

**PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**FIFTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT**

**FIRST SESSION**

**21 August 2001**

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**FIFTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION**

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<sup>1</sup> Resigned 3 November 1999

<sup>2</sup> Elected 11 December 1999

<sup>3</sup> Resigned 12 April 2000

<sup>4</sup> Elected 13 May 2000



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**Tuesday, 21 August 2001**

**The SPEAKER (Hon. Alex Andrianopoulos) took the chair at 2.04 p.m. and read the prayer.**

**CONDOLENCES**

**The SPEAKER** — Order! Before calling the Premier, I suggest that he move the condolence motions separately. When the motions have been dealt with I will ask the house to agree to both in the traditional manner.

**William Francis Fogarty**

**Mr BRACKS (Premier)** — I move:

That this house expresses its sincere sorrow at the death of William Francis Fogarty and places on record its acknowledgment of the valuable services rendered by him to the Parliament and the people of Victoria as a member of the Legislative Assembly for the electorate of Sunshine from May 1973 to August 1988, as a temporary chairman of committees from 1982 to 1985 and as Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees from 1985 to 1988.

Bill Fogarty was born in Kingsville in inner western Melbourne and died not far away at home in Spotswood on Friday, 13 July 2001, at the age of 79.

I had significant contact with Bill Fogarty, as both the area where he was born and the area of Spotswood where he died at home are in my electorate. I also spent holidays at the same beach as him and his wife, Olive. I saw them there quite regularly and knew he was in frail health at the end of his time.

Bill was a very popular local figure and a jovial family man who worked hard for both the western suburbs community and the needs and aspirations of Victoria's farming community. Known locally as a champion of the underdog and a friend of the worker, his tireless efforts in the electorate brought him praise from many quarters. Bill was a very likeable fellow who spoke his mind, which at times offended some people — usually because there was truth in what he said whenever he spoke his mind publicly.

A long-time advocate of workers' rights through his association with the Meat Workers Union in the state of Victoria, Bill went on to enjoy a long and distinguished association with the Australian Labor Party, rising to the position of Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Victoria during the term of the Cain government.

Bill was active from an early age in local sports activities, joining the Footscray Swimming Club in 1934 and going on to captain two premierships

swimming teams after the war. He played junior football with the Yarraville Socials Football Club and was also Footscray council's representative on the Footscray Football Club, which is a very important position in the west of Melbourne.

He worked at Pacific Heating and Airconditioning before signing up with the Royal Australian Navy on his 18th birthday in 1940. He trained in communications and served on the navy's Gabo and Otway signal stations before transferring to HMAS *Allenwood* and then serving on HMAS *Quickmatch* with the British Pacific fleet. In 1945 Bill served in Japan with Australian forces sent to Tokyo to witness the signing of the Japanese surrender.

Soon after Bill's return from the war he joined the Victorian Labor Party. Prior to entering Parliament he was active in the trade union movement, representing meatworkers as both state and federal secretary of the Cold Storage and Meat Preserving Employees Union. Bill came to the Parliament with 15 years experience as an advocate appearing before 11 different state wages boards and the arbitration commission. Bill was a representative of a range of Australian food trade unions at the International Food and Allied Industries Conference held in Chicago in 1971 and in Geneva in 1972.

Bill was also actively involved in local politics, serving on the Footscray council as a councillor from 1960 to 1972 and as mayor from 1963 to 1964. Bill was an active member of the Australian Labor Party in Melbourne's west. He was vice-president of the Sunshine branch and a member of the state executive from 1970. He was elected as member of the Legislative Assembly for Sunshine in 1973 and served in the Parliament until his retirement from politics in 1988.

He served as opposition spokesman on agriculture between 1977 and 1982, and the first time I ever met Bill was in Ballarat on one of his many trips around the state when I was managing a campaign for the federal member, John Mildren. I remember Bill as a regular visitor to Ballarat at that time.

Bill estimated that by 1982 he had travelled some 40 000 kilometres a year in order to fulfil his important role as shadow Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs. Anyone who has had that role or holds it currently will understand the commitment involved.

Bill Fogarty's work for his community is perhaps best exemplified in the efforts he made to secure the construction in 1982 of a 53-unit housing development

for elderly residents in Braybrook. The project transformed an unattractive parcel of land in the precinct into a valuable community asset. It was fittingly named Fogarty Place in his honour.

As a parliamentarian Bill served on the Meat Industry Committee from 1976 until 1979, the Road Safety Committee from 1979 until 1980, and the Salinity Committee in 1982.

William Fogarty will be remembered for his significant contributions to the community, the Parliament and the people of Victoria. On behalf of the government I extend condolences to the family of William Francis Fogarty, including his wife, Olive, his son, Terry, his daughter, Dianne and their families.

**Dr NAPHTHINE** (Leader of the Opposition) — I rise on behalf of the opposition to support the motion moved by the Premier of condolences for the unfortunate death of William Francis Fogarty, commonly known as Bill Fogarty.

Bill was, as the Premier said, born in 1922 in Chirnside Street, Kingsville. He was to live and work in that area of Melbourne for virtually all of his life. He went to the North Essendon State School, St Augustine's Primary School, South Melbourne Technical School and then on to Footscray Accountancy College.

Bill was a fine athlete and a champion swimmer for the Footscray Swimming Club, twice being runner-up in the state championships. Indeed, he put his swimming to great effect in his political life. I refer in particular to an article in the *Footscray-Western Suburbs Advertiser* of 22 November 1979 that refers to the then Minister of Education, Mr Alan Hunt, being out in the western suburbs to open a new heated swimming pool. The article says:

Mr Hunt, unaware of the demonstrators, stayed at the pool longer than planned because the member for Sunshine, Mr Bill Fogarty (ALP), a former champion Footscray swimmer, agreed to do a few laps of the pool if Mr Hunt would donate \$10 a lap to the swimming club.

Even in his political career Bill was using his great swimming skills to raise money for much-needed causes in the western suburbs.

His connection to the water saw him, like so many people of that era, joining the war effort. He joined the Royal Australian Navy soon after his 18th birthday and, after training in communications, went on to serve on the HMAS *Allenwood* and then on the HMAS *Quickmatch* with the British Pacific fleet. It was during this time in the services that he met his wife, Olive, at a war service dance in Sydney.

Bill married while he was at home for two weeks from war service off the coast of Japan. In fact, he and Olive managed to squeeze both the wedding and the honeymoon into that two-week break in his war service. Then he set off again, as was so typical of so many people who served during the Second World War. Olive was to become Bill's lifelong partner and a great supporter in his political career and his efforts serving in his local community.

After returning to Australia Bill went to work at Sims Cooper meatworks, and it was there he became more heavily involved in public life. In the 1950s Bill became active in the trade union movement representing the Cold Storage and Meat Preservers Employees Union at all levels, including terms as state and federal secretary. As was the case with so many of his fellow veterans, the experiences of economic depression, the war and its aftermath had a great impact on Bill and gave him a strong commitment to his community, to his state and to his fellow citizens. Indeed, he is quoted as saying in 1965:

I think the experience of the war years tended to show the anomalies that existed in the world.

Bill was one who saw those anomalies and sought to rectify them within his community and within his own powers.

With his work in the trade union movement Bill became actively involved in the Australian Labor Party. In 1960 he became a councillor of the City of Footscray, and he continued to hold that position until he was elected to this place as the member for Sunshine in 1972. He did not just sit on the council, he was actively involved in all aspects of council and community work. In particular he was involved in chairing the council's finance committee, and he was elected mayor for the period 1963 to 1964.

As the Premier said, he served in that very important position as the representative of the City of Footscray on the Footscray Football Club. I am sure he would have been pleased with the Western Bulldogs performance on Saturday when it revived its attempt to remain in the finals race.

**Mr Mildenhall** interjected.

**Dr NAPHTHINE** — I am glad the honourable member for Footscray is still supporting the Dogs!

Bill used his election to Parliament in 1972 as an opportunity to strongly represent and push for the interests of his community. He worked tirelessly, as the Premier said, for the building of flats for the elderly in

Braybrook, and it is fitting that when they were opened in 1982 they were named Fogarty Place.

As the Premier also said, Bill worked tirelessly as the shadow minister, but when the Labor Party was elected to government after many years in opposition unfortunately Bill was not included in the first Labor cabinet. He did not take that setback bitterly, as many others may have. Bill saw opportunities to make contributions as a local member and as a member of the Parliament. Indeed, he later accepted the position as the Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees, a role he fulfilled with distinction. He said at the time that he understood the decision of the Labor Party and respected the Labor Party, and he continued to work for his community and the Labor Party he loved. When he took on the role of Deputy Speaker he made his understanding of the role very clear. He said:

I have the job of ensuring that the opposition is given equality in Parliament.

...

Sir Kenneth Wheeler set a high standard, as did Jim Plowman, the last Speaker. I want to maintain those standards.

He understood his significant role in Parliament and saw that by having a strong Westminster system he and others could fulfil their roles as members of Parliament irrespective of the government of the day.

Bill's character shone through in 1984, when he found himself in Japan for the first time following his wartime experiences. Bill felt no malice towards his former enemies. Indeed he found time to admire a number of their achievements, particularly their economic achievements. He was quoted in the *Western Times* of 18 July 1984 as saying:

Australians can learn some lessons from Japanese industry.

It is a measure of the person that having gone through the Second World War he was able to visit Japan and see some positives in the relationship. That shows the great strength of Bill Fogarty. In 1982 the commissioner for the City of Sunshine said about Bill Fogarty that he was 'the best politician I have dealt with in the western suburbs'. Again that says a lot about somebody who was from the western suburbs, for the western suburbs and a strong advocate of the western suburbs.

Bill is survived by his wife Olive, his two children and six grandchildren. On behalf of the Liberal Party I pass on my condolences to his family.

**Mr RYAN** (Leader of the National Party) — I rise on behalf of the National Party to support the condolence motion moved by the Premier and seconded by the Leader of the Opposition.

I did not know Bill Fogarty, but from my reading of his background by any account he must have been a real character. He seems to me to come within the description generally attributed to those accorded the acclaim of being a good bloke.

Bill Fogarty died at the age of 79. Like so many who came into this place in that era, he was a war veteran. He joined the services on his 18th birthday and trained in communications. He served at the Gabo and Otway signal stations before his subsequent periods of service on HMAS *Allenwood* and HMAS *Quickmatch*.

After the war Bill Fogarty trained as a cabinet-maker and worked for the Myer organisation. He then became involved with the meat industry and ultimately assumed the role of organiser for the Cold Storage and Meat Preserving Employees Union.

His sporting abilities have been referred to by the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition, his interests being particularly in football and swimming.

On these occasions it is always interesting to reflect on the commentary of a member in the course of his or her maiden speech. Bill Fogarty spoke in this place for the first time on 19 September 1973. He described his constituents as the 'salt of the earth', as was the man himself.

He talked about issues that in some instances represented change and in other instances represented no change at all. He raised issues to do with roads, rail lines, education and police. He talked with much pride about the community he represented, and he spoke in a manner that showed his enormous sense of honour and humility at being able to come into this place and represent the people who had elected him to the task.

There is a priceless sentence contained in his maiden speech, which I believe on this occasion does bear reference, in that the Speaker of the day was Sir Kenneth Henry Wheeler of the Liberal Party, who had not long before been appointed to the office. On the occasion of his inaugural speech in this place Bill Fogarty said to Mr Speaker:

As a former trade union official, I have probably stopped your dairy's milk supply and therefore I cannot expect to win any favours from you on that score.

The fact that he made that remark in the context of his speech is no doubt a measure of the man and an

indication of his down-to-earth nature. The make of the man is encapsulated by the commentary that appeared on the front of the booklet that marked the occasion of his requiem service:

Do not cry because I have gone,  
Smile because I have been.

I suspect that sums up the man in one. On behalf of the National Party I join the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in supporting the condolence motion.

**Mr BATCHELOR** (Minister for Transport) — I join in the condolence motion in support of the life of Bill Fogarty. Bill Fogarty passed away on 13 July aged 79 years. He was known to me. He was a longstanding member of the Labor Party who was active in his local community as a councillor and simultaneously was active in his trade union, the cold storage union. He carried out those community activities prior to being elected to this chamber as the member for Sunshine.

Bill Fogarty started his working life before the war as a cabinet-maker with Myer at its heritage furniture factory in the western suburbs. In the 1970s it was my honour to call at that factory as a union official for the Furnishing Trades Union. Although Bill had long ceased working there, because of the nature of employment at that factory there were still people working there who had worked there prior to the outbreak of hostilities of the war and who remembered Bill because of the impact he had on any workplace he had contact with.

Bill went on to become a union official working for the cold storage union. That position took him to many industrial locations spread across country Victoria. It was in this capacity that he established long-lasting relationships with the local communities, which served him well when he went on to become the shadow Minister for Agriculture for the Labor Party during his term as the honourable member for Sunshine.

During his period of work for the Labor Party he was involved at a senior administrative level on the state executive, and he continued his involvement in Labor Party administrative matters throughout his career.

I will remember during my term as state secretary of the Labor Party the coming together of these threads in Bill Fogarty's life at a time when decisions were being made about whether Labor Party preferences in a number of seats would go to the National Party or the Liberal Party. In those days, unlike now, our preferences were actually distributed in some country locations. I will remember Bill and his allies arguing

very strongly that the preferences in Warmambool ought go to some person called John McGrath.

**Mr Ryan** interjected.

**Mr BATCHELOR** — That is right. An interjection from across the table was that John McGrath is a very decent man. That is absolutely right. It does not surprise me that the likes of Bill Fogarty would recognise those qualities. It was probably a mutual recognition of those sorts of qualities that led to that strange support in unexpected places.

That was the sort of person Bill Fogarty was. He worked hard. He was prepared to go in to bat for battlers. He never forgot the area of his birth — his beloved western suburbs. He fought for the interests of the western suburbs, both at local government level in his life as a trade union official and of course during his long service between 1973 and 1988 as a member of the Legislative Assembly.

He was a bloke's bloke, and I suppose that got him into a lot of mischief. A lot of stories are recounted about the sort of larrikin behaviour that sometimes was associated with Bill Fogarty. But during his life, whether as a union official, a local councillor or a member of Parliament, he never forgot his roots and the constituency from where he came, and he always tried to better the case of those who were less advantaged.

I join with all honourable members in this chamber in expressing our condolences to his family. He will be sadly missed by all.

**Mr COOPER** (Mornington) — I join the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and other honourable members in honouring the life of Bill Fogarty. You and I, Mr Speaker, became members of this house in 1985 when Bill Fogarty was elected Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees. I was sad that I could not attend Bill's funeral, because I had a high regard for him.

It is hard to know where to start when talking about Bill Fogarty. I heard the Leader of the National Party say that on reading information about Bill and some of Bill's speeches he thought Bill must have been a bit of a character. To say he must have been a bit of a character is probably selling Bill a little short: he was very much a character. It is sad that the opposition does not have somebody like the former Deputy Premier, Pat McNamara, in the house today because Pat knew Bill well. He recounted many wonderful stories of discussions he had held with Bill on some mornings in the Deputy Speaker's office when Bill was feeling no pain and was intent upon making sure that the rest of

the day would pass without pain. He and Pat would sit there and reorganise the world, or certainly reorganise Victoria, between them.

He was a fine man. He was a straightshooter, and, as the Premier said — I wrote the words down to make sure I would not misquote him — ‘he was a very likeable fellow who spoke his mind’. Again, one of your distinguished predecessors, Mr Speaker, the Honourable Ken Coghill, could give testimony to the fact that Bill Fogarty spoke his mind when it needed to be spoken. Bill certainly had some moments inside and outside this place that should not be the subject of this condolence motion but could well occupy at least one or two chapters in my book when it is eventually written, because the stories are legion.

During my early days in this chamber I was the shadow Minister for Local Government. On one of my numerous trips around Victoria I was down in Gippsland. The shire president there, a member of the National Party, asked me, ‘Do you know Bill Fogarty?’, to which I replied, ‘Yes, I know him’. He said, ‘Bill and I were in the navy together — in fact, I have a photograph of the two of us here’ — and pulled out of his wallet a dog-eared photograph of Bill and him in naval uniform. He then told me the story of how he and Bill had been sent to Gabo Island, each with a .303 rifle; their job was to defend the island against enemy invasion.

**Dr Napthine** — They did it very well!

**Mr COOPER** — As the Leader of the Opposition said, they did it very well. My understanding of World War II history is that Gabo Island was not invaded. I am sure that if it had been the sight of Bill Fogarty with a .303 rifle would have sent the invaders well on their way home again!

The shire president told me that during his time on the island with Bill — just the two of them were there — he learnt a lot about human nature and what a fine man Bill was. Although the shire president had severe disagreements with Bill Fogarty’s political philosophies, he, like me, had a very high regard for Bill as a human being and as an individual.

That came through in the way Bill conducted himself as Deputy Speaker and particularly as Chairman of Committees. I can remember many occasions when the house was in a bit of an uproar during a committee stage and, as the Chairman, Bill Fogarty would rise to his feet with his hands on the table at which the Deputy Clerk is sitting and say, ‘Listen, you lot, I have had enough of all this. You will shut up and get on with the

job!’ It was not exactly parliamentary language, but he made his point, and only those who had a desire to leave the chamber early would ever flout the rulings of Bill Fogarty.

Bill was stern and was very sure about upholding the dignity of this house, and he did it in his own particular way. At the end of the day he had everybody going with him, because everybody respected him as an individual. To his wife and family, I extend my sincere condolences.

**Ms KOSKY** (Minister for Post Compulsory Education, Training and Employment) — I join with other honourable members in extending my condolences to Olive, Terry, Dianne and the rest of the family members on the passing of Bill Fogarty.

When I first seriously entered politics in Footscray and around the western suburbs I learnt quickly that there were several people you had to take notice of or you would learn a lesson. Bill was very much one of those people, as was Olive. They worked as a team. Bill had the strong, stern voice and larrikin character, and Olive always smoothed things over and looked after Bill — and probably did a bit of cleaning up along the way after some of Bill’s conversations. As other honourable members have already said, Bill was a very strong person. He spoke his mind and was a larrikin by nature, but he was absolutely committed to the western suburbs.

It is interesting to look at Bill’s political history, to which mine is fairly similar, although I am obviously a fair bit younger than Bill was. He served on the Footscray council for quite a long period. I would enjoy telling some of the stories about what happened at the Footscray council, but they are not appropriate for telling in Parliament, although Bill would probably have enjoyed my telling them here. Footscray’s council was strong. Vigorous debate occurred during and after council meetings, along with the enjoyment of a few glasses of beer or other drinks.

Bill was absolutely committed to the western suburbs and became the member for Sunshine. Because of his abiding commitment throughout his career he worked tirelessly to make a difference for his constituents and others in the western suburbs. He had a very strong commitment to the Labor movement and, as other honourable members have already said, Bill was passionate about improving the lot of working-class people.

In his inaugural speech in this house Bill derided the lack of educational facilities in Melbourne’s west, with

the Footscray Institute of Technology being the sole tertiary educational institution at that time. Certainly his efforts and the efforts of others have ensured that that has not remained the case.

Bill also highlighted the lack of policing facilities in the western suburbs, and the need for more and better housing in Melbourne's west. He was renowned for his capacity to make things happen, and his tenacity was well known and has already been spoken about. What you saw in Bill, as has been variously described by friends and colleagues, was a dogged, down-to-earth, real grassroots campaigner, and an absolute straight talker.

During the period of the Whitlam government Bill was able to harness and take full advantage of that government's far-sighted regional development policies and channel much-needed resources into the west through the establishment of the Western Region Commission. He did not just work for his electorate, but for the good of the western region as a whole, which was and remains very important.

As has been mentioned he, too, was a member of the Footscray Football Club. He was the Footscray council's representative on the club, as I was some years later.

Bill was also a great family man, a supporter of the Bulldogs, of course, and also a terrific swimmer. As the Leader of the Opposition has mentioned, on one occasion Alan Hunt, the then Minister for Education, was opening Sunshine's heated swimming pool, and spontaneously Bill suggested he would swim a few laps if Alan would donate \$10 a lap. I suggest that at the time that was probably quite a decent suggestion by Bill. The minister agreed, a pair of bathers were soon rustled up, and Bill was away and raising money for the swimming pool. I do not know how many laps he managed to swim or how much he raised, but this story typifies Bill. He was a colourful character with a great sense of humour, but he was deadly serious when it came to improving services in the west.

My condolences go to his wife, Olive, their children, Terry and Dianne, and other family members. The west is certainly better for Bill's determination.

**Mr LEIGH (Mordialloc)** — It might seem strange that someone who often has a go at so many members of the Labor Party would pass on condolences to Bill Fogarty's family, but when you come into this chamber on the first occasion, as I did in 1982, several things come to mind. Firstly, when you sit here instantly the other side of the chamber is the enemy and you have to

do everything you can to remove the enemy. If you are the opposition you are more mindful of trying to get rid of them faster. But I have to say I learnt a lot from people like Bill Fogarty, Frank Wilkes and Carl Kirkwood. They were what I would regard as the characters of this Parliament. They never gave me information, so I do not mean it in that sense, but after question time or at some time during the day Bill Fogarty, Carl Kirkwood or Frank Wilkes would come over and give me advice on what I should and should not do, so in part they were probably responsible for my behaviour over all these years!

**Mr Thwaites** — That was the plan!

**Mr LEIGH** — Yes, that may well have been the plan! What was always particularly interesting about Bill was that whenever he was doing some form of renovation to his house — and in those early days they sat up where the honourable member for Evelyn now sits — Bill would rush over to my side of the chamber with a copy of his plans, seeking free advice on how he could put up the pergola or whatever the extension was, and I can but hope that those structures are still standing!

I always found him to be a very charitable, fair and responsible human being. As the honourable member for Mornington said, when we came to the committee stage of a bill it was always interesting because whenever the former member for Springvale, Mr Micallef, stood up, between Carl Kirkwood and Bill he copped more than any member of the opposition ever got when we were in opposition! They were genuine, true Labor believers.

I certainly regret Bill's passing. I always believe that it does not matter in a democracy what side of the fence you are on, it is important that you make a commitment.

There is no doubt that Bill's family can be proud of the fact that he made a commitment that advanced not only his life but more importantly the lives of many other people, particularly those in the western suburbs, who can be thankful for what he did over the years. I pass on my condolences.

**Mr MILDENHALL (Footscray)** — I join other honourable members in making a brief contribution to the debate on this condolence motion. Bill Fogarty was a quintessential good bloke who put in to his local community and helped his mates out in a distinguished way. He demonstrated great stamina and commitment over 27 years of elected office. He served for 12 years on the Footscray council representing the Kingsville

area and 15 years as a member of the Legislative Assembly representing an area that was largely in the current electorate of Footscray — even more so if the draft boundaries are adopted.

Honourable members have spoken about some of his achievements, including his position as chair of the finance committee at Footscray council. You knew when you got to that position and had some influence over the purse strings that you had made it, because you could manipulate where the resources would go. His ascension to the role of mayor in 1963–64 was a manifestation of his sense of authority and leadership in that council. We can see the signs of his consistent effort from his roles in the Parliament as shadow agriculture minister and Deputy Speaker. He was also a persistent advocate for sports in his local community. As others have mentioned, in local politics he was known as Mr Footscray Football Club, and he always had a very watchful, caring and authoritative eye over the fortunes of the very well-performed swimming club.

To me Bill epitomised the Labor values of helping his mates out in the workplace and the local community. His achievements in that area and his networks and contacts are legion. My particular story about him dates back to 1982 when I was a public servant in the then Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation. At that time I was not involved in politics and there had just been a change of government. Those of us in the public service were looking for the signs: what will be different about this new Cain Labor government; will there be a different style and set of expectations?

The first letter we received and had to answer was a ministerial letter addressed to the Honourable Neil Trezise. It read, 'Dear Nip, About those footy club change rooms we talked about ... we need to get something happening' and was signed 'The Fog'. So we said, 'Okay, we have worked out who Nip is. Who knows who the Fog is?'. We then expected to write in the draft ministerial correspondence, 'Dear Fog, your cheque is in the mail' or whatever! I think the deal had been done a long time before we had seen that correspondence.

Bill Fogarty was a legend in the area and will be sorely missed by the community and his many friends and associates. Certainly he will be missed grievously by his family from whom he was inseparable — wherever you saw Bill, Olive was always there. I am sure the condolences of all honourable members, particularly the former and present honourable members of the western suburbs who have not had the chance to make

comment during this debate, will be passed on most sincerely to Olive and the family.

**Mr SMITH** (Glen Waverley) — I express my sincere sorrow at the passing of Bill Fogarty. When I first came into this place it was a group of, I believe, former World War II diggers who made me feel extraordinarily welcome. It is a peculiar place to come into when one is a new member. Bill Fogarty, Tom Edmunds, Gordon Stirling and Carl Kirkwood on the Labor side, and Tom Austin, Digby Crozier and Dick Long on the Liberal side, held out that hand of friendship from the beginning and you felt that you were back with the Military Mafia, as we used to laughingly call ourselves.

Bill Fogarty had a sense of humour and gave out a feeling of joie de vivre. You, Mr Speaker, are probably in the same boat as the honourable member for Mornington and me, because you came to this place about the same time. There were those fun nights we had with him around this place. As the honourable member for Mornington said, when anybody upset Bill, particularly on issues to do with Japanese prisoners of war, he made his feelings well known. I believe one night to ensure that peace was kept around this place, the then Deputy Premier, Rob Fordham, had to get his car and Bill was given an early trip home. The point is that Bill believed in values, and when people made fun of those values he was out there, even at his age at the time.

I heard of his death about two weeks after the funeral, when I was with a group of Vietnam veterans and Barry Jones, an SAS colleague, said that his father and mother had been to Bill's funeral. I asked him to get me a copy of the funeral service. It came back quickly, and Barry Jones said, 'Use what bits out of that you want'. During the service Bill's son, Terry, said:

Like most ex-servicemen, the war scarred Dad for life.

He spoke of the trembling that he felt when he was on the bridge near the captain as the kamikaze pilots tried to take them out. That stayed in Bill's mind. Also etched in his mind was the condition of the Australian prisoners of war who were liberated when he went to Japan as part of the occupying forces.

Terry made reference to Bill's career, and said:

Prior to Labor's election in 1982, Dad was shadow minister for agriculture for six years, probably because of his background in the meat and dairy industries. It involved enormous hard work keeping abreast of the portfolio without the trappings and staff of the minister. When Labor was elected in 1982 he was shafted in the merry-go-round of factional deals and disloyalties.

In 1985 Dad was appointed Deputy Speaker in the Legislative Assembly.

It was only over the weekend that Tom Edmunds told me how highly respected Dad and his decisions were, by both sides of Parliament.

A man like Bill Fogarty was able to teach many lessons. I was surprised one night when I went along to the Japanese embassy to see Weary Dunlop paying great respect to the Japanese. I was staggered. I knew little about Weary Dunlop at that stage, not nearly as much as I know now, and Bill said to me, 'Well listen, there is a big lesson there for you, young fellow: there is a man who suffered most of all with these people in Burma and Thailand, yet he is now able to forgive'. That is the lesson we should all be following and the lesson we have from Weary Dunlop.

It was with great sorrow that I learnt of Bill's death. I pass on my sincere condolences and those of my wife, Sarah, to Olive, and to Terry and Dianne and their families.

**Mr LEIGHTON** (Preston) — I join other honourable members to respect the memory of Bill Fogarty. I remember Bill as a decent and warm human being, a colourful and outgoing individual and a committed trade unionist.

I remember him most as a trade unionist, less as a parliamentarian, because he retired at the 1988 election when I was elected to this house.

I knew Bill from the 1970s onwards through the trade union movement, particularly as his union, the cold storage union, and mine, the hospital employees federation, shared the same corner of the bar in the John Curtin Hotel in the days when decisions were made and deals were cut at that hotel. He was a close mate of my union's secretary of the day, Dick Jimmieson, who is long deceased. Not only were they great friends as fellow trade unionists, but they were both navy men. As a young union organiser in the 1970s and early 1980s I looked up to Bill Fogarty. His union represented the battlers and working people, and he cared deeply for them.

The honourable member for Mornington referred to Bill as a character. The honourable members for Mordialloc and Glen Waverley referred to his association with other colourful characters in this place, such as my predecessor, Carl Kirkwood. The expression that was missing is shellback, as a group of them were known. Most of the shellback stories are best kept out of *Hansard* for another time. However, their association continued well after their retirements. Bill and Carl remained close friends through their

various social activities, including their contact through the former members' association. I know Carl was deeply saddened at Bill's passing.

The last time I saw Bill was a while ago at the funeral of Carl's wife, Helen. What struck me then was how frail Bill looked compared with when I knew him in the 1970s. Bill, with Carl and others, was a colourful character, I suspect the likes of which will not be seen in this place again. I express my condolences to his wife, Olive, and his family.

**Mrs MADDIGAN** (Essendon) — I also pay tribute to former Deputy Speaker, Bill Fogarty. It says a great deal about Bill Fogarty that when he left this Parliament he was not only missed by his colleagues but he was also deeply missed by the Parliament's staff, particularly the staff of the Legislative Assembly. Not only was he a bit of a legend in his time here, he has now become a legend.

When I was appointed Deputy Speaker one of the first stories I was told was about Bill Fogarty's Christmas drinks. Bill Fogarty had a system whereby at Christmas, in his affable and generous manner, he would call the attendants into his room one by one for a Christmas drink or, as it turned out, several Christmas drinks. Bill was not one to do things by halves. You could not escape with a glass of beer or a mixed drink. I understand the attendants were given large glasses of whisky to help Bill celebrate Christmas. Some were very young and remembered this experience for many years. It certainly made Christmas special for the Legislative Assembly attendants.

Bill was well known, as other honourable members have said. Bill and some of his colleagues, particularly Jack Culpin, Gordon Stirling and Carl Kirkwood, as the honourable member for Preston said, were described by staff here as the Evil Four, and they spent a great deal of time together. I am told they could often be found together, either in the Deputy Speaker's office, no doubt having a cup of tea, or in Speaker Tom Edmunds' office, of whom they were also fond, having a cup of tea.

True to his trade union traditions, as mentioned earlier, Bill strongly supported the union movement. On one occasion he was extremely cross with the staff here when Parliament House staff held their first strike. Parliament House staff had formed a picket line across the Parliament. Bill was exceptionally annoyed because no-one had told him it was a picket line; he was horrified that with his strong trade union background he had inadvertently crossed it! He spoke to the staff quite

seriously about their making sure that in future he should be told if any industrial action was to take place.

There were lots of stories that Bill told me. Some of them related to the Deputy Speaker's bath, which it is probably not appropriate to speak about here. He and his colleagues certainly had a lot of fun in the time that he was Deputy Speaker. I endorse all the warm things that have been said about Bill Fogarty. He was an excellent member of the Labor Party, an excellent member of this house and a very strong Deputy Speaker. I also pass on my sympathy to his wife and family.

**The SPEAKER** — I join with honourable members in expressing my sorrow at the passing of William Francis Fogarty. As has been mentioned, he was affectionately known to us as Bill. I came into this house in 1985 and spent my first three years with Bill Fogarty as the Deputy Speaker. I found him to be very good in giving advice to new members. Admittedly he might have provided me with different advice to that offered to the honourable member for Mordialloc.

As has been mentioned, Bill Fogarty had a lot of qualities that were formed during the war years. These qualities were seen in his time in Parliament and subsequently. One of these that has not been mentioned up until now was loyalty. Bill was loyal to his country first and foremost. He was loyal to his wife of 57 or so years and he was devoted and loyal to his family. I had the privilege of attending his funeral and of hearing the comments made by his son Terry and Fr Jack Frawley, who was a personal friend of Bill's from their navy days and who had remained a lifelong friend. The message conveyed by both those individuals was one of his great loyalty to those things which he held dear and to the people he felt close to.

As has been mentioned, the Victorian community was well served by Bill Fogarty. His passing away is a great loss and he will be missed by very many people, including me. I express my condolences to his wife Olive, to his son Terry and his daughter Dianne Hutchison and their families at his passing.

**Hon. William Archibald Borthwick, AM**

**Mr BRACKS (Premier)** — I desire to move:

That this house expresses its sincere sorrow at the death of the Honourable William Archibald Borthwick, AM, and places on record its acknowledgment of the valuable services rendered by him to the Parliament and the people of Victoria as member of the Legislative Assembly for the electorates of Scoresby, from 1960 to 1967, and Monbulk, from 1967 to 1982, Minister of Water Supply from 1967 to 1970, Minister of Lands, Minister of Soldier Settlement and Minister for

Conservation from 1970 to 1979 and Minister of Health from 1979 to 1982, and Deputy Premier from 1981 to 1982.

Bill Borthwick passed away suddenly after complications during open-heart surgery at the age of 76. The news of the former Deputy Premier's death came as a shock to politicians across all party lines. As many honourable members who attended his moving funeral service in Ballarat will know, it is no secret that he had the respect of all members from all parties.

Both sides will remember Bill Borthwick as a man of great honour, decency, vision and compassion. He was a tireless member of Parliament and represented the people of Victoria for 22 years under the Liberal governments of Sir Henry Bolte, Sir Rupert Hamer and the Honourable Lindsay Thompson.

Bill Borthwick was born in the rural township of Murrayville in the Mallee and spent his early years working on his parents' farm where he developed a deep and abiding love of country and regional Victoria. During his education at state schools at Cowangie and Walpeup his academic potential was recognised and he was offered a scholarship to Ballarat Grammar School. At school Bill's greatest hero was Sir Charles Kingsford Smith. He had two ambitions in life. The first was to serve in the Royal Australian Air Force and the second was to become a state member of Parliament. As events transpired, he was able to fulfil both ambitions successfully during his long career.

During World War II and right after his 18th birthday Bill enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force as a fighter pilot. He flew missions over England, Italy and Yugoslavia. At the end of his war service, he arrived back in Australia as a hero, having been granted a special award by the then Yugoslav government for his exploits as a fighter pilot.

I should also note that subsequent to the war my father, who was a navigator in the Royal Australian Air Force, had a strong friendship with Bill and his family. In 1945 Bill came straight off the troopship and went to the Dandenongs, which became his home for the next 45 years. Bill was an outstanding sporting athlete. He played football for Boronia and was part of its 1949 premiership team. Although he retained his fondness for the game of football, tennis took over. He played in three consecutive premiership teams and became secretary of the Ferntree Gully Tennis Club.

Bill Borthwick married, had children and worked as a bank officer, insurance representative and later as a politician. He developed a commitment and willingness to involve himself in a number of community activities. He co-founded the Upper Ferntree Gully scouting

association and was a scoutmaster for several years. He served as treasurer to the William Angliss Hospital, as a board member of the Ferntree Gully Technical School and the Upwey High School and was a life member of the Upper Ferntree Gully Rural Fire Brigade.

In 1960, in a by-election after the sudden death of Sir George Knox, Bill entered Parliament as the member for Scoresby. Bill's first words in his inaugural speech in Parliament were of the great pride and humility he felt in speaking in the Assembly chamber as the member for Scoresby. He went on to emphasise the importance of educational facilities and services to the rapidly expanding communities in the outer suburbs of Melbourne. As a local member he was a caring man who had an exceptional understanding of people and a helpful approach to community problems. Bill established close personal relationships with many local organisations, developed over the 45 years he was involved in community projects in Victoria.

Bill impressed his colleagues in Parliament with his constructive approach to problems and his sensible and practical contributions to debate. He served on parliamentary committees including the Printing Committee from 1961 to 1964 and the Statute Law Revision Committee from 1964 to 1967. In 1967 Bill was elected to the marginal seat of Monbulk which he was able to hold for the subsequent 15 years. After only seven years on the backbench, Bill was the Minister of Water Supply from 1967 to 1970.

Bill's stature and involvement grew under the Hamer government in which he was appointed Minister of Lands, Minister of Soldier Settlement, and Minister for Conservation between 1967 and 1979. Bill will be remembered most for his efforts in conservation. He established a new department of conservation with a determination to preserve and enhance the environment. Importantly, Bill founded the Environment Protection Authority to tackle pollution. It is one of the most successful authorities anywhere in the world and was certainly a model in Australia. He also established the Land Conservation Council to recommend the best use of public lands, and he oversaw a vast expansion of Victoria's national parks system.

Later, from 1979 to 1982, Bill was appointed Minister of Health, where he encountered difficult new challenges. He recognised that people with intellectual disability should not be treated as having a health problem. He proceeded to display a human touch as a man of sympathy and concern in that portfolio.

Bill very narrowly missed out on becoming Premier in 1981 but was elected Deputy Premier in the Thompson government. He lost his seat of Monbulk in 1982, and with his wife bought a cattle farm near Creswick before retiring to Barwon Heads.

Bill Borthwick's outstanding community service to Victoria was recognised when he was conferred an honorary freedom of the Shire of Lilydale, being only the second person ever to receive such a title.

At his testimonial dinner in 1982 Bill said he would love to see the situation in Australia where every person born had the objective of serving the community. In his commitment and the legacy he has left, he has certainly led by example and made a significant difference.

Bill Borthwick passed away on Thursday, 31 July 2001. A state funeral involving family members, colleagues, friends and well-wishers was held on Tuesday, 7 August as was befitting for this great Victorian. I was privileged to attend that funeral and to listen to a very moving and eloquent oration by the former Premier, the Honourable Lindsay Thompson; I think everyone was moved by that oration. On behalf of the government, I extend condolences to the family of William Archibald Borthwick, including his wife, Margaret, and their sons David, Mark and Andrew and their families.

**Dr NAPHTHINE** (Leader of the Opposition) — It is with a degree of pride and sadness that I join the Premier today in his condolence motion to recognise the life of the Honourable William Archibald Borthwick, AM, for his lifelong service to his local community, to the state of Victoria and to the nation.

As honourable members would be aware, Bill Borthwick was a wonderful man, a true gentleman and a very proud Liberal in every sense of the word. He was Deputy Premier of this state from 1981 to 1982. He served as a minister in various portfolios for 15 years and as a local member of Parliament for 22 years — an enviable record of service to this Parliament and this state. In addition, as the Premier said, he made an enormous contribution at the local and international levels. Bill Borthwick was a man who achieved much in his life and who will be sorely missed by his community and particularly by his family.

Bill was born on 20 November 1924 in Murrayville in the Mallee area. Much of his down-to-earth, commonsense approach to life came from growing up as a farmer's son in the Mallee, where life was not always easy. Bill learnt a lot in those early years about how to get on with people and how to achieve the

outcomes he sought. Unfortunately he died three weeks ago at the age of 76.

Bill Borthwick followed a path taken by many people of his era to this place: from the family farm, through a broad education system, to the tragedy of war and a return home to build with great dedication and commitment a strong local community — a prosperous community — for themselves, their families and their fellow Victorians. Bill was always regarded as determined and driven, yet compassionate, and those traits served him well throughout his life.

As the Premier said, Bill's academic talents were recognised early at his local state school and he was awarded a scholarship to Ballarat Grammar School — a school that he loved as a student — where he achieved distinction both on the sporting field and in his academic studies and where he later had the privilege of sending his children and serving on the council. It was a pleasure to be a part of a great celebration of Bill's life at the Ballarat Grammar School chapel with the Premier and many other members of Parliament and distinguished Victorians.

As has been said, in his youth Bill had a great desire to fly aeroplanes. Unfortunately he got that opportunity in wartime rather than in peacetime. Twelve days after his 18th birthday Bill joined the Royal Australian Air Force and served as a fighter pilot. Those of us who were not directly involved or even alive during the Second World War know enough about it to know that serving as a fighter pilot was a very dangerous occupation which required great skill, great courage and a great degree of dedication. Bill served in England, Italy and the former Yugoslavia. As the Premier told us, Bill's courage was rewarded by the Yugoslav government with a special award for his exploits during an extremely hazardous series of missions over the former Yugoslavia.

Bill moved to the Dandenongs in 1945 after his return from the war and immediately became heavily involved in the local community. Bill's record of achievements and involvement in his local community staggers me as it did many people who listened to it. It shows the extent of volunteerism and the commitment of ordinary people in those times of the immediate post-war era when people saw themselves as having a real role to play in building their local communities and making them better places for their children and grandchildren.

Bill was involved with many organisations. He was secretary of the Ferntree Gully and District Tennis Association and a very successful former A-grade player, as well as the founder of the junior tennis

association. He was co-founder of the Upper Ferntree Gully scout group and a former scout master. For seven years he served as a board member of the William Angliss Hospital, including as treasurer and chair of its finance committee. He was a member of the Ferntree Gully Technical School and Upwey High School councils. He was a life member of the Upper Ferntree Gully Rural Fire Brigade. Indeed those who know the Dandenongs would know of its very high fire risk, and throughout the Dandenongs and in the clippings you see of Bill Borthwick's life, he became known as Bushfire Bill! I think it was meant in the kindest way — that he was prepared to combat and prevent bushfires in the Dandenongs.

Bill was a life member of the 1812 Theatre in Ferntree Gully, a patron of the Dandenong Ranges Music Council and honorary secretary of the Upper Ferntree Gully Preschool Association, where he annually ran Christmas parties to raise funds for local kindergartens. He was a member of the Boronia football team, including the 1949 premiership team. He was very actively involved in sporting, cultural and community activities in that local community — and that was on top of his career as a bank officer with the former State Bank for 15 years, and subsequently his involvement as an insurance consultant. It is interesting that in his commentaries on his role as an insurance consultant he said it was very important to him because it allowed him and taught him to stand on his own two feet in a business sense.

Bill Borthwick entered Parliament in 1960 as the member for Scoresby by way of a by-election following the death of Sir George Knox. In his maiden speech he made clear his drive and determination to ensure Victoria became a better place in the future, and the importance of never resting on one's laurels. Talking of the need to achieve and maintain full employment and economic development he said:

... I believe that if too much momentum is lost, it may be most difficult to regain.

His determination to drive the state forward became obvious in every area in which he took an interest as a local member, and later in every area where he accepted ministerial responsibility.

In 1967 Bill was returned to Parliament as the member for Monbulk, a seat that he held until the 1982 election. As a member of Parliament he worked tirelessly in his electorate. Indeed a former councillor and a principal of Monbulk Primary School, Mr Ray Yates, summed up the feelings of those who benefited from his work as follows:

Bill was absolutely devoted to the community ... There was not one area of the electorate Bill would not have been actively involved with.

It is said that on top of his work as a local member and member of the community, Bill achieved greatness as a minister for 15 years in various portfolios. He was elected to the ministry in 1967 as Minister of Water Supply. Many people would comment that his election to the ministry was not exactly in accordance with the wishes at the time of Sir Henry Bolte. This is probably unusual in the Liberal Party, which has elections for ministerial positions. Generally a leader of the stature of Sir Henry Bolte has a guiding hand in the process of democracy in the party, and for Bill Borthwick to be elected in those circumstances was a great tribute to the support he had among his colleagues and a recognition of his enormous talents.

It is interesting to note that Bill was made Minister of Water Supply in 1967 and one of the worst droughts in Victoria's history occurred in 1967–68, as those who have long memories and come from rural Victoria will recall. Following that period the Liberal government of the day made a policy commitment — it was one of the things that Bill Borthwick was actively involved in — to drought-proof Melbourne. Bill, as Minister of Water Supply, was actively involved in the development and implementation of that policy, which fundamentally rebuilt the water supplies for the Melbourne metropolitan area that have served us well for the 30 to 35 years since then. That shows his vision in his very early portfolio areas.

In 1970 Bill was appointed as Minister of Lands, Minister of Soldier Settlement and Minister for Conservation. Bill grew up in the Mallee and saw the unfortunate results of soldier settlement after the First World War when soldier settlers were given blocks of land that were of poor quality and too small, which caused them a lot of heartache. Through observing that process Bill learnt that soldier settlement had a role to play but that it had to be done properly. I and many others believe Bill Borthwick, in his role as Minister of Soldier Settlement, was responsible for one of the most successful soldier settlements in Victoria's history — that is, the Heytesbury settlement.

The Heytesbury settlement was an enormous success in opening up new land for production and providing farms of a fair and reasonable size and the infrastructure to make those farms viable for the people selected to settle them. It is now one of the most productive dairy areas in Victoria, and a lot of its success can be traced back to the good planning and leadership of the Minister of Soldier Settlement, Bill Borthwick.

Many people would say that his true worth was seen in his work as Minister for Conservation, which has been alluded to by the Premier. Bill set up the first Victorian conservation ministry in 1970, which in itself was a groundbreaking piece of work. He also established the Environment Protection Authority (EPA), which I am advised was the first such authority in Australia and the second in the world, with the only other model being in Sweden. The fact that the Environment Protection Authority, which has served us so well for over 30 years, was established by the vision, the foresight and the good planning and management of Bill Borthwick says a lot about his role as minister over that time.

Under his watch the number of national parks in Victoria doubled; rangers were trained; stricter preservation rules were introduced; and the EPA was given the powers to enforce those rules. Under Bill Borthwick's determination and vision, 5 per cent of Victoria was set aside for parkland, which has served us well since that time.

In 1979 Bill was asked to take on a bigger challenge — that is, the challenge of being Minister of Health. He took that job in 1979 and, unfortunately, lost his seat in 1982. I hate to make this comment in front of the current Minister for Health, but I think I am correct in repeating what former health minister Rob Knowles told me — that is, that in the long history of Victoria over 150 years no minister for health has ever served two terms as minister. It is a very rocky road for ministers for health, and unfortunately Bill Borthwick succumbed to that tradition.

However, as Minister of Health, Bill Borthwick played an enormous leadership role in dealing with intellectual disability. In my role as Minister for Community Services in a previous government I met a number of people who still spoke strongly of Bill Borthwick's personal passion and commitment for people with intellectual disability and of his understanding of the issues they face. They commend Bill Borthwick as being one of the first ministers to recognise that people with intellectual disabilities should not be treated as having a health problem and that they should be given the opportunity to live a normal life in the community. Indeed, the term 'normalisation', which was coined at around that time, occurred under the leadership of Bill Borthwick.

He was involved in taking the first steps towards moving people with intellectual disability from institutional care into community-based care. That was not a popular change at the time, and it was seen as something revolutionary and different. However, it was

something that Bill was passionate about and personally committed to, and he broke the ground in that area. A lot of the developments that have taken place in the improvement of quality of life for people with intellectual disability in this state owe a lot to the work of Bill Borthwick in his time as Minister of Health.

Subsequently he had the opportunity to serve as Deputy Premier. As many people know, in a very close vote Bill Borthwick came within a whisker of becoming Premier of this state in 1981. He did not get that job; but Bill, being the person he was, served as a loyal deputy to Lindsay Thompson, and he did it with great dignity and great service.

After Bill lost his seat in 1982 he continued his involvement with the community. Indeed, one of the great tributes to Bill Borthwick is the fact that the newly appointed Minister of Health, Tom Roper, appointed Bill Borthwick to a position on a mental retardation consultative council. His skills were recognised on both sides of politics, and that appointment was a great tribute to him.

He continued to serve the community in many capacities after his retirement from Parliament, which shows he was a person who always put the interests of the community first. As the Premier has said, Bill was awarded the freedom of the Shire of Lillydale in 1982, only the second time in 110 years that honour had been conferred.

Bill Borthwick stands out as an example to anyone aspiring to public life. His integrity was beyond reproach, along with his compassion and his determination to make tomorrow better than today. Less heralded but just as important to what Bill stood for, and in the light of recent discussions about the importance of volunteerism, we should not forget his enormous example as a volunteer within his local community. Bill always saw representing his community as an absolute privilege. He is quoted as saying, 'The real privilege of politics is the direct contact with the people'. Indeed, he was a very great contributor. As Tim Colebatch said a few weeks ago in an article about Bill Borthwick:

He exemplified the qualities that made the Hamer government a landmark in far-sighted, compassionate and decent government.

I think all of us could learn from the life and achievement of Bill Borthwick. To paraphrase the words of Lindsay Thompson at the outstanding memorial service for Bill Borthwick, Bill's life can be summarised in a few words: decency, compassion,

vision, loyalty, strength and a constructive approach. Bill Borthwick left a legacy of many lasting achievements.

I pass on my condolences to his wife, Muffie, and the three children, David, Mark and Andrew; and all members of the Liberal Party also pass on their condolences and sympathies. Bill Borthwick was a great Victorian, a great Australian and a great Liberal.

**Mr RYAN** (Leader of the National Party) — I join with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in this condolence motion to mark the passing of the Honourable Bill Borthwick.

The material written about Bill Borthwick has a recurring theme, best summarised in an article by Shane Green in the *Age* of 2 August headed, 'Bill Borthwick: a man of decency, vision and compassion'. Other articles written about the man are in the same tenor. An article in the *Herald Sun* of 7 August is titled 'Bill Borthwick: air hero and top MP'. Another published in the *Age* of 7 August, the article by Tim Colebatch to which the Leader of the Opposition has just referred, was headed 'Tribute to a man who made a difference'. The commentary contained in those three articles is reflected across the whole gamut of information one can glean when preparing to speak on this occasion.

Bill Borthwick died on 31 July at the age of 76 years. He was born in the Mallee, joined the Royal Australian Air Force at the age of 18 and became a fighter pilot. He flew fighters in the most extraordinary of circumstances during the Second World War. How extraordinary to think that a man of such young years should have been charged with that huge responsibility!

After the war he became the member for Scoresby, later Monbulk, and served that community from 1960 to 1982. He served in various portfolios over his 15 years in the cabinet. He was the minister responsible for water supply, conservation, health, lands and soldier settlement. As observed by the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition, he fulfilled those various roles in a superb fashion, and to this day people have the highest regard for him.

Bill Borthwick was absolutely passionate about conservation and the environment, which were groundbreaking issues at the time. He dedicated himself to those issues as the minister responsible for the portfolio. In health he was one of the first to apprise people of the fact that disabled people were not to be treated as a health problem. He involved himself in getting those people out of institutions in which historically they had been treated.

As the Leader of the Opposition said, Bill was known within the Country Fire Authority ranks as Bushfire Bill. He was respected by all. He was Deputy Premier for one year in the Thompson government and, as has been attested, he had a wide range of community interests and participated in various aspects of community activity.

When he came into this place in 1960 it was about 15 years after the conclusion of the war. Bill was a visionary of the first order. He brought with him not just that vision, but the drive, energy and commitment to make that vision a reality. Underpinning it all was the greater attribute of life experiences. In the way I have just indicated, Bill had been at the cutting edge of enabling the preservation of democracy at a time when it was under threat. Like many others of the time, he had a clear understanding of how precious it was to be involved in a democratic system, and so it was that he threw himself into the task that came to him as a member of this Parliament to make sure that all the attributes he gained during his contribution to the war years and subsequently were translated into his period of service in this place.

Bill Borthwick had a strong belief in the necessity of full employment. He was absolutely passionate that it was necessary for Victoria to go forward. He held that belief in a period when it was thought in some circles that having regard to the recent experience of the war years it was appropriate to pause and take stock rather than push forward. This was not the way of Bill Borthwick. He was committed to Victoria and Victorians being the best and getting the best out of themselves and the state getting the best out of itself. So it was that he made his contribution in Parliament and as a cabinet minister in particular.

He was passionate about education. He saw education, as he reflected in his inaugural speech, as a birthright, as he termed it — a guarantee of freedom, in part, for the people of the state which he was honoured to serve.

On behalf of the National Party I join with the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and the other members of the Parliament who are yet to speak in offering my condolence to the family of Bill Borthwick, who by any standards was a remarkable man.

**Mr THWAITES** (Minister for Health) — I join with the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the National Party in this condolence motion. I note the bipartisan support for a great career, and the outstanding service that Bill Borthwick gave to the people of Victoria. The issue I want to focus on in particular is Bill Borthwick's contribution as the health

minister. The Leader of the Opposition referred to the relatively short careers of health ministers, and I point out that Bill was also Deputy Premier, but he did represent a marginal seat. It has been acknowledged not just now but for 20 years that in the relatively short time Bill was health minister he made a significant contribution.

Bill Borthwick did that because he was a person who had not only a vision but also a very practical understanding of some of the new issues in health that had not previously been given sufficient consideration. It has not been mentioned yet today that Bill had a real interest in and concern about Koori health. In the early days he made some policy changes to put a focus on that area.

He was the health minister when the Victorian Health Commission lodged its first annual report. Perhaps more significantly he was also involved in the early integration of mental health with acute health. Today that view is considered to be fairly mainstream, but at the time it was a radical step. It had been thought that people with mental health problems were somehow out of the mainstream of society and should be treated differently. Bill recognised early that people needed to be brought together.

Perhaps most significant of all was his understanding of the need to change the way people with intellectual disabilities were treated. One would have to say that for many years the treatment of such people in this state left a great deal to be desired. The service system did not understand their needs, and they were regarded as having an illness or as being somehow retarded and their problems were not addressed appropriately. Bill understood that people with intellectual disabilities should be treated as human beings and that they all had their own abilities. He was a visionary in that regard.

As well as introducing broad policy, Bill had a practical, caring nature. For example, I understand that late in his career he helped a Tongan boy come to Australia for treatment of a serious eye problem. Bill stepped in as health minister to enable that kid to have an operation that saved his eyesight. That sort of practical approach was a demonstration of his compassion.

After leaving this place Bill continued his interest in health issues. In the 1980s and 1990s Bill led the establishment of a hospice service in Ballarat. That service was widely respected as a model for integrating hospital care with community care. Again it brought together the strands that Bill used when he was minister to link community facilities and services on the one

hand with institutional public services such as hospitals on the other hand.

As has been recognised, Bill had support from all sides of politics. John Cain saw Bill Borthwick as a man with a strong social conscience. Lindsay Thompson, who was Premier when Bill was Deputy Premier, commented that Bill was a thoughtful person with a constructive approach to problems.

Bill's life was one of outstanding public service. As health minister and in his post-parliamentary years he made a real difference. As the current Minister for Health it is my honour to recognise that contribution and pass on my condolences to his family.

**Ms ASHER** (Brighton) — It is with some sadness that I join in the condolence motion moved by the Premier and seconded by the Leader of the Opposition. I wish to pay my respects to Bill Borthwick, an outstanding individual who served in this Parliament for 22 years. He was Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party, Deputy Premier and a minister for what today seems like an astounding period of 15 years.

There are many themes to Bill's life, and I want to touch on a couple of them. The first theme is that of service, whether it be service as a fighter pilot or service to the community. An outline of his service to the community has already been touched on by honourable members, including his involvement with his local football and tennis clubs, as scout master, on hospital, school and preschool boards, and with fire brigades. Bill had an outstanding involvement at many levels within his community.

Bill's involvement with politics is the area of public life for which he will be most remembered. Bill was elected to this house as the member for Scoresby from 1960, continuing as member for Monbulk from 1967 to 1982. He occupied ministerial office for that staggering number of years as Minister of Water Supply, Minister of Lands, Minister of Soldier Settlement, Minister for Conservation and — probably one of the worst jobs in government — Minister of Health. He was also Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party — another role in which he served with considerable distinction. He and I discussed that particular role from time to time.

Another outstanding feature of Bill Borthwick was his humanity. Many honourable members who have spoken about Bill today have touched on a number of areas in which he was held in high regard: firstly, for his compassion for the underprivileged, for those who could not articulate their own position; and secondly, for his modesty. Bill considered that any achievement

he made was never really just his, as he always accorded any achievement to his team and to those around him. He was fundamentally probably one of the most decent men I have ever met in politics.

I particularly want to comment on Bill Borthwick's loyalty. The circumstance of his election to the position of Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party has been articulated here today — obviously that election followed a lineball vote. Commentaries have been made on who was then overseas and who was not. Bill was one of the most outstandingly loyal deputies any leader could want, and I know Lindsay Thompson has commented on that on many occasions. It is interesting to note the number of obituaries that have been written in the press in recent times about Bill Borthwick, because few politicians at state level would have been the subject of so many fulsome obituaries.

The third theme in Bill's life is achievement. Many people who come into this place like to occupy office. In Bill's case, he wanted to occupy office for a reason — and that was to get a better outcome in accordance with his own philosophy of liberalism. He has a number of real achievements or scores on the board. Many of those have already been touched on, in particular in the area of conservation, where he established the Environment Protection Authority and the Land Conservation Council. Under his administration the number of national parks within Victoria was expanded. They were real achievements by a Minister for Conservation. He was very vocal in the protection of the Dandenongs and was instrumental in the establishment of William Ricketts Sanctuary, now a tourist attraction of international renown.

He was typical of those Hamer ministers who focused on the quality of life and the betterment of society — men of real achievement. Bill Borthwick also had many achievements as Minister of Health, a portfolio he held from 1979. Comment has already been made about improvements he made to Koori health and his advances to help those with disabilities.

An area that has not been touched on so far is Bill's regard for young people and the fact that he spent a significant amount of time trying to encourage young people to be involved in politics and to take a stance on policy. I first met Bill Borthwick in 1976 when I joined the Young Liberal Movement. He was a minister in those days and would spend countless hours with young people in the Young Liberal Movement trying to encourage us to get involved in the forums the party offered and trying to encourage significant policy discussion.

At the end of 1981 Bill Borthwick was present when I was elected president of the Young Liberal Movement. I have some terrific photos of him on that occasion. I am not quite sure whether he was there to support me in my pitch to be the first female president of the Young Liberals or to make sure that the former member for Burwood counted the votes properly — but Bill was there! Obviously the loss of the 1982 election impacted on us all, but one of the saddest individual losses was that of Bill Borthwick as an outstanding local member of Parliament.

He held that seat, a marginal seat, for so many years. It is an absolute compliment to him and a reflection of his involvement in the community that he was able to hold on to a marginal seat for such a long time. There was widespread comment about why the seat of Monbulk was lost in 1982. I tend to not accept many of the popular versions that were put forward but refer to the fact that it was amazing that through his community work Bill held on to such a marginal seat for so long.

I extend my condolences to Bill's wife, Muffie, and his three sons. I also pass on sincere condolences on behalf of all Liberal Party members, particularly all members of my generation of the 1970s Young Liberal Movement, who were encouraged by and respected Bill. Bill Borthwick was a great man and a great Liberal. We will miss him.

**Mr BATCHELOR** (Minister for Transport) — I join with other honourable members in this chamber in expressing my condolences to the family of Bill Borthwick. Today a great many tributes have been paid to Bill Borthwick, and a number of themes have come through in all the contributions from both sides of Parliament. Before talking about that, it is interesting to reflect on the tributes that have been paid to him in the media since the announcement of his death, to which both the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the National Party have referred. They are significant because they are glowing tributes from people who worked in the press gallery and observed the life and work of Bill Borthwick. Those in the press gallery are hard nosed and not forthcoming with kind and friendly words towards politicians, but all the recent commentaries from those in the journalistic field have shown a very high regard for his work.

An article by Tim Colebatch in the *Age* of 7 August 2001 talks about the attributes Bill Borthwick clearly displayed throughout his political life and tries to come to an understanding of what triggered this compassionate response. The article, in referring to politicians and other people like Bill Borthwick, says:

Many of them were men who had been to war for Australia. They came home with high ideals, a strong sense of national purpose, and a desire to serve the public and make a difference.

That certainly sums up not only the political life of Bill Borthwick but also his contribution that has been so eloquently described by his local community in the Dandenong Ranges.

During his great political contribution over a career of 15 years as a minister and 22 years in the Parliament he contributed to many things, but in acknowledging the political merit of his contribution I refer to the difficulties the then Liberal government got into over the plans to subdivide the Little Desert. Arising out of that low political watermark, Bill Borthwick was able on behalf of the Liberal Party to engage in a number of quite creative and long-lasting strategies that were a great tribute to his political acumen and concern for the environment. The establishment of the Environment Protection Authority and the Land Conservation Council, and his expansion of the national parks program in Victoria, will stand as a lasting tribute to his concern for environmental and conservation issues.

We have also heard of his work in the health area as minister, and his very advanced stage of recognition and understanding of intellectual disabilities. His understanding was well in advance of that of the community generally, and perhaps even of that of some people today. It is not surprising, then, that there have been a large number of tributes, both across the political chamber and in the wider community. The theme that shines through was that Bill Borthwick was a quiet, no-fuss achiever. He got on with it. He was passionate in what he believed, and he was loyal to his cause.

He was also a minister who was prepared to consult, listen, understand and take on causes that were not politically fashionable at the time. So people from both sides of the Parliament, indeed all Victorians, have benefited from the vision he had — a vision of a more compassionate society; a vision that he was able to implement as a minister. His love of the environment, his determination to protect it and his recognition of the rights of the disabled clearly demonstrate the passion he felt and acted out in his daily life.

I join with all honourable members in paying our respects and extending our sympathies to Bill Borthwick's family.

**Mr MACLELLAN** (Pakenham) — I join the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and other honourable members in supporting the motion of condolence for Bill Borthwick. I had the honour of

being both a backbench colleague and a ministerial colleague of Bill's; that is, I was not only here for years as a backbencher, but also served with him in the cabinet.

The Premier made favourable mention, as I think he should have, of the words of former Premier Lindsay Thompson at the funeral, and the Leader of the Opposition referred to other speakers at the funeral. The words that meant most to me were those spoken by David, Mark and Andrew — Bill's sons. Each of them spoke of their father, and it was very moving and a great tribute to Bill and a great revelation of the sort of Bill Borthwick we knew here. We had that privilege only because the family was denied so much of his time.

Bill Borthwick was responsible for the initiation of the Land Conservation Council, which studied public land right across the state, making interim and final recommendations, and we know the outcome of those measures: much public land was protected for all time. We know he was responsible for the Environment Protection Authority and the work that flowed from it. These things did not just happen; they emerged from his earlier life experience both as Minister of Water Supply and, in relation to the EPA, the pollution of water supply, the depletion of ground water and protection of ground water supply. Bill had some difficulty because it was not popular to tell people that their bores would be restricted because the supply had to be shared with others. In relation to the Land Conservation Council, I have no doubt it came from his early experience in the Mallee.

He was a great supporter of Puffing Billy, and introduced legislation to protect the easements so that the line could be extended into my electorate. His real passion was the Country Fire Authority and the volunteers in that service, and the Rural Finance Corporation and the work it did to assist farmers who were having difficulties.

I remember his intense pleasure at a late invitation from the then communist government of Yugoslavia to go back and collect a medal. As a cabinet colleague it came as a little surprise to me to think of a Liberal cabinet minister about to accept an invitation to go back to communist Yugoslavia to accept recognition for his work as a teen and a twenty. But let's get it right: Bill Borthwick was flying aeroplanes in Yugoslavia when he was 18, 19, and 20 years of age. When he was, say, 22 or 23, after the war, he was back at Ferntree Gully establishing himself in the bank and the insurance industry.

It was not until something like 16 years later, when he was about 36, that he was elected to Parliament. He was born in the Mallee and fought in the war for us all and all that we hold dear when he was 18, 19 or 20 years of age. After the war he tried to fit back into our community, and we must remember he was elected to Parliament at the peak of Henry Bolte's period as Premier. He was made the Minister of Water Supply, which was a position that many honourable members with a country background took as their first ministerial position, I presume because of the strength of Sir Ronald East and the former Rural Water Commission and its administration, which provided a training ground for a new minister.

The new, youngest minister with a ruralish background always started their career in water supply. It was a perilous job, because Henry Bolte himself had been Minister of Water Supply. With almost no previous ministerial experience apart from that position, Henry Bolte suddenly became leader of the Liberal Party and subsequently, because of problems in the then government, Premier of Victoria. It was said an unknown had arrived and would last six months! In fact he lasted 17 years! To be Minister of Water Supply when Henry Bolte was the Premier and the Treasurer was a learning position!

We must remember he was appointed to the positions of Minister of Lands, Minister of Soldier Settlement and Minister for Conservation in the Bolte government. History muddles it up. History wants us to assume that Bill Borthwick took up those ministerial positions in the Hamer government, but in fact he took them up when Henry Bolte was the Premier. We must remember that he always followed trouble and difficulty; he never had an easy run. Mention has been made of the drought when he became Minister of Water Supply, and the Minister for Transport was quite right when he said that he became Minister of Lands following the defeat of the previous Minister of Lands, who had got into trouble with western Mallee land development in the Little Desert.

Bill used to regale us with the story of how he received a telegram congratulating him on his appointment as Minister of Lands. The letter pointed out that all the previous ministers of lands — and I might add, all those in the Liberal government — had lost their seats, and warned him that it was no bed of roses to be the Minister of Lands, let alone to be the Minister of Soldier Settlement and the Minister for Conservation. It was in that position that he introduced the new initiatives in land conservation and the Environment Protection Authority. As Minister of Lands he formed

an intense belief that the role of the Rural Finance Corporation was incredibly important.

Others have spoken about Bill's work in the area of health, especially the move towards the integration and deinstitutionalisation of people with disabilities, and in the Koori community. I want to assure honourable members that Bill Borthwick of cabinet was no different to the Bill Borthwick of Parliament and the public arena. He spoke passionately and directly and raised his point of view at cabinet discussions. He was not one way in the cabinet and another way publicly. The Bill Borthwick you knew was the same Bill Borthwick both inside and outside cabinet. He worked with people right across the Parliament: he worked with members of the then Country Party, now the National Party, and the Labor Party, both as a backbencher and as a minister, to build support for things he believed were needed to address the challenges facing the Victorian community.

If I could be forgiven for one anecdote, my wife and I were invited — one must remember that I was 10 years younger than Bill — to have the debts at Dalyston presented to us. It was a family secret, and certainly not one which I cared to share in a wider group of people in my electorate, that at the time when the debts would have completed their training and the deb ball conducted, my wife would have been in an advanced state of pregnancy with our youngest son. I did not feel like saying that I could not accept the debts presentation because my wife was pregnant, because in those days wives tended to want to remain non-pregnant for as long as they could in the public arena. It was not something one paraded in those days.

I accepted and approached His Excellency the Governor, to see if His Excellency might substitute for me. No, His Excellency had another engagement. I tried to think of someone who would be respected enough to take the debts and not leave me looking silly. Bill Borthwick and Muffie did the job. It was typical of them that they would drive down to Dalyston and have the debts presented to them and drive back again to help a backbencher, another member of Parliament, a person who had explained why he had got himself into that difficulty.

When you think of Bill, born in the Mallee, flying planes in Europe, Yugoslavia and the United Kingdom at the ages of 18, 19 and 20, and a few years later at the age of 36 a minister in the Bolte government and Deputy Premier, you realise it was not a bad effort for a young Mallee boy. It is one of the great things about our society — as well as the American, Canadian and New Zealand societies — that such things are able to

happen. The person who is born in quite ordinary circumstances may have a life where fate, opportunity, hard work and talent can triumph. Bill was certainly an example of that.

I join other honourable members in expressing my condolences to Muffie, who must be immensely proud of Bill's life both here in Parliament and in the family; to David and Mark; and to Andrew Cameron, the youngest who spoke so magnificently at the service of a great father.

**Mr McARTHUR (Monbulk)** — It is with some sadness that I join debate on the condolence motion for Bill Borthwick and offer the condolences of all the people of the Monbulk electorate to Muffie and to Bill's sons on this sad occasion. It is also with pride, because Bill was a fine man and is remembered fondly not only by people throughout Victoria but particularly by people in Monbulk.

I refer to an article in the *Age* of 7 August by Tim Colebatch, who said:

I wish those people who are cynical about politics and politicians could have known Bill Borthwick. Bill had been almost 20 years out of politics when he died last week. But as the deluge of tributes to him from community groups of all kinds testifies, he had made a difference to people's lives.

Indeed he had. We heard from the Premier, the leaders of the Liberal and National parties and other honourable members about the things that Bill did in making a difference. As I have gone around my electorate over the past nine years or so that I have had the privilege to represent the people of Monbulk, it is extraordinary the number of times people have come up to me and said, 'It's nice to meet you; how are you going and what are you doing, but do you know Bill Borthwick?'

Then they would tell me a story about approaching Bill over something they had been involved with 15 to 20 years ago and on which they needed assistance or were at a dead end. Without exception, they remember Bill fondly for his preparedness to listen and take on board the person's or group's issue, no matter how small or difficult it may have been, and the way he would deal with the issue and what he achieved in his time as the honourable member for Monbulk. It is extraordinary that 20 years after he left office so many people still want to talk about Bill. The nicknames are still remembered. He was Koala Bill or Bushfire Bill, but above all he was Bill.

In my electorate not a bad word is said about Bill Borthwick. A lot of good words are said and a lot of good stories are told by people from all walks of life —

by people from both sides of the political spectrum, by people interested in business and in developing their businesses, by people who want to gain support for building a community group or by people involved in a conservation effort who wanted to make sure things were protected or preserved in the Monbulk electorate or across the state. Those people are proud of how Bill Borthwick represented them. They are proud they knew him and were involved with him from time to time.

Some of Bill's work must be placed on the record. I could not possibly cover it all, and I would not try. He lived in and around the Dandenongs for quite some time. He lived variously at The Basin, Boronia, Upper Ferntree Gully and Kalorama. A story or two could be told about Bill's life at Kalorama, but perhaps that is for the honourable member for Mornington's book rather than the house today.

The Leader of the Liberal Party has already put on the record that Bill was involved in almost everything that took place in and around the Dandenongs. I disagree with him about the Boronia Football Club, though, because The Basin is a far preferable club. Bill was a champion player for the Boronia Football Club. He was a champion tennis player at Ferntree Gully tennis club, and he founded the junior tennis association. He was the co-founder of the Upper Ferntree Gully scouting association and was a scoutmaster for some years. Bill was involved in the Upper Ferntree Gully kindergarten and every year used to run a fair or fete that went for about 10 days to raise funds for the kindergarten. For many years he was on the board of management of the Angliss Hospital, and he was a key worker and organiser for that hospital.

Bill worked with all the local Country Fire Authority brigades, which is where he earned his name of Bushfire Bill. When I spoke to Peter Mark about Bill, he told me he got the name Bushfire Bill not because he liked fires, but because he loved the CFA. He did everything possible to improve the resources, the manpower and the training of the CFA. It is worth noting that after the 1962 bushfires in the Dandenongs, which were devastating fires and far worse than the recent fires in the hills, Bill, along with Sir Gilbert Chandler — another well-known and respected local identity — managed to convince the cabinet of the day that the government should buy back a large part of the land in the Dandenongs for two reasons: firstly, to protect residents from bushfires and, secondly, to protect and preserve the environment of the Dandenongs.

Now the Dandenongs has the Dandenong Ranges National Park, the National Rhododendron Gardens at

Olinda, the R. J. Hamer Arboretum at Olinda and a whole range of other facilities. That all happened because of the work Bill Borthwick did after the 1962 fires and was achieved against the wishes of the Treasury of the day, and probably against the wishes of a good many other people in government.

It was an extraordinary achievement for Bill as a new member of Parliament sitting on the back bench, but it was a testament to the work that he could do and I suppose it was a fairly good indicator of the achievements that he would manage during his years in Parliament.

I note his work on conservation in the Dandenongs. Betty Marsden, a long-time member of the Save the Dandenongs League, joined the league probably towards the end of Bill's parliamentary career. She said he would be remembered for his long-lasting contribution to conservation in the Dandenongs as well as for his many personal attributes that have often been commented on. Bill was a straightshooter; he told you what he thought. He was honest and was not going to tell you something he did not believe or was not prepared to do. He could be relied on to deliver if he made a commitment and could always be relied on to do his best for the local community and local organisations.

Bev McAlister, who was at his funeral in Ballarat a couple of weeks ago and was a good friend of Bill's, told the story of how she and her husband, Murray, while living in the United States, had seen a program on community music. When they came back to Australia they went to see Bill at his Saturday morning office, which was probably at US Buslines in Belgrave. Bev said she was a young woman at the time and a bit nervous about meeting Mr Borthwick. She told him of her wish to bring a community music program to the Dandenongs. Bill said, 'Right! Let's do it! We'll meet at my place next week and here's who you need to get. This is what we'll do'.

Within a very short time a coordinating or founding committee was established and the next meeting was held here in Parliament House. In no time at all the Dandenong Ranges Music Council was established, and it is still running. It provides community music activities and training to thousands of people of all ages and takes music to schools, nursing homes and senior citizen centres as well as to the broader community. This was achieved because Bill Borthwick was prepared to encourage and support a young couple who had come back from the United States with a strange idea that he found worthwhile and worthy of support.

There are dozens and dozens of stories about Bill Borthwick and an enormous amount of things exist today because of him. Many people have very fond memories of him and I suppose there are many who regret that he left Parliament prematurely and sincerely regret his early death. The last time I saw Bill was here in the halls of Parliament House. He was attending a former members' lunch and, as always, was cheerful, healthy looking, and pleased to be around and to have a chat. I was surprised and saddened to hear of his death.

However, he did achieve an enormous amount; he will be remembered for a long, long time. He is an example to people who believe in or want to do something for their local communities. He set an example which shows that if you are prepared to work, to put in the time, to build relationships and to work at it then, regardless of where you come from, your politics or your background, you can move from a dusty farm in the Mallee, attend primary schools at Cowangie and Murrayville, win a scholarship to Ballarat Grammar and, eventually, become a member of Parliament, the Deputy Premier and the minister for almost everything, and you can make a difference. That is an extraordinary legacy. He is a grand example for us all.

I join with all honourable members and, on behalf of the people of the Monbulk electorate, pass on my sincere condolences to Muffie and to David, Mark and Andrew.

**Mr SAVAGE** (Mildura) — I did not personally know William Archibald Borthwick, AM, but like most Victorians I know much about him. He is well remembered in Murrayville where he was born and Cowangie where he initially went to school. I note that many honourable members have made eloquent observations about a great Australian, a great Victorian and a patriot.

My own observations are that Bill Borthwick was clearly a man of great bravery, sporting prowess, compassion and intellect. Most importantly, in this place Bill Borthwick should be an inspiration to all of us.

Like other honourable members I have noted his incredible exploits during World War II as an 18-year-old fighter pilot. I have some difficulty sometimes comprehending the commitment that young Australians made and their duties during those dark days, flying in and out of Yugoslavia with despatches from Churchill for Tito and likewise taking despatches back. I often think about that. It was the thing that made me conscious that I should perhaps make some

observations of my own, as a member for the area where Bill was born and went to school.

Bill Borthwick was a quiet achiever and obviously spoke little about his exploits, and perhaps there is much about him that we did not know that we should know. I read with some interest the obituaries, especially one by Tim Colebatch, which had some significant advice for some of us. One paragraph states:

What most impressed me was not just what he did, but how he did it. Borthwick was always wary of relying on public service advice and would meet critics directly to find out what the problems were. Today's politicians could learn a lot from him.

Another paragraph states:

Bill Borthwick ... was a shrewd, passionate, caring man who loved life, had exceptional understanding of people, thought for the long term ...

I share the condolences to his wife Muffie and his three children.

**Mr RICHARDSON** (Forest Hill) — I wish to associate myself with the condolence motion for the late Bill Borthwick. When I was first elected to this place in 1976 I was one of a group of young new members who were — —

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr RICHARDSON** — I was young then! We were fortunate that we entered this place when Bill Borthwick was here and occupying a senior position as a minister because he soon became our guide and mentor. We looked up to him and we liked him enormously. I do not think I have ever known anybody in politics who was as universally popular as the late Bill Borthwick, and as the house will know I have been involved for a long time! It was not possible to dislike him. He became the guide, mentor and leader of the new batch — and there was a large batch of us in those days. We were privileged to learn a great deal from him.

The extraordinary thing is that a lot of the things that are now taken for granted in the community are memorials to Bill Borthwick. They do not have flags flying saying that Bill Borthwick was responsible but there are a multitude of things which everybody takes for granted that he was instrumental in starting. Reference has been made to the disastrous drought which led to the massive public works program to ensure that water would be brought to Melbourne. It is a decision for which many country people, particularly those in Gippsland, have still not forgiven us. But it was done and done effectively.

There was also the Heytesbury soldier settlement development. The history of soldier settlement is strewn with disasters. It would have been very easy to get it wrong again, but they did not get it wrong when Bill Borthwick was the minister.

Reference has been made to the establishment of institutions which are now taken for granted. An example is the Environment Protection Authority, which was revolutionary, groundbreaking stuff. The idea that there should be a government agency which monitored things and ensured that people became conscious of the environment and the need to have clean air and so on is something we take for granted now, but it was revolutionary when it was first put together. The Land Conservation Council was established as a government agency which would study in minute detail public land across Victoria. The idea was that it would examine and re-examine and produce voluminous reports and detailed maps. The importance of that work is taken for granted now, but it was initiated when Bill Borthwick was the Minister of Lands and the Minister for Conservation.

I remember being on Bill's bills committee when he was Minister for Conservation and I had just entered Parliament. Some draft legislation was presented to the minister which he brought to the committee for consideration. The legislation proposed regulating recreational inland fishing and widening the licensing provisions to make them far more extensive than they had been. When it was pointed out to Bill that this would mean you would need a fishing licence to catch yabbies, he exploded. He said that the drafters of the bill had tried to slip that one in before but they were not going to get away with it because yabbies were for kids. They did not get away with it!

Bill Borthwick was passionate about national parks. The work of the Land Conservation Council was important in establishing and extending the national park network.

When he became Minister of Health Bill inherited a chalice which has always been poisoned. He faced enormous difficulties, but as has been mentioned, his decisions relating to intellectual disabilities were very important. Bill's influence was equally important in his rejection of the way nursing homes were being run at that time. He was appalled that people in nursing homes were being disadvantaged and exploited. I can recall meeting with him on a number of occasions, when he would say he had just been to another one and he was very distressed at what he had seen. He was determined to make a difference.

Bill Borthwick was passionate about everything — he was untiring — and he was a brilliant speaker. He was loved by all who knew him. On behalf of my wife Mary I offer our sincere condolences to Muffie and the boys. This community is a better place because Bill Borthwick walked among us.

**Mr PERTON** (Doncaster) — This is the sort of debate where we rededicate ourselves to public service. I first met Bill Borthwick, as the Deputy Leader of my party stated she did, when I was a Young Liberal in the Forest Hill Young Liberals in John Richardson's electorate. I met Bill Borthwick for the first time when I was 16. He was a jovial, friendly man who was able to inspire Liberals with his infectious, idealistic enthusiasm. He was in Parliament for more than 20 years, and it was his enthusiasm to make a difference, to do good for his community, that I remember and that so inspired me as a Young Liberal, as it did the Deputy Leader of my party.

I should not repeat all of the great things he did, but as I prepared myself for today I re-read some of his speeches, such as his impassioned plea to this Parliament for the abolition of capital punishment — most of us are almost too young to remember that debate — and his contribution to the abolition of that terrible punishment. His liberalism, his compassion and his humanity show through those speeches. His enthusiasm for the environment shows through. As the honourable member for Forest Hill quite rightly said, young people take as granted an Environment Protection Authority, they take as granted that huge parts of the state are set aside for national parks, but that was not common thinking in his time. As the honourable member for Forest Hill said, there is not a flag on everything that he did, but every time we visit a national park or enjoy the parks of the Yarra Valley, there is Bill Borthwick walking with us, standing with us.

Obviously I have taken the Liberal Party's position of spokesman for the environment in opposition, and I hope that one day I will have the opportunity he had to make a difference to the environment of Victoria; but I doubt that anyone today could make that difference. When Bill got to work on the Environment Protection Authority, air quality in Melbourne was poor, smog was not uncommon; water quality was not of the quality that it is today; and biodiversity was not as valued as it is today. Through his enthusiasm Bill Borthwick has made many of those institutions and agencies seem commonsense in Victoria today. Even an agency like the Marine and Freshwater Resource Institute, doing its fine work in Queenscliff in the electorate of the honourable member for Bellarine, was

set up by Bill Borthwick to provide proper research so Victoria's environment could be well served.

I am proud to have known Bill Borthwick. I am proud to fill the role of Liberal Party conservation spokesman as he did. I hope that one day when we return to government, along with my colleagues I will have the opportunity to build on the legacy that Bill Borthwick left.

**Mr LUPTON (Knox)** — In joining this condolence motion I wish to talk about the Bill Borthwick that I and the people of Boronia, Ferntree Gully, Bayswater and so on knew. He was a bloke who was involved 100 per cent in our community — in preschools, primary schools, secondary schools, or high schools in those days, technical schools and the community in general — Country Fire Authority, the whole bit.

His sporting prowess has already been mentioned. To take football as an example, he played in the 1947–49 premierships teams. I was talking with Bob Henry, who said, 'Jeez, he was a great footballer — a bloody good sportsman'. That is the sort of bloke he was. What Bradman was to cricket, Bill was to tennis in our area. He was invincible. He played with people like the late Fred Charters, Val Tyres, Ruby Chatterton, Mrs Clowes, whose husband used to deliver the ice, and also the bloke I knew as Bert or Bill Barnes, I think it was. For years they dominated tennis in the Ferntree Gully area.

In fact, before the new Boronia Tennis Club pavilion was opened in 1978 Bill made a phone call to say he wanted to be present at the opening. He came along and presented to the club a cup which had his name on it and a lady's name which I cannot remember. Apparently he had won the trophy some years before, and when his house was later robbed all his tennis trophies vanished. When a subsequently elected member of Parliament went to look in the back shed of a new house he had bought he found the cup with Bill Borthwick's name on it! As I said, Bill came back and presented it to the Boronia Tennis Club in 1978, and it still sits in the clubhouse.

Bill Borthwick was a gentleman. Both my father and father-in-law knew him for many years, and I knew him for about 30 years. As a minister for the Crown, his door was always open. He was indeed a gentle man.

I remember going to his office at the ministry of health, where he said to me, 'Hurtle, one thing I cannot work out is why architects and engineers do the things they do'. I thought, 'He knows more about it than I do'. He took me into the toilet of his ministerial office — where

the honourable member for Albert Park probably now sits — and showed me the view. Sitting on the throne in there you have the most magnificent view all the way down the coast to the heads. He said, 'I will never understand why anyone would build a toilet where you get a view like that'. I hope he found the answer before he passed away.

As I said before, he was a gentleman who was respected by his community. When he passed away many local people came to my office to extend their condolences. It was interesting that a representative of the Country Fire Authority rang to pass on the condolences of its members, who had earlier invited him to a dinner. He had left public life 19 years before and moved out of the area 15 years previously, yet they still remembered him. He was a real man's man.

**Mr PATERSON (South Barwon)** — It is a great honour to contribute to the debate on this condolence motion. Bill Borthwick moved to Barwon Heads in his retirement and with his wife, Muffie, became a Liberal Party branch member at Barwon Heads, where I got to know them. It was a great privilege and honour to have known Bill Borthwick, if only in his latter years. He and Muffie became good friends of my parents, who also live at Barwon Heads.

We have heard much about Bill's extraordinary service to the community through the Royal Australian Air Force as well as scout groups, tennis clubs, football clubs, hospitals, kindergartens and high schools. In fact, one of his obituaries says he was made a freeman of the Shire of Lillydale. I am sure that was a great honour and was befitting of a man such as Bill Borthwick.

In my early days as a member of Parliament I sent some material about a sensitive environmental issue to my branch members, including Bill Borthwick. Within a couple of days I received a letter back from Bill, who made it plain that he was not particularly enamoured of the material I had sent, which included some expert evidence from a gentleman at one end of the environmental debate whom Bill well remembered from his time as Minister for Conservation. As a green young politician I had looked at the material and thought that it read quite well and that my branch members might be interested in it. Bill, of course, had personal knowledge of this gentleman. He wrote me a letter suggesting that I should get to know the man a little better before sending that kind of material out to branch members.

I was a little taken aback, I must say, when I first read the letter. I thought about the effect I had had on this great icon of the Liberal Party who had moved into the

area and joined one of my branches. Then I re-read the letter and realised very quickly that he was trying to help me and had given me some sage advice.

I have kept the letter, and I read it every now and again. I am now far more attuned to questioning the material that comes across my desk. Bill certainly did me a favour, but more importantly, he took the trouble to write a letter to me quickly after I had sent that material to assist me in my duties as a member of Parliament. That is just one example of where Bill made sure those around him were aware of his firm views but also that he was there to help. As I said, I read the letter every now and again and remember fondly that he was prepared to take the time to give me that advice.

Our condolences go to Muffie and the boys. There was a very moving state funeral at Ballarat, and one of the readings was from the Bible, chapter 14 of the book of John, which reads:

In my father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come back and take you to be with me, that you also may be where I am.

I am sure there is a very fine place reserved for Bill, who will rest in peace and be remembered by all of us as a man of great compassion and as a man who made a difference.

**Mr THOMPSON** (Sandringham) — Sometimes when you meet a person and shake their hand you can immediately discern certain qualities. When I had the opportunity to meet Bill there were certain qualities immediately discernible. He was earthy, strong, forthright, intelligent, sure of smile, firm of handshake and true of spirit. These are qualities he brought with him into the political arena.

Last year I had occasion to arrange for my parliamentary intern to meet with him for several hours at Point Lonsdale. She was very impressed with him and the insights he expressed during the time she spent with him. In reviewing his political career he regarded as the spark of his greatest achievement a couple of initiatives in the conservation portfolio. One was the Trust for Nature, and the other area related to the tiered national park system whereby not only are there national parks but below the state national parks grade there are regional parks. Cr Yates, in his speech on the occasion of Bill being awarded the freedom of the Shire of Lillydale, noted that Bill was untiring in his representations on behalf of his constituency and also 'obsessed with fair play'. That is a great tribute to him.

Bill's wife, Muffie, trained as a nurse, and the qualities of care she possessed were reflected in Bill's work in the Parliament and the community. Those qualities will live on through the work of his wife and his children, David, Mark and Andrew.

**Mr WILSON** (Bennettswood) — Like the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the honourable member for Doncaster, I first met Bill Borthwick when I first joined the Young Liberal Movement; and, like those two honourable members, I remember him very much as someone who encouraged young people to get involved in politics and public policy. My overwhelming memory of him is from the time when, as a very young man, I was the Liberal Party candidate for the seat of Mildura at the 1982 state election. Sitting at the front table today is my campaign manager from the time, the honourable member for Doncaster.

In particular I recall vividly, as a junior member of the Young Liberal Movement and as the recently endorsed candidate, receiving a phone call from Bill Borthwick offering me congratulations and support. I thought that was a great opportunity to tell someone very senior in the Liberal Party that my candidacy was somewhat limited by the fact that I had no campaign funds and very little manpower to assist me in the campaign. I remember thinking that he would be the solution to the problem.

I remember a long pause during the telephone conversation, and then Bill Borthwick saying to me, 'It is going to be a character-building campaign'. Indeed it was, especially with the honourable member for Doncaster as my campaign manager! Later, as the Young Liberals state president, I received great encouragement and advice from Bill Borthwick, who had then left Parliament but always took the time to encourage young people. He was a terrific person to know and to be involved with.

In my previous life as an adviser to the former Minister for Health, the Honourable Rob Knowles, I learnt from the bureaucracy how strongly and positively they thought of Bill Borthwick as health minister. The Leader of the Opposition and the Minister for Health have today reflected on his great contribution and the ground he broke in the areas of Koori health, mental health and disability services.

Bill Borthwick will be remembered as an outstanding parliamentarian, an outstanding minister and an outstanding Victorian. My sympathy goes to his family.

**Mr SPRY** (Bellarine) — I join with my colleagues to speak briefly in honour of the memory of the late Bill

Borthwick. As my colleague the honourable member for South Barwon said earlier, Bill and his wife, Muffie, retired some years ago to Barwon Heads. Since then they have been popular identities in the shopping precincts of Barwon Heads and the neighbouring Ocean Grove, in my electorate. They have also been prominent in retirement activities in those communities. From time to time I used to run into Bill in the streets of Ocean Grove. I always felt buoyed and encouraged by our brief exchange, although I was sometimes chastened by what he thought were the shortcomings of the then government. As was the experience of my colleague the honourable member for South Barwon, I was always a little wiser for the encounter.

Other speakers have highlighted Bill's contribution to society in the state of Victoria, particularly in his cabinet portfolios of water supply, lands, soldier settlement and conservation and, in his later parliamentary career, health, where he was an effective and committed advocate particularly for the intellectually disabled.

I believe Bill will be best remembered because of his commitment to the environment and conservation, the establishment of the Environment Protection Authority and his pioneering vision for the expansion of the national park network in Victoria, as was mentioned earlier. I have no doubt that his childhood on the land in the sometimes harsh environment of the Mallee sharpened Bill's awareness of the need to introduce safeguards to protect Victoria's natural heritage.

Bill's maiden speech in post-war 1960 revealed his awareness of the need to develop the country and, at the same time, expand the economy. He was well aware of the demanding equation of development and protection. By coincidence, this weekend I will be hiking on Wilson's Promontory, one of Bill's conservation babies, with a couple of my colleagues and friends. I have no doubt that we will again have reason to rejoice in Bill Borthwick's vision and foresight as we walk through that remarkable landscape.

On behalf of the electorate of Bellarine, I express my sympathy and condolences to Bill's wife, Muffie, and his sons, Mark, David and Andrew, their families and others close to them.

**The SPEAKER** — I join honourable members in expressing my sorrow at the passing of William Archibald Borthwick. Although he was not personally known to me, I had the privilege of attending the state funeral that was held at Ballarat, and I am cognisant of his contribution to his local community and to Victoria throughout his parliamentary career. I am sure that this

nation is also grateful for his great service during World War II. To his wife, Margaret, and to his children, David, Mark and Andrew, I pass on my sincere condolences. He will be sadly missed.

**Motions agreed to in silence, honourable members showing unanimous agreement by standing in their places.**

## ADJOURNMENT

**Mr BRACKS (Premier)** — I move:

That, as a further mark of respect to the memory of the late William Francis Fogarty and the late William Archibald Borthwick, AM, the house do now adjourn until 8.00 p.m. this day.

**Motion agreed to.**

**House adjourned 4.42 p.m.**

**The SPEAKER took the chair at 8.04 p.m.**

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### Schools: languages other than English

**Dr NAPHTHINE (Leader of the Opposition)** — Can the Premier, who is also the Minister for Multicultural Affairs, assure the house that his government will maintain the minimum requirements for teaching of languages other than English in Victorian schools?

**Mr BRACKS (Premier)** — The answer is unequivocally yes. It is one of the six core curriculum areas we have in the state. It has been one of the great successes of this state and one we will keep in the future. We will also look to see how we can increase language education in the state. When I was in Italy we signed some agreements for the next three years on the further teaching of language education. We will seek to maintain foreign language education not only in the school system but also in adult communities in Victoria, and we are signing agreements for that with Italy and other countries.

### Major projects: initiatives

**Mr MILDENHALL (Footscray)** — I ask the Premier to inform the house of the latest major projects announced by the government and how they position Victoria in terms of its capacity to attract investment in the future?

**Mr BRACKS (Premier)** — First of all I thank the honourable member for Footscray for his question and

also for his work as parliamentary secretary to me as Premier.

Before answering this question, which is probably the first and earliest opportunity to do so, I congratulate you, Mr Speaker, the Clerks and the staff on your work in Bendigo. It was a very successful sitting. That was the outcome which was endorsed by all people in the community of Bendigo and district. Mr Speaker, I congratulate you on the work you have done and ask you to pass that message of congratulations on to the rest of your staff.

The honourable member for Footscray asked me what major projects have been undertaken in Victoria since the Parliament last rose. There are four major areas in which projects have been undertaken in this state since the Parliament last rose. One is in the strategic industries area — I will come to that soon; another is in major projects; a third is in the Linking Victoria strategy; and the fourth is the Commonwealth Games, sport and major events.

I go to the first of these, in particular the strategic industries and the focus of this state on two particular industries which the Treasurer and I were pushing when we were in Los Angeles — they are biotechnology and the film and television industry.

I can report to the house that since the last election, in biotechnology the state government has committed to a major investment which will attract the scientific community to Victoria in a great way. We will have in this state a \$157 million synchrotron, the only one in the Southern Hemisphere, to the cost of which the state will contribute \$100 million in a partnership project with the private sector and the private sector and other consortia will contribute another \$57 million.

This project will drive considerable extra investment in biotechnology, which is already recording some 40 per cent investment in this state in all the biotechnology industries, with the majority of those listed on the stock exchange actually listed in Victoria. It will drive that further and be a magnet for scientific and technological research in Victoria.

The second project, which I announced in the parliamentary break for the winter recess, is a film and TV industry studio for Victoria. This was the last matter to be considered in the Thornton report, which is reviewing film and TV production in this state and adds on to all the other initiatives in the state budget. It concerns the capacity to have a studio to take up the slack for film and TV production and to attract international blockbusters to Victoria.

The second major area within major projects — that is, the decision of this government to extend Collins Street via a bridge over Docklands — has resulted in significant extra investment for the state. The biggest project currently in the Southern Hemisphere — the Victoria Harbour project — is \$1.8 billion of new investment, and I congratulate the Minister for Major Projects, who is responsible for the Docklands. The decision for the state to take hold of that trunk infrastructure rather than putting it onto the on-costs of the private sector has resulted in the biggest single project in the country and the Southern Hemisphere.

In addition, the National Australia Bank has decided to relocate its head office in campus-style accommodation, with 4000 new jobs for Victoria.

Thirdly, in the Linking Victoria strategy — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I ask the honourable member for Monbulk not to interject in that vein. I ask the Premier to conclude his answer.

**Mr BRACKS** — As to the last two projects under Linking Victoria, during the parliamentary break major expressions of interest were sought for the Spencer Street redevelopment project — a \$300 million project to upgrade Spencer Street into a commercial concourse — and finally the project that has been negotiated by this government for some nine months now came to conclusion last week — that is, the Melbourne Cricket Ground redevelopment. The agreement has been struck between the Melbourne Cricket Club, the MCG Trust and the Australian Football League, which will contribute \$5 million, bringing the total to \$150 million over the coming years. The \$400 million development, which will see Victoria ready for the Commonwealth Games with an upgraded MCG, will be second to none in the world.

In conclusion, since the last time we met in Parliament here in Melbourne there has been \$1 billion of new investment by the government. We have had a record \$2.9 billion in new building approvals, and this government has got on with the job of providing new projects, new incentives and new investment for Victoria.

### **Ovine Johne's disease**

**Mr STEGGALL** (Swan Hill) — While the government is so keen on the expenditure of money I would like to ask a question of the Minister for Agriculture about the Johne's disease issue. As the government is spending all the money the Premier has

just outlined and is not going to write off the Johne's disease debt and will not compensate those who wish to eradicate Johne's disease from their properties, will the minister explain to the house, following the Premier's last episode, what financial assistance the government will put forward to fight this disease?

**Mr HAMILTON** (Minister for Agriculture) — I thank the honourable member for his question, the import of which appears to be that suddenly on the other side of the house we have this big-spending mob that thinks money comes out of thin air. It would seem that there is a competition between the Liberal and National parties on who can make the most promises about irrational spending.

I return to ovine Johne's disease. I trust the honourable member can still read. If so, he would have read the report which the government released in response to the recommendations in the independent Environment and Natural Resources Committee report, which came to Parliament some time earlier this year.

**Dr Napthine** interjected.

**Mr HAMILTON** — It seems the Leader of the Opposition is still in his rush-and-bash mode. He rushes in where angels fear to tread, which is probably why he is sitting on that side of the house.

The facts of the matter are that the ball on ovine Johne's disease is quite clearly in the industry's court at the moment. One of the committee's key recommendations is that if there is going to be a compensation program, the levy on every industry provider would have to be increased from something like 12 cents a head to 50 cents a head. That is certainly a decision that has to be made by industry; it is not — I repeat, not — a decision that will be made by government. This government has no intention of repeating the disastrous program introduced by the previous government, which left the industry with a \$16 million debt. At the current rate it will take 45 years to pay off that debt.

**Dr Napthine** — On a point of order relating to tedious repetition, Mr Speaker, the question related to whether the minister would accept the recommendation of his own committee to write off the debt — yes or no? He does not need to go into tedious repetition; he needs to answer the question.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I do not uphold the point of order. The minister was being relevant in answering the question. I will continue to hear him.

**Mr HAMILTON** — Perhaps we should not have question time after dinner!

The next stage in the matter of ovine Johne's disease is clearly in the industry's hands. I look forward with great expectation to learning whether the industry intends to increase its levy from 12 cents — —

**Mr Steggall** — On a point of order, Mr Speaker, the question was clearly about what funds the government is going to put in to fight this disease. That is a simple question, which should be answered.

**Mr Brumby** interjected.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Treasurer! I remind the house that every honourable member should remain silent while the Speaker is on his feet.

I do not uphold the point of order, and I will not allow the Deputy Leader of the National Party to raise a point of order merely to repeat his question.

**Mr HAMILTON** — It looks like the National Party has just committed another \$16 million to the budget, which it has blown out. It is important for the house to understand that this is a very complex and complicated issue. The next step is clearly in the industry's hands: the industry has to decide what move it wants to make. As I was saying, I look forward with great expectation to learning whether the industry has decided to increase the levy fourfold.

The government is committed to providing resources totalling over \$200 000 through its department for the support mechanisms that were recommended. The matter of compensation and the decision about the next step in addressing ovine Johne's disease must be decided in the first instance by the industry. Once the industry has made up its mind, the government will very carefully consider how it will deal with the other part of the program. We cannot as a government afford to repeat the mistakes of the previous government.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Mr HAMILTON** — Opposition members yell and shout, but all they want to do is spend money over which they have no control. They are still hurting.

### **Partnerships Victoria policy**

**Mr SEITZ** (Keilor) — Will the Treasurer inform the house on how the government's Partnerships Victoria policy is contributing to the strength of the Victorian economy?

**Mr BRUMBY** (Treasurer) — I begin by reiterating the strength and vibrancy of the private sector in Victoria. Over the past four months Victoria has

recorded the highest total value of building activity of any state in Australia. When talking about building activity, we are talking about houses, apartments, shops, offices and new factories — the highest in Australia for four months, higher than New South Wales, and the highest on record.

Secondly, retail trade grew by 2.3 per cent in the June quarter — the highest in Australia. Thirdly, employment conditions in Victoria continued to be robust with Victoria generating the highest rate of job growth anywhere in Australia over the last year. Since the Bracks government has been in office almost 40 per cent of all new jobs generated in Australia have been generated in Victoria.

Private business investment is up by 6.4 per cent in the March quarter, which represented increases in investment across all categories and all sectors. Finally, in the last two years Victoria's exports are up 36 per cent.

**Ms Asher** interjected.

**Mr BRUMBY** — The Deputy Leader of the Opposition keeps interjecting and asking, 'What projects?', as if all this investment, export activity, building growth, job growth and retail spending suddenly materialises without being built on solid investment and projects. They are built on clear policy guidelines by the government. I am pleased to inform the house that the government's public and private sector infrastructure policy, Partnerships Victoria, has received exceptionally strong support from the private sector, to which I shall come in a moment. Partnerships Victoria is about driving value for money, bringing together the public sector with the private sector using their innovation, risk transfer and financing capacity to get better value for money for the Victorian people. At the moment we have — —

**Dr Napthine** interjected.

**Mr BRUMBY** — I will come to you later.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I ask the Leader of the Opposition to cease interjecting. The Treasurer should ignore interjections.

**Mr BRUMBY** — We have 10 projects. The opposition has been on holidays since the last session and we have not heard a squeak out of them. Most of you have been overseas, have not announced a thing, have not done any work, have not gone around the state, and you wouldn't have a clue.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I ask the Treasurer to address his remarks through the Chair.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Mr BRUMBY** — What a rabble; you are hopeless!

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I ask opposition benches to come to order. I ask the Treasurer not to invite interjections.

**Mr BRUMBY** — In the marketplace there are 10 projects valued at more than \$1.4 billion; there are other projects in the development stages valued at more than \$2 billion; and in total the government is expecting more than \$3.5 billion worth of private-public partnerships. While the opposition sits here and criticises the performance of the Victorian economy and criticises Partnerships Victoria I will refer to what the independent commentators say about it.

An article in the *Australian Financial Review* of 26 June, under the heading 'Victoria shows way for private partners', states:

New South Wales expects to develop a similar partnerships policy by August, and a Queensland policy has gone to cabinet several times.

South Australia announced it would introduce a public-private partnerships system for major infrastructure in its 2001-02 budget.

The independent commentators are saying that the Bracks government is leading the way across Australia and the other states are following. In conclusion — —

**Mr Perton** — On a point of order, Mr Speaker, your guidelines for question time require a minister to be succinct. The minister has been going for nearly 7 minutes. He is also debating the question. I ask you to ask him to conclude his answer.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The honourable member for Doncaster correctly points out that answers need to be succinct. However, the house has interrupted the Treasurer on a number of occasions. I do not uphold the point of order, but I ask the Treasurer to conclude his answer.

**Mrs Peulich** — He has not mentioned the GST once!

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The honourable member for Bentleigh is not assisting proceedings.

**Mrs Peulich** — What happened to the GST?

**Mr BRUMBY — The GST!**

An article in the *Age* of 2 July, under the heading ‘Auscid applauds partnerships deal’, states:

The Victorian division of the Australian Council for Infrastructure Development has welcomed the state government’s Partnerships Victoria guidelines launched last week. ‘The guidelines are a blueprint for successful infrastructure projects involving the public and private sectors’, said Auscid’s Victorian policy director, Raphael Arndt. ‘We are delighted to have been consulted on the guidelines and we believe that they clearly establish Victoria as the leader in this field’.

Here we are with \$1.5 billion of projects in the field, \$3.5 billion under assessment in total, the Victorian economy leading the way, and we are putting in place a public–private partnerships policy that the Liberal and National parties could never do. We have it in place and we are leading Australia.

**Stamp duty: used cars**

**Ms ASHER** (Brighton) — My question is to the Treasurer. I refer to recent changes made by the State Revenue Office to the way in which stamp duty on second-hand cars is collected, allowing many people to avoid paying it. How much stamp duty has been lost by the government as a result of these changes, and what does the Treasurer propose to do to ensure that this stamp duty will be collected by the government in future?

**Mr BRUMBY** (Treasurer) — The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has raised the matter of stamp duty, and I am surprised that she has because it is one of the many areas in which the opposition has made totally irresponsible and uncostered policy commitment.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Mr BRUMBY** — Here we go! It is only a matter of months ago in this place that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the shadow Treasurer, got up and said the government ought to be imposing stamp duty on the GST-exclusive price and not the GST-inclusive price. I was surprised that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, being a former government minister, would make such an irresponsible claim, so I had that costed by Treasury, which estimated that the cost would be \$100 million. But as we learnt last week in the Parliament, the opposition has costed that at \$130 million. So here is \$130 million per annum — —

**Mr McArthur** — On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to the question that was asked. It was extremely specific and related to stamp duty on used motor cars. I put it to you that the Treasurer is

debating the question, and I ask you to draw him back to answering it.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I do not uphold the point of order. I remind the Treasurer that it is his obligation to answer the question and not debate it.

**Ms Asher** interjected.

**Mr BRUMBY** — I would certainly be avoiding a lot more stamp duty under the opposition’s policies, wouldn’t I? There would be \$130 million a year of it! As I have said, the opposition has made a number of highly irresponsible promises in the area of tax and that is not — —

**Mr Cooper** — On a point of order, Mr Speaker, the excuse is available to the Treasurer that if he does not know the answer to a question he can take it on notice. As he clearly does not know the answer to this question I suggest that he take it on notice and advise the Deputy Leader of the Opposition of his answer at some future time.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! A point of order cannot be taken along those lines.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr BRUMBY** — I will tell you about the State Revenue Office. We are moving 40 per cent of it to Ballarat. We are doing something in the first two years of this government that you could never do in seven!

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I once again remind the Treasurer to debate in the third person and through the Chair and not to invite interjections in that manner.

**Mr BRUMBY** — In relation to the matter raised by the honourable member, if she cares to provide me with that information I will ensure that the State Revenue Office provides a full and detailed reply.

**Building industry: performance**

**Mr CARLI** (Coburg) — I ask the Minister for Planning to inform the house of the latest information concerning building activity across Victoria.

**Mr THWAITES** (Minister for Planning) — I am pleased to respond to the honourable member and advise him of the good news that the latest figures from the Building Control Commission show that in the June quarter building permits were granted for \$2.9 billion of new building work. The honourable member will be interested to know that this was the highest figure ever recorded since the Building Control Commission started keeping figures.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Mr THWAITES** — Honourable members opposite are interjecting about the break-up and I am pleased to give it to them because there was an improvement in domestic building. Opposition members are claiming credit for that on behalf of the Howard government. I am not sure whether the Howard government would claim that lot! Nevertheless, it was a 7.8 per cent increase.

If one looks at the other areas, commercial activity has improved by 54 per cent and retail activity has improved by 85 per cent. That clearly demonstrates private sector confidence in Victoria, in the Bracks government and in its system of planning and building. Unlike the previous government the Bracks government has been able to provide certainty in planning which has been what business has called for. It has also been prepared to step in where it should. For example, the Queen Victoria site was a bomb site for many years under the previous government, but now that construction job is under way and will be the world headquarters of BHP Billiton. What a good effort!

The building industry has performed amazingly well despite the obstacles put in its way by the Howard government: the goods and services tax and the failure to properly regulate the insurance industry. The HIH Insurance collapse has been a major obstacle for business. The shadow planning minister and others were running around talking down the economy and talking down building but this government, under the leadership of the Minister for Finance, led the way on HIH Insurance with a strategy that was supported right around the country as the best approach to the HIH collapse. As a result of that, the building industry has overcome the obstacle caused by the federal government's failure to properly regulate building.

I am also pleased that private sector confidence in Victoria is matched by a boost in public sector expenditure in building. As part of this boom in our building economy, there are major public sector initiatives like the Austin hospital and the development at the Alfred hospital and in our schools, with building work taking place at Thornbury, Chirnside Park, Point Cook, Foster, Mildura, Eltham North and Swan Hill — all over the state.

In the area represented by the Minister for Corrections work is under way at Ararat and Deer Park. The Minister for Housing has major works at Collingwood, Kensington and South Melbourne. Right around the state we are seeing — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Mr THWAITES** — For the last three quarters Victoria has posted the highest level of buildings approved in Australia.

**Mr Ryan** interjected.

**Mr THWAITES** — The Leader of the National Party asks for dollar terms. In dollar terms there will be more than \$10 billion in building activity in Victoria this year. Eighteen months ago — just about the last time we heard from him — the Leader of the Opposition was talking down the economy. He was running around saying that there would be a flight of capital from Victoria. Well, the only flight has been into Victoria: investors from around the country are saying that Victoria is the place to build.

### Corrections: home detention

**Mr WELLS** (Wantirna) — Will the Minister for Corrections confirm that under the Labor government's proposed home detention program a person caught with 240 grams of pure heroin — enough to make 4000 hits and therefore the person is deemed to be a non-commercial trafficker — would be eligible for home detention?

**Mr HAERMEYER** (Minister for Corrections) — That was meant to be question 10 on the government side. After two question times I am still waiting for a question about police from the honourable member, but I can understand his embarrassment. The opposition has been going through this rather curious process with the home detention program, one which it tries to define as consultation. The opposition says it has not made up its mind about the government's home detention proposal, but it is quite clear that it has. The opposition's so-called consultation appears to be an absolute sham, because it has been holding these rather poorly attended meetings and doing what could be defined as nothing short of push polling by giving some rather selective information and asking whether people support the idea.

The home detention program is effectively for low-level offenders, people who have committed non-violent crimes a step above those deserving a community-based order but not the sorts of crimes for which one would normally give a custodial sentence. It is about providing an alternative sentencing option between community-based orders and prison sentences. The way it will work is that every person who is eligible under the program will be assessed by a committee and then be referred back to the sentencing court.

**Mr Leigh** — On a point of order, Mr Speaker, with regard to relevance, the question was specifically about drug traffickers carrying 240 grams of pure heroin being allowed onto home detention. Is it yes or no?

**Ms Duncan** — Ask the judge!

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The honourable member for Gisborne! I do not uphold the point of order.

**Mr HAERMEYER** — Let me say that under the current system of penalties — the sentencing system that the previous government put into place — the sort of person in the case the honourable member refers to would have been eligible for a fine! This person would have been eligible for a community-based order, so what sort of stupid, imbecilic question is that? Obviously having question time after dinner is not a good idea.

I am absolutely astounded by the attitude taken by the members opposite. Home detention is about making it less likely that people will reoffend. Members of the opposition want to put low-level offenders into the prison system where they are ten times more likely to reoffend than they are under the home detention system. I have to say that to me that does not make sense.

### Schools: digital divide

**Ms OVERINGTON** (Ballarat West) — I direct my question without notice to the Minister for Education. Will the minister inform the house how the government's commitment to bridge the digital divide will affect Victorian schools?

**Ms DELAHUNTY** (Minister for Education) — I thank the honourable member for Ballarat West for her question and her continuing interest in the education of our students. Under this government no child will be left behind in education. That is a very different notion — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I cannot allow question time to proceed with that level of interjection.

**Ms DELAHUNTY** — The Bracks government is serious about giving every child, wherever they live, whatever school they attend — country or city — the best opportunities that this government can afford.

**Mr Ryan** interjected.

**Ms DELAHUNTY** — The Leader of the National Party interjects, but 19 government schools in his electorate have received an extra \$7 million.

**Mr Ryan** interjected.

**Ms DELAHUNTY** — Don't you worry about the principals in Gippsland. They are doing okay!

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I ask the house to come back to order and to allow question time to proceed in an orderly fashion. The Chair will not hesitate to start using sessional order 10 to quieten the house down.

**Ms DELAHUNTY** — If we are serious about lifting standards, we have to make sure that the essentials of the modern educational repertoire are included in every school. I am delighted to announce that the \$70-million budget commitment we made to bridging the digital divide has meant a funding increase for every school across the state.

Honourable members might recall what the Auditor-General said about the previous government's funding of information technology — that is, that it was a cruel, flawed and unfair formula whereby schools had to go out and raise \$3 before the government would give them a miserly \$1. Schools right across the state had to hold sausage sizzles, run raffles and sell Maltesers to raise the \$3 for information technology (IT) so the government would give them \$1. Those bad old days of education are long gone.

Under our proposal, the provision of 23 000 computers will bring every school up to the 1:5 computer to student ratio; Internet access will be improved by the installation of 45 000 network points; e-learning centres will be established for every secondary school; and \$1 million will be provided for distance education. No matter where school students live or where they attend school — country or city — they will have access to information technology.

As the Deputy Premier ran around the state in his answer, let me fill in some of the gaps for the honourable member for Ballarat West. The 47 government schools in Ballarat will receive \$1.5 million in information technology support under this government. In Bendigo, where we were welcomed last week by its good citizens, 51 schools will receive \$2 million in IT support for every student, regardless of which school they attend.

We hear the Leader of the Opposition bleating about how much money is going into schools: 33 public schools in his electorate will receive half a million

dollars for information technology, which will mean nearly \$6 million extra in the global budgets — —

**Dr Napthine** — What about the Dartmoor toilets?

**Ms DELAHUNTY** — The Dartmoor toilets! The Leader of the Opposition sees the really big picture! An extra \$6 million will fix the toilets in Dartmoor and every other school in the honourable member's electorate and beyond!

The Bracks government is ensuring that Victoria has fair information technology funding and that it is funded according to need, not according to the ability of school councils and school communities to raise funds. Every student in every school will be supported with information technology funds and computers. As far as education is concerned, Victoria is the place to be.

### **Chisholm Institute of TAFE**

**Mr BAILLIEU** (Hawthorn) — I ask the Minister for Post Compulsory Education, Training and Employment to advise the house whether the government is to close the Bonbeach campus of the Chisholm Institute of TAFE — yes or no.

**Ms KOSKY** (Minister for Post Compulsory Education, Training and Employment) — I thank the honourable member for Hawthorn for his question. It has been a long time since I have had a question from the honourable member for Hawthorn; in fact, it was last spring when he last asked me a question. I am very happy to answer his question, even though I have noticed that the honourable member for Monbulk has been coaching him on how he should ask it.

As the honourable member for Hawthorn and other honourable members would know, Chisholm Institute of TAFE was left in a parlous state under the previous government. As we know, the separate institutes had surpluses as separate institutes, yet when they were amalgamated they had a deficit under the so-called leadership of the previous minister, and Chisholm has been struggling enormously ever since. We also know that the reason why the previous minister amalgamated all the institutes in the south-eastern suburbs was that he wanted to privatise Holmesglen Institute of TAFE; so Chisholm was brought together in an attempt to bring together a large number of different campuses and institutes into one. It was a bad mistake at the time.

The government has since worked very hard to address Chisholm's deficit. I called for a review by some very eminent people — —

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Ms KOSKY** — You said, 'Labor mates', did you? The previous head of the Department of Treasury and Finance is a Labor mate, is he? I do not think that is a good suggestion from the honourable member. I have that report with me at this stage and I will be making an announcement in the next couple of days about this — and the staff at the institute will find out before the opposition does.

### **Tourism: Air Canada**

**Ms BEATTIE** (Tullamarine) — I ask the Minister for Major Projects and Tourism to inform the house of any new flight services to Melbourne and how they will impact on Victoria's tourism industry.

**Mr PANDAZOPOULOS** (Minister for Major Projects and Tourism) — I thank the honourable member for Tullamarine for her question. She has the fantastic Melbourne Airport in her electorate. It is the biggest employer in Melbourne's north-western suburbs. The government has a great partnership with Melbourne Airport, and there is a great joint effort between Melbourne Airport, Tourism Victoria and the state government to get more direct flights into Melbourne.

The best way to build tourism is to get airlines flying directly into Melbourne. Melbourne Airport, being a curfew-free airport with planning regulations to limit other developments that may impact on the airport, compared to an overpriced Sydney airport, has a growing reputation as a hub destination and entry point into Australia for visitors, whether business or tourist. The house would be aware — —

**Mr Doyle** interjected.

**Mr PANDAZOPOULOS** — The honourable member for Malvern says I would be dreaming. What a put-down of all the airlines that are flying down here! What a put-down of Melbourne Airport! What a put-down of everyone who works at Melbourne Airport! Victoria is growing as a tourism destination. Since we formed government international airlines are flying 6000 additional seats a week into Melbourne. They are not coming here because they do not think there are opportunities; they are coming because they think we are growing in tourism, and the government and Melbourne Airport work with them to make it attractive for them to come.

I am pleased to announce to the house today that a new airline has decided to fly into Melbourne. We have not had services from Canada for many years. Since it came to power the government has been working with Air Canada, and it has for a number of months been

encouraging that airline to fly to Melbourne. I am pleased to inform the house that Air Canada will commence three weekly direct services between Toronto and Melbourne from 30 November this year. That is great news! The Canadians no longer have to fly into Asia or into the United States, they can fly direct from their home country. Canada is a growing tourism market for us, and this new service will bring an additional 660 seats per week into Melbourne from Canada. Air Canada will become the first airline to offer direct services between Toronto and Melbourne, flying Boeing 767 services three times a week via Honolulu.

**Ms Asher** interjected.

**Mr PANDAZOPOULOS** — The former Minister for Tourism, now the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, says by interjection, ‘Will they fly directly out of Melbourne?’ Is the Deputy Leader of the Opposition suggesting that we should not attract extra flights to Melbourne just because some people may use it as a hub and fly to other parts of Australia? We know that every additional flight into Melbourne means that extra people stay here. Whether for a few days or for extra days, they are starting their trips to Australia via Melbourne. That is great news. With the Commonwealth Games in 2006 Canada, being a commonwealth country, will have its own airline flying direct to Melbourne. To make sure people visit Victoria we will work with Air Canada on developing market opportunities.

During his presentation of the tourism awards recently the Premier announced that Philippines Airline will recommence flights to Victoria. It stopped flying under the previous government, but it is back flying three weekly services into Melbourne commencing in late October, improving connections into Asia.

This is great news. The opposition does not like good news for Victoria; it complains about it all the time. The government has a successful record of new flights into Melbourne. We have seen British Airways and China Southern Airlines flying into Victoria in the past 12 months, as well as other additional services, so tourism and business travel is growing in Victoria. That is good for trade, business and tourism.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The time set down for questions without notice has expired, and the minimum number of questions has been dealt with.

**Mr McArthur** — On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I refer to the accuracy of the *Hansard* record. As you know, Sir, all members of this house and the public rely

on the accuracy of the *Hansard* record to assess what has happened in the house. In raising this issue I do not in any way wish to criticise *Hansard* itself. I simply raise the issue to ask you to investigate and report back to the house.

During the adjournment debate last Thursday in Bendigo an issue relating to education in Gippsland was raised by the honourable member for Bendigo East. In responding to the issue I was surprised when I heard the Minister for Education say that Gippsland was another area that was suffering from neglect by the Bracks government. I thought that was a brave statement for any minister to make, let alone this minister.

I listened carefully to her speech, and I was interested to see what actually appeared in *Daily Hansard*. As you know, the *Daily Hansard* was not available until today due to logistical issues involved in its preparation. I was therefore very surprised to see that that statement now reads:

Gippsland is another area neglected by the former Kennett government — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Mr McArthur** — That may be what the minister wanted the record to read, but it is certainly not, to my recollection, what she actually said. I request that you, Sir, look at this matter, listen to the tape of the sittings in Bendigo and advise the house whether the record is accurate and whether the changes that have been made to the record fall within the guidelines relating to alterations to *Hansard*.

**Ms Delahunty** — On the point of order, Mr Speaker, I know the honourable member for Monbulk is at times a puerile pedant, but quite clearly what I said was a slip of the tongue that I corrected immediately while on my feet. Many members make slips of the tongue, and I corrected mine immediately. If the honourable member for Monbulk is alleging that in some way we tampered with *Hansard*, that is a very serious allegation and I suggest that he withdraw it. It is defamatory, it is wrong and it is very offensive — it is extremely offensive — and I ask him to withdraw that comment. If the honourable member had been listening to my comments in Bendigo he would have heard the slip of the tongue and my immediate correction, with a smile, which was responded to by members from his side of the house.

Honourable Speaker, I ask that the honourable member for Monbulk withdraw, and let us make no more of this silly nonsense.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! On the point of order raised by the honourable member for Monbulk, I believe all members of the house are aware that Hansard editorial policy allows for the Hansard Editor and subeditors to make corrections to members' speeches. However, because I am the ultimate authority in that regard, I will examine the matter raised by the honourable member for Monbulk and the response made by the Minister for Education and advise the house accordingly.

## PETITIONS

**The Clerk** — I have received the following petitions for presentation to Parliament:

### Wild dogs: control

To the Honourable the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly in Parliament assembled:

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of the state of Victoria sheweth that the citizens of Gilderoy are concerned at the problem being caused by wild dogs attacking and killing livestock.

Your petitioners therefore pray that the Parliament of Victoria and the Minister for Environment and Conservation urgently take action in tackling the problem of wild dogs.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

**By Mrs FYFFE (Evelyn) (1035 signatures)**

### Gatehouse Street, Parkville: traffic control

To the Honourable the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly in Parliament assembled:

The humble petition of the undersigned residents, together with pedestrian users of Gatehouse Street, Parkville, all being citizens of the state of Victoria, sheweth that Gatehouse Street, Parkville, is a developed residential street in the municipality and state electorate of Melbourne, bounded by dwellings on the eastern side, and the Royal Children's Hospital and Royal Park on the west. It is an undivided street, with one lane of traffic in each direction, and with controlled intersections at either extremity. Gatehouse Street suffers from a high concentration of through traffic, causing danger from speeding vehicles and noise and air pollution beyond the tolerable limits in a residential area. Permitting trucks to use Gatehouse Street exacerbates these problems.

Your petitioners therefore pray that this Parliament, and through it the honourable minister, ensure that Gatehouse Street be designated a residential street and be included in the 50-kilometre-an-hour speed limit plan for residential streets as proposed by the honourable Minister for Transport on Thursday, 25 May 2000, and except for local purposes only, heavy vehicles and trucks be prohibited from using Gatehouse Street as a thoroughfare, and any measures taken to achieve these ends not be to the detriment of other residential streets.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

**By Mr LANGDON (Ivanhoe) (249 signatures)**

### Stamp duty: insurance

To the Honourable the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly in Parliament assembled:

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of the state of Victoria sheweth that that part of the stamp duty which is levied on the fire levy and GST on insurance premiums on property constitutes a tax on a tax.

Your petitioners therefore pray that the part of stamp duty which is levied on the fire levy and GST on insurance premiums on property which constitutes a tax on a tax be removed immediately.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

**By Dr NAPHTHINE (Portland) (145 signatures)**

### Rail: Hastings crossing

To the Honourable the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly in Parliament assembled:

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of Victoria sheweth that the railway level crossing at Hodgins Road, Hastings, is dangerous and in urgent need of the installation of boom gates.

Your petitioners therefore pray that the government install boom gates immediately at this level crossing before an accident claims lives.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

**By Mr COOPER (Mornington) (17 signatures)**

### Frankston–Flinders, Dandenong–Hastings and Denham roads: traffic control

To the Honourable the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly in Parliament assembled:

The humble petition of the undersigned citizens of Victoria sheweth that we are gravely concerned about the extreme danger of the intersection of Frankston–Flinders Road with Dandenong–Hastings Road and Denham Road in Tyabb.

Your petitioners therefore pray that urgent action be taken to make this black spot intersection safer before any more lives are lost at the location.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

**By Mr COOPER (Mornington) (270 signatures)**

**Laid on table.**

**Ordered that petition presented by honourable member for Evelyn be considered next day on motion of Mrs FYFFE (Evelyn).**

**Ordered that petitions presented by honourable member for Mornington be considered next day on motion of Mr COOPER (Mornington).**

## PAPERS

### Laid on table by Clerk:

Altona Memorial Park — Report for the year 2000

Anderson's Creek Cemetery Trust — Report for the year 2000

Anti-Cancer Council — Report for the year 2000

Ballaarat General Cemeteries Trust — Report for the year 2000

Bendigo Cemeteries Trust — Report for the year 2000

Border Groundwaters Agreement Review Committee — Report for the 1999–2000

Cheltenham and Regional Cemeteries Trust — Report for the year 2000

Falls Creek Alpine Resort Management Board — Report for the year ended 31 October 2000

Fawkner Crematorium and Memorial Park — Report for the year 2000

Geelong Cemeteries Trust — Report for the year 2000

Keilor Cemetery Trust — Report for the year 2000

Lilydale Memorial Park and Cemetery Trust — Report for the year 2000

Medical Practitioners Board — Report for the year ended 30 September 2000

Mount Stirling Alpine Resort Management Board — Report for the year ended 31 October 2000

Mt Baw Baw Alpine Resort Management Board — Report for the year ended 31 October 2000

Necropolis Springvale — Report for the year 2000

*Parliamentary Committees Act 1968* — Response of the Minister for Finance on action taken with respect to the recommendations made by the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee's report on the 2000–2001 Budget Estimates

*Planning and Environment Act 1987* — Notices of approval of amendments to the following Planning Schemes:

- Banyule Planning Scheme — No. C12
- Bass Coast Planning Scheme — Nos C3, C4
- Casey Planning Scheme — No. C16
- East Gippsland Planning Scheme — No. C7
- Greater Dandenong Planning Scheme — No. C16 Part 2
- Greater Geelong Planning Scheme — No. C27

La Trobe Planning Scheme — No. C5

Maribyrnong Planning Scheme — No. C22

Whittlesea Planning Scheme — No. C21

Statutory Rules under the following Acts:

Fisheries Act 1995 — SR No. 78

Water Act 1989 — SR No. 79

*Subordinate Legislation Act 1994* — Ministers' exemption certificates in relation to Statutory Rule Nos 65, 71

Templestowe Cemetery Trust — Report for the year 2000

Wyndham Cemeteries Trust — Report for the year 2000.

## BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

### Program

**Mr BATCHELOR (Minister for Transport) — I move:**

That, pursuant to sessional order 6(3), the orders of the day, government business, relating to the following bills be considered and completed by 4.00 p.m. on Thursday, 23 August 2001:

- Community Visitors Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill
- Agriculture Legislation (Amendment) Bill
- Public Notaries Bill
- Transport (Further Amendment) Bill
- Crimes (Validation of Orders) Bill

I move this motion to provide the business program that was set out before the break that has finished effectively now, notwithstanding the opening day in Bendigo. This program takes into account and recognises that the legislative program possibilities for this week have necessarily been reduced because of the condolence motions and the adjournment debate, and I believe it sets out an adequate program for the remainder of this week.

**Mr McARTHUR (Monbulk) —** This is not an overly onerous program for the week. There are four and a bit bills to deal with between now and 4.00 p.m. on Thursday, and given that the Crimes (Validation of Orders) Bill had some attention in Bendigo last Thursday, dealing with that should not be too difficult a task. However, I point out that they are all relatively minor pieces of legislation in the broad scheme of things. They may all deal with issues that small groups consider important — and they are important for those groups — but they are hardly earth shattering or seminal pieces of legislation on the statewide scene.

There are many other things currently going on in the state which this house could and should be dealing with. For instance, we should be able to find some time to discuss issues as important as industrial relations. The police have work bans on all over the place, which are threatening community safety and order; the nurses may well reinstitute work bans within a day or so, which will threaten the delivery of health services to many thousands of people in the community; and there is a series of other industrial relations issues in disability services. What is the government doing about it? It is sitting silent. What has it done? It has gagged its Minister for Industrial Relations. The Premier has told her that she is not allowed to meet with any of the disputing parties. Why would that be?

It seems odd to me that there are such important issues out there, yet under this business program the government wants the house to adopt the Parliament cannot debate them. Parliament cannot respond to the issues that are of seminal importance to the people of Victoria this week. We see on the notice paper a small number of relatively minor bills. Today the government has given notice of another six bills.

Together with the bill which was read a second time in Bendigo last Thursday, that totals seven bills. That gives us seven bills to deal with when we come back after our three-week break. It is worth noting that one of those is an industrial relations bill. From what I recollect of the notice that was given, it canvasses the possibility of transferring industrial relations powers, perhaps to the federal government — the federal system. It could be worth the house discussing these important issues now. It would seem that an industrial relations minister in this state drawing a salary of \$180 000 a year should presumably do something about industrial relations, and it would seem odd if we were to hand over more powers to the federal industrial relations system. Perhaps during the course of today, tomorrow or even Thursday, the government might care to make what it is intending to do a little clearer.

There are important issues that this house should deal with. Unfortunately the government does not want them discussed here; if it did it would have them on the notice paper. The Premier could come in here and make a ministerial statement on what he intends to do to provide some certainty about the industrial relations system in Victoria. He could provide some outline of how he intends to deal with the nurses dispute and what he intends to do to guarantee that stage 2 of the police bans will not come into play and further threaten community and public safety. He could show the house how he guarantees to deliver disability services to some of the most disadvantaged people in this community.

But what do we see? We see a silent Minister for Industrial Relations in the other place — it is not sitting, so she cannot do anything in the house, and she is not allowed to meet with the disputing parties. We see a Premier who will not allow the issue to be discussed. We see a Treasurer who is not in here to answer any of these issues. We see a business program of a government which simply refuses to canvass the issues in this place, the people's house, where they should be debated.

This Parliament is being let down. The Premier and the Leader of the House should correct the government business program and allow these important issues to be debated.

**Mr MAUGHAN** (Rodney) — The National Party does not oppose the motion. The five bills are all relatively minor pieces of legislation. It will not take a great deal of time to get through them. We have plenty of time this week to do that even though we have the grievance debate tomorrow.

At the same time I support the thrust of the arguments put forward by the honourable member for Monbulk, that we would like to see far more legislation before the house. Once we clean up these five pieces of legislation we virtually have nothing of any substance on the notice paper. We will have another seven bills by the end of this week, but again there is nothing of any great consequence there. I would like to see something that deals with the problems that are besetting the state, such as the industrial relations problems in the health industry — including the nurses — the police force, the preschools and the disability services area. One could go on about a whole range of enormous problems in the state.

I can hear some laughter on the question of disability services, but there are major problems in that area, just as there are in the preschool sector. I welcome the increase in funding to the preschool sector, but the government has commissioned the Kirby report, and we need an opportunity to debate it. Nothing has been done about it to date, and we now need that report to come before the house to give members on both sides the opportunity to discuss the recommendations — most of them very sound — that were put forward by the Kirby committee.

Preschool education is absolutely vital. The more I read, the more I understand that that first five or six years of a child's life is absolutely crucial to the sort of society we have in another 10, 15 or 20 years. At this stage the government has done nothing about dealing with that vital issue. In terms of the budget virtually

nothing was done, with about \$80 million out of \$23 000 million being allocated to the area. In that sense we are not really dealing with the issue of early childhood development and preschool education.

The National Party supports the business program that has been put forward by the Leader of the House. We will accomplish that aim easily, without any stress, but I reiterate that we would like to see some more legislation with a bit of meat in it so we can debate the issues of vital importance to the people of Victoria.

**Motion agreed to.**

## MEMBERS STATEMENTS

### Petrol: prices

**Mr COOPER** (Mornington) — The time is well overdue for the Bracks government to put its money where its mouth is and cut petrol prices. The Victorian government should follow the lead set by the Queensland government and forgo the amount it receives from the federal government as a share of the excise levy so that petrol prices in Victoria can be reduced.

An independent analysis comparing petrol prices in Victoria and Queensland shows that pump prices in Brisbane are consistently 9 to 12 cents per litre less than those in Melbourne. Pump prices in country Queensland are consistently 7 to 10 cents per litre less than prices in country Victoria. The reason for this big difference in petrol prices is that the Beattie government is doing more than just talking about the issue; it is actually doing something positive for motorists.

By comparison, in Victoria we have a government big on rhetoric but short on action. The Premier has been loudly demanding lower petrol prices, but he has done nothing other than chatter away. Blaming someone else for the problem is what the Bracks government seemingly does best.

If the Queensland government can afford to do something positive about lowering petrol prices then so can the Victorian government. I call on the Bracks government to forgo its share of the excise levy and cut the price of petrol at the pump.

### Fr Nicholas Moutafis

**Ms BARKER** (Oakleigh) — Members of the Oakleigh community, and in particular the Greek community of Oakleigh, were very shocked and

saddened by the sudden death on 22 June of Fr Nicholas Moutafis. Fr Nicholas was a great man. He had led the Greek Orthodox community of Oakleigh since the early 1960s. His leadership saw the building of the Saints Anargiri Church in Willesden Road, Oakleigh, the community centre, older persons' units and Fr Nicholas's pride and joy, the primary and secondary Greek Orthodox College.

Fr Nicholas had a special place in his heart for all his community. He was always available to his community, offering support, advice, assistance and guidance. He also advocated very strongly on behalf of his beloved community to governments at all levels. He was a quietly spoken, very sincere and gentle man. I have had many conversations with him, and I admired him greatly for his absolute devotion to his family and his community. I respected him enormously and will honour his memory. I know his memory will also live on in his lovely and loving family, who will miss him enormously.

I am sure they will be comforted by the knowledge that his legacy will live on not only in the buildings that he worked so hard to see built, but also in the strength and commitment of the Oakleigh Greek Orthodox community, which will live on for many years.

I extend my deepest sympathy, together with that of the Oakleigh community and other honourable members of this house, to Mrs Moutafis and her family. Fr Nicholas was a great man who will be very much missed in the Oakleigh community, not only by the Greek community but also by the broader community of Oakleigh, who respected him greatly.

### Rural and regional Victoria: tenders

**Mr KILGOUR** (Shepparton) — Only a few minutes ago in this house we heard the Minister for Education talking about the fact that 23 000 computers will be put into schools and about fairness in information technology (IT) funding. What is fair for rural Victoria in 23 000 computers being let on one tender, which absolutely cuts out every other retailer and stockist of computers in country Victoria?

Given that the Minister for Education originally came from Murtoa, did her primary school education in Murtoa, returned to her family home in Murtoa and has seen businesses close in Murtoa, one would have thought she would have an understanding about country services and businesses needing government contracts. What is wrong with a tender for the provision of all those computers being let through retail businesses in country Victoria?

This government, which trumpets about helping country Victoria and taking Parliament to Bendigo, has absolutely wiped off the retailers of rural Victoria in the provision of IT. When will somebody wake up that IT can be provided by country retailers? They should be given the opportunity, instead of 23 000 computers being supplied by one retail outlet in Melbourne. The people of country Victoria, who support and sponsor the schools and provide the after-sales service of the machines, are being let down by this government.

### Andrew Ingham

**Mr CARLI** (Coburg) — I extend my condolences to the family of Andrew Daniel Ingham. Andy Ingham was a councillor at the City of Moreland and a former mayor of Brunswick. He died tragically at the age of 46 after a very short illness. His death was a big shock to the Brunswick community and the broader Moreland community. He was a very devoted ALP member and combative politician. As the local member for the area I worked constructively with Andy. I also had a fair number of disagreements with him and had the occasional tongue lashing by him. I, along with everyone else in the community, knew him as a political activist with a strong commitment, particularly to social justice and reconciliation.

Andy was also instrumental in getting the City of Moreland and the City of Hume to form a friendship with the town of Aileu in East Timor. It has shown the constructive ability of our communities to raise funds to help in the reconstruction of a town in that country, and it is a recognition by us of how important solidarity is for East Timor. It was an important cause for Andy. He devoted an extraordinary amount of time and energy to providing assistance in East Timor, and he made many friendships there. He will certainly be sorely missed.

### Country Fire Authority: volunteers

**Mr WELLS** (Wantirna) — I bring to the attention of the house the appalling lack of understanding by the Bracks Labor government, particularly the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, about the Country Fire Authority. In response to the issue I raised during the adjournment debate at last week's historic sitting in Bendigo concerning the unionisation of the CFA, in particular the important question of volunteer training, the minister revealed his incompetence, once again, in failing to understand the real issues. The minister is either being deliberately mischievous or he simply does not understand the concerns and needs of CFA volunteers.

Under the terms of the current enterprise bargaining agreement, CFA volunteers cannot perform paid training. Only United Firefighters Union-sanctioned trainers are permitted to deliver paid training. Volunteer trainers, even if they are the best and most experienced personnel available to undertake training, have been totally cut out.

CFA volunteers feel that they have been totally forgotten at the expense of the United Firefighters Union's domination, and it is high time that the Minister for Police and Emergency Services recognises that he has failed dismally to understand the real issues facing the CFA and its volunteers.

If he cannot untangle himself from the puppet strings of the union, it makes it difficult for the CFA management to assist CFA volunteers in receiving the best training, especially when it could be delivered by qualified volunteers.

### Leader of the Opposition: comments

**Mr LANGDON** (Ivanhoe) — I wish to raise the matter raised by the Leader of the Opposition on 13 June in reference to my comments at a Warringal Conservation Society meeting and the Scoresby freeway. The Leader of the Opposition made allegations that I had responded in a certain way at the meeting, which is incorrect. I shall read two letters, one from the guest speaker and one from the Warringal Conservation Society.

The guest speaker, Griff Davis, stated:

As the guest speaker for the night, and presenting information on transport planning matters, I referred to the funding focus of all government levels towards road building and the need to increase funding for public transport and other modes.

I ... clearly recall that the only substantive comment you made involved a question regarding the availability of the rail reservation from Epping to Whittlesea township.

The Warringal Conservation Society stated:

We are happy to respond to put the record straight ...

Members of the Warringal Conservation Society would have been delighted to hear you speak out against the Scoresby freeway proposal at our June meeting.

However, at both the public meeting arranged by this society (26 March) ... and our general meeting, 7 June ... you did not speak against the Scoresby freeway proposal. You did not say that either you or (as *Hansard* records Dr Napthine's words) 'the Labor government is opposed to the Scoresby freeway'. We note that you had previously stated that there would not be an aboveground freeway through the Yarra Valley in the Heidelberg area while you are the local member and the ALP is the government.

We hope that this letter will help to get better debate on this subject and to correct Dr Napthine's misunderstanding.

### **Chisholm Institute of TAFE**

**Mrs PEULICH** (Bentleigh) — I am very concerned, as is my community and the business sector in the Moorabbin and bounding suburbs, about the likely outcomes of the Chisholm review to which the Minister for Post Compulsory Education, Training and Employment referred today, and also about some of the articles that are featured in the *Moorabbin Standard* attempting to soften public opinion for the likely outcome.

My local community is concerned about the carve-up of the Moorabbin campus. The plans are to sell it off, or a significant part of it, either for housing or other purposes, leaving the Moorabbin and Bentleigh areas without an important technical and further education (TAFE) college which has been servicing one of the largest industrial areas in Moorabbin.

I understand the plan will be to retain the Edmund Barton centre fronting on South Road. A forced merger with Holmesglen College of TAFE would lead to the surrender of the manufacturing focus of the Moorabbin campus to a predominantly building and construction focus of Holmesglen. This will be a disaster not only for the industrial area of Moorabbin but for my electorate, where many residents are employed in those areas.

If amalgamated, Moorabbin TAFE will be stripped of its assets, sold off and educational resources —

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

### **Emergency services: volunteers**

**Mr MAXFIELD** (Narracan) — I wish to place on record my admiration for the work of the State Emergency Service during the storms over the weekend in my electorate. The Warragul SES fielded more than 100 calls about damaged roofs, trees down and damaged property. The assistance provided by those fantastic workers in this the International Year of Volunteers is something I appreciate.

I commend the work of the contractors who restored the supply of power to more than 100 000 homes and businesses in the region that were blacked out. Other emergency services also provided tremendous assistance. For example, many members of the Warragul Country Fire Authority worked through the night prior to the official opening of their building.

After having spent all night attending a rescue operation and repairing many roofs and assisting residents they provided breakfast and served meals at the official opening by the Minister for Police and Emergency Services.

During the storms TXU was the only disappointment. Unfortunately TXU, a company that was involved in the Kennett government's privatisation program, failed to communicate with the people who needed the power. Many farmers, especially dairy farmers, were unable to get accurate information from TXU. The TXU communication system totally failed and —

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

### **Eastern Freeway: Greensborough link**

**Mr KOTSIRAS** (Bulleen) — I stand to condemn the Minister for Transport for ignoring the concerns of the residents of Bulleen. During an adjournment debate in May I raised for the attention of the minister the proposal for a freeway link to go through my electorate. Unfortunately three months down the track I have not received a response from the minister or from his office. Despite the fact that I sent him a letter last week, all I have received is a holding letter written by his office, which states:

Your letter is receiving attention and a response will be forwarded as soon as possible.

I am not impressed with the minister's lack of action, nor are the residents. I do not want a link going through my electorate, and more importantly nor do the residents. The residents have had enough and have organised a meeting for this Thursday at 7.45 p.m. at the Veneto Club. I ask the minister to show some courage and vision by turning up and telling the meeting that there will be no freeway link through the Bulleen-Heidelberg area, because if it were to go ahead it would cause some problems. It would threaten the local amenity, increase traffic and endanger residents' health.

I have been advised that the honourable member for Ivanhoe supports this link, but I hope the minister puts it in the bin where it belongs. I would appreciate a response to my letter and to the adjournment matter that was raised three months ago. I have not had a response from the minister yet.

### **Graham and Jan Bland**

**Mr ROBINSON** (Mitcham) — This evening I place on public record my congratulations as well as the

congratulations and gratitude of thousands of Blackburn residents for the services rendered by Graham and Jan Bland at the Blackburn newsagency in South Parade, Blackburn. Graham and Jan Bland recently retired after some 26 years of service in the Blackburn Newsagency. Throughout that time they have delivered and sold millions of newspapers, as well as a whole range of other products.

As Graham commented and reflected on at the recent farewell that was organised by the Blackburn Chamber of Commerce and Industry, he had only one regret — that is, after his perfecting for 26 years the art of tossing newspapers out of a car window in the early mornings and landing them precisely beneath cars parked in driveways, the people who had inherited the newsagency would lack that skill!

Graham and Jan have become a special part of the Blackburn community. They have always had friendly smiles, despite the long hours and difficult working conditions that often confront newsagencies. I wish them all the best, along with the best wishes of all Blackburn residents, in their retirement, which has been well and truly earned.

### **Pascoe Vale Primary School**

**Ms CAMPBELL** (Minister for Community Services) — I place on record my appreciation of the work of the principal of the Pascoe Vale Primary School.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

## **COMMUNITY VISITORS LEGISLATION (MISCELLANEOUS AMENDMENTS) BILL**

### *Second reading*

**Debate resumed from 3 May; motion of Ms CAMPBELL (Minister for Community Services).**

**Mrs ELLIOTT** (Mooroolbark) — The opposition will not be opposing the Community Visitors Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill. As it is some time since the second reading of the bill in the autumn session, I take the opportunity to refresh members' memories about the contents of the bill.

It amends four statutes that provide legislative mandates to keep the community visitors program. Those four statutes are the Intellectually Disabled Persons' Services Act 1986, the Mental Health Act 1986, the Health Services Act 1988 and the Disability

Services (Amendment) Act 2000. It will also make amendments to the Guardianship and Administration Act 1986, which is the presiding legislative act for the Office of the Public Advocate.

Appointed by the Governor in Council, community visitors are members of the community who apply to undertake this role on a voluntary basis. They have very wide powers: they can visit any of the institutions which come under any of these four acts; they can arrive at any time without warning; they can inquire into any aspect of the care of residents of these institutions or individual community residential units; they can inquire into the opportunities for training, education and rehabilitation; they can inquire into failures to comply with the governing legislation; they can talk to residents and hear their complaints; and they can refer any complaints or concerns to the Office of the Public Advocate.

The annual report of the community visitors for 1999–2000 sets out the governing principles of the Intellectually Disabled Persons' Services Act, which governs the way the community should regard people with an intellectual disability. Earlier today during a condolence motion we heard about a former member of Parliament, the Honourable Bill Borthwick, who showed compassion, concern and practical application of that concern for people with an intellectual disability. Honourable members on both sides of the house said how far we have come as a community in our regard of people with an intellectual disability. Although this bill covers other acts — the Mental Health Act and the Health Act — I will concentrate on intellectual disability.

As a community we have come a long way in recognising that people with an intellectual disability have the same rights as able members of the community: they have the right to a reasonable quality of life. These people should be accorded every opportunity to reach their fullest capacities and capabilities. Their innate intelligence, talents and abilities should be developed as far as possible. They should be given every opportunity to live in a dignified and appropriate manner and to have every form and degree of education from which they can benefit. They should also have the right, as does everybody else, to recreational activities. Indeed a bowling alley in Mooroolbark is host to several teams of bowlers with intellectual disabilities who bowl with abled and disabled teams and obviously get a great deal of pleasure from that activity.

People with an intellectual disability have the same rights to other forms of entertainment such as going to

movies and playing sport. These people should be no longer hidden away. Over and above that, they should be able to exercise choice in their own lives and not have other people make choices for them. For this to happen it is important that people with an intellectual disability — and people with a psychiatric disability — have as much control over their own lives and as many opportunities as possible for social and physical integration with the remainder of the community.

On another occasion I have spoken of Bernie, a man who is over 80 years old and who lives in Croydon. Bernie was living in a nursing home, the ownership of which changed last year and became specifically a home for Dutch people. Bernie had to move house, but the owners of the nursing home took great care to ensure that he went to another nursing home in the same area where he would feel at home. Great care was taken with his transition from one place to the other.

Bernie's greatest pleasure in life is to come down to the main street of Croydon every day. He makes his mark in the nursing home's visitors book and does a round to the police station, my electorate office, the real estate agent's and many of the other businesses in the area. Bernie collects key rings; he has thousands and thousands of them. Everybody in the street keeps the key rings that they are given or buy so that he is not disappointed when he comes to visit their businesses or my electorate office.

The whole community looks out for Bernie. He is much loved, and every year on his birthday he has a party to which all of us go. He is as integrated into the local Croydon community as anybody can be, given his innate disabilities. I always think of him when I think about how people with disabilities should be treated in our contemporary community. I am not sure whether community visitors visit Bernie's nursing home, but I am sure that if they do they are pleased with what they see. However, the annual report of the community visitors shows that everything is not always well in some of the institutions they visit, and I will refer to that later on.

The other part of the bill, which is important, was asked for by the Public Advocate. He believes he and his staff should have the same ability to enter premises and inspect documents as community visitors. He has not been able to do that before without previously advising the community residential units or other places where people reside. The Public Advocate feels it is necessary that that happen. The request grew out of the fact that there is a shortage of community visitors, and in some regions staff of the Office of the Public Advocate have

had to act as regional coordinators for community visitors without having the same powers of entry.

The other legislative provision is that community visitors should be local and visit within their own communities. However, it is obvious that there are not enough community visitors. In some country regions like Hume and the Grampians there are not sufficient community visitors to keep to the legislative requirement of visits occurring at least once a month. Although the minister's second-reading speech says that to allow — —

**Mr Viney** — On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker, part of my role as parliamentary secretary is to respond to some of the issues that are raised by the opposition spokesperson in relation to a debate — —

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Order! What is the honourable member's point of order?

**Mr Viney** — I am coming to the point of order. I am finding it difficult to hear the points that the honourable member is making, given the extent of conversation on the other side. I would have thought that opposition members should be listening to their spokesperson.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Order! The honourable member for Mooroolbark, continuing.

**Mrs ELLIOTT** — The second-reading speech says that local community visitors should visit residences in their own areas, yet this bill says they can visit outside their own areas. I suspect it is not for flexibility's sake but because there are more community visitors applying for positions in the eastern and southern regions than there are in the northern and western regions — and, indeed, in rural and regional areas.

I recently read a profile of community visitors but I was unable to find it for the purposes of this speech. It pointed out that most community visitors are female and middle aged, and there is a declining number of them in some regions. It is becoming increasingly difficult to recruit community visitors. The removal of the requirement that community visitors only visit in their own area is commendable in some ways, but in other ways it will be more difficult for these people to be seen as genuine community visitors if they are visiting outside their own area and are not so familiar with the area in which they are meant to be taking great interest in the living conditions of people with intellectual, psychiatric or health disabilities.

The bill provides a common definition of region, which is that a region is as defined. The bill also provides a common secrecy provision through the four statutes,

with appropriate penalties for any community visitor who divulges information in circumstances other than those allowed in the acts.

I return now to the number of community visitors. It is quite clear from the annual report of the community visitors for 2000 that there are not enough community visitors in any of the regions. At the time the report was published there were 25 community visitors in the eastern region, and 37 were required. The northern region had 21, with 37 required. The southern region had 26 community visitors, with 23 more required. In the rural and regional areas, Gippsland had 10 community visitors, with 8 more required, the Grampians had 11, with 21 more required, and Hume had 13 community visitors, with 17 more required. Victoria had a total of 133 community visitors, when all the regions together needed 173.

Frequency of visitation without warning results in an improvement in the standards for the people living in the places visited. However, this bill meets the current needs. It will extend the mandate for community visitors and ensure as far as possible that residences visited comply with the standards.

One thing stands out from the community visitors annual reports over a number of years, and that is that the Kew Residential Services (KRS) have never met the needs of their residents. The Kew facility has a long history dating from the 19th century. It is an institution which has never met the requirements for dignity of the people who have lived there.

**Mr Richardson** interjected.

**Mrs ELLIOTT** — The honourable member for Forest Hill thinks he is upsetting me. Let me assure him that he is not.

**Mr Richardson** — I can keep talking then?

**Mrs ELLIOTT** — You can. In 1999 the annual report of the community visitors said:

The overall picture of KRS is of a primitive and repressive facility akin to stepping back into a 50-year time warp. Community visitors are unable to report to the Victorian community that the care and accommodation at KRS is acceptable according to community standards. The residents are truly the state of Victoria's forgotten people.

Prior to the last election the coalition took notice of this. In its pre-election commitments the coalition said it would close Kew Residential Services in recognition of the fact that congregate care is no longer appropriate for people with intellectual disabilities, that institutional care cannot afford them the dignity and privacy and the

educational and recreational opportunities they need to enhance the quality of their lives.

The incoming Labor government made no such commitment at the time of the last election. It said it would redevelop 50 beds at Kew. In the annual report of the community visitors for 2000 we see the same thing said about Kew:

During the current reporting period until April 2000, community visitors noticed few positive outcomes for the majority of residents at Kew Residential Services ...

...

The 163 people who expressed an interest in a move to the community in 1997 continue to be denied that opportunity.

...

... These are surely the forgotten people of Victoria, hidden from the general community in an isolated environment in an affluent suburb of Melbourne.

Finally, in May this year the Labor government and the Minister for Community Services realised that something had to be done about Kew. They announced there would be a \$100-million sale and redevelopment of the land at Kew and that most of the residents would be moved out into community residential units (CRUs). In other words, they realised how good the promises the coalition made prior to the last election were.

There are 460 people residing at Kew. The conditions, as successive community visitor reports since 1986 have noted, have been improved, but they are still nowhere near good enough for any people to be living in. However, the government has announced that the redevelopment at Kew will take between 6 and 10 years, but as surely as night follows day, the current Labor government will not be in office in 6 or 10 years time.

Will the 163 people who in 1997 expressed interest in moving out get that chance prior to the end of those 6 years or 10 years? Will programs for the residents who are to remain there for those 6 to 10 years be continued, and will they be funded? Will the government absolutely guarantee that all the money from the sale of the Kew site will go back into intellectual disabilities? The government has said that from 50 to 100 residents can remain in the community residential units on the site at Kew. What if more than 50 or 100 residents express a wish to stay on that site, where many have been living for so many years and when many of their parents have raised money over the years to provide amenities for them? Who will decide which residents stay and which residents go? If there are more than 50 or 100, will they have the choice to stay or to go?

That land in Kew is prestigious. If it is sold to a developer to build houses for the general community and if the CRUs for the Kew residents who have intellectual disabilities are to be scattered throughout that site, will the minister give a guarantee that the units will be of the same standard as the houses that will be built on that site so they will not stand out like sore thumbs? They should be absolutely indistinguishable from the houses around them so that the residents at Kew who remain living at that site are able to live at a standard equal to that of their neighbours. Otherwise the redevelopment will mean nothing.

Why are the government and the minister not giving the non-government sector a chance to run the CRUs on site at Kew or the CRUs that will be built in the suburbs and in country areas for the current residents at Kew? Why has the minister insisted that the government run all those community residential units when we know that the non-government sector often does it better? It certainly does it for less cost.

Is it a sop to the Health and Community Services Union, which has recently twice closed Kew for 3-hour periods and whose members are to walk off the job tomorrow and leave the care of the residents to volunteers and management? Is that behind the minister's reasoning that the government will be running those community residential units, so that they will be staffed by union members?

**Debate interrupted pursuant to sessional orders.**

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Order! The time for government business has expired. The honourable member for Mooroolbark will get the call when debate on this bill resumes.

## ADJOURNMENT

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Order! Before calling for members to raise matters in the adjournment debate, I remind honourable members of Speaker Wheeler's ruling, which has been endorsed by later Speakers, that the adjournment debate should not become a second question time, the distinction being that question time is an opportunity to seek information, while conversely the adjournment debate is an opportunity to give information on matters that honourable members consider require action. When addressing matters to ministers, honourable members must ask for certain action to be taken or they will be ruled out of order.

## Police: Bellarine Peninsula

**Mr SPRY** (Bellarine) — I raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services concerning, once again, the 24-hour police station on the Bellarine Peninsula. The recent announcement that the station will be built in Ocean Grove unfortunately raises more questions than it answers, particularly about police numbers and the future of the Drysdale, Portarlington and Queenscliff police stations.

A freedom of information (FOI) request has revealed that, as a result of the government rushing through a police station site selection deal without any public consultation, Ocean Grove has been dispossessed of an important sporting facility — namely, the town's only squash court. Despite the minister's claim as reported in the local press that the Labor province representative, the Honourable Elaine Carbines, has worked closely with the community to determine the best location for the 24-hour police station, recently at a public meeting after the site had been selected and announced Mrs Carbines was forced to admit that there had been no public consultation.

I ask the minister to take action by explaining to my electorate what is going on. The minister and Labor's representatives in Geelong have failed to explain how police numbers on the peninsula will increase from the current 21 to 41, which is the number required for a 24-hour station according to details exposed in the FOI documents — that is, double the current numbers. Mrs Carbines has stated that Drysdale, Portarlington and Queenscliff police stations will remain open. The numbers do not stack up.

On behalf of the electorate I seek action in the form of a candid explanation from the minister this evening and a commitment that he will now fully consult in an open and accountable way with the communities of Drysdale–Clifton Springs, Portarlington–St Leonards and Queenscliff–Point Lonsdale.

## Tourism: Geelong

**Mr TREZISE** (Geelong) — I direct my issue for action to the Minister for Major Projects and Tourism. As the minister and the house are well aware, tourism is a vital industry sector to Geelong. When I talk about Geelong I do not refer just to the city of Geelong but to the Geelong region, including the Bellarine Peninsula and the west coast. The action I seek from the minister is that he take steps to ensure that appropriate government funding is made available to the Geelong region to promote itself as a tourist destination.

As I said, tourism is an important industry in the Geelong region, and the importance of the sector continues to grow year by year. The tourism industry is a major employer in the region and a significant contributor to our economy. In 2000 more than \$400 million was injected into the economy through the tourism industry. More than 4000 people are directly employed in the tourism sector in the region, which represents something like 5.5 per cent of the total employment in the Geelong area. The industry is a major employer of young people in our region, and in many instances it provides that important first step into full-time employment.

Over the last decade there has been a marked push by the community and the tourist sector within the Geelong region to attract international visitors. In the year 2000 around 30 000 international travellers stayed at least one night within the Geelong region. No doubt these figures will continue to grow. This is especially so given private sector initiatives announced in recent times. The Four Points Sheraton Hotel is an example of private sector confidence in the region. That establishment, opened very recently by the Premier, will ensure quality accommodation for international visitors to our region.

Other initiatives include the planned visits of two cruise ships in November this year and January next year, both much welcomed and well earned by the Geelong region and its tourism sector. Those two cruise ships alone will bring literally thousands of international visitors into Geelong. The point I am making is that over the last 12 months the private sector has expressed its confidence and commitment to the tourism industry through significant dollar inputs.

Therefore I believe it is appropriate that the state government continue to complement private sector spending in the tourism industry in Geelong so that the region continues to thrive as a major international, national and intrastate tourist destination.

### **Insurance: voluntary organisations**

**Mr JASPER** (Murray Valley) — I bring to the attention of the Minister for Small Business in another place, through the Attorney-General, the massive increase in public liability insurance costs for organisations that are running functions and events across country Victoria, and particularly across my electorate of Murray Valley. A large number of organisations are now looking at whether they can continue to run these functions because of the huge increase in public liability insurance premiums.

The classic example, which I want to present to the house, is the Rutherglen Country Fair. It is part of the Winery Walkabout, which as everybody knows is conducted in the June long weekend in north-eastern Victoria — and what a great event it is! The Rutherglen Country Fair is held on the Sunday in the closed main street of Rutherglen, and a range of organisations run activities. The events are run by the Rutherglen Chamber of Commerce and voluntary organisations. Last year the cost to them of public liability insurance was approximately \$1700, but the amount they had to pay for public liability insurance this year rose to \$6279. That is a massive increase. Those organisations believe they may not be able to continue unless action is taken.

The National Party believes the government should investigate the rates charged by insurance companies and see what it can do to look for alternatives — perhaps by providing insurance cover right across Victoria or through municipalities, where activities can be covered.

The organisations at Rutherglen are not the only groups to bring the matter to my attention; a number of other organisations have indicated to me the great difficulties they will have in running such functions in the future. We need to follow through the recommendations of the Leader of the National Party and have a forum to bring all the parties together to discuss the issue. If we do not, we will find that voluntary organisations will not be able to conduct functions that are important to country towns. Their loss would be devastating to the organisations and to the areas where they are run.

We look forward to action from the Attorney-General in his representations on this matter to the Minister for Small Business. I repeat: these massive increases cannot be sustained by those organisations. They will just go out of existence. The problem goes right across the spectrum of organisations running voluntary activities and includes the sporting world. The National Party seeks action in the form of urgent assistance from the government.

### **Delatite: boundary review**

**Ms ALLEN** (Benalla) — I raise an issue for the attention of the Minister for Local Government, whom I ask to assist the Shire of Delatite in its desire to change the local government arrangements in the Benalla–Mansfield area.

Following the release of the community review report into the viability of a split of Delatite into two new shires, the minister requested the shire to complete a

business plan to map out the sustainability and affordability of two new shires that are supported by the community.

As we all know, the Kennett government's forced amalgamation of small rural shires into fewer, extremely large shires was not exactly a great success across country Victoria. Many towns were linked to other towns with which they had absolutely nothing in common. Not only do we have many shires that are millions of dollars in debt, but we also have shires such as Delatite which have not worked from day one and which the residents vigorously fought against.

I support the council's aspirations, subject to the viability of the plan, and I want the minister to consider the plan and give advice back to council.

### **Bendigo Livestock Exchange**

**Mr McARTHUR** (Monbulk) — I raise an issue for the attention of the Minister for Agriculture, who I note is listening intently, which relates to the Bendigo Livestock Exchange. As the minister will know, the livestock exchange was given \$5 million by the previous government to allow it to be built on its present site at Huntly. The exchange is now a major regional selling centre in the south-east of Australia. It draws livestock from across Victoria and from southern and western New South Wales. It is now a major indicator in the livestock market across Australia on a weekly basis.

The City of Greater Bendigo submitted an application for \$200 000 to the Regional Infrastructure Development Fund in May last year, but it heard nothing for six months. Eventually in November it was advised to resubmit its application. The council has reassessed its application. It has put together a professional business proposal and has reapplied for \$400 000 from the fund. The City of Greater Bendigo is prepared to put \$320 000 into this much-needed project, which is of regional importance and is deserving of support from the government.

I ask the minister to meet with a delegation of interested groups from Bendigo, as I did in July. I met David Beard and Ian Frost, an engineer, from the City of Greater Bendigo; Gavin O'Sullivan, from the transport and saleyards committee; and Elders and Ellis Nuttal, agents. They are keen to proceed with this excellent project. The minister should take this up on behalf of the Victorian livestock industry, become a champion for this project and argue with his colleague, the Minister for State and Regional Development, for the granting of the \$400 000. After all, the Minister for

State and Regional Development was bragging about allocating an extra \$10.68 million from the fund in April this year. Let him allocate an amount for this very worthwhile, sensible project in Bendigo.

### **Caffeinated beverages**

**Mr ROBINSON** (Mitcham) — I raise a serious matter for the attention of the Minister for Health concerning caffeinated beverages. I seek from the minister an assurance that his department will monitor current inquiries into the effects of caffeinated beverages such as Red Bull, and in particular the effects of these beverages when consumed with alcohol.

The reason I raise this issue is that recently a meeting of the Australia New Zealand Food Authority (ANZFA) determined that labelling and monitoring regulations for these beverages ought to be put in place. That is a good thing, because up until July this year there were no regulations.

I am concerned that the ANZFA agreement grew out of an identified risk to children, as outlined in a discussion paper on the findings of an expert working group put out by the authority last year. The ANZFA press release stated that warnings were essential because the energy drink:

... contains caffeine, and that it's not recommended for children, for pregnant or lactating women ...

Recent international reports also refer to the dangers of consuming drinks like Red Bull with alcohol. I turn to an article in the *Irish Independent* of 12 July which cites three deaths of young teenagers after they consumed Red Bull after having consumed very high amounts of alcohol. Another article relates to a report in Sweden and another relates to investigations under way in Ireland. The report in the *Irish Independent* states:

Red Bull cannot be sold in stores in Norway, Denmark or France because it is classified as medicinal due to its high caffeine levels. It could, however, be sold in pharmacies in those countries.

ANZFA is to be congratulated on the steps it has taken, which arose out of the risk of caffeinated beverages to children in particular. However, more recently we have seen potential risks emerge in other groups, and it is incumbent on the Department of Human Services to monitor the research going on in other jurisdictions concerning the effect of consuming caffeinated beverages with alcohol.

I seek agreement from the minister to have the department monitor these studies to ensure that the unforeseen risks of consuming high-level caffeine

drinks with alcohol are mitigated where they can be, and at the earliest opportunity.

### **State Emergency Service: Woodend**

**Mr WELLS** (Wantirna) — I refer a matter to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services and ask him to take immediate action to fund a new building for the State Emergency Service in Woodend. Last week I was invited to visit that site with Macedon Ranges councillor Donna Petrovich and the SES controller for Woodend, Ailsa Howe. We met with a group of dedicated volunteers. Donna Petrovich and Ailsa Howe are two exceptional people who have worked very hard in their community and are real community leaders. They deserve the respect they command in that town.

The SES is currently operating out of a condemned building with few or no facilities for the volunteers. The SES headquarters is an old hayshed that has been converted, and a wall has been stuck in front of the building. The headquarters building is on a concrete slab, and there are a number of major problems. The building is located on top of an unsuitable septic system that is subject to flooding. The building has been condemned, yet the government is allowing the SES volunteers to work in it.

The honourable member for Narracan mentioned before, and I acknowledge, that the SES does a phenomenal job in the community and the members deserve respect for the work they do. Certainly the conditions in which they work must be up to a certain standard. At present there are no heating or shower facilities, and when I visited the building it was absolutely freezing. After attending a messy road accident at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning or after tarping down a roof in the middle of the night, the volunteers must go back to a cold hayshed where they cannot even have a shower. It is appalling.

Volunteers need to be debriefed and have the opportunity to discuss the incidents they have witnessed. I can imagine that the volunteers have seen some horrific scenes. It is important that they regroup so that they can be properly debriefed. I call on the minister, in this International Year of Volunteers, to look at funding the Woodend SES. Through the efforts of Cr Donna Petrovich the local council has contributed \$30 000 towards the cost of a new building and seeks assistance from the state government to assist the Woodend SES to ensure that these hardworking volunteers receive a proper and adequate building.

### **High Street, Preston: traffic control**

**Mr LEIGHTON** (Preston) — I raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Transport with regard to a 17-kilometre stretch of High Street between Bell Street, Preston, and Cooper Street, Epping. I ask for a range of minor works to be undertaken and I call on the minister to make funding available.

A range of minor measures would make traffic flow more efficiently along this primary arterial route. Those measures include line marking changes, the creation of right-turn lanes, the lengthening of existing right-turn lanes and improved linking between traffic signals along the length of the route.

I have been able to obtain a copy of a report by Andrew O'Brien and Associates which was produced under the previous government. I am hopeful our government can find the money for some of these works to take place, whereas I would not have had much confidence of that occurring two years ago. The report identifies three stages: the first stage involves relatively low-cost improvement works; the second stage involves medium-term works; and the third stage involves long-term planning issues.

The third stage will run to millions, whereas the first stage, for a few thousand dollars here and there, can achieve a number of efficiencies such as in Bell Street, where there is a problem with east-west traffic right turning. That could be addressed by installing fully controlled right turns on east and west approaches. The consultant's report, entitled 'Principal traffic route study', talks about the principal traffic route being a combination of High Street and St Georges Road-Spring Street, and indeed a lot of traffic uses both those routes to move across the northern suburbs and often ultimately on to the Hume Highway. A number of areas are bottlenecks and others are hazards.

I have previously called for the scrapping of the clearway in High Street, Preston, and that is still on my agenda. If the Minister for Transport can provide the money for a number of these minor treatments to take place that will also assist the campaign of our local community to scrap the clearway. Indeed, Vicroads wants the Darebin council to address a number of technical issues and to undertake a number of modifications. I would welcome any advice from the minister.

### **Kingston Centre**

**Mr LEIGH** (Mordialloc) — I raise a matter with the Minister for Aged Care. I am sad that she is not in the

house and I hope she is listening. It concerns a very serious matter affecting the City of Kingston and aged care at a renowned facility, the Kingston Centre. It is true that the former Liberal government sought to outsource some of the beds. The current administration believed in keeping the facilities there and is therefore opposed to the outsourcing. I will briefly read some quotes, which I will make available:

Elderly people in the south-east suburbs should quite rightly feel outraged that their vital health and care facilities are being eroded.

Who said that? The minister in waiting and former ALP candidate for Mordialloc, Robyn McLeod. In this week's local paper Cr Elizabeth Larking, the ALP mayor of the City of Kingston, said:

I don't believe Kingston can afford to lose any nursing home beds.

The ALP mayor of the City of Kingston went on to say in another local paper:

The Labor Party in opposition did not agree with closing the Kingston Centre, yet now they are in government they are running the centre down.

'If we are not careful, all this land will be sold to the private sector ...

This is the ALP's mayor of the city criticising the Labor Party for removing beds from the aged care facilities at the Kingston Centre. It has moved them to Dandenong, outside the electorate; it has jerry-rigged it so it looks like Dandenong gets them over us. It has taken some of the beds to the western suburbs. The local Labor Party is now agreeing with me. An article in one local paper is headed 'Truce in fight for aged care', and the subheading is 'Leigh, Larking on same side'. Another article is headed 'Bid to save beds'.

Locally at least the Labor Party and I have one objective — that is, aged care facilities in our community, whichever way we believe they should be. And where is the Labor Party? What is it doing now? It is scrapping the Kingston Centre. It is scrapping these facilities. I demand that this minister come in here tonight — —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Order! I did not hear what the honourable member said.

**Mr LEIGH** — I am saying I demand that the minister come in here tonight and explain what the government is doing. This is a woman who is more than happy to criticise the federal Minister for Aged Care — —

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr LEIGH** — If it is to keep the facility and have it meet its accreditation by 2003 it has to spend close to \$50 million to upgrade it. I want her to do the job. She is supposed to want to keep this facility. To keep the facility you need to spend the money for accreditation — and that is up to \$50 million.

The minister should not be a coward. She should come in here tonight and explain what she is doing.

### **Housing: Long Gully estate**

**Ms ALLAN** (Bendigo East) — The matter I raise for the attention of the Minister for Housing relates to the redevelopment of the Long Gully housing estate in Bendigo. I ask the minister what action she is taking to address issues around soil contamination in the Long Gully housing estate.

Long Gully is an area of Bendigo which I am very pleased to represent, along with my colleague the honourable member for Bendigo West. We are both very pleased to share representation of the suburb of Long Gully. In December 1999 the minister confirmed government funding of around \$6.35 million for the next five years for this important redevelopment of the estate. It is an important housing project in Bendigo, and the Long Gully community has very strong support for the project.

A committee has been formed called the Long Gully Community Liaison Committee, which has met regularly since the minister made the funding announcement. It discusses important issues of implementation and the development of a communication and liaison strategy around the redevelopment.

The project is all about strengthening the Long Gully community. Some interesting spin-offs or side effects of the project in its getting the Long Gully community together are the strengthening of the role of the community house in the Long Gully estate and the addressing of some social issues in the Long Gully area. One of those has been the incredibly successful formation of the Long Gully Legends junior footy team. In the past few years the team has competed in the under 12s, and it is doing a sterling job in that competition. The football team is really about community building; it is strengthening the community and, as the parents are involved in supporting the junior footballers, bringing it back together.

A housing project like the Long Gully housing estate is not just about infrastructure — although I must say that

it is a very important infrastructure project for both the Long Gully and Bendigo communities — but is also about strengthening the community. As I said, things like the Long Gully Legends football team and the community liaison committee are vitally important to ensure the long-term success of the housing estate.

The area needs some development and assistance. I seek action from the minister and advice about what she is doing to assist this community.

### Kingston Centre

**Mrs PEULICH** (Bentleigh) — I also wish to raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Aged Care. It echoes the concerns of the honourable member for Mordialloc about the future of the Kingston Centre.

Being the honourable member for the Bentleigh district, which has the third-highest number of over-65s in the state — and Sandringham nearby has the second-highest number of over-65s in the state — I am concerned that there will be a tragic loss of beds and much-needed aged care facilities from the Kingston Centre, and I think the plan to disperse the beds to outlying areas is very bad.

The waiting list for elective surgery, especially orthopaedic, is dramatically affecting older residents, and that will exacerbate what is already a shortage of aged care beds. When the honourable member for Mordialloc referred to some commitments made locally by the Labor Party he failed to quote a very important comment attributed to Robyn McLeod, the ALP candidate. I must endorse those comments. She said:

It is totally unacceptable for the state government to continue to reduce the funding for this centre when the needs of our elderly citizens should be of highest priority.

There is no doubt that the need is in the Bentleigh, Sandringham and Mordialloc districts. While there are obviously needs in the outlying suburbs, one should not be used to substitute for the others. There ought to be an expansion of aged care facilities and services, not a diminution and erosion of them in the local area.

The Minister for Aged Care has been very happy to sheet blame to her federal counterpart, but obviously she has responsibility for a state facility, and I ask her to give an assurance to Bentleigh residents that this facility will not lose beds for aged care residents and that she will provide the funding necessary to upgrade the facility.

Quite clearly the general approach of the Bracks Labor government is: when the minister fails, find someone else to blame. In this instance there is no-one else to

blame. It is a state facility. The demographics of the area are such that the beds are needed in the Bentleigh, Mordialloc and Sandringham districts.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Mrs PEULICH** — I have already called for the action, and it will be an absolute betrayal of older residents in these areas if the beds are tragically lost to the local area.

The City of Glen Eira is already on the record — —

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

### Responses

**Mr PANDAZOPOULOS** (Minister for Major Projects and Tourism) — The honourable member for Geelong raised the importance of tourism in the Geelong region, which includes Bellarine, and links up with the west coast and the Great Ocean Road. He, along with the member for Geelong North and the member for Geelong Province in another place, Elaine Carbines, are regular communicators with me about the importance of tourism for the region, and it is pleasing to see the confidence the region has in itself as tourism grows in the area. This is seen in the private sector investment that the honourable member spoke about.

There has also been the additional Queenscliff–Sorrento ferry service, which means that every hour on the hour from each side of the bay you know a service is operating, which is a great bonus to the local communities, as it is to tourists, who can now be guaranteed that they will not have to hang around for too long at any location and they can plan their trips.

The community is much more confident now to seek funding support from the state government because of the extra resources we have provided in regional events — the extra \$2 million over four years specifically focused on regional Victoria.

Communities are now saying, 'It is good to see something we didn't have in the past. We can either have the confidence of applying to seek some marketing and financial support or we can apply on a more regular basis', and those honourable members are vocal in supporting their industry, and I am pleased about that.

I am pleased to announce to the house that I have authorised Tourism Victoria to provide \$70 000 for three different events that will benefit the area. Two of the events are well known. One has been rebranded and

improved, and there is an additional event. One of those is the Great Ocean Road rally, which involves a \$25 000 grant. The rally will take place in November and feature up to 50 historic and modern classic sports cars. They will travel from Adelaide along the Great Ocean Road, finishing in Geelong.

It is a cooperative venture with the South Australian Tourist Commission, which will host its part of the event. It is good to see that Victoria and South Australia are working together in that region to encourage that touring event.

Overnight stops will take place in Port Fairy and Lorne as well as two South Australian destinations, but the rally will finish in Geelong, and we are supporting it because it strengthens that touring route between Geelong and the Great Ocean Road, which is very important for us.

The race will finish in Geelong. The local community is very keen about it and will be hosting two event-related functions at the completion of the race, which will add focus and welcome the visitors. There is no doubt the media will be following that event and branding the area. The funding grant will assist the organisers with the promotion and marketing of the event — —

**Mr Spry** — On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker, you gave a very clear direction when you started the adjournment debate session this evening that honourable members must ask for action to be taken. It is all very well to hear these announcements made by the Minister for Major Projects and Tourism, but I ask you to stick to your original direction. These are the sorts of statements that should be made either during question time or in ministerial statements. I suggest the minister is abusing your original direction of earlier this evening.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Order! There is no point of order. The matter to which I referred related to members asking for action. The minister was starting to refer to funding as the member for Bellarine rose to raise his point of order. I cannot direct the minister to respond in the way the honourable member for Bellarine wishes.

**Mr PANDAZOPOULOS** — The honourable member for Geelong sought ongoing marketing support to recognise the region. I am announcing marketing support for three events. I understand the honourable member for Bellarine is embarrassed. I was thinking about having a go at him and the honourable member for South Barwon for not raising tourism issues, but I respect him because we served together for a number of

years on the Environment and Natural Resources Committee, so I will not do so.

I would also like to announce to the honourable member that the Queenscliff Music Festival will receive \$20 000 this year. There is no doubt that Hugo Armstrong will be particularly impressed. The festival won the major regional event category at the Tourism Victoria Awards recently. The grant will assist the festival in marketing itself to Melbourne and interstate markets, and the government believes this event has the capacity to continue to grow and attract not only intrastate but also interstate visitors.

I am also pleased to announce to the house that I recently paid a visit to Spray Farm on the Bellarine Peninsula to announce a \$25 000 grant to the 2001 Spray Farm Spring Festival. That is an absolutely fantastic event, and it is a great location. This year the event has been organised to coincide with Equitana Asia Pacific, the equestrian extravaganza, which will be held in Melbourne just prior to the festival. It will combine its traditional equestrian competition with a food and wine focus to showcase regional food and wine. The government has worked with Spray Farm to grow the event. There is no doubt that the Geelong and Bellarine areas are fantastic tourism destinations in their own right. Those areas are working with us and the local members to grow tourism. I thank the honourable member for Geelong for his huge commitment, and I thank other Geelong government members.

**Mr CAMERON** (Minister for Local Government) — The honourable member for Benalla raised a matter concerning municipal arrangements in the Benalla and Mansfield areas — namely, those in the Shire of Delatite. You will be aware, Honourable Deputy Speaker, that that area was subject to the reign of terror that occurred during the Kennett years, when councils and municipal areas were forced together whether they wanted it or not. The forced amalgamation was not sought in that area, but local Liberal Party members Graeme Stoney and Geoff Craige thoroughly supported it. During that period many communities in country Victoria suffered greatly.

It is of great credit to communities in most parts of Victoria that they have rebuilt themselves and got on with their lives, notwithstanding the massive setbacks that occurred during the Liberal years.

One area with ongoing issues is the Shire of Delatite, the only municipality in the state where councillors want change. If there is to be change of this nature, the council must be driving it and there must be council support. Councillors in the Shire of Delatite are

unanimous in wanting to bring about change so that there is a new shire of Benalla and a shire of Mansfield.

From interjections tonight it is clear that the opposition remains unfazed by the concerns in that community. The opposition remains unapologetic for its actions. Earlier this year the Leader of the Opposition on radio dismissed the councillors by saying that they should sort it out and be done with it. He was not appreciative of the issues in that area.

The honourable member for Benalla is the only member of Parliament in that area who appreciates the subtleties and the issues in her community. She shares the aspirations of the councillors and wants to ensure that if it goes ahead the council proposal is affordable and sustainable and has community support. To that end the council is developing a plan of how it intends to proceed.

This week I provided advice to the council about the issues it may canvass as it goes forward and the way it may plan to bring about greater community support, the need to ensure affordability and matters associated with long-term sustainability. Clearly the council plan has to be financially responsible and self-contained. All the new arrangements and their cost have to be incorporated into the plan. The council will set up a community council concept at both ends of the municipality to bring about greater local decision making. It intends not only to do that around broader issues but to go further so that the process ends up being detailed. It may be that there will be different service arrangements at each end of the municipality, with different priorities and other changes.

If that can be done with sustainable rates, then the council will seek a separation that in all reality will be a simple severing because the council intends to pursue it to that degree. The community concept means that the council intends to conduct itself as two administrations, as two shires within the existing boundaries. If all goes well it will seek the formal separation process.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Mr CAMERON** — Opposition members are interjecting. They are not fussed, and they want the lines on the map to remain because they do not care and do not want to examine the issues. However, the honourable member for Benalla and the councillors want to give it a go and want to see if there can be community support, affordability and arrangements that last in the long term.

**Mr BATCHELOR** (Minister for Transport) — The honourable member for Preston raised with me an issue

of traffic congestion along High Street, Preston, up to Cooper Street, Epping.

It is a well-known through route for north–south traffic in this part of the northern suburbs. It is of particular interest to the honourable members for Preston and Thomastown because they have been concerned to look at traffic issues along this section of High Street to see what can be achieved. The honourable member wanted to know what action the government would be able to take to address these matters, which throw up a number of problems. The current problems centre around poor lane definition, rear-end accidents and the problems created by right-turning cars blocking through traffic. These problems manifest themselves at a number of locations over the 17-kilometre stretch referred to by the honourable member for Preston.

The honourable member also pointed out that this is not a new problem, but that it has existed for some time. It is a problem that was neglected by the previous Kennett government, because it had little care for what happened in the northern suburbs and was prepared to let matters fester without any attempt to resolve them. The honourable member mentioned that some low-cost treatments could be put in place easily that would be of great assistance.

I am pleased to inform the honourable member for Preston that in this financial year the Bracks government is prepared to make \$143 000 available to improve traffic flow along High Street, which will be of great assistance to motorists who travel through the cities of Darebin and Whittlesea. It will be greatly appreciated by those who reside in the Preston and Thomastown electorates.

**Mr Hulls** interjected.

**Mr BATCHELOR** — It will be of great benefit to them. The sorts of things we could be looking at along this section include line-marking changes, the creation of right-hand turns, the lengthening of existing right-turn lanes and improved linking between traffic signals along the entire route. These simple, straightforward and down-to-earth treatments along this busy through route will increase efficiency and reliability and improve the traffic flow. I congratulate the honourable member for Preston on raising these and other matters.

**Mr HAMILTON** (Minister for Agriculture) — The honourable member for Monbulk referred to an application to the Regional Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) made to the Minister for State and Regional Development by the Bendigo Livestock

Exchange for improvements to the saleyards in that city. I know it is early in this sessional period, but the honourable member committed two fundamental sins in relation to adjournment matters — and I know the honourable member is a stickler for protocols and proper performance in this house.

Firstly, if the honourable member wanted a detailed and genuine answer to a matter raised with me for action, then normally he would advise me and I would get the information and give a full answer. I could easily have satisfied this question by saying, ‘I will look into it’. However, it is a serious matter. The other sin was that during my term as a minister of this government, and during my experience in this house over a number of years, delegations are normally and generally progressed through the local member. The City of Greater Bendigo, which is an applicant for this money for the Bendigo Livestock Exchange, should have gone through the excellent local member.

**Mr McArthur** interjected.

**Mr HAMILTON** — I will not meet with the honourable member, who interjects. If he had had a look at the record of delegations I have met with during my term as minister he would have seen that I have met with delegations led by members of the Liberal and National parties as well as by the Independents. They have requested delegations, as have honourable members on my side of the house. Indeed it has been my modus operandi to meet with delegations as requested on every occasion. I would have expected better of the City of Greater Bendigo and for it to have chased up this extra one, which certainly sounds like a worthy cause. The honourable member for Monbulk has been around long enough to know how the place works, and it is not his style to create stunts during the adjournment debate.

Nevertheless, I can assure the honourable member that I would appreciate the City of Greater Bendigo contacting the local member, who I am sure would be very pleased to arrange a delegation. She can be assured that, upon a request being made, I will meet with them as I meet with any group to discuss matters which are of importance to agriculture.

On a final note, it is pleasing that the honourable member for Monbulk appreciates the significance and importance of the Regional Infrastructure Development Fund. It has been welcomed throughout the whole of regional Victoria, and was a great innovation by a good Minister for State and Regional Development. I can assure the honourable member that the record of the minister is second to none in making sure that

applicants get a fair go and are given serious consideration.

The record will show that the City of Greater Bendigo received a substantial grant from the RIDF in relation to another major agricultural event, which had its inaugural showing in Bendigo some two years ago. I shall expect the honourable member for Bendigo East to arrange for the delegation to meet with me so that I can listen to their concerns and make sure that this matter is progressed further with the Minister for State and Regional Development.

**Ms PIKE** (Minister for Housing) — I thank the honourable member for Bendigo East for raising the issues of soil contamination and the ongoing development of the Long Gully public housing estate. I am pleased to remind the house that 74 of the properties within the broader Long Gully redevelopment have already been upgraded at a cost of \$2.25 million over the last 12 months. The whole development is being done in stages over a five-year period. Ultimately not only will it see a broad change in the character of that community, it will also see significant improvements in both the quality of residential facilities and the development of the community itself.

Some of the tenants have been relocated as part of the stage 1 redevelopment. The redevelopment liaison officer is interviewing all tenants and meeting their particular needs — advising them and giving them support in the process of that redevelopment so that they can be either successfully relocated to other places or, once the redevelopment occurs, go back into the Long Gully community.

In relation to soil contamination in the area, as many honourable members will know, this sort of soil contamination is very common in the Bendigo area and in many other parts of country Victoria. The government has been working closely with the City of Greater Bendigo and 100 households have already been visited. Residents have been made aware that assistance and advice are available to them. A public health bulletin and pamphlet have been hand delivered to households in the area, not only in public housing but also in the broader community.

The Office of Housing, in consultation with the public health division of the Department of Human Services, the City of Greater Bendigo and the Environment Protection Authority will continue to monitor and address matters that arise from soil contamination on the site.

The honourable members for Mordialloc and Bentleigh raised the matter of the Kingston Centre. In the case of the honourable member for Mordialloc I must say it is pleasing to witness his new-found interest in aged care and I am hopeful that as time proceeds we will hear more from him about this issue, which is important to his community, although I might say that the kinds of quotations brought before the house tonight are rather opportunistic. It is unfortunate that someone's personal circumstances are often the precursor for some of these issues being raised.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Ms PIKE** — If honourable members were genuinely concerned about the future of aged care in their community they would get on the phone and call Bronwyn Bishop because it is clearly — —

**Mr Leigh** — On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker, the matter that I, the honourable member for Bentleigh and the mayor of the City of Kingston raised relates specifically to state government funding for a building that is owned by the state and is about to fail accreditation in 2003. The money is required from the minister's government, not the federal government. We do not want you buck passing! Make a decision!

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Order! There is no point of order. I ask the minister to continue.

**Ms PIKE** — It is important that we understand the issues that relate to the Kingston Centre in the broadest possible context. The reality is that as of July 2000 in the southern region — of which the Kingston Centre is a part — instead of having 90 beds per 1000 of population over 70 years, there were only 82.7 beds, as a direct result of the commonwealth government's failing policy in aged care — —

**Mr Leigh** — On a point of order, I keep telling the minister I have got the right Bronwyn, because the minister is the Bronwyn who is responsible for funding the particular building. It is not a matter about the nurses, it is about the building and the facilities that she is trying to close. Even the ALP mayor of the City of Kingston knows that.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Order! There is no point of order. The minister, to continue.

**Ms PIKE** — In raising this matter in the adjournment debate the honourable member for Mordialloc reminded us that the previous government had the intention of privatising the Kingston Centre.

**Mr Leigh** interjected.

**Ms PIKE** — The honourable member interjects. The intention of the previous government was that the Kingston Centre would be the largest single privatisation of any group of aged care beds in the whole state.

**Mrs Peulich** interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Order! The honourable member for Bentleigh! The minister, to conclude.

**Ms PIKE** — Two hundred and eight beds were to be privatised, sent out to the likes of the Morans and the Crofts and many others who were beneficiaries of the privatisation agenda of the previous government.

**Mrs Peulich** — On a point of order, the communities of Bentleigh, Mordialloc and the Sandringham district are interested in answers about the future. They do not want to hear a minister reflecting on the past, especially a minister who obviously conveniently seeks to blame someone else when she fails. We want her to take responsibility for the government's undertakings and policies.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Order! There is no point of order.

**Ms PIKE** — In the process of preparing for the privatisation of the Kingston Centre, which is germane to the matter raised in the adjournment debate this evening, the previous government basically decimated the services in that area. Many of the ancillary services were moved off the site and the whole area was left to run down, including the services left on the site. The community was outraged by that process. People are very concerned that the period in which the previous government had responsibility for and stewardship of the Kingston site was one of utter neglect and a lack of care and concern.

This government has a profound commitment to older people. It has invested considerable resources into care for older people at the Kingston Centre and other sites. Through its strategies in the recent budget the government has injected considerable money into services. It is now supporting a number of people on the site in interim care facilities.

**Mr Leigh** — On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker, what the minister and members of the Labor Party locally are saying is right. The minister is taking beds from the Kingston Centre and moving them to Dandenong. She and Stan Capp, another Labor flunkey who is in charge of that region, are destroying the Kingston Centre. The past is the past. We want to know

what the government is doing. The minister should answer the question!

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Order! There is no point of order.

**Ms PIKE** — Given the enormous difficulties that it finds itself in, with diminishing resources — —

**Mr Leigh** interjected.

**Ms PIKE** — I have actually visited the Kingston Centre. Given the enormous difficulties that it finds itself in, with diminishing resources in terms of subsidies from the commonwealth and the 5000-bed shortage that we have in aged care right across Victoria, the government is working very closely with the management of the Southern Health Care Network through the process of the future redevelopment of the Kingston Centre.

The government is requiring Southern Health to consult with the local community. It is requiring it to ascertain the genuine demand for beds in the varying locations in the network. The government is meeting regularly with Southern Health management — I met with them about three weeks ago to discuss their plans. This government has put millions of dollars into capital redevelopment and the Kingston Centre will have a future that the community will be proud of, not like the past under the previous government, which the community is ashamed of!

**Mr HAERMEYER** (Minister for Police and Emergency Services) — The honourable member for Bellarine raised an issue relating to staffing of the new 24-hour Bellarine police station. This government is committed to that station and is in the process of getting construction of it under way.

Over the past two years the honourable member for Bellarine has been desperate to find a negative angle to the commitment the government made to that police station. He first cast doubt on whether the government would build it and then he said other police stations would close. The member is desperate to find a negative angle because he did nothing to try to get this police station built when his party was in government! He did nothing towards enhancing the police presence on the Bellarine Peninsula. In fact he sat there while his government was cutting police numbers to shreds.

A member for Geelong Province in the other place, Mrs Carbines, has been an extremely active advocate for this police station, for a 24-hour police presence on the Bellarine Peninsula — for an enhanced police presence.

**Mr Spry** interjected.

**Mr HAERMEYER** — I have to inform the honourable member for Bellarine of two simple facts. Firstly, this government is increasing police numbers, not reducing them. Tomorrow another 45 recruits will graduate from the police academy, and that will take the net number of police on the ground to more than 400.

So less than halfway into our government's term of office we are more than halfway towards attaining our target of 800 additional police. We will attain that three months ahead of the expiry of the four-year term of this government. The 800 extra police means more police presence across the state. Coupled with a 24-hour police station in Bellarine, it means an enhanced police presence on the Bellarine Peninsula, something the honourable member for Bellarine seems to have some difficulty getting his mind around.

When you cut police like his government did, there are less police; when you put more police on, there are more police and police presence is enhanced. It is pretty simple. There will be no closures of police stations on the Bellarine Peninsula. This 24-hour police station will only lead to an enhanced police presence — a 24-hour police presence — on the Bellarine Peninsula, no thanks to the honourable member for Bellarine but all congratulations to a very strong advocate of policing on the Bellarine Peninsula, the member for Geelong Province in the other place, Mrs Carbines.

**Mr Spry** — That is pathetic!

**Mr HAERMEYER** — Obviously the honourable member for Bellarine does not want a 24-hour police station on the Bellarine Peninsula! When we were in opposition we knew all along where he stood, but now he has confirmed it.

The honourable member for Wantirna raised a matter relating to the condition of the shed of the Woodend State Emergency Service (SES) unit. I have to say I was a little perplexed that he would raise this tonight, because I happened to notice a copy of the *Mickleham Times*, in which it is claimed that he raised this matter in the parliamentary sitting at Bendigo. I happened to go through *Hansard* and found that it had not been raised but that he had raised the matter about the Woodend Country Fire Authority (CFA) unit, so somebody must have gone and told him about the difference.

I can understand the confusion on his part, because it was certainly the intention of the government of which he was a part to merge the two organisations. I well

remember the former Minister for Police and Emergency Services going to a CFA unit, I think at Romsey, and indicating that the SES and the CFA were likely to be merged after the election. We knew where the former government was going, and I can understand that the honourable member for Wantirna confuses the CFA and the SES. However, he misled the people of Woodend, the *Mickleham Times* and the SES brigade when the suggestion was made to them that he would raise this matter in the parliamentary sitting at Bendigo.

He may have picked up that the honourable member for Gisborne has been in fairly close contact with my office. In fact within the past 24 hours I signed a letter to the honourable member for Gisborne indicating that, provided that the normal formula of the \$30 000 on offer from the council still applies, the government will ensure that this SES unit will get a new shed. I congratulate the honourable member for Gisborne on being on the ball on this issue. I rather deplore the manner in which — —

**Mr Leigh** — On a point of order, Deputy Speaker, given that the minister has obviously written this letter, I ask that he make it available to the house now so we can see it.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Order! There is no point of order.

**Mr HAERMEYER** — The honourable member for Wantirna, as I say, should hang his head in shame for having made representations to that SES unit and that community that he was going to do things and for now raising the matter in the house a week late, after the job has already been done. There was no phone call to my office, there was no letter, and he did not raise it in the house. It is too late — the honourable member for Gisborne has already done the job! This funding would not even have been possible under the previous government, because for seven years it starved the SES of resources. It is the boost to SES funding that this government has made available that is enabling us to provide the SES across the state with vastly enhanced resources and facilities. I dare say that by now there would be no SES if it had been left to the previous government, because its plan was to merge the two organisations.

**Mr HULLS** (Attorney-General) — The honourable member for Murray Valley raised the issue of public insurance liability. It is true that some small businesses, tourist operators and community groups have recently complained about their public liability insurance premiums having increased to what they say are unaffordable levels or having been refused cover

altogether. It has been said that the rise in premiums has been commonly attributed to the collapse of HIH Insurance. I will raise this matter with the Minister for Small Business in the other place. I believe there is a range of other factors involved in that matter.

Oversight of the general insurance industry is certainly, as the honourable member would know, a commonwealth responsibility, and as I understand it the responsible federal minister, Mr Joe Hockey, has referred several questions on insurance premium pricing to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission and requested that it monitor premium movements. I am aware that the Minister for Small Business has also recently written to the federal government about this matter. However, I will raise this matter and the concerns of the honourable member with the Minister for Small Business.

The honourable member for Mitcham, as I understand it, raised a matter for the Minister for Health about Red Bull — no bull! — and caffeinated beverages. I will refer that matter to the Minister for Health.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Order! The house now stands adjourned until next day.

**House adjourned 11.14 p.m.**

