

Last week, with relation to the Footscray strike, the secretary for the Bendigo regional branch of the Victorian Teachers Union spoke out in high dudgeon over the fact that the Footscray teachers were being punished for obeying union directives. This is the crux of the matter in educational disputes today. Teachers cannot serve two masters. If we are to have a stable educational system for our children, teachers must decide once and for all who is boss. On the one hand, we have the Education Department taking an over-all view of the needs of the State within the framework of the money available, to decide what is best for the children of Victoria. Within that framework, principals are appointed to put into action departmental policies. On the other hand, we have teacher unions trying to run the State education system and demanding that teachers follow their directives, regardless of whether they are in the best interests of students or the taxpayers. It is an impossible situation, and I must support the suggestion made by the honorable member for Burwood that the time has come to declare teaching an essential service. Only then could we give children what is their legal right, namely, a stable and uninterrupted education.

In my own electorate, students from Mount Clear Technical-High School have missed approximately one day a fortnight through strike action since the beginning of this year. In such a situation students are demoralized and parents lose faith in the education system.

Over the years we have witnessed many changes in school administration and conditions due to pressure from teacher unions. Some of those changes have been good but some have had an adverse affect, especially from the point of view of the teachers. If one looks, for instance, at the staffing formula for primary, secondary and technical schools, one will see clear evidence that those who were most militant have by far the best teacher-pupil ratio. The same is true in the case of teacher assessment procedures in the Secondary Schools Division. The Victorian Secondary Teachers Association

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held a gun at the head of the Director-General of Education until it got its own way, even although this meant broken promises to other members of the teaching profession. The Government must be particularly careful that it gives due regard to the interests of those teachers who do not strike to get their own way.

As a new member of this House, I look forward to actively representing the people of Ballarat South and contributing to the governing of this State. Finally, I assure His Excellency the Governor of the loyalty of the people in the electorate of Ballarat South to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Mr HOCKLEY (Bentleigh)—Mr Speaker, at the outset I congratulate you on your elevation to the important position you now hold. Because of your apparent youth, Sir, I researched the ages of Speakers of this House as far back as 1856, and I found that you are the third youngest speaker in 123 years of the history of this House. I, too, can claim something of a record. I believe that I am the oldest new member to be elected to the 48th Victorian Parliament. My colleague, the honorable member for Springvale, may dispute that claim, but if he does he will have to produce a birth certificate. I think that I overcame the biggest margin in Victoria to win the seat of Bentleigh—it could be said: An old dog for a hard road.

I wish to thank the staff of this Parliament for their courtesy and patience, particularly during the installation period of this, the 48th Parliament. Having regard to the high turnover of members, they have been most helpful in every possible way. The catering on the occasion of the official Opening of Parliament could be termed a monumental achievement. The staff are to be commended for that. I speak from 34 years of experience in that field. Their success on that occasion was no accident. I wish also to express my gratitude to the people of Bentleigh for placing their faith in me and electing me to represent them in the Legislative Assembly. I am fully aware of the responsibility that has been bestowed

upon me, and I intend to represent, to the utmost of my ability, every person in my electorate.

Prior to 5 May the Bentleigh electorate had been represented for twenty years by one of this Parliament's longest serving members, Mr Bob Suggett—and I think that is another record. As the new member for my area, I accept the challenge to try to overcome the many, varied problems which affect the everyday lives of the people of the Bentleigh electorate. Having lived and mixed in the local community for several years, I have become aware of a number of problems which I intend to deal with. In particular, these matters concern public transport, employment and education. Although there are a number of other matters to which I could refer, I shall elaborate on only a few of them.

During the two and a half years of my campaign to win the seat of Bentleigh for the Australian Labor Party I visited more than 6000 of the 14 600 homes in my electorate, and I met about 14 000 people on a person-to-person basis. Doubtless most honorable members have done the same thing; perhaps for that reason many of them are here today. During my campaign I met people whose lives have been shattered by the collapse of Associated Securities Ltd. Many of these people saw their life savings disappear overnight.

I trust that even at this late stage the Government will instigate an inquiry into what is to many people a financially ruinous disaster. I could give particulars of five separate cases in which widows have lost their life savings and couples their lump sum superannuation payments which they had invested because the names of prominent and widely-respected people had appeared on a prospectus. In my campaign I met teenagers who had applied for shop assistants' positions only to be told they were over-educated and that they had no job experience. Some of these teenagers had spent twelve years at school, qualified for the higher school certificate but had been unable to find any worth-while employment.

Many of the problems which have been reported to me during the past two and a half years have spilt over from some neighbouring electorate. I am in the position of being surrounded by active and efficient members who now represent the electorates to which I refer. I have already directed many matters to these new members for attention.

I was privileged to have been invited to join what was locally referred to as the telephone box committee, which was formed by Mr Clyde Killingsworth to save Moorabbin's oldest building, known as "The Grange", from the council's bulldozer. That building is about 130 years old and in excellent condition for its age. Reputable architects have expressed the opinion that it is well worth restoring. Testimony to the success of the members of that committee is the fact that this building has survived threats of demolition and it now has a good chance of becoming the focal point of an eventual cultural development.

During the past two and a half years I have met many people who were fearful of the growing signs of confrontation between employer and employee. I believe that Australia has much to learn from the West German system, which embraces the knowledge and skills of workers in the work place to the benefit of themselves, their unions and their country.

One must not forget the historic Bentleigh pedestrian rail underpass, which is a lasting monument to the need for the revision of the Uniform Building Regulations. This costly white elephant floods during rain; it is treacherous for the very young and the very old; it is used as a public lavatory after dark, and it sports the foulest graffiti. The only things the underpass lacks are pedestrians. I have met people in my electorate whose quality of life has been seriously eroded by the effects of Sunday football. Many of these people have seen the valuation of their homes reduced to the point where they are unsaleable because of noise from traffic and Sunday football.

During the past two and a half years I have met many hundreds of people and numerous local organizations wanting a tram service to be continued down the Nepean Highway, at the same time that the widening programme is being undertaken. Also, I met people who would like to know the findings of a feasibility study conducted into that project. These people feel that such a project would relieve the traffic pressures on residents near the Moorabbin football-ground. They feel also that it would relieve pressures on some businesses along the highway. In addition, it would offset the demand for scarce expensive motor fuel. Moreover, it would provide mass transport facilities to the many schools in that area.

I found schools that are dilapidated for want of cyclical maintenance. Several of these schools are in neighbouring electorates. Doubtless these matters will now be taken care of by the honorable members for Glenhuntly, Heatherton and Oakleigh. I found a school canteen which has been condemned by the local health authorities but which is still being used—out of sheer necessity—to provide meals for hundreds of students. I speak of the McKinnon High School canteen, which requires extensive renovations—in fact it is a badly converted shelter shed. The honorable members for Glenhuntly and Footscray have been made aware of this serious position—in fact they have both visited the area in question.

I found the shopping centre at East Bentleigh had been without a public toilet block for the entire 26 years of its existence. I am pleased to report that as a result of publicity given to this subject by myself, relief for the shoppers of East Bentleigh is now in sight. I found a pressing need for extended meals-on-wheels services to many frail, aged people, a great number of whom live alone. Many of these people are becoming incapable of coping with even the most basic self support. At present there is no obvious source from which these needs can be met.

During my numerous visits to every part of my electorate I found a widespread need for pre-school child care

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services. Many young mothers are willing to organize and administer these services. I found a pressing and urgent need for an electorate office in Bentleigh. For about two years before 5 May—and since—my home has been constantly invaded by deputations from teachers, parent organizations, pensioner representatives and endless telephone calls for assistance and advice on all manner of matters. I am pleased to advise the House that 735 Centre Road, East Bentleigh, will shortly become Bentleigh's first electorate office in 24 years.

A deep concern prevails among parents about unmanned school crossings. The same concern is felt by shoppers in the Bentleigh shopping complex where there is a complete lack of pedestrian crossings and where people constantly run the gauntlet of heavy traffic in order to go about their daily business.

I have had a representation to me about the appalling state of disrepair in the 70-year-old Kingston kitchen, where more than 300 meals-on-wheels and hundreds of hospital meals are produced daily under conditions which would not be tolerated in any private food-handling organization. Doubtless my colleague, the honorable member for Heatherton, will take a close interest in this matter in the future.

They are but a few of the challenges confronting me in the Bentleigh electorate. On behalf of the people of Bentleigh, I accept the challenge to overcome these problems. I will do this in co-operation with the Parliament, the Government, semi-government and local councils.

On the motion of Mr Reynolds (Gisborne), the debate was adjourned.

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The **SPEAKER** (the Hon. S. J. Plowman)—Yesterday I gave an undertaking to the House that I would look into the question of the order of calling on notices. My research reveals that on 8 March 1978 the Deputy Leader of