

ADJOURNMENT

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COUNCIL

Tuesday, 17 November 1992

Hospital waiting lists

Hon. D. E. HENSHAW (Geelong) — The matter I raise is for the attention of the Minister for Aged Care representing the Minister for Health. I refer to a matter that has been raised concerning a constituent who had a problem with the waiting list of the Royal Melbourne Hospital and ask that he direct the matter to the Minister's attention so that an answer will come back shortly.

Regional commissions

Hon. PAT POWER (Jika Jika) — My concern is directed to the attention of the Minister for Regional Development. The Minister has made some responses to questions asked about regional commissions. During one of his responses he indicated he would be conducting discussions over the next few days on the future of the two regional commissions. Earlier this day the Minister indicated that the Geelong Regional Commission is not within his Ministerial responsibility.

Can the Minister for Regional Development explain to the House the Ministerial status of the regional commissions, and whether when he made his point of explanation on 29 October he was speaking in his capacity as Minister responsible for regional commissions, and, if that was not the case, when was a decision taken to place the regional commissions outside his Ministerial responsibility?

Western Region Committee of Disabled Persons

Hon. JEAN McLEAN (Melbourne West) — I raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Aged Care representing the Minister for Community Services in this House. The Western Region Committee of Disabled Persons is a body that supplies individual advocacy for people with disabilities and runs a home and community care advocacy program. It liases with West Move, an organisation for people with intellectual disabilities at Caloola, and with the western region migrant resource centre, an ethnic disability centre. There are 150 voters on the register and another 500 people with disabilities.

Given the excellent work performed by the disability advocacy organisations, I ask the Minister to give the western region committee an assurance that its funds will not be stopped or severely reduced?

Victorian Post-Secondary Education Commission

Hon. R. S. IVES (Eumemmerring) — I refer to the Minister for Tertiary Education and Training his announcement during question time today that the Victorian Post-Secondary Education Commission will be abolished and replaced by an advisory board. What relationship will the further adult and community education sector have with the proposed advisory board and will the Minister guarantee that the special nature, status and funding of this sector will be protected under this proposed arrangement?

Beaumaris heathland

Hon. G. P. CONNARD (Higinbotham) — I direct to the attention of the Minister for Conservation and Environment an area known as the Beaumaris heathland in Sandringham which is recognised as a unique area that should be saved from the ravages of metropolitan Melbourne. I first raised this matter with the incompetent previous government as far back as 1982, and at that time it undertook to investigate the situation.

I raised the matter again in 1986 with Ms Kirner when she was the Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands and she said that she would speak to the then Minister for Education, the Honourable Ian Cathie, because the block of land was owned by the then Ministry of Education. It was agreed by Minister Cathie and Minister Kirner that the block of land should be transferred to the Department of Conservation, Forests and Land.

In 1987 the then Minister said that discussions had been delayed by the amalgamation of the schools in the Beaumaris area but she promised to continue to confer with the then Minister for Education.

In September 1988 Mr Collins of the then Ministry of Education wrote that the then Minister for Education had written to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet to seek approval to transfer the land to the then Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands and that that was granted.

In 1989 Ms Kirner, who was by then the Minister for Education, wrote a letter explaining that her predecessor, Mrs Hogg, had consented to the transfer of the reserve to the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands.

The PRESIDENT — Order! I advise the honourable member of the rule that members

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should not make a set speech during the debate on the motion for the adjournment of the House, and I ask him to get to the point.

Hon. G. P. CONNARD — Ten years later this block of land has still not been transferred. I understand there is some hold-up in the Titles Office, and I ask the Minister to examine this issue and ensure that the title can be sent to the appropriate department so that the area can be proclaimed a conservation area. I trust this issue can be hurried up so that our community will not have to wait a further 10 years.

State deficit levy

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS (Jika Jika) — I address a matter to the Minister for Housing. The Minister has been asked on a number of occasions about the \$6.5 million home levy, the Kennett home tax. So far he has said that the funds will not come from rent increases for public tenants.

Hon. R. I. Knowles — Right.

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS — He said he would not be using Commonwealth funds.

Hon. R. I. Knowles — Right.

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS — And he said a figure of \$287 million, which is the rental operating account — —

Hon. R. I. Knowles — It is recurrent expenditure.

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS — I understand it is from the rental operating account.

Hon. R. I. Knowles — No, I did not say that.

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS — I shall check the *Hansard* again. The Minister can clarify it in a moment, after I have gone through the figures. I received a departmental program for 1991-92, and the expenditure of total rental was \$337.6 million, of which \$49.8 million was refunded by the Federal government under the Commonwealth-State Housing agreement, leaving an amount of \$287.8 million which is equivalent to the amount the Minister mentioned.

That \$287 million breaks up into fixed costs which are:

rates and charges, \$45.4 million; depreciation, \$52.4 million and interest, \$101.5 million which amounts to \$199.3 million leaving approximately \$88.5 million.

Hon. HADDON STOREY (Minister for Tertiary Education and Training) — On a point of order, Mr President — —

The PRESIDENT — Order! I was about to suggest that Mr Theophanous get to the point of his question.

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS (Jika Jika) — I am trying to locate precisely the expenditure from which the \$6.5 million is coming because, based on the analysis, the remainder is really out of tenants' services and maintenance. I ask the Minister to clarify from which part of that total expenditure account the \$6.5 million will come.

Duplication of Wellington Road

Hon. B. N. ATKINSON (Koonung) — I address a matter to the Minister for Roads and Ports. I have received representations from both the City of Knox and some of the staff of business houses in the vicinity of Monash Highway, which is Wellington Road in the Rowville area. Their concern is about the status of duplication of the roadway and they have asked that the current status of that project, especially in the vicinity of Corporate Avenue, where a fatality occurred not long ago, be determined.

This road is part of a link of roads in that area to Dandenong, the Peninsula and Gippsland and is an access road to Rowville and a range of industrial developments in that area. I ask the Minister the status of that road and whether Federal funds might be forthcoming, as was announced prior to the election.

Responses

Hon. M. A. BIRRELL (Minister for Conservation and Environment) — Mr Connard raised a matter about a reserve in the province of Higinbotham. I undertake to look into the matter.

Hon. HADDON STOREY (Minister for Tertiary Education and Training) — Mrs Hogg was concerned about accrued sick leave for TAFE teachers following her concern about other TAFE teacher matters. I shall respond formally to her about long service leave. Family relief is more