

seems to be out of all proportion as regards the responsibility of the Federal Government towards the mental health services in the State.

The State is against spreading its services, not only in the metropolitan area but also throughout country areas. The list contained on page 14 of the explanatory memorandum attached to the Bill indicates that every effort will be made to share the funds available and to develop the facilities so that people will not have to travel long distances for treatment at mental health establishments.

I also refer to alcoholism and drug-dependency services. The increasing problem of alcoholism and drug abuse in the community warrants a greater allocation of funds to allow not only for capital works but for the actual operations of these services. No one will dispute the fact that there is a problem in the community of alcoholism and of drug abuse. An examination of the appalling statistics of disasters on the roads indicates the high proportion of people affected by drugs and alcohol who are involved. The time has come when more attention should be paid to the development of these services.

I do not wish to touch on any other matter to any extent other than to say that I am happy that the Public Works Department and the Education Department have seen fit in the allocation of money this year to call tenders for the building of a multi-purpose hall for the Wellington High School which is situated in my electorate in Mulgrave. This school has been developed fairly quickly, in spite of restricted funds. The addition of this hall will do much to consolidate the activities of the school.

One area needs an additional high school. I refer to an area further east which embraces part of the electorate of Dandenong. A school is needed to serve the northern end of the Dandenong electorate and the eastern end of the Springvale electorate. The first stage of the school is in progress and I commend the Government for that.

*Mr. Billing.*

I recommend to the Education Department associated with the Public Works Department that an urgent survey of the area be made with a view to getting on with the job of providing a secondary school there.

The funds allocated for the school programme have also enabled a start on the Brandon Park Technical School which, in the south-eastern part of Melbourne will be the first co-educational technical school to cope with the demand being made by girls for technical training. The nearest such school is at Huntingdale and is overcrowded. It causes students to travel unnecessarily long distances from the suburbs farther east. To the south the Karingal Technical School provides a service but it is far too distant to meet the demands made, particularly by girls, in the Mulgrave subdivision of the electorate of Springvale.

I commend the distribution of the limited amount of money in this Public Works and Services Bill 1977 but speak for school councils and all who are associated with the need for public works when I say that we have confidence in the Minister of Public Works to ensure that our representations are acceded to in so far as is possible within the funds at his disposal.

**Mrs. TONER** (Greensborough): Looking at the Public Works and Services Bill, I note that \$158.1 million has been allocated for school buildings and school sites. Like the previous speaker I regret the limitations in the amount of money available but if the money is limited, it should be wisely spent. I am particularly concerned about this matter in relation to the electorate of Greensborough.

The previous member for Greensborough, Mr. Vale, was also concerned about this matter. In the Preston region which covers the Greensborough electorate, last year, of the amount of \$10.5 million allocated for expenditure in 1976-77 on major projects, only \$8.39 million was spent; more than \$2 million was returned.

Yet, for the whole of the State only \$6.2 million was not spent. It seems, therefore, as though in the region which covers my electorate we have had a bad deal or poor treatment from those in power, or perhaps mismanagement from those in administrative positions. That concerns me greatly.

In that area there are twenty major items on the priority list, and these are reshuffled from time to time, according to who is jumping up and down the most at the particular moment. I believe parents should not have to do this sort of thing for their children's education. Mr. Speaker, you may have been present at the opening of the Greensborough Liberal Party campaign. It must have been embarrassing for the people who drove past the Greensborough Primary School and who noted that the parents of pupils at the school had to put up signs announcing that "The school is a health hazard," that "30,000 cars a day pass the school" and, "Quiet, children at work." That is what the parents had to resort to, although they did not like doing it. They want their children to have a decent education and decent facilities as a right, and they want the limited amount of money available to be well spent.

It was in relation not only to major works that the money was not spent, but also to the maintenance of school buildings. In the Preston region in my electorate, \$1.205 million was allocated for this purpose and only \$1.113 million was spent. There has been a general failure to manage the money competently. The people of Apollo Parkways, a new subdivision in my electorate, have been waiting for a school for some time. They were promised another school, but suddenly, prior to the election, they were offered a portable complex immediately. They want a permanent building and I do not blame them for that. They were prepared to wait a couple of years longer to be absolutely certain that they

would not have to put up with portables, as did Greensborough Primary School, for twenty years.

I also understand that it costs \$150,000 to re-site portables. It appears to be another case of false economy. Indeed, four projects were promised in the Greensborough electorate during the past seven weeks; so the people there are inclined to think there should be by-elections more often. I believe the planning should go ahead in an area that is developing at the rate Greensborough is, and that there should be some thought before residential development is allowed to occur.

As a member of the local council there for years, I have tried to draw to the attention of State Government the fact that development is going on. When it is expected that there will be a certain number of people in the area at a certain time, nothing is done about providing school sites. It seems that rezoning occurs and residential development begins, and then the school site is acquired, at residential land prices. That worries us greatly because it means there is less money to go around. The people in the area are industrious and want to know that their hard-earned tax dollars are wisely spent. It worries them when this does not occur.

As an example of that, I cite one instance. Development is going on in the Progress Road area in Eltham North. For some time we have insisted that a school site was necessary. The council investigated a number of sites and even, at the instigation of the State Government and the Education Department, was going through the zoning process in relation to one site, but suddenly the Education Department acquired a completely new site. From that acquisition the land developer made a profit of 140 per cent by selling 22.7 acres of extremely steep and unsuitable hillside in Greensborough to the Victorian Education Department.

According to the Titles Office records, three-quarters of the land was bought by R.D.C. Projects (Victoria) Pty. Ltd. on the same day that it was sold to the Education Department. The Education Department bought this undeveloped land in Progress Road for \$365,000 on 30th August, 1976, and on the same day the titles of three-quarters of the land was transferred to R.D.C. Projects (Victoria) Pty. Ltd., which is a subsidiary of R.D.C. Holdings Ltd. of Sydney, from various landowners. This means that R.D.C. paid a total of about \$250,000 for 38 acres of land, a little over \$6,500 per acre and of that 38 acres they sold 22.7 acres to the Education Department for \$365,000, but were still left with 15 nice acres which can be developed. The site is rather an unlikely place for a school, as anybody who has seen it would realize. There are many car bodies lying around, and the council has never considered it to be an appropriate site.

That is an instance of the way in which money has been wasted. We regret the limitations of the money to be spent but it seems to us that if it was spent wisely, more value would be obtained. The people of Greensborough are extremely intelligent and like to be involved in the planning process. They know the needs of the children and I believe they are bitterly resentful about being left out in the cold and about having to allow development to go along with no facilities to match it being provided.

Another problem which arises relates to the Austin Hospital. The building programme there for the coming year was cut in half. That greatly concerns a number of people of my electorate who have been working on the site. Unemployment is a major problem. As the State Government has failed in its Budget to allocate any money for job creation programmes, it should be careful that its public works proceed, in order to provide jobs. That simply has not happened.

Mrs. Toner.

While I am here I shall be trying hard to ensure that nobody in administration, and that nobody in the State Government forgets Greensborough again and that the people of Greensborough and I, their representative, are involved in the planning process. The educational priority list contains more than twenty items and, if completed at the present rate of one a year, that brings us to the turn of the century, when our young children will have children at the school. At that rate of completion, our needs will never be met. We must move on and I am determined that nobody in this Parliament or in the Education Department will forget Greensborough.

**Mr. McLAREN** (Bennettswood): It is pleasing to have the honour of following the honorable member for Greensborough and to be able to congratulate her on her election and on her maiden speech in this House. That speech has shown that the honorable member will be able to make many contributions to discussions in this Chamber.

The Bill deals with public works and services in 1977 and covers perhaps the greatest expenditure of any Bill dealt with by this House. The fact that it provides for the expenditure of \$399 million is an indication of the responsibility its passage places on honorable members and on the Government. In the year ended 30th June, 1977, the actual expenditure was \$276 million and in the present financial year the amount will be increased to \$303 million.

I repeat what I have said on a number of occasions: The Victorian Parliament and all Australian Parliaments should examine expenditure of this kind through an expenditure committee. This year, several honorable members, of whom I was one, had the opportunity of visiting the House of Commons. We realized that the House of Commons takes much pride in being able to dissect all expenditure approved by it. The members of its expenditure committee have the opportunity of calling