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Mrs MILNE (Lyons) - I rise to support the budget bill but without the enthusiasm I had hoped to feel on the bringing down of the first Budget in the ALP Green accord's period of office. My enthusiasm is dampened by several factors: by the recognition that the State's finances have been left in such a chronic state and that Tasmania's debt per head of population is the highest in the nation, with the result that there is less money to cater for the needs of Tasmanians and hence a reduced capacity to initiate change, but also because the changed priorities of government, as stated by the Greens and the ALP, are not reflected in dollar terms.

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I stood for election to this Parliament because I believed that Tasmania was at the crossroads, that we could not continue to rely solely on the resource-based industries to provide employment but, more important, that in the long term government had to put Tasmania first. I had seen the way the large companies had browbeaten the former Government, a situation acknowledged last night by the member for Bass, Mr Robson, when he said North Broken Hill Ltd owned half of Tasmania and that had made it difficult to deal with it. What he was really saying was that the former Government had neither the strength nor the inclination to force the traditional power brokers in Tasmania - the resource-based companies - to pay their way. That mind set of deference to the energy, industrial and mining giants led to a situation that whenever Tasmania's heritage presented an obstacle to their progress, Tasmania's heritage was dispensable - and I use heritage in the widest possible frame of reference to include natural, architectural, historical, cultural, archaeological and technological.

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Both as an historian and one who recognises the value of our natural heritage, I could no longer stand by and watch our wilderness areas and coastal environments being threatened by those who could not see that to destroy such places as the Franklin River and the southern forests was to destroy part of what it is to be Tasmanian. I am delighted to have been able to be part of the process that saw those areas nominated for World Heritage status. I could not stand to see our historic buildings constantly being threatened by developers and it is my intention to support and encourage heritage legislation so that places such as the coalmines on the Tasman Peninsula do not fall down through want of care, or that other places - such as the officer's quarters at Eaglehawk Neck - are not sold into private hands again when it is the responsibility of government to secure them for the future.

One hundred years ago a tourist wrote to the 'Mercury' from Melbourne at the time when the Government sold off the buildings at Port Arthur. This person commented on the vandalism of the Tasmanian Government and the 'huckstering meanness and callous philistinism' which had deprived future generations of their heritage. Things have not changed much in a hundred years and it will give me enormous satisfaction to see the introduction of heritage legislation into this House.

But heritage also means our land and our rural traditions. The former Government did begin to recognise the seriousness of soil erosion and land degradation and the importance of caring for the resource by instituting such programs as the whole farm planning program but at the same time it was prepared to permit North Broken Hill to carve up some of the best farming land in the State for industrial development; to put 13 kilometres of rail spur through 36 properties; to see over 200 hectares of farmland go to industrial development; and to allow a land-fill site 17 000 tonnes of contaminated waste per year which could really have contaminated the groundwater in that area.

Land capability studies must be conducted statewide and on the basis of the results long-term land use management can be planned. I wholeheartedly support the work the Department of Primary Industry is doing in its whole farm planning and its land care program. I thank the Minister for Primary Industry, Mr Llewellyn, for appointing me to the judging panel for the fast farming competition for this year which will enable me to visit several properties where farming for sustainable agriculture is the hallmark.

In terms of sustainability I would also like to see more market research done into the overseas opportunities for organically grown food. Last year I spoke time and time again of

the unique advantage Tasmania has in world markets because of our clean environment and it is a fact now recognised by the Labor Government. But I am here to ensure that it is not a fact forgotten when the issue of pulpmills once more comes to the fore.

I reiterate for the record that until zero discharge of organochlorine compounds is achievable I remain totally opposed to kraft chlorine pulpmills in Tasmania. We simply cannot have a minister for Sea Fisheries and Primary Industry recognising on one hand the clean environment is our market edge in wild fisheries, aquiculture and agriculture and on the other promoting a mega-industry which will cause long-term toxicity problems in the environment and bioaccumulation of toxins in the food chain, not to mention the degradation of beaches and coastal environments, a problem suffered by the north-west coast and one we hope will be partly redressed by the fact that at last we are to have an Environment officer in that area again.

But it is not good enough to protect the land, our natural heritage and our environment if we allow it to be mined and exploited by overseas interests. I urge this Government to intervene to stop large, foreign-owned companies from picking the eyes out of the tourism potential so that profits can go out of this State.

P & O already has a monopoly on the northern end of the Cradle Mountain national park. It has expressed interest in the 'Abel Tasman' and now has moved in on the Coles Bay area. Tasmania must retain ownership of its land and for that reason I support a foreign ownership register to be compiled as a matter of urgency so that Tasmanians can at least be made aware of the amount of the State that has already been sold to foreign-owned companies.

No doubt some of the members opposite would like to call out - if this were not an inaugural speech - about selling off in terms of World Heritage and just for the record I reiterate that World Heritage is nothing more than a recognition of the status of the area; not one square inch of that land has been sold off. It is the status that will bring people here but what is the point if the money they bring flows straight out of the State?

On the subject of tourism, I urge this Government to ensure that tourism developments are appropriate. I welcome the initiative of the minister in following up the Teepookana Reserve proposal and also for the interest he has shown in the Montezuma Falls railway feasibility study. For some reason the former Government was confined to a belief that big is beautiful and pursued mega-developments, no doubt believing in the one-hit solution. Let us ensure that we encourage a tourism industry which makes the most of our wilderness and history without destroying it or depriving Tasmanians of its use.

Helicopter access to the western lakes is a good example. I believe that to be able to catch fish in the wild is an increasingly valuable opportunity in terms of our tourism industry, but if we destroy the wilderness value of the experience by introducing helicopters to facilitate tourists we will destroy the very thing that people come to experience and destroy it for those Tasmanians who delight in their good fortune at being able to fish in one of the world's great wild areas.

But caring for our natural heritage and our built heritage will not be adequate unless we nurture our greatest resource - Tasmania's young people - through our education system. The root word of education is educare - literally 'to lead forth' or 'to bring out something which is potentially present'. How can we bring out potential and move from a predominantly resource-based economy to a brains-based economy without making education a priority of government? I have witnessed the crocodile tears of the former Government in the past few days in regard to the Education budget. The percentage of the State Budget allocated to Education has steadily declined from 26 per cent in 1981-82 to 23.3 per cent in 1988-89 and now to 21.8 per cent in 1989-90.

Whilst members of the former Government were debating this in this House over the past seven years I was teaching in the schools. I watched the morale of teachers sink lower and lower as they were expected to provide more and more services with fewer resources each year. The member for Braddon, Mr Rundle, was quite right in suggesting that teachers voted

for my colleague, Mrs Hollister, and myself and I share their extreme disappointment that at the time when they expected some relief from their hardship they have been hit - in the words of the Tasmanian Teachers Federation - by the most savage cut this decade. How can we bring the young and the great together - which is the task of education - if we do not provide the basics?

In Tasmania 48 per cent of schools have demountable classrooms; 358 new classrooms are needed. Parents and friends groups are purchasing equipment as basic as toilet paper, photocopiers and computers because the Government is failing to increase the annual requisition each year. But most fundamental of all is the need for more teachers and parity of conditions between primary, secondary and senior secondary colleges. Whilst it is anticipated that all government employees will receive salary increases during the financial year, I cannot see in the Budget where the funds are to cover these increases and I fear that the current teacher/pupil ratios are at risk and we will be looking very seriously in the next few weeks to see that it is not under threat.

In terms of capital works there is a desperate need throughout the State but nowhere more so than in my electorate of Lyons. Only last week I met again with the parents and friends of the Tasman District High School who are suffering shock from the fact that the home economics and manual arts blocks seem to have been axed. At St Marys District High School the science lab needs immediate redevelopment and the swimming pool - which caters for the whole district - is little better than a sheep dip. The Perth Primary School has waited for seventeen years for redevelopment and there is still no joy, and the Sorell District High School grinds on under enormous difficulty, although - to the great credit of teachers - last night I opened the art exhibition for the Year 10 students in the southern half of the State and, given the incredible pressure on teachers and on the schools, the work they are producing is again of high quality and in fact shows the creative energy that is there that we need to nurture.

I welcome the minister's decision to increase maintenance of schools and colleges and I also welcome the compilation of a three-year works program which reflects the urgent needs of schools and colleges, and that it be made public. I discussed this matter several weeks ago with the secretary of the department and impressed upon him the need to have the politicising of capital works stopped. As a teacher I despaired as politicians talked about fictitious lists and pulled a new college or gymnasium out of the hat at election time when neighbouring primary schools had toilets seeping into playgrounds and high school students working in unsafe laboratories and workshops. It is a huge step forward to address need instead of votes.

The same applies to the rationalisation of schools and the amalgamations or closures that result. If they result in improved educational opportunities for children, I support them. But I will be working to ensure that no school is closed for reasons of cost saving only.

I also welcome the moves towards an incentive scheme to conserve energy in schools and colleges and look forward to further devolution of the system to a move towards school self-management. Teachers and parents and friends have enormous energy and efficiency in making the most out of the education dollar. One has only to look at the Sheffield and Rosebery district high schools to see what increased community participation in the life of a school can do to improve its educational outcomes. Nevertheless, whilst the more equitable student transport arrangements, the increased funding for the new certificate of education and the increase in departmental scholarships are all welcome and will prove beneficial in the long term, it is my conviction that until the general public comes to realise the desperate need for significant budget increases to education, governments and Treasury officials will continue to resist making these allocations. Therefore it is my intention to take the education debate into the public arena.

After the resounding success of the daylong meetings to share information on issues of World Heritage, I have decided to adopt the same principle in terms of education. With the support of the minister it is my intention to organise an education forum by the end of this year or early next year at which, with the cooperation of the Treasury, the Education department and the Schools Board, the State Budget and the Education budget will be explained

to every interest group in education. They will all be invited to participate, and that includes principals, organisations, the unions and the parents and friends.

For example, I want to give primary principals the opportunity to impress upon the department, the Treasury, the media and the public their desperate need. How many people in this State are aware that the 1988 report of the Commonwealth Grants Commission revealed that in 1986-87 recurrent funding for Tasmanian government primary schools was \$3.387 million less than the amount recommended by the commission? Primary schools want and deserve a fair go.

I think it is important that the secondary college teachers have a public forum in which to outline their case for opposing regionalisation and that the other stratas of education have an opportunity to comment accordingly. Once teachers, parents and the media are informed and consulted they will be empowered to support the minister and the Greens in the demand for a greater budget allocation for education. The Tasmanian community will then also be prepared to accept cuts or delays in other areas of spending to ensure that Tasmania's young people achieve their full potential in education. I believe Tasmanian education is eminently marketable and potentially a great source of job creation. I want to see an expansion in the tertiary sector, which already offers great opportunity through the university, the Tasmanian State Institute of Technology and the Australian Maritime College, and I would very much like to see Tasmania become the internationally recognised centre for Antarctic research and information. To that end I will work to see that the proposed Antarctic centre on the Hobart waterfront is given State government funding so that private investment and sponsorship can be forthcoming.

Along the same lines I wish to pursue the idea of Hobart's becoming the national centre for independent radio production. As networking is inevitable and technology has reached such a level that our isolation poses no significant problems, Hobart has many advantages - not least in terms of cheaper real estate. Such a move would act as a tremendous stimulus to music and the arts and would also provide employment in the technological field.

In terms of social justice issues, let me say that I want to see in Tasmania a much more serious effort by government to address community needs, especially as they pertain to women. Organisations such as MOVE - Men Overcoming Violent Emotions - are contributing a valuable service and deserve greater funding. Women's shelters, child-care centres and elderly persons' hostels are in desperate need of more funding. I congratulate the Government for its initiative whilst in opposition in compiling a report on these needs and look forward to the budget day when provision of mobile vans to cater for preventative health care in isolated areas is a cornerstone of health policy.

I take this opportunity whilst referring to health to commend the Minister for Health on his leadership in relation to the single base hospital for the north-west coast. In 1986 the Commonwealth Government commissioned a country centres report on the north-west coast and that identified that one of the key problems inhibiting progress in the region was its lack of political leadership at all levels and the inherent parochialism of those elected. I support a base hospital and regret that the member for Meander, Mr Hope, seems intent upon depriving his constituents of better health care by opposing the recommendations in the recently released report.

In conclusion, I support the budget bill but look forward to next year when I hope to support the Budget with great enthusiasm, for by then I hope to see real progress in areas such as environmental planning, heritage, education, long-term land use planning and issues of social justice.

I also wish to place on record my attitude towards the accord. I am an Independent member of this House, contrary to the deliberate misrepresentations other members of the House perpetuate in relation to a 'Green party' and so on. As an Independent member I want it to be recognised and understood that before I signed the accord I weighed up its provisions carefully and decided the gains for Tasmania were sufficient for me to sign. Having signed,

adhere to the provisions in that accord and thus I am disillusioned by the manner in which some members of the Government seem to think that every clause in the accord is negotiable. That may be politics but it is not how I think or how I behave.

Those members are in government because their Leader - who is not present - signed this accord and all the provisions therein and thus I say that one particular item says that any existing licences within World Heritage areas or national parks will be revoked and the areas rehabilitated. I am referring of course to the Jane River goldfields. I do not want to hear anything about Jane River except to hear that the mining companies are moving out because when that accord was signed we made hard decisions. We compromised on some areas of our platform in order to give the Labor Party government. In return the Labor Party now has to deliver with its hard decisions, and provisions in that accord relate to the revoking of those licences within World Heritage areas and also to the woodchip quota.

I am extremely disturbed to have received a letter inviting me to a briefing by the Forestry Commission on the woodchip quota. I know about the woodchip quota; it was part of the accord that was strongly argued and now I find there is an orchestrated campaign by the companies in the past three days, one after the other, calling for a review of the woodchip quota and the Forestry Commission is pushing for it as well.

My disillusionment with the past Government was that it was pushed around by the large companies in this State with ownership elsewhere and I trust that this is the last I will hear about the Jane River goldfields so that Lady Jane Franklin can rest in peace. She has had enough trouble in the past eight or ten years and I want to see that she remains in the peace with which she was buried.

Finally before I resume my seat I would like to congratulate the member for Braddon, Mr Rundle, who took time to educate the House last night by telling the story of Boadicea, queen of ancient Britons. A little history and literature is most welcome in this House but no doubt he recounted the story in order to inform the House of Boadicea's unfortunate end.

Members laughing.

Mrs MILNE - But Boadicea was defeated by massed legions of brave and heroic Roman soldiers and, in my most charitable view, the seventeen Liberals ranged on the other side of the House are a far cry from those massed Roman legions. These seventeen Liberals are unlikely to do more than take the shine off the wheels of the chariot as it rides over the top of them.

Members laughing.