are to have any chance of getting back into government.

I shall conclude my remarks by referring to a number of local issues on which I am working at present, and I do so to indicate that they are of a relatively straightforward nature and should have been taken up under the previous administration.

Last week the Government made an announcement concerning the likely establishment of a supermarket in the Sandringham area. Debate has raged for more than three years about this matter and there is great relief in the area that finally a decision is to be made about where the supermarket is to go. Unfortunately, as a result of procrastination by the previous administration, the Straws clothing store, which has been in the Sandringham shopping centre for more than 50 years, announced its closing down in the dying days of the previous Government.

I have also had discussions with the Hightt Chamber of Commerce with a view to solving the car-parking problems in their area. The whole of the shopping centre is in a sorry state simply because no discussions of any moment were arranged with VicRail, which has land available for car parking, or in connection with the traffic flow and the arrangement of local streets. Those problems will be resolved. Similarly, I have had discussions with the Minister of Public Works about a Public Works Department depot that has been on the foreshore illegally for five years. The local council has written many letters trying to have it removed but the

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previous administration did nothing, despite the fact that its policy was that non-water related facilities had to be removed from the foreshore. Despite that policy, the depot was constructed on the foreshore, higgledy-piggledy, and it was not removed even though the local council requested its removal, in line with the policy of the former Government.

Another matter of concern has been Housing Commission rents and rebates, and I am delighted that the present Government has been able to introduce a change in policy that will benefit all Housing Commission tenants. I campaigned heavily on the ground that rent and service charges being inflicted on Housing Commission tenants were unfair. I am pleased that, rather than taking the whole of pension increases through decreasing rebates as occurred last year which was of great concern to residents in the electorate I represent, the present Government has limited increases in Housing Commission rents, through a reduction in the rebate, to one-fifth of any pension increase. That represents a substantial benefit to many people in the electorate of Sandringham and they appreciate it.

I close my contribution to the debate by thanking the House for its indulgence and I indicate that I hope to be a strong local member and I am pleased that, in serving on the Economics Committee of the Government, I will be implementing the sorts of changes referred to by the Treasurer in his Ministerial statement today.

Mr DICKINSON (South Barwon)—As the newly-elected member for South Barwon, I congratulate the Governor on his address at the opening of the first session of the 49th Parliament and extend the best wishes of all electors in South Barwon to the Governor and Lady Murray during their Vice-Regal appointment in Victoria.

It is interesting to note the Government's firm intention to bring control over Victoria's assets and to implement programmes in areas such as housing, education, public health and transport to provide the greatest benefit in areas of greatest need. I am pleased to see that

the Government has a firm resolution to overcome the present level of high unemployment and to stimulate the economic area of small business, and that it intends to improve the climate in which business operates. No one on either side of this House can tolerate the high level of youth unemployment in this State and the high level of interest rates with which young family homeowners are faced today. It is to be hoped that the Government's intentions on such forward moves will mean that it ceases to offer excuses for not getting on with its plans and refrains from the all-too-easy role of stating the obvious.

The Government now has a duty to act in the best interests of all Victorians and to put behind it the play acting of blaming a responsible Liberal Government that ruled this State well for 27 years. The fact that the Liberals remained in office for that period speaks for itself. Some who are cynical about how this came about might reflect on the fact that electoral boundaries were said to favour the Liberal and National parties. It had nothing to do with boundaries, it was the people within those boundaries who elected the Governments they wanted. We, in the Opposition, will ensure that when a Victorian Electoral Commission does act, it acts equitably and is not seen as a manipulation by the Government to ensure its retention in office.

I believe the South Barwon electorate will welcome the Government's intention to minimize the incidence of industrial disputes, in particular in schools. No parent likes to have his or her child's education disrupted through wildcat strikes on the part of teachers or their unions. Nor do parents like to see teachers playing politics with the infants in their care. I intend to see that the Government honours its promises to the South Barwon electorate in proper maintenance programmes for schools and in relocation where schools are known to be overcrowded, as well as in the establishment of the rural physical education programme for those schools in need. I will also watch to make sure that the Government honours its promise of support for the further development

of Deakin University and that community health centres and the north wing of the Geelong Hospital, programmed for construction, receive Government priority funding, as proposed by the Government.

I believe the Geelong rail commuters look forward to the realization of the Government's public transport pledge to reduce fares and make rail services to Geelong more efficient. Industry in Geelong would like a standard rail gauge for the area. Pensioners, students and supporting parents also look forward to the travel concession benefits from the Government.

I thank the electorate of South Barwon for giving me the opportunity to represent its people in this Parliament. This is my first opportunity of speaking publicly since the election results were finalized. South Barwon had no declaration of the poll, because the returning officer failed to advise the elected candidate of the time and place for the usual ceremony to take place in front of the returning officer. I am honoured to represent the electorate of South Barwon and its voters, who comprise city people, farmers, labourers, industrial manufacturers, unionists, factory workers, married and single people, students and retired people. They are all equally important to me.

For the first time, the electorate will have an electorate office in Belmont, at 157 High Street, and I will be representing the electorate full time while I remain a member of the Parliament. The electorate covers five municipalities, working in the best interests of all ratepayers and residents. They are the shires of Barrabool, Bellarine, South Barwon and Winchelsea and the Borough of Queenscliffe, and their presidents and mayor—Messrs Ron Anderson, Bill Jones, Max Smart, Fred Rossack and John Caldow, and councillors, need the continuing support of the Government and the Parliamentary representatives of the area in matters affecting the residents of the community.

The South Barwon electorate is very important to the State of Victoria, and to those who live in and holiday in it.

It is the home of 32 000 voters. It embraces part of the rich farmlands of western Victoria—the magnificent Otway Ranges and the closer development areas of Geelong, Highton, Belmont, Grovedale, Ocean Grove and coastal centres from Point Lonsdale to Lorne, so popular to holidaymakers and the many tourists who visit the area.

I intend to represent all constituents resident in the electorate of South Barwon and voice their concern for the needs in this area. Many elderly people have retired to the electorate and need assurance that their future is secure. There are many who are gainfully employed in Geelong and many who commute to Melbourne who wish to see Victoria remain the prosperous State and the financial centre of Australia. Whilst those still unemployed need our help to find jobs, one should not forget that there are many seeking employment who want the reassurance that they live in a community which has the economic "get up and go" for providing employment.

The Geelong "City by the Bay" concept has much to commend itself for the Geelong region. Schools in the area require rationalization and upgrading to meet the needs of the new residents and the growing population areas such as Torquay, Grovedale, Ocean Grove and the Bellarine Peninsula.

I also pay tribute to my predecessor, the former member for South Barwon, Mr Aurel Smith, a hardworking non-headline seeker, who was at all times accessible to the people of the electorate and who introduced constituents to appropriate Ministers from time to time. I too will follow in his footsteps in bringing to the notice of the Government that which is important to the South Barwon electorate, the many families, the children of the future who may get frustrated by Government over-regulation and inefficient public administration.

Whether it be in the areas of running hospitals, train services, local sewerage authorities, or problems in local government or conservation, there will be times to be vocal on these things and

Mr Dickinson

to speak up for the silent minorities who need to be considered by this Parliament.

When a former member for South Barwon made his maiden speech, he was described by an Australian Labor Party member as being better than Nureyev with a tic in his tights.

Whilst I remain a member of this House, I hope my actions for those I represent will speak louder than words. Many who sit in the strangers gallery watching Parliament in the British Commonwealth are often shattered by the conduct of debate which at times could be said to resemble a chimpanzees' tea party.

This may be the one and only occasion when I can say something without jeer or sneer. I thank the indulgence of members in Government for a few seconds to state items that concern me as an Australian. The problems concerning us today will not be solved in the twinkling of an eye, but both State and Federal Governments need answers to the following:

The defence preparedness of Australia;

the eradication of drug trafficking; whether Australia wants Socialism, and the extreme left which controls this area;

whether we want rampant unionism and strikes to continue year after year.

For example, one State Electricity Commission strike cost Victoria \$500 million in lost wages and productivity. Waterfront stoppages in the current year have also cost the State millions of dollars.

Finally, unemployment and inflation needs the attention of all Governments for inflation erodes the savings of the community and destroys the security of those on fixed pensions and incomes.

I cannot help but reflect that under a Federal Labor Government, Australian industries became uncompetitive, demands for higher wages got completely out of hand, productivity in industry decreased and far too many jobs were created in the Public Service.

No Government has a mandate to be Father Christmas at the expense of the community, but has a duty to act responsibly to all, rich and poor alike. I believe for our free enterprise system to survive we must all work and come to grips with the forces which threaten Victoria's and Australia's future. Rewards in any free enterprise society go to men of initiative and enterprise and benefit society generally—honourable members should make no mistake about that.

Liberals are creative—Socialists are takers. It is always the energetic who produce wealth. It is the idle, non-contributor who wants Socialism or something for nothing, who wants to tamper with private ownership and stimulus to private gain.

It is interesting to note that in the Socialist French Government today 43 per cent of its members are former teachers. The Victorian State Government Cabinet today has eight former teachers and twelve former teachers amongst the new Assembly and Council members.

There will always be those who say nasty things about leaders, either political or commercial. Men at the top are not there for their good looks or to win popularity polls. When the Australian Labor Party was not in Government, it could promise the sun, the moon and the stars and never had to deliver the goods. Now is the time when the Labor Party is in Government, swept in on the highest tide ever known in Victoria, and may no Victorian have to see a repetition of the Whitlam era with a wrecked ship of State and the ruination of thousands of small businesses.

There are grave dangers for those Australian or Victorians who believe in big government, that government can provide all the schemes to solve the nation's or State's ills. The inspiration and drive has to come from all our people. It is not realistic to sit back waiting for Governments to cure all. I remind those who sit back that in the long term they will become impatient, disillusioned and angry when the goals are not achieved.

If Victorians are in trouble today it is not because the people have failed, but because Parliamentarians have been weak and have tried to mean all things to all men. This can never be so.

We now live in a world that has seen tremendous changes and presents tremendous challenges for all those who are elected to Parliament.

Australia has a unique role to play in showing leadership in the South Pacific—on the side of freedom, peace and progress as opposed to totalitarianism and reaction. May those in Government show that we have the national character and moral stamina for the 80s.

Mr HANN (Rodney)—Politics certainly is a fascinating art or science when one looks at the dramatic changes we have seen in a matter of months within this Parliament—a situation where people were one day kings and the next day pawns. Sitting on the fringe in the National Party, we have moved from one side to the other, but have seen the former Government move in a dramatic way and in the process lose all its perks, responsibilities and challenges of office.

Likewise we have seen the reverse situation. We have seen the Opposition, which has been in that position for 27 years, move over to the Government benches, elected with a large popular support in this State following the election and given the task of forming a new Government in Victoria, given the responsibility of implementing the policies it has been promoting over a long time. I thought that it would be appropriate at this stage to perhaps examine the reasons why that has occurred. I was first elected to Parliament some nine years ago, and about half-way through that time the rot really started to set in for the Liberal Party. In the early days, the former Premier, Sir Rupert Hamer, was very much in control of both the Parliament and his Government and, in 1976, that Government was returned to office with an increased majority. Thereafter there was a decline which began partly as a result of the complacency of members