

tied up with the Liberal Party. Farmers should remember that united they will get somewhere, but divided they will fall. It is essential that primary producers achieve unity.

I have had many requests from shire councils and people living in my province for the establishment of a teachers' college in Hamilton. Country parents should not have to send their children away from home. Educational facilities should be decentralized. People would remain at Hamilton and other nearby towns if a teachers' college was established in the district.

I wish to address my remarks to Ministers of the Crown, and I exclude from them the Leader of the House and the Minister of Public Works. Some Ministers adopt the practice of visiting my province and do not tell me of their intentions. It is wrong that they should do this. The Minister for Local Government was in Heytesbury recently, and I knew nothing about it. The Minister of Health recently visited my province but I had no knowledge of his visit. The practice of Ministers making unannounced visits to areas and not informing the members concerned prevents them from effectively representing their provinces. If the utmost assistance is to be obtained for people whom members represent they must receive co-operation from Ministers. It disappoints me to read in a local paper that a Minister has been present in my province, which extends from Horsham to Cobden, and that I have been unaware of it. I believe that Ministers should inform me when they intend to visit my province; I should not have to approach the Minister.

The Hon. C. A. M. HIDER (Monash Province).—I express on my own behalf and on behalf of the electors of Monash Province our loyalty to and affection for Her Majesty the Queen, and trust that it will be conveyed to her. A constitutional monarch is so much a part of the democratic way of life that we come to assume the presence of Her

Majesty and, in doing this, I believe we do not place enough emphasis on our duties and obligations to her.

In his Speech, His Excellency the Governor referred to the welfare and happiness of the people of this State. I believe this to be the essential basis and the essential meaning of democracy. It involves the acceptance of an underlying assumption, namely, the importance of the individual and acceptance of his value as an individual rather than as a mere unit in society. From this, several things flow. The first, and perhaps the most important, is the right of the individual to freedom—his right to act and express himself freely having regard to the welfare and happiness of others. This is a freedom which is basic to our concept of democracy.

From the right to freedom flows the necessity to create a society and an environment in which an individual, who is the basis of this society, can develop his own potential without the need for a paternalistic State or a "big brother" to tell him how and when he is to do that which he feels he should do. He must act as a mature man, who makes his own decisions and accepts responsibility for them.

It follows that an individual must participate in political activity. This is important, because decisions taken by Parliament can have an important effect upon his welfare and happiness; in addition, political activity enriches him as an individual and allows him to develop himself.

I turn now to discuss the main point I wish to make tonight, namely, the importance of State Parliament. Parliaments are extremely important; in fact they are vital in a democratic structure. Because of the existence of a State Parliament, the individual is close to the Parliamentary process and the State Parliamentarians are close to the people. They do not move. They are very easily seen and very easily contacted, and the issues that this House and another place consider are more

local, more immediately urgent, more important to the individual, and often more easily understood.

Centralism, on the other hand, if taken to its logical conclusion mitigates against democratic government. By definition, a central Government tends to be remote, particularly in a country of Australia's size, and an individual has trouble in feeling involved, in feeling that he is participating, and in communicating with his elected representative. In addition, the danger always exists that a Federal member of Parliament will lead a cloistered life as a result of a communication gap which exists between him and his electors. Because it is centred away from the biggest business areas, the Public Service is also likely to develop an ivory tower outlook and become a service which is so remote that it fails to understand the needs of the business community and also, perhaps, the needs of the farmer.

Response of the Public Service and the response of Parliamentarians in the Federal sphere to the needs of the electorate can be slow. I am not necessarily saying that they are slow, but I believe that the danger is there if centralism is taken to its extreme. Therefore, to counter this situation, there needs to be a proper balance between a State Government and a central Government, but this cannot be achieved having regard to the financial structure which exists at the present time. If the States are not given financial responsibility, surely they must become merely administrative agencies of a centralized monolith.

Federalism was intended to give the State and Commonwealth Governments different areas of responsibility and it presupposed that there would be real independence in different areas. In recent years, the States have merely administered; they have not had a direct financial responsibility. Although State Governments may have been blamed by the electorate in connection with certain failings, the fact is that they do not have

ultimate financial responsibility. The Federal Government derives that power from its control of the purse strings.

In areas such as education, the remoteness and irresponsibility of the Federal Government is clear, in that it seems to be unconcerned about how funds are spent so long as they are spent. This is a development which, I believe, must be arrested if we are to have a democracy in which an individual can participate and can feel that his problems and his interests are important.

If development of this type continues, I believe that people will come to feel more and more that they are being disfranchised, and surely this is symptomatic of the demonstrations and sit-ins we are now having. It is due to a failure of communication between those in the electorate who have a problem and those at the top who are endeavouring to solve that problem without having the slightest idea of what it is.

His Excellency the Governor, in his comments in relation to the welfare and happiness of the people of this State, recognized that there are spiritual or intellectual matters which are now as important as more material things and which have been described as the quality of life. That expression, although now tending to become a cliché, is one which has been well used over the last two or three years in Australia. It is an expression which could be described as the theme of the 1970s as distinct from the 1950s and the 1960s, when the community was attempting to overcome problems associated with a depression and with the second world war.

A basic concern, which is implicit in the expression "quality of life", is that one should be concerned that the environment in which he proposes to live is one which will enable him to develop his own abilities and one which will offer the same opportunity to individuals of the future. During the past two or three years, the community has realized that harm caused by pollution or by the des-

truction of our environment can ultimately be more damaging than a mere lack of food. The community has realized that the danger of a lack of clean air in the future is very real.

Destruction of our environment affects not only this generation but also future generations, and it deprives the individual of the enjoyment he should experience from his surroundings. A clear example of what happens in areas in which pollution is uncontrolled is the situation which exists with regard to the Crown of Thorns starfish and the damage it is causing to the Great Barrier Reef. That is a clear example of natural environment being upset by man's misuse. The effect of the use of pesticides, the effects of radiation, and so on, are only now being recognized by the general public as real problems which must be resolved.

It is for those reasons that the people now insist that Parliament should give priority to the problems of pollution and to conservation. Conservation involves the preservation not only of our natural resources, but also of our historical buildings which have been developed over the past 100 years and which cannot be replaced. I am amazed to think that a city such as New York probably has only four buildings which were built before the year 1900. I should hate to think that a similar situation could arise in this State.

In conclusion, I believe that the theme expressed by His Excellency is certainly a continuation of the democratic ideas which have been held by members of the Liberal Party and, I am sure, by all other honorable members in this House. The community has recently given a lead to politicians that they must concern themselves with the welfare and happiness of individuals, not merely with regard to matters of quantity, but also with regard to matters of quality. I hope that during my stay in this House I may be able to make a contribution in respect of what I believe to be the overriding problems of the next ten years, if not of the rest of the century.

The Hon. C. A. M. Hider.

On the motion of the Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH (Doutta Galla Province), the debate was adjourned.

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

FOOTWEAR REGULATION BILL.

This Bill was received from the Assembly and, on the motion of the Hon. G. L. Chandler (Minister of Agriculture), for the Hon. V. O. DICKIE (Minister of State Development), was read a first time.

ADJOURNMENT.

The Hon. G. L. CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—By leave, I move—

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

The motion was agreed to.

The House adjourned at 9.14 p.m. until Tuesday, October 6.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, September 30, 1970.

The **SPEAKER (the Hon. Vernon Christie)** took the chair at 4.4 p.m., and read the prayer.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE.

The following answers to questions on notice were circulated:—

LAW DEPARTMENT.

MURDER INQUESTS AND TRIALS: CASES AWAITING HEARING.

Mr. TURNBULL (Brunswick West) asked the Chief Secretary—

1. Whether any inquests into suspected murders are awaiting a hearing by a coroner; if so, what are the inquests and when the suspected crime was committed in each case?

2. Whether any persons are in prison awaiting such hearings; if so, whom, what are the reasons for any delay in the hearing, and how long each such person has been in prison?