The Hon. W. G. FRY (Higinbotham Province). - On this first occasion when I address this House, I express my loyalty to the Crown. I do this with great feeling because I have nothing but admiration for Her Most Gracious Majesty. Indeed, it would be strange if any member of this House did not entertain such feelings because we all remember the stock from which she has sprung; we remember the way in which her late father, King George VI., set an example of courage and fortitude, and we would expect from his daughter the same attributes. Her Majesty has faced many situations which would try any young person, but on all occasions she has acquitted herself with the utmost dignity and has earned the loyalty and gratitude of the Australian nation and the whole world. In these troubled times, we in Australia recognize that Her Majesty has set a pattern of family life and family behaviour which is to be admired.

I feel that I may have been privileged to be among the first to meet His Excellency the Governor in Melbourne, when he exhibited those qualities which now endear him to the people of Victoria. I was present in the drive of Government House when His Excellency arrived in Melbourne. The car in which he was travelling flashed by, and we all thought that that would be all we would see of the Governor, and we were proposing to move out, when a message was received asking us to remain in our places. In a few moments His Excellency came down, and it was his pleasure to meet all and sundry who happened to, be lining the drive at Government House on that occasion.

There are two minor matters to which I wish to refer in this, my maiden speech. With the thoughts of the election on 29th April last fresh in my mind, and with my eventual admission to this House on Tuesday, 18th July, about two and a half months later, it may be of some interest to members to know that members of the Government services -the Public Service, the Teaching Service and the Police Force-are placed in a peculiar and somewhat unfortunate position when elected as members of this Chamber. I am sure the position can be remedied with a minimum of legislation.

If two teachers stood for election, one for the Legislative Assembly and one for the Legislative Council, and they were both elected to Parliament on 29th April last, the Legislative Assembly member received his salary from the following Monday, 1st May, whereas his opposite number in this Chamber received his first cheque on July 14th-about eleven weeks and a $1,000 later. This situation was caused because of a decision to hold the Legislative Council elections earlier and conjointly with elections for the Legislative Assembly, which principle I support. This arrangement may well continue and a longer break could occur after the next election, with a consequent greater increase in the number of dollars lost.

When a teacher is elected, he ceases to be employed by the Education Department and is unable to be employed in government schools. At the same time, he is also ineligible to be sworn in as a member of this House, but remains a member of the Legislative Council elect, a " Mr. Nowhere ". He is in the somewhat Gilbertian position of not being employable by the Education Department, on the one hand, and not being admitted to this House on the other. When this position became clear to the Chief Secretary, I could have received no greater assistance than he gave me. He tried every avenue to alleviate the position, and I am sure that, as a result, steps will be taken to ensure that the same fate does not befall future members of this House.

I pay a tribute to the. officers of the Education Department, from whom I have received courtesy and consideration for 40 years. In various places, I have heard deprecating remarks about public servants, but I place on record my gratitude for the efforts of the officers in trying to ease this position for me.

I also wish to refer to the position concerning superannuation. Recently the Herald newspaper

contained an article indicating that many years ago certain qualifications of property ownership were necessary before a person was entitled to vote at Legislative Council elections. These qualifications have now been dispensed with and the whole idea went out with button-up boats-that may not be the right analogy because button-up boots seem to be in the news again.

When a person who pays superannuation to any Government authority is elected to Parliament, the first blow that he receives is that he becomes unemployed; the second blow is that, having paid large annual superannuation contributions over a period of 40 years to gain security for a wife and family, he finds his payments are refunded and he is no longer covered, and in fact will not be covered until he has been a member of Parliament for a considerable period. This provision needs revising, and I find that I am in good company because the Premier entirely agrees with this and is taking steps to ensure that something will be done for those who may be elected in the future and who, I hope, will have a somewhat easier row to hoe.

I now refer to education in primary schools. I am indebted to the report of the Central Advisory Council for Education-commonly referred to as the Plowden report-which, after many years of investigation in England, has recently been tabled in the British Parliament. It would be expected that in such a report, practically all the available information on education would be tapped. On taking a brief look at education, I find that many changes are essential. It would be a commonplace to say that education is changing, but there are many who resist change. Having dealt with many people in the community, I find there is a widespread attitude: " This is the way my father did his arithmetic, look at the way he got on; this is good enough for me." This attitude is all too common and is one which ignores the immense personal, social and scientific changes which are taking place in the world to-day.

Fifty years ago, and subsequently for many years, primary education aimed in part at turning out a generation of clerks-persons able to obtain quick and accurate information, and to add tallies. However, such a concept falls very short of present-day requirements. Machines will do any bookkeeping that is needed, and a machine needs only someone who has been trained to think correctly.

We have learned a good deal more about the intelligence quotient of people and research has shown that the intelligence quotient represents an interaction between hereditary and environmental circumstances. Although the intelligence quotient is fairly stable in any child in a given environment, tests tend to show that there is an improvement of something like 25 points when a child from a very poor and underprivileged environment is placed in a more suitable environment. Indeed, in this respect children are very much like plants. If plants are put in the right environment and given the right treatment, they will produce good blooms. If not, only half-formed blooms will result.

The second thing which demands a changed education pattern is that over the years children have changed, both physically and mentally. A comparison of children in 1910 and 1950 reveals that on the average five-year-olds in 1950 were 3 inches taller than their counterparts 40 years earlier and that thirteen-year-olds were 4 inches taller. Further work is now taking place in the United States of America and in Great Britain on the age at which children reach maturity, or the menorche, as it is called. This reveals that the mean age at which children reach maturity is twelve in the United States of America and thirteen in Great Britain.

The third major factor which has some impact on our thinking on education is the fact that, whereas previously it was thought that there was no increase in intelligence after a person

reached sixteen years of age, research has shown that in fact some people do not reach maturity until they are twenty years of age.

While discussing this subject, I should like to say a word about the main content of education. Whatever a child does he does for a reason, and every need--whether it is biological, social or personalconstitutes the motivation for the activities which follow. If he satisfies this need--there is no adjustment problem-no delinquent child to set right. If he cannot reduce his tensions by socially acceptable means, he will resort to other ones. Landreth, in his Psychology of Early Childhood, says

It is strongly suspected that early childhood is the period of life predominantly concerned with the origin of neurosis.

Lying and stealing, for example, are some of the symptoms of unsatisfied needs which may arise from the child himself or unsatisfactory relations with his peers or adults with whom he comes in contact, from an inability to achieve success at any level, or from conditions within a school or within a class which make it impossible to satisfy his basic urge or his basic drive.

So we are dealing with a generation fundamentally different physically and mentally from previous genera-tions and the techniques and curricula of a by-gone age are useless to-day. In view of what I have said, it is obvious that classes must be of a size which allow individuals to progress at their own rate and to taste the success which is every child's right at all levels. Rooms must be designed to allow for a correct balance between activity and rest while at the same time providing the necessary climate and environment wherein children are able to share experiences, to learn the art of communicating with others, and to foster initiative in planned activities which yield satisfaction to them.

Children in our primary schools, of course, will learn best when they are happy, when they are secure and when they are loved for their own sakes; and, conversely, will be frequently upset and will be upsetting influences in the community eventually if, during school years, they have been rejected by their peers, by their teachers or by their parents. These points have very definite implications in building programmes for schools.

Every child is different. Every child grows physically and mentally at his own pace. It is useless to force him, and promotion by blocks of children in grades is harmful, for a child may never taste success in a grade; he may be a " tail end Charlie ". It must be realized that the grade is composed of individuals. Some may be grouped together for instruction, some may be treated individually as being far ahead of the various groups in the class, while some may be far behind and in need of just as careful remedial teaching. So it follows that in such a situation there is a need to use to the full -all modern aids, individual assignment cards, programmed learning of all kinds, closed-circuit television, and the many audio and visual aids available for learning.

To do this efficiently in overcrowded rooms is quite impossible. An ultimate aim of probably twenty children in a class should be set with, in my opinion, an immediate maxi-mum of possibly 30. I am as well aware as anyone else of the implica-tions involved in making that state-ment. To start with, it means a duplication of the teaching strength. It requires further teachers' colleges, fully staffed - and I might say that it was with great pleasure that I noticed that the Commonwealth Government has enabled another step forward to be taken in this regard. Victoria is contemplating a change to a three-year training course in primary teachers' colleges, and in this regard I should like to quote from a report on page 493 of Children and Their Primary Schools. A

small sub-committee which came before the Board of Inquiry reported thus

Nevertheless, we are concerned with the effect on the size of primary school classes, particularly infants classes, of the rapid and increasing wastage of young women teachers. We can expect that of every 100 women who enter the training colleges, only 47 will be in the schools after three years' service and after six years only 30.

We think it of great importance that staffing standards should be rapidly im-proved. But we are bound to ask whether it is justifiable to expand the colleges of education even faster than is planned only to achieve a diminishing return in women teachers staying on in the schools. We also believe that with the changing pattern of the lives of women - their early marriage and child-bearing, their subsequent length of life and increasing tendency to want to work - there is a need to look critically at the most effective way of giving them pro-fessional training so that they may be enabled to use it most productively.

For these reasons we suggest. that the three years of teacher training, might, for some students, be divided into a basic two years with a third year further training to be taken after a few years in the schools. Thus the third year would only be taken by those who intended to stay in teaching, and the spaces released in the training colleges could be used to increase the number of teachers entering the schools or eventually for in-service training. The present courses of advanced study for teachers with at least five years' experience might be the founda-tion for the third year's course, but there is a variety of patterns it could take. It would rarely be residential.

The scheme would provide 10,000 more teachers in the schools during the first half of the seventies. It would pro-vide help at a time when the staffing situa-tion will be difficult with rising numbers of children and advances the elimination of classes over 40 by three years.

Because of the opportunity to experience a long period of teaching and then go back to theoretical work the "sandwich" three--year trained teacher might well be a better one than the continuous three-year trained teacher.

This note contains only suggestions . . .

I commend the report to the people who are dealing with this matter. I feel that it is well worthy of con-sideration. In the light of the effects that environment has on child per-formances, there is a section of our schools which requires priority treat-ment. By "priority treatment", I imagine possibly loaded salaries to keep a stable teaching staff, for example. Some of these areas have been for many years starved of new schools, new houses and new investment. The accent is on the provision of new secondary schools, often cheek by jowl with antiquated primary schools, and the result has been a loss, in these areas, of the people such areas can least afford to lose--those up and coming young people who have decided to move to localities where there is more space, where there are modern homes and where there are modern and better primary schools.

Where regeneration is taking place, a new factor makes attention to some inner suburban schools most neces-sary. I refer to houses, often very large and on large allotments, in the inner suburban areas of Melbourne, which have been occupied perhaps by an elderly person and which are now being sold and replaced by blocks of flats, each supplying numbers of children to a school. This has created a need for a continuation of schools at one time thought to be almost obsolete. In these schools, which are the complete antithesis of those being provided by the Education Department at present, there are depressing approaches to the areas, with parked

vehicles crowding the footpaths, narrow corridors and often totally inadequate staff rooms and a complete lack of storage space used by teachers, with small rooms for group teaching and the other things I have mentioned completely missing.

Usually, a few devoted teachers form the nucleus around which the staff revolves. In one such school I visited, three teachers had been there for periods of between ten and twenty years; for the rest, there has been a rapid turnover of staff and pupils alike because many seek what are to their minds more congenial areas.

What I feel is needed in each area is a perfectly normal, thoroughly well-planned, modern, well lit, primary school, such as those which have been built in the outer areas, for it is in the establishment of the relation-ships and rich experiences found in pleasant school surroundings that the basis of good co-operative citizenship is first laid.

Further, it is necessary that schools in such areas should provide the people in the district with adult fare where this is not provided in high schools or technical schools. There is no reason why these schools should not provide adult classes which will attract people to them and provide one of the most necessary require-ments for a successful education system to be established, namely, contact between home and school.

It is also vital that in the growing and rapidly developing areas children are not deprived of their right to a first-class primary education. It does not necessarily follow that education, depending as it does on the growth of the economy, must necessarily trail along behind such growth; rather, it should contribute to that growth. Nor does it follow that a fair and equitable state of affairs exists when each area has an equal number of class-rooms, teachers and so on. It does not follow also that any Government has responsibilities to expand rapidly in the newer and generally more capable areas within the limits of its resources and to attend to the less-favoured areas when opportunity permits. It is fair to assume that equal advantages for many of the less fortunate areas will be possible only when in fact they receive equally ungenerous treatment.

A study would therefore appear to be indicated embracing the occupations, the number of migrants, those deprived of parents, living conditions -for example, families living in one room, size of families, and so on-to ascertain the extent to which the special aid to which I referred is necessary.

It would be worse than folly to divert part of the funds from the newer and more fortunate areas-that is, to impoverish them in order to build up the less fortunate. What is needed is a policy of replacement with some specific amount earmarked for each school for minor improvements each year. For the positive eradication of such features as inadequate lighting, unattractive toilets, bad staffroom accommodation, and small playgrounds, an amount of, say, $12,000 to $15,000 on each school selected should be expended annually over and above the normal State-wide allocation of maintenance moneys.

I realize that the key to all that I have been saying is that greater amounts of money must be expended on education. I realize that the Premier and Treasurer is aware of the situation and that he has allocated the sum of $239,200,000 out of the total Budget of $603,006,968, or approximately 39 per cent., for the purposes of education. However, if we accept the proposition that good attitudes of truth, of honesty and of upright living are founded in the primary schools and backed up in the homes of the people, and that these attitudes are the very foundations and indeed the life-blood of a strong nation, then we agree that money, whether it is obtained from

Canberra or elsewhere, must be found.