

background and experiences, and we must acknowledge the positive aspects of being actually and potentially bilingual.

For children from English-speaking backgrounds, the need is also great, for to be monolingual in today's world is a disadvantage indeed. We believe that all children should have the opportunity to be familiar with another language, and what better starting place than within their own community, using a language where they can communicate with their friends and their families.

Thus, this Government recognizes the pluralism of Australian society and rejects many of the tokenistic—too little, too late—measures of past Conservative Governments.

Schools are, we believe, the logical places for changes to begin. In 1976, Al Grassby said:

For the schoolroom and the playground form the first and sometimes only meeting place for Australian children of various backgrounds. Before going to school they have been divided in many cases by cultural, language, ethnic and class differences and these same differences may well keep them apart after they leave school, yet during their schools years, all Australian children must live together, however inadequate their understanding of each other may be. For this reason, Australian schools must be the first point of concern against discrimination and for the building and unity and amity in our society. In the new Australia, there is room for everyone's heritage.

Indeed, in 1982, I believe the Government will want to take this statement further and pursue the idea that through language programmes and multicultural awareness in schools, through equality of opportunity, language, ethnic and class barriers will be jolted and in many real ways society will change. The conservative establishment of this country and this State will certainly be altered.

Thus we say that the institutions of Australian society, especially the schools, need to take account of the cultural pluralism of the population. Children from non-English speaking backgrounds must be given greater access to English and to their own languages as a matter of right and to gain social and occupational mobility

The Hon. C. J. Hogg

for migrant groups as a whole. The policy of our Government is for bilingual programmes in appropriate schools, based on the very good Richmond-Collingwood model that was set up several years ago, far greater access to English as a second language and for the teaching of community languages which must be made available to all children.

The inbuilt inequalities of our education system, the lopsided access to our institutions, the lack of mobility in the job opportunities of the thousands who have come here, the fear, frustration and isolation of non-English speaking women who stay at home, and the very real problems that workers with limited English confront on the job and in the work place are all questions that the Government shall address.

The Victorian Government believes the responsibility of a Government to new settlers is clear. It is to help them become established and then ensure that all ethnic groups are able to retain and express their identity and their cultural diversity, if they so desire, without sacrificing their rights of equal access to the community resources.

This Government is committed to equality of opportunity, to progressive social change and participation of all its citizens. Thus, by the reforms that it will make and the policies that it will implement, the notion of an equal multicultural society will be transformed at long last from rhetoric to reality.

The Hon. M. J. ARNOLD (Templestowe Province)—It is a great pleasure for me to rise today as a member of an Australian Labor Party Government, particularly when one bears in mind the number of fine members who have served the Australian Labor Party in the Parliament so well over a number of years in a number of different eras without having the opportunity of speaking as members of the Government. No doubt those honourable members took strength in the knowledge that a vigilant, strong, progressive and

determined Opposition kept the Government of the day honest and ensured that Australian Labor Party policy was espoused in the Parliamentary forum.

Our Parliamentary system of democracy requires an able Opposition and those members ensured that the light of reform continued to burn in the Parliament in the days of conservative Governments. It must have been galling for them not to have been able to implement actively the ideas and policies that they held so dear. Victoria could well have been a different society if those men and women had had their turn in Government. It is the duty of members of the newly returned Labor Government to ensure that the principles for which those members fought so hard will be enshrined in the proposed legislation that will be introduced by the Government.

The fact that the John Cain Australian Labor Party team could have had such a convincing win at the last election speaks volumes for the effort of our party, the soundness of its policies and the change of moods of Victorians in 1982, having regard to the infrequency with which the Labor Party has managed to gain power in Victoria.

I shall mention one matter which touches on the question of the member elect. No doubt the majority, if not all honourable members, have filled the role of member elect before arriving in this House. There are propositions for the reform of this Chamber, this Upper House. I believe these reforms are long overdue and I am pleased to note that, in a short time, deep and thorough investigations will be made into the workings of this House. The question of the member elect reform upon which I wish to touch is a matter on which each party could reach agreement without difficulty. Major reforms are often slow of implementation. The matter I raise touches everybody, but, unfortunately, it touches some more heavily than it touches others.

I realize there is a three months' wait between the election date and the date of swearing in, which might be regarded as a necessary period for

one to clear one's desk and toughen up mentally for a stint in this House, but I think it is an unnecessary burden to place on teachers, public servants and those paid from the public purse to have to battle through without the benefit of an income. It is an indication of how far our system can get away from reality and the problems that face the man on the street. At present members elect are expected to continue their normal life although generally they have to work at the job of being the member from the date of the election to the date of their being sworn in. Public servants are forced to resign and, in this period, without income, they are often placed in difficult straits.

Fortunately the majority of us may not be in these circumstances and it is probably well that we are not. Having regard to the way my wife, my three children, my two dogs, my two cats and last and probably least I, eat, drink and generally be merry, I doubt whether I could have survived such a period without an income.

A simple piece of legislation could resolve the situation by not requiring public servants to resign from their positions until sworn into the Parliament. At that stage they could be described as being properly under our present system and placed on the payroll. Quite often these people have to take leave without pay in a lead up to an election so that they can campaign effectively and, upon being successful, they are placed in an invidious position of having to survive a further three months without money and facing severe financial pressures.

The present law is discriminatory and places harsh and unnecessary burdens on public servants who have attained public office, sometimes at great expense and personal loss in the course of an election campaign.

I now move to a more general and broad area. There is no doubt that there was, and still is, an unhealthy air of pessimism in the Victorian community. This pervades the whole of Australia. It has been abroad too long and it must be dispelled. The people

of Victoria know and opted for what was for them a radical change, to return a Labor Government, and they did it in the belief that a new Government would restore confidence in Victoria and for Victorians. I know the Government will make its best endeavours to live up to the responsibility placed upon it by the Victorian people.

Realistically, however, we must face the fact that a State Government, even if it were completely unfettered and a master of its own destiny, as it would have been if this House had been completely elected by the contemporary electorate, can do only so much. If Victoria is to get out of its malaise, there must be a change in the Federal sphere. The Australian voter will see to that in the near future because the present Federal Government cannot be permitted to allow our country and State to career downhill from slump to gloom to disaster. An early Federal election is obviously in the wind and there must be a change of Government.

On the question of financial burden, one has to face up to the broad reality that the Labor Government has been elected in a period of severe financial difficulty. It has been elected with policies to implement, but the problem it has to face up to, and which concerns us all, is where is the money coming from. This problem has been compounded in recent days by the Fraser-Federal Government's refusal to give Victoria its proper allocation of Commonwealth Grants Commission funds. That is a disgrace and should be abhorred by all honourable members.

Of course, the availability of finance is vital and must be a constraint upon the activities of the Government. However, the Victorian people have elected a Government of reform and change and we are obliged to carry out the policy upon which we campaigned.

Accordingly, although it is essential for us to be mindful of the financial restraints imposed upon us as a Government and the responsibility to get the financial house of the Government in order, the major energy of our Government should not be devoted to this.

The Hon. M. J. Arnold

It is our duty as a Government to ensure that credence is given to examining how we can develop our commitments and programmes in the light of the financial position of the State. That is, how much of the task do we want to carry out; whether it is better to do less of some of our programmes or more of other of our programmes or more of some at this stage and more of some at a later stage. These are the decisions which our Government has to make, and will make responsibly, and the implementation of these programmes will assist Victoria in its financial redevelopment and return it to the position which it should have as the leading State in the Commonwealth.

Moreover, once the Government has made a decision to carry out the programmes on which it was elected, or such part of its programmes it chooses to carry out, taking into account the limitations imposed by financial constraints, it should not be hindered or fettered in its task by a body of people who do not have the current support of the present popular electorate.

The people in Victoria are anxious for a new direction and a lift in momentum from this, our new Government, within the limits of fiscal responsibility. They realize that the Government knows that the question of "where does the money come from" could put a financial strait-jacket on a reforming Government. However, they realize that this is an important question that must be answered, but they still expect changes to be made in areas of needs, the areas of social welfare, housing, education and the like. The people of Victoria are due for a change; they are entitled to a change.

The argument which goes to the tune of "if the policies Labor was to be elected on are to be funded, first of all problems associated with the financial management of the State's resources have to be dealt with" is valid only if equal energy is devoted to the question of the reform of the economic structures of the State and the implementation of our policy. Our Government has moved to implement the reforms to the

State's economic structures and it will implement the policies needed by Victoria.

It is essential that the State's resources be efficiently managed, not just because that is a good thing in itself, but to enable the Government to more effectively intervene in the State's economy. The Labor Government will not let the people down and give undue emphasis to the question of financial mismanagement and avoid the broader question of the economic structure of this State. If the Government continues to operate at the margin of the State's economy, this would be unsatisfactory and very little would be achieved—certainly not the implementation of its policies.

The Prime Minister of this country has admitted that he has led it into a recession, but that must not inhibit us, as a State Government, from pumping the pump which will lead us back to recovery, hand in hand with a Federal Labor Government in the near future.

I should like to briefly touch upon Templestowe Province and, if I can rely on information quoted by Mr Houghton, it occupies an area of some 1400 square miles and sweeps from Ivanhoe into Bundoora, Doncaster and part of Mitcham, up through Greensborough, Eltham, Evelyn, Christmas Hills, Kangaroo Ground to Kinglake and takes in areas that are industrial, commercial, urban and rural and has some of the most beautiful countryside in the State. In fact some of the joys of campaigning in Templestowe Province was travelling in the countryside that lay between two or three barbecues on a Sunday afternoon.

There is a wide diversity of economic, social, cultural, and ethnic groups which are very sensitive to the mood of the times contained in my 130 000 voters. When I first campaigned in the elections for the province in 1979 against Mr Houghton, I was told that it occupied the boundaries of the "Old Diamond Valley seat" which was the litmus test seat for Federal elections during the late 1960s and the early 1970s. In the course of my campaign for the 1979 and 1982 elections, I found

that people in the province had become very aware and politically conscious and hard taskmasters in their judgment of political candidates in all spheres of Government.

The widely different attitudes and needs of people in areas such as West Heidelberg, Templestowe and St Andrews, will always ensure that the Templestowe Province is a volatile one and certainly an interesting area to represent.

The electors of Templestowe Province were typical of the people who on 3 April had their say and gave the Cain Government an overwhelming mandate to govern this State and to implement its policies, the policies upon which it had campaigned and had put forward without fear or favour.

In conclusion, I should like to congratulate my predecessor, Dr Ralph Howard, for his stint as the honourable member for Templestowe Province.

I should also like to congratulate my fellow members, sworn in today, on their election.

To the older members of the Labor Government, who must have felt in splendid isolation in the Chamber in the past, I hope the now crowded conditions will be regarded as a benefit and not a burden.

The Hon. B. T. PULLEN (Melbourne Province)—I welcome this opportunity to introduce myself to the House and to give honourable members some indication of my views.

Firstly, I consider myself particularly fortunate to enter this House at a time when there is a Labor Government in office. It is a fact that there have been many hard working Labor members before me who have not had an opportunity of doing that.

A couple of days ago I reviewed some of the reasons that I saw as leading to my taking a place in public life and it seemed to me that there were two considerations that have influenced me in the course of that movement.

The first step along the path is one that many have followed. It is a progression from local community involvement, including local government, to