

is very doubtful whether it would be a good proposition in our area to irrigate for pastures.

It is very gratifying indeed from my point of view and from that of the settlers in the Donnybrook area to know that at last a move has been made to dam the tributaries of the Preston River. Work on this project will commence in 1969, the first stage being to construct a dam which will hold 700 to 1,000 acre feet of water. This will be constructed on Lyalls Brook, about two miles north of Mumballup. Admittedly the water will cost the farmers \$15.00 an acre foot, but with the high value of crops, this will still be a great advantage to them, and they are looking forward to it.

It must be admitted that over the years, the amount of water which flows down the Preston River and into the sea is colossal, and it is very frustrating for settlers to see all that water go by knowing that by the end of December they will be unable to pump any water from the river because it will be practically dry by then.

There has been quite a lot of talk lately in regard to the small farmer disappearing from the Australian scene. It is believed that as he has only a small unit, it will become uneconomic and eventually he must sell. Such farms will be amalgamated and taken over by larger concerns, and the small farmer will disappear. If this does occur, it will be a very sad and sorry day for Australia, because this country has been developed by these people. I think the same initiative displayed by Australians during the war has also been displayed by these farmers, and they are now entitled to some support and assistance in order that they might maintain their farms within our economy.

I would like to conclude by thanking the constituents of the Blackwood area for having elected me. I only hope I am able to carry out my duties and work for them in the way they desire.

**MR. BERTRAM** (Mt. Hawthorn) [7.45 p.m.]: Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity, my first to do so, to congratulate you on your recent election to high office; that is to say, to the position of Speaker of this Assembly.

It is now four months and more since the general election and that is sufficient time to enable one to form some first impressions. The spirit of co-operation and service which is so noticeable in the staff of Parliament House is certainly not the least of these. Speaking as objectively as one can in the circumstances, I must say it has been good to see the energy and enthusiasm displayed by my fellow new members on this side of the House. I have no desire to be presumptuous, or even to appear so, but it has been said from time to time that the new members to whom

I have just referred are going to make their mark and at the same time make a significant contribution both to the Parliament and the State of Western Australia. My belief—prognostication—is that these high expectations will be borne out. In the fullness of time there will be ample evidence to show that these predictions were justified.

I am sure I speak not only for myself but for all new members on this side of the House when I express appreciation of the tremendous leadership and direction given to us by our leader, The Hon. J. T. Tonkin, who is the Leader of the Opposition in the Chamber, during the general election, and also for the positive and good influence he has had upon us to the present time. Similarly I should like to extend my thanks to those members on this side whom I refer to as the "old hands," for the assistance and help they have given us during these first few months. It is a period which, perhaps, can fairly be referred to as the shakedown period for new members into parliamentary life. To those members opposite who have extended friendship to us over this period of time, I say this has been noted and appreciated.

Another very important impression relates to our former leader, The Hon. A. R. G. Hawke. I have been greatly impressed to observe the tremendous enjoyment which he derives from life. He seems to revel in a good joke and there is hardly a situation from which he cannot derive at least some humour. It may be fair to say that his quest for fun is insatiable. I imagine these qualities which he possesses are not irrelevant from the standpoint of the tremendous amount of support which he has received from so many Western Australians for so long.

Of course, I am not overlooking his ability to know, to understand, to work with, and to fight for those people whom on this side of the House we so affectionately refer to as "the little people." Without seeking to emulate Mr. Hawke's humour, I nevertheless digress for a moment to speak in lighter vein. The fact is that in the short space of time in which I have been moving about in the precincts of Parliament House I have contracted at least my fair share of the viruses which are prevalent at this time of the year. If it were not for the fact that my good friend and colleague, the member for Pilbara, is on the House Committee, I would be tempted to aver that the committee was seeing to it that I was getting, perhaps, a little more than my fair share from its ample larder of virulent viruses.

Election to this Parliament for the first time connotes a great deal. It involves a sizeable reorientation and reorganisation of one's former life routine. It heralds in, as it were, a new era for the new member. This being so, I believe it is a time for



me to pause for a moment in order to take stock and, more particularly, to thank certain people and organisations for what they have done for me in years gone by. I propose to do just that; and, in the first instance, I should like to thank certain friends and relatives who, some years ago, gave me the opportunity and the encouragement to qualify as an accountant. I have come to realise that opportunity is so important in life; without it very often one does not get off the ground. I particularly wish to thank my brother who, of his own volition, contributed some of the wherewithal necessary for me to qualify.

I should also like to thank a fellow member of the legal profession who, at a later time, was instrumental in making the way available—giving the entree, in a sense—for me to enter the legal profession. It is not at all that easy to gain entree to the legal profession today, but a few years ago it was somewhat more difficult, particularly if one did not have the means. He made the way available to me and this allowed me to study, qualify, and ultimately become a practitioner of the Supreme Court of Western Australia.

These things mean a lot to me, but I mention them in the present context because the qualifications to which I have referred have been invaluable to me in the relatively short space of time that I have been substantially interested in political matters, and I do not expect they will be a great burden to me in the future.

I think it is quite proper and, in fact, necessary that I should thank the Australian Labor Party, as the member for Maylands did earlier this evening. Perhaps I should say, "The Great Australian Labor Party" and make no bones about it. It is the oldest party within the Commonwealth of Australia. It is a party which has never sought to conceal its identity or its name down the years by reason of fluctuations of fortune. In the mere 17 years, or thereabouts when it was at the helm of the Commonwealth, the Australian Labor party made a tremendous contribution to the Commonwealth of Australia and to the people of Australia. I put it to members that there is ample evidence of what I have just said in statutory and other form for all those who wish to view it. It is not idle comment, but supportable by ample evidence.

As far as Western Australia is concerned, I believe the Australian Labor Party has the support of the majority of voters in Western Australia. Down the years it has helped to lay the foundations of this State and has contributed in a big way towards its growth. Over the years, the Australian Labor Party has been in office in this State for long periods of time, and, once again, the Statutes show that the Australian Labor Party accomplished many things when it was in office. It was not in any way lopsided. By that I mean it did not proceed in one direction and mark

time in others. It is the Australian Labor Party which has laid the foundations which are so necessary to enable Western Australia now to proceed and to progress at the rate at which it is proceeding with a measure of safety. Surely it is agreed all round that, no matter what the edifice one seeks to construct, it is only as good as the foundations—the base—upon which it stands.

I also thank the Australian Labor Party because it sets out its objectives so clearly for all to see. These objectives appeal to me. Furthermore, my thanks go to it because it happens to be the vehicle which enables me now to be a member of the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia and to speak at this time.

I should also like to thank a large number of people within the Labor movement, and outside of it, who, by their selfless endeavours in the course of the election and leading up to it, made victory in the Mt. Hawthorn electoral district a probability. I use the term "Mt. Hawthorn electoral district"; because, with the newly constituted electoral boundaries, the district includes a sizeable portion of Wembley. It also includes Joondanna, parts of North Perth, Osborne Park, and so on. However, the most significant thing as a result of the last redistribution of boundaries is that Wembley came into the Mt. Hawthorn electoral district.

It was a heartwarming experience for a relatively novice candidate to observe the tremendous amount of time and talent which those people—whom, as I have said, we on this side refer to so affectionately as the little people—were prepared to give in order to gain the desired result on the 23rd March last. The spirit they showed was the spirit of endeavour, which gives one hope and entitles one to believe—as I do—that there may yet be time for the people of the world to come to learn to resolve their differences in a mature and adult way—I refer to differences whether State-wise matters, administrative-wise or otherwise—and for people to come to realise that peace and co-operation are goals which should transcend most, if not all, other objectives. Certainly they should transcend the less wholesome approaches to life which prefer competition and all that goes with it, to something savouring of co-operation. I refer to all the things which are manifested these days in what is so aptly referred to as the rat race.

Thanks, then, to the people of the Mt. Hawthorn electoral district, since this is the electorate which I represent—all 12,550-odd electors in that district. They are the people who ultimately gave me the support which meant victory in the general election. I told the electors at the material time that I would serve them severally and collectively to the best of my ability. That was not said in a sense of



gimmicky. This being so, I do not hesitate to restate my intention to do my very best—to deliver the goods—in the Mt. Hawthorn electorate.

To speak for one's fellow man, one's equals, in the highest forum in the State is surely one of the greatest temporal roles, if not the greatest, which any man can be given. I recognise the great honour and privilege and also the heavy responsibility which it involves.

One of my greatest concerns, Legislature-wise, is the apparent reluctance on the part of Governments—particularly conservative Governments, as the name would suggest—to offer something in the form of leadership through legislation; and I am also concerned with their reluctance to modernise legislation.

In this context I use the word "modernise" in the broadest sense. Statutes which have served their purpose and which are now obsolete and redundant should be placed in the discard by prompt repeal. In regard to this question, in more recent years this State has made quite a progressive move, albeit a belated one, to repeal many of our obsolete Statutes. There should be, of course, a greater preparedness to review and revise existing Statutes for the purpose of eliminating anomalies contained in them, and so that they may be fairer and more efficient.

Those Statutes which are introduced for the purpose of removing unfair situations where appearing within the framework of the common law appear to be enacted only belatedly. Furthermore there seems to be little attempt to anticipate situations that may arise and to legislate for them accordingly. Rather, the procedure is to wait and then reluctantly—and as if in the last resort—to introduce some appropriate, yet also quite obvious, statutory measure.

Many of the situations we encounter in this State, quite obviously, have been experienced and dealt with in other countries and in other States. If the position is to be that we are not to offer leadership, but rather to follow the lead shown by others, then in my view we should, at least, be quick to benefit from these initiatives taken elsewhere and from the precedents which are available therefrom.

To give quick illustrations of the type of situations I have mentioned, I turn my mind for a moment to certain situations that have arisen, not only within our State, but also within the Commonwealth, because these are conveniently available. Turning firstly to the Commonwealth scene, I mention a man who was one of the fathers of Federation; who was a member of the Victorian Legislature; who subsequently became a member of the House of Representatives; who went on to become a member of the High Court of Australia; and who, ultimately, so far as

his judicial efforts were concerned, became the Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia.

This man, together with other far-sighted men, was urging, well before 1920, that the provisions of the Commonwealth Constitution enabling the Commonwealth to legislate on matrimonial causes and divorce should be put into effect for the obvious reason that divorce should be the subject of an Act covering the whole of the Commonwealth, and saying that it was not efficacious for each State to legislate separately. Domicile is an important factor in the divorce jurisdiction, and, amongst other things, there was a tendency to segmentise the Commonwealth rather than to unify it. Being a legal man, Mr. Speaker, you probably recall the efforts of the man I have mentioned as being one of the fathers of Federation.

However, what happened? The answer is that nothing happened for 40 years or more, when ultimately a private member had the temerity to introduce a Bill which was subsequently adopted by the Government, and finally a law was enacted, but only as late as 1959. Since that time experience has shown how wise and necessary this legislation was, and yet apparently the fathers of Federation, even as far back as when Federation was first mooted, knew how necessary this legislation was and therefore wrote it into the Commonwealth Constitution.

If I remember correctly, the gentleman to whom I have been referring—that is, the man who was urging the introduction of this legislation before 1920—was later to become the first Australian-born Governor-General. I will not burden the House by indicating which Government it was, but will leave it to members to work out for themselves the Administration responsible for breaking with tradition appointing this man—an Australian—as Governor-General. On second thoughts, perhaps I should say which party appointed this Australian-born citizen as Governor-General. It happened to be the Australian Labor Party.

Once again, turning briefly to the Commonwealth sphere, I would point out that there was terrible procrastination and interminable delays surrounding the introduction of legislation to restrict unfair trade practices which was proclaimed only in the last year or so. In our present-day society this type of legislation is inevitable. At this point of time I will not debate and discuss the efficacy of the legislation, the effectiveness of which may be far more apparent than it is real. Nevertheless it does no harm to mention that Labor saw the need for this type of legislation as long ago as 1903, and perhaps even before that.

In Western Australia we have numerous examples of delay and prevarication. Yesterday evening the Deputy Leader of the



Opposition rattled off a few in quick succession, and I am indebted to him for that. The fact is that in 1863 or thereabouts, Abraham Lincoln made a declaration—using those now well-known words—that democracy was government of the people, by the people, and for the people. That was his approach, and I think it is correct to say that it was a principle that was accepted by the whole of the western world.

If this principle means anything, it means that every person is entitled to a vote. But what happened in Western Australia? To our everlasting discredit it could be accurately said that nothing happened along these lines until 102 years had passed, because it was not until 1965 that the people of this State, for the first time, were given a vote, not only in Legislative Assembly elections, but also in Legislative Council elections. It is true that people will say, "Oh yes, there were reasons for this," but I would say that they were only alleged reasons and without worthwhile motives.

The people of Western Australia were entitled to vote in the elections of both Houses as of right, and in my view no reason could be advanced to justify the deprivation of this right. By the turn of this century surely it is not asking too much that each person should be entitled to vote in the elections of each House forming the Legislature of this State.

A great deal of reluctance was also shown when an attempt was made to amend the common law so as to enable one spouse to sue another. Here we were once again in the mid-twentieth century and again being bogged down—on this occasion by a mediaeval legal fiction which said that spouses are one entity, and that this being so, one spouse could not possibly sue another. The grossly unfair consequences of this provision of the common law were to be seen every day of the week with the modern motor vehicle wreaking havoc among the people.

Yet it was not until a year or so ago that the law was amended, so that now a spouse has rights at common law in running down cases which are equal to those enjoyed by other citizens. No longer is a wife regarded as a second rate citizen and obliged to accept a legal position inferior to that of the paramour, for example, who is injured in consequence of the negligent driving of her *de facto* spouse.

Even now, in the Speech he made at the opening of Parliament, the Lieutenant-Governor expressed the Government's intention to introduce a measure during this session to provide for compensation for society's casualties in the case of victims of criminal violence. Such a move by the Government is eagerly awaited. Admittedly, the move is a little

belated, but it is not as late as some of our previous efforts have been. Other countries, of course, have introduced laws already to deal with this situation. Whilst we are not giving the lead but again following it, we are this time not so very far behind.

It seems to me to be an extraordinary paradox—it is certainly not a satisfactory position—that in a State such as ours, which by reason of its immense natural resources and its singularly advantageous geographical position must go ahead by leaps and bounds, we should be determined to conserve and delay legislation rather than speed it up, to reform it, and to set an example of leadership in this field. Surely we should be committed to the same rate of political, parliamentary, and legislative progress as we are to scientific, technological, and other forms of progress. Otherwise we shall continue to have a curious and unacceptable mixture of twentieth century and nineteenth century thinking which, to say the least, seems to be an extraordinary example of inconsistency.

It is just not possible that we can continue to progress at a certain speed in some fields of activity, and yet be prepared to go slow in others. In the penal field it must now be obvious to all of those who have studied the position, and who are prepared to accept what they have learned, that capital punishment and flogging will be abolished, if not completely, then to a significant extent before many more years have passed. If this is true—as I believe it is—I put this question to the House: Why should we continue to delay this reform any longer? Because in my belief the present position gives us an excellent opportunity to show some initiative and to spell out an enlightened approach to this particular question.

Has any member the right to address this House at a time such as this without expressing his real concern, as I now do, about the price of residential land and the unavailability of housing accommodation? In a State such as ours, where only the merest fraction of the great land mass is occupied, and where the materials necessary for housing construction are in almost unlimited supply, it seems unbelievable that the price of residential land should be prohibitive, and that residential housing should fall so far behind the ordinary and proper requirements. A house is a basic need for a home, which happens to be the foundation of our society, and the unavailability of proper homes, with the consequential destruction of normal and ordinary home life, has far-reaching, very serious, and adverse results. There is nothing new or novel about this appraisal of the situation which I have just made. I only mention it in the hope that my remarks will serve



to underline the unsatisfactory position which now obtains, and in the hope that the Government will take such further drastic action as this drastic situation demands, so that the housing position in this State may return to normal, or something approaching normality, within a short time in the future.

Turning now to education, one cannot possibly be satisfied and one cannot condone the present position which exists in our schools, which are not provided with libraries and other basic facilities, and as a consequence it is necessary and incumbent upon a relatively few dedicated members of parents and citizens' associations to organise, to raise funds, and to guarantee bank accounts, in order that these rudimentary needs may be made available to the children.

In this context I do not want it to be understood that I am against parents and citizens' associations, because that is certainly not the case. It has been my business to support them to the best of my ability for many years; but this is a question of degree. The present situation bears more heavily upon conscientious parents, than it does upon those who are less so; and, so far as fund-raising is concerned, its impact does not occur according to the means of the people but upon some other measure, and therefore it is unfair.

Libraries are being used to an ever-increasing extent in these modern days, and the denial of libraries to schools is a very bad feature of the education system. Recently the headmaster of one school in referring to the children said, "They only pass this way once." That puts everything which is connected with education on a very high level of priority. I hope the Government will do its best to make up the leeway which exists in respect of libraries and of other basic and rudimentary requirements of schools.

No longer does there seem to be a system of free education in the sense that we used to know it previously. It can be extremely embarrassing for parents when each day their children come home from school, particularly in the early part of the school year, with another request for money. It is a type of duress. What parent would allow his child to go to school and be the odd one out? This puts an unnecessary and a heavy demand on parents, particularly on those who are not perhaps as fortunate as others—the ones I have referred to as the little people.

It is a good thing to note that this year—I believe for the first time—certain State schools are making an attempt, as it were, to enlarge the scope of education. At last there seems to be recognition of the fact that it is not only necessary to have our children taught how to read and to write, but that they should be encouraged to develop the finer things in

their nature. I refer, of course, to the special schools which have been set up and which allow the children, for the time being at any rate, who have some talent in art, music, and perhaps in other directions, to study these subjects as if they were ordinary subjects in the school curriculum. I do hope that this step will be preserved. It is a wonderful step forward, and I hope it will be persevered with on a grand scale.

In conclusion I also hope that the needs of our youth will continue to be recognised, and they certainly should be, and that greater financial assistance will be given to youth by the Government; and that there shall be provision made for additional skilled, and perhaps, more particularly, dedicated personnel, so that only the best results may be derived from the sporting and cultural activities of our young people, and so that they may be better able to use their leisure time to the very best advantage. I thank all members for their forbearance on the occasion of this my maiden speech.

**MR. YOUNG (Roe)** [8.21 p.m.]: May I at this juncture add my congratulations to you, Mr. Speaker, on your elevation to the Chair of this House. I also add my congratulations to the member for Narrogin on his reappointment as Chairman of Committees.

As my contribution to the Address-in-Reply debate, I wish to make some comments relating to land allocations, land boards, and the circumstances of allocations which have been made in the electorate of Roe. As most members are aware, this is a developing area. The major problem at the present time is the expansion of the area into new fields. New areas have been thrown open and problems have arisen as a result.

It was with some pleasure that I learnt some time back that we, as the Government, were going to restrict the allocation of land to a more realistic rate. We have thrown a great deal of land open for selection, and this was mainly brought about by pressures, because the demand for land was so terrific. About 40 blocks or so would be advertised for selection at a time, and we would find 400 to 600 applicants. With land being in such great demand, pressures for throwing open land for selection became great.

The old settlements had been developed mainly before the last war. With the extension of development beyond the limits of the old settlements we found it was possible to develop land within 30 to 50 miles, by the use of modern transport and modern techniques. However, as development has taken place and is taking place beyond the limit I have mentioned, we find that the lines of communication and the necessary ancillaries which go