"INTERFERENCE" IS RIGHT

It was good to see Mr Whitlam coming out strongly against unity tickets with Communists at Adelaide this weekend. He declared his opposition to lifting the official ban on such tickets, a policy which his leader, Mr Calwell, is now committed to support by his bizarre decision to go to the next Federal conference as a delegate of the Victorian A.L.P. convention.

But, as so often with this able but agile politician, Mr Whitlam seemed anxious to have it both ways. For—unless he was incorrectly reported—he also said that he was against interference in trade-union elections by any political party—whether they were A.L.P., the Democratic Labour Party or the Communist Party. In fairness to Mr Whitlam, this too is the official policy of the party so that he is strictly in line with the decisions of the Federal executive and conference.

But experience has proved over and over again that if the A.L.P. is seriously determined to get rid of Communist influence in the unions, it is not enough simply to ban unity tickets. It is necessary also to give full A.L.P. support to an approved anti-Communist candidate. This has now been accepted by Mr Oliver, the president of the New South Wales branch of the A.L.P., who said in his presidential address to the N.S.W. conference last week that he would give "all support to good A.L.P. candidates." Mr Whitlam was in the hall when he said it.

It was only by this means that Mr C. Fitzgibbon was elected general secretary of the Waterside Workers' Federation in 1961 against Communist opposition. Mr Fitzgibbon was not the official candidate in the full sense, because this was not permitted by the rules, but everyone knew that he had the party's unofficial support and as a result he won a striking victory. It is true that the same policy was less successful in the case of the Builders' Labourers last year but in that case the chosen candidate was not wholly suitable.

To condemn this policy as A.L.P. "interference" in union elections is one of those maddening phrases which are repeated without questioning their meaning. For since the unions have the constitutional right to "interfere" in the A.L.P. by electing delegates to State and Federal conferences, it is only commonsense for the A.L.P. to see that these delegates support the policy of the A.L.P. and not that of the Communist Party.

Undefined frontier

The action of the Administrator of Papua-New Guinea in ordering a full investigation into a report that an Indonesian patrol had threatened to burn a New Guinea village on the border shows that such an incident is regarded as by no means improbable. The fact is, of course, that an unmarked frontier, especially in primitive tribal country where the people have neither interest in nor knowledge of international lines of demarcation, provides a standing invitation to "incidents." It is high time the border agreement reached between Australia and Indonesia last year was implemented and the joint survey begun.

Whatever the rights or wrongs of the Sekotchiau incident, and whether or not, indeed, any incident occurred, the lesson for Australians is that very little is accurately known about what does go on along their frontier with a potentially hostile Power. This is a matter of the more concern now that the first open clash between Australian and Indonesian forces has occurred in Borneo. The initiation of an Indonesian policy of frontier harassment is by no means off the cards.

At any rate, Australia would be very foolish not to be prepared for trouble on the West Irian border. The Government has shown itself aware of this. Last November the Prime Minister spoke of the need to "prepare for all eventualities, including the control and, if necessary, the defence of the frontier between West New Guinea and Papua and New Guinea." He announced that the Pacific Islands Regiment would be strengthened, that coastal patrol craft would be obtained and that airfields would be developed. Last week, an additional precaution was taken with the decision to station a detachment of Army light aircraft in New Guinea.

At the same time, the Territory Administration is pushing slowly ahead with plans for the development of the Western District. These are all useful moves, but it must be questioned whether they are commensurate with the problem involved. The border runs through appallingly difficult country of mountain and swamp and river—"It's a terrible border from the physical and strategic point of view," observed the Chief of the General Staff after flying over it last month—and a much more considerable military effort is needed to police it. The refusal to commit mainland Regular troops to the Territory may have to be reconsidered.

Drought finance

In banking affairs, Dr Coombs abhors the precise statement. He leaves his textual students a big and sometimes impossible job trying to decide what he means. If there are occasions when the coyness is understandable, last night was not one of them. The question at issue is quite straightforward: At a time of general credit tightness, have the banks been clearly given both the guidance and the means to help rural customers in the areas affected by drought?

The common opinion among bankers seems to be that so far the answer is No. Since the threat, and in some places the reality, of drought have become apparent there has been no revision of the limit permitted in their rate of total lending. They have been advised that any additional rural loans should be the result of a diversion of lending from other directions. Dr Coombs really said nothing last night to refute that impression.

Is this good enough? The Reserve Bank does not need to be told of the dry conditions; and, to be fair, its general handling of money policy this year has been well conceived and effective. The Governor again referred last night to the strains that domestic expenditure is putting on the overseas balances.

Nobody knows how long the drought will last, but any appreciable loss of livestock already caused by a lack of tiding-over finance is a destruction of important capital assets. In many cases this would be thoroughly bad economics, nationally speaking. Already there are areas where economic conditions are worse than anything experienced in the general recession of 1961, which was the subject of so much corrective action. It is surely necessary to adapt bank credit policy to these particular cases, and possible to do so without compromising the general line of policy. The Reserve Bank might well give a positive lead to ensure that this will be done.

Letters To The Editor

CROWN LANDS ACT

A legislative monstrosity

SIR,—The Crown Lands Consolidation Act, 1913, is a tangled skein of legislation. The original Act has now been amended by approximately 8 Crown Lands Acts and incidentally amended or affected by about 70 other measures. An amending Act is to be expected annually, almost as confidently as the visits of Father Christmas, but not as happily.

There are numerous different tenures each with different incidents as to rents, conditions, reversion rights, rights to transfer and the like. The latest amending Act of 1964 runs to 18 sections comprising no less than 90 pages and of amendments to be incorporated in the principal existing code.

The sections in the original Act relating to transfers and mortgages are obscure and badly need "rethinking" and revision.

The effect of registration of dealings in the books of the department and in the General Register of Deeds respectively as regards priorities, is not clearly defined. A complete code of conveyancing in relation to Crown Lands tenures based on similar lines to the Torrens system is long overdue.

Sections amended

The last straw for the unfortunate lawyer or layman, who has to endeavour to make something of this legislative monstrosity, is the 1964 Amendment Act. Not only were numerous sections of the principal existing Act amended, but many of them were amended by no less than three different sections of the 1964 Act.

The task of a person who has to note up the alterations would at least have been made easier if the various sections of the principal Act (as amended) were amended in numerical sequence and if all the amendments to any one section were made by the same sub-section or paragraph of a sub-section of the amending Act, and if all the amendments to other Acts incidentally affected (such as the Western Lands Act and the Closer Settlements Acts) were placed together at the end of the amending Act instead of being mixed up throughout its structure with amendments to the principal Crown Lands Act.

One may venture to ask whether the new Minister for Lands, as a modern Hercules, will undertake the pressing task of endeavouring to clean out this Augean stable.

SOLICITOR.

Newcastle.

Catholicism of a protestant

Sir,—There are some non-Anglicans, like myself, who are very sorry, and, it must be admitted, rather impatient, when our Anglican friends protest at being called protestants (with a small p).

As John Hyde ("S.M.H." Letters, June 19) has stated, all Anglicans believe in the "one Catholick and Apostolick Church" and claim to belong to the same, so deserving the title "catholics." Has it occurred to Mr Hyde that many other Christians, owing allegiance neither to Rome, Canterbury nor Constantinople, hold the same strong belief and make the same firm claim?

There is nothing inconsistent in being both a catholic and a protestant. Those Christians who terminated any connection with Rome in the sixteenth century (including Lutherans, Reformed Christians and Anglicans) did not abandon the catholic faith.

Personally I don't mind in the least being called a protestant, but violently take exception if my Church is referred to as "non-catholic."

JOHN CAMPBELL.

Hurstville Grove.

School freeze not admitted

Sir,—The Department of Education and one of its famous schools were wrongly criticised by "Frozen Student" ("S.M.H." Letters, June 17). The department makes available many facilities for technical college classes and outside bodies, particularly in the school mentioned where not only classrooms, but also assembly hall, gymnasium and courts, are regularly used at night.

Recently, following urgent requests by the headmaster and parent groups, new heaters have been installed. Unfortunately, some technicality caused unsatisfactory operation in some rooms. This was already being checked and members of evening classes had been informed.

The trouble has now been rectified.

TEACHER.

North Sydney.

Seat belts for public cars

Sir,—The great safety afforded drivers and passengers by seat belts in cars is now well recognised.

As the Minister for Transport, Mr M. A. Morris, is currently examining ways and means of reducing the road toll perhaps his advisers should consider a strong recommendation to taxi and hire-car companies to fit seat belts for the safety of their passengers and drivers to all their cars.

J. A. POPE.

Belrose.

Death of a cat from Denmark

Sir,—Saturday's report of the sacrifice of yet another defenceless cat in the name of official disease prevention must cause pangs of bewildered sympathy in the hearts of many animal lovers. I ask whether it was really necessary to impose a blanket veto upon the entry of all cats from any country other than the United Kingdom or New Zealand?

Is the irrevocable death sentence beloved by officialdom and carried out on the spot before any appeal or process of law can stay proceedings the only answer that modern science can produce to give protection?

In this case the victim was a much-loved and well-tended Danish family puss, forced to be a stowaway, and not allowed to remain for two or a half hours within the Mascot quarantine enclosure on its way to another country. And it is significant that the magistrate found the offence proved but dismissed it, saying it was a "breach technically, and I hasten to underline technically." And while disallowing costs also he said he hoped some means could be found to speed the cat on to New Zealand. This humane view had apparently no effect upon the official who proceeded to destroy the unfortunate animal.

What specific or other cat disease is feared in all this? I can only think of rabies. But we accept cats from England and England accepts cats from Denmark and other lands. Surely the same length of quarantine could be applied here as in England? We have accommodation in all our capital city quarantines. Let's use them to their full end and this backward attitude that started when there were probably less than a dozen trained veterinarians in N.S.W., as against the hundreds today—both departmental and private.

I believe that a proper system of permitted entry from approved countries, vaccination with phenolised nerve-tissue vaccine and a quarantine period would, in addition to preventing these damaging spectacles of bureaucratic barbarism, result in all round better control.

ROBERT TURNER.

Pymble.

Vexed question of medals

Sir,—I don't think that an M.B.E. was a suitable award for the Beatles, but it must be a great incentive to them to live up to it and, in doing just that, give a good example to the young people who admire them so much.

ELINA MANSFIELD.

Vaucluse.

Sir,—Much of what "Art Lover" ("S.M.H." Letters, June 18), says is perfectly true. If giving pleasure, or earning millions, thereby paying sufficient taxes to keep many Public servants' salaries covered, is the criteria for receiving honours, where does it end?

I have seen no outbreak of public indignation because Betty Cuthbert was also honoured by the Queen . . . yet, to follow through "Art Lover's" argument, has she done more than Down? Or more than any other man who spends endless patient hours teaching spastics to swim, with little thanks or recognition from any other than the spastics' parents?

I feel, since singers, dancers, cricketers and jockeys, to name just a few, have not only been given orders, but knighthood in the past, there should be no reason to exempt the Beatles. So why the furore?

Since there is no British Empire anyway, the order seems extinct. In my humble opinion, all such honours should be eliminated in this age of democracy, for among people who care about such things, they must be much heartburning at times at the thought of being slighted.

Meantime, good luck to Betty and the Beatles and anyone else who was singled out for the Queen's blessing.

Mrs H. M. GOULD.

Cronulla.

Oxygen exposure in particles

Sir,—On the subject of exploding matches I noticed today that one box gave off varying noises when the matches were ignited. About one in six sounded slightly explosive.

Non-explosive materials such as common flour can be very explosive if the particle size is small enough. The explanation of course is that the surface area of the particles increases enormously with the decrease in size, with the resultant enormous quantity of oxygen exposure.

Perhaps this aspect may be worthwhile thinking about by the match manufacturers.

LEN. LUBER.

Woollahra.

The teaching of decimals

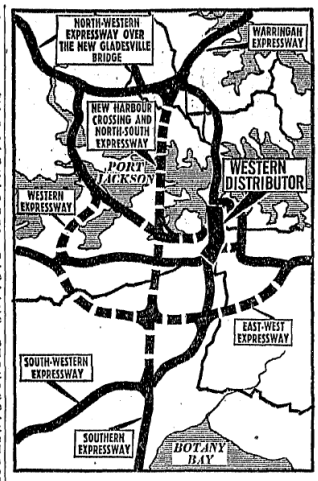
Sir,—In answer to "Mother" ("S.M.H." Letters, June 16).

My eldest son who attends a Public school and is in fourth class has been doing decimal currency in class since the beginning of the school year.

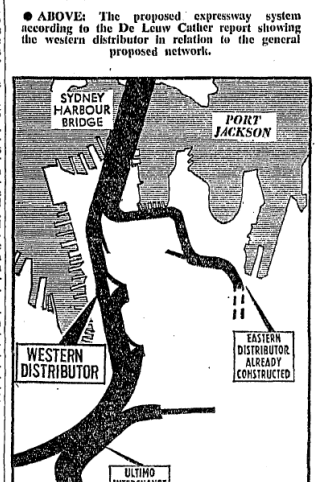
I think whether the children learn £ s d or decimal currency depends entirely on the teacher or teachers concerned.

ANOTHER MOTHER.

Eastern Creek.



● ABOVE: The proposed expressway system according to the De Leuw Cather report showing the western distributor in relation to the general proposed network.



● ABOVE: The western distributor begins at the southern end of the Harbour Bridge and extends to the Ultimo interchange proposed by the Department of Main Roads but modified in the De Leuw Cather report.

Elections in the Philippines

SIR,—I read with surprise and displeasure the article written by George Farwell entitled "Philippines Elections a Test in Democracy" ("Herald," May 29).

It is unfortunate and to be deeply regretted that people like Mr Farwell, after having been welcomed to the Philippines and enjoying its hospitality, should upon departure therefrom malign the country and the Filipinos by making uncomplimentary and uncalled for remarks about their way of life.

Mr Farwell seems to be of the belief that a vote in the coming elections in the Philippines can be bought. For this information, it may be stated that qualified electors are registered only after proving that they have the right to vote. They are fingerprinted and their identity fully established before the voters' cards, which contain their pictures and signatures, are issued to them.

In the forthcoming elections, they must present these cards and satisfy all poll officials that they are the voters concerned. In view of this, it is absurd and bordering on the ridiculous for Mr Farwell to believe that leaders of either party would gather and buy cards before election and use them to advantage.

Co-operative

Mr Farwell stated that after rejecting or stalling on most of the policies and projects of the President, the Congress of the Philippines "has done nothing constructive." On the whole, however, Congress has been co-operative with the President on policies and projects that have been beneficial to the well-being of the Philippines and the Filipinos.

The writer also made it appear that during the six months that he spent in the Philippines, Congress did not have a single meeting "despite the Vietnam crisis, an almost total evaporation of Government finance, at least half a dozen Administration scandals and an upsurge of violent crime that has lifted the murder rate to 8,000 a year, and robberies with violence to nearly half that figure."

These statements are evidently unfair and far from the truth. In the last session of Congress which ended May 21, 1965, the House of Representatives passed a bill authorising the sending of a battalion of 2,000 engineers with security support, and appropriating the sum of 25-million pesos for the purpose. This bill is now under consideration by the Senate during the special session.

On the crime wave mentioned, suffice it to state that while it is true that, like in other countries, there are some criminals and dishonest men in the Philippines, to say that looting is not a crime or that Filipino people are generally dishonest, is stretching the point too far. The 8,000 a year murder rate and 4,000 a year robberies and violence cases mentioned by the writer cannot be given credence and are certainly not supported by statistics.

Lastly, Mr Farwell points out that in the Philippines, which is rich in natural resources, "90 per cent of its 30 million people remain at a bare subsistence level, in rural and city slums, hopelessly in debt to the almost feudal landlords and usurers who determine their lives and tell them how to vote." This is another unkind and untruthful statement.

The Philippines, it is true, like the United States and other highly developed countries, has its poverty problems. To say, however, that 90 per cent of the 30 million Filipinos remain at a bare subsistence level is to malign our people. No Filipino ever dies of hunger. The majority eat practically three times a day and while the standard of living is quite low, the masses enjoy a comfortable way of life.

MANUEL R. CUMAGUN,
Philippines Consul-General.

Sydney.

[In a recent interview with "U.S. News and World Report" President Macapagal was asked: "Is there a breakdown of law and order here in the Philippines, as so many Filipinos claim?" He replied: "I certainly would not argue with you about it. There is less respect for the law than before." He was then asked: "Is corruption also widespread?" President Macapagal replied: "Not to the extent it was when I first took office. Then graft was organised right from the top. It went down through every part of the Administration . . . Of course, there is corruption in the lower levels, in the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Customs Service." When the President of the Philippines speaks so frankly, we can assume that there was some substance in Mr George Farwell's charges.—Ed., "S.M.H."]

"Snowy and Ocker never seem to be able to agree about Picasso's Blue Period!"

THE GREAT TRAFFIC SNARL

ATTACK ON PRIORITIES NEEDED

By
D. F. ORCHARD
Professor of Highway Engineering, University of N.S.W.

THE traffic difficulties of Sydney have again recently received much prominence in the "Herald" and many of the popular cliches have again been resurrected. All the well-known methods of curing the trouble have been repeated. Indeed this is inevitable as there are no new methods but as stated in one of your leaders there is probably no harm in this repetition.

But, of course, the immediate implementation of all these measures is economically impossible and it might be more helpful if a more realistic view was taken and the various measures listed in some order of priority, which nobody so far appears to have attempted.

Traffic is self-adjusting and will not in a city the size of Sydney "grind to a halt" as is often popularly stated. When a certain degree of congestion is exceeded some people will cease using the roads affected and a state of complete stoppage therefore will not arise.

For the same reason certain measures of the traffic engineer which can be taken at comparatively small cost are ineffective in easing congestion, as they produce only marginal improvements, if any. If there is a slight improvement it only encourages more people to try to get down the traffic routes. This restores the previous state of congestion, the only difference being that a little more traffic is getting through than formerly.

The only effective cure is new road construction sufficient to increase the traffic capacity of the road system to a level at which even the increased usage thereby encouraged will not cause saturation.

Certain organisations are objecting to the present, one-way road systems in central Sydney. These organisations have a right to be heard, and although their interests are very much bound up with those of the inhabitants at large, the policies they are advocating are not necessarily right in the overall context and probably not even in their own.

For one-way traffic systems to be effective, certain requirements must first be met. The roads in which one-way movement is instituted must be of considerable length and must be separated by not more than one building block, and the number of cross streets should not be too numerous. These requirements are probably substantially met by Pitt Street and Castlereagh Street. The cross streets, however, do not comply so well with these requirements, but nevertheless one-way systems are most effective when both the main streets and the cross streets are one way.

It cannot therefore be concluded without very careful investigation that some system of one-way routing of cross streets is not of advantage. This can, of course, make the journey from east to west and vice versa very difficult to anyone not fully familiar with the system, but the alternative could be even more frustrating.

Many of the various public authorities responsible for and interested in our roads and traffic system must have considerable detailed information which would enable priorities for the various necessary measures to be established, and therefore people not having access to this information should be cautious in their statements of what should be done. However, I would make the following tentative proposals for the allocation of priorities:

Necessity

First of all the western distributor road as at present planned is of vital necessity. The construction of this would have a twofold advantage. First it would divert much through traffic not having business in the central area, and secondly it would enable traffic having business in the central area to travel along the distributor until it reached a point nearest to its destination and then branch off to its destination, thereby using narrow city streets to the minimum extent.

Until this western distributor is constructed one-way traffic systems will need to be retained and even extended into clearways, as is at present under consideration. Measures likely to attract more traffic to Sydney such as the establishment of extra parking facilities and the development of the stagnant area between the Town Hall and the Central Railway Station should be avoided, and the money which would be needed for these used instead for road improvements.

Construction of the eastern suburbs railway would also help to draw off motor traffic from the Core of Sydney, but it is doubtful whether the necessary finance can be found immediately for both this and the western distributor, and it is probable that the eastern suburbs railway should be of lower priority than the western distributor.

The provision of fringe parking areas would be comparatively cheap, but cannot become fully effective until the eastern suburbs railway and more arterial roads in other areas are constructed. This measure, however, would be quite useless if at the same time the means of public transport from the fringe parking areas to the city are not considerably improved.

After the western distributor and the eastern suburbs railway, an east-west bypass to the south of the city is important, and this is included in proposals which exist. When this ring of expressways has been constructed, the expressways into the city can be built without fear of undue congestion within the city, but if they are completed now they will only serve to aggravate the situation, and for this reason it would probably have been better if the western distributor had been constructed before the northern approaches to the Harbour Bridge, necessary as that improvement undoubtedly is.

Lot to do

A further Harbour crossing with a further north-south expressway as recommended in the De Leuw Cather report will be necessary, but there is a lot to do before this can be justified.

It would be hard to refute the fact that although the application of the methods normally available to the traffic engineer has produced some benefits, these have failed singularly to cure the problem, and the only way a lasting cure can be obtained is by new construction, designed and located after close study of both traffic and town planning considerations.

If proper attention is not paid to the discipline imposed by good town planning the final result will be chaos considerably greater than anything we have known to date, and in this connection attention should be drawn to the dangers of a rigid application of the results of origin and destination surveys.

The object of these surveys is to establish the journeys performed at the time of the survey by the majority of vehicles, and if roads are located to satisfy these journey desires, what is most probably a very bad existing town plan will be perpetuated.

One of the major objects of town planning is to distribute land use in such a way that no single road or road junction is likely to have to carry an excessive amount of traffic. Studies have shown that the planning of such pursuits as minor industry can make a tremendous difference to the freedom of traffic movement.

It is essential therefore that all possible power be given to the new Town Planning Authority and that its recommendations should not be overruled in the interests of expediency and individual interest. The Great Plan must be kept inviolate, and there must be no more "once for all time" relaxations of this.

Essential

Committees already exist for controlling traffic engineering and town planning measures. It is essential that these committees should be given full support and work in close liaison, and that they should be beyond pressures from interested parties. Local interests must be heard and given sympathetic consideration by these committees, but should not be represented on them.

If recommendations governing the true interests of everyone are to be made, it would appear that committees composed of senior State servants, who have at their command expert staffs capable of advising on all possible factors, are best suited to the task.

People who criticise must bear in mind that it is not possible to cure the problem quickly, in fact it will take 20 or more years. Let us therefore have a master plan phasing the various measures in order of priority with due regard to their cost as well as their effectiveness, let this be published in simple language for all to understand what is being done, and let us work through it as fast as finance can be made available.

VICE-REGAL

The Administrator received Dr Graham Edgar at Admiralty House, Sydney, yesterday morning.

In the afternoon his Excellency visited the Division of Textile Physics at the C.S.I.R.O. in Ryde.

His Excellency the Governor, attended by Lieutenant C. H. Longstaff, A.D.C., was present at a reception to launch the Research and Development Appeal of the Australian Institute of International Affairs, New South Wales Branch, at Menzies Hotel yesterday evening.