

## THE MEN FOR THE JOB

A LOT of voters may say it's about time that political candidates proved their fitness before standing for office.

Out at Warringham some voters have made a promising move.

They consider that running a local government administration needs some of the qualities of a business executive.

So they propose screening candidates for the local elections. They are going to give them a psychological test, and check them for honesty, stability and intelligence.

A sense of responsibility comes into it, too. Why not?

### For M.P.s too

Warringham of course has its electors on their toes because it is just back to elections again after having its affairs run by an Administrator.

But electors in other areas will be watching the experiment with keen interest.

Above all, why stop at local government?

Conscientiousness and emotional stability are not bad prerequisites for members of State or Federal Parliament.

Sometimes the electors can pick those qualities by instinct.

But often enough the parties present them with a choice of candidates who, as the saying goes, would find it hard to make a success of running a corner milk-bar.

A smattering of Shakespeare's "king-becoming graces" (like bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness) would not go amiss either.

Our rulers don't have to be supermen. But they do need to be someone we can trust.

### IN THE CHIPS

THE notion of Martin Place as a plaza where citizens can walk, sit and watch the world go by is imaginative and refreshing.

To pave it with South Australian marble is sound and imaginative, too.

Only someone will have to tell the gas companies, Post Office, electricity authorities, water board and the rest of our excavators.

Otherwise the handsome marble slabs, after a few years of jack-hammering, will end up as a mosaic of marble chips.

# CANDID COMMENT

BY ONLOOKER

THE Cairns backdown must have caused as much chagrin among Labor's political foes as among the fervent left-wing supporters of Dr Jim.

His duel with Arthur Calwell for the Melbourne pre-selection had the makings of another first-class row in the A.L.P., damaging to the party and gratifying to its opponents.

Then Cairns, having at one stage staked his parliamentary career on getting the nomination, pulled out—and the "crisis" evaporated.

The retreat, unheroic however it was motivated, spared the Victorian executive a painful decision. It also averted the possibility of Federal executive intervention, a prospect highly distasteful to Cairns even though it might have secured him the Melbourne seat.

And Calwell? The veteran of many a fight cannot feel very happy in his victory. He called the challenger's bluff—the threat of retirement—and caused him to lose face.

But if there is a Federal election this year and Cairns were to lose in Lalor, the party would not forgive its former leader for not having made way for the younger and valued man.

Should Parliament run its normal course, the pressure on Calwell to retire at the end of next year will be irresistible.

### Sport and colour

RHODESIAN cricketer Colin Bland, who plays for South Africa, is denied entry to Australia under the sanctions ban. The M.C.C. tour of South Africa looks like falling through because of the inclusion in the England team of Cape Coloured all-rounder Basil D'Oliveira, as a replacement for an injured bowler.

Thus does the racial question bedevil sporting and international relations.

Prime Minister John Vorster is being excessively touchy in declaring the team unacceptable on the ground that D'Oliveira was not selected solely on his merits as a player. South Africa's apartheid rules do not automatically bar non-white sportsmen. But the clamour attending D'Oliveira's original omission, and the attempt of a British newspaper to have him accompany the team as a writer, have made the S.A. Government suspicious of a plot to embarrass it.



BASIL D'OLIVEIRA

He only wants to play cricket

The M.C.C., however, has clearly acted in good faith. It cannot possibly allow South Africa to dictate its choice of players. So unless Vorster gets off his high horse the tour will lapse. That will be a blow to cricket and a thoroughly miserable business all round.

### Necessary choice

NOT for the first time the propriety of Cabinet Ministers retaining company directorships while in office has been called in question in Victoria.

Replying to a Labor censure motion, Sir Henry Bolte described the integrity of Chief Secretary Sir Arthur Rylah as unchallengeable. That is not the point. Ministers not only have to be above suspicion of allowing their public duties to conflict with their private interests; they have to appear to be so.

It is an established convention, elsewhere than in Victoria, that the possibility of conflict and criticism shall be avoided by appointees to Cabinet relinquishing any directorships they may hold, however severe the sacrifice.

This rule has been applied repeatedly in the Commonwealth and twice quite recently in N.S.W.

The committee held that the theatre should have applied to it, in place of the Lord Chamberlain's fiat, the laws of defamation, obscenity and blasphemy governing other forms of literary expression; and this has been done in the new Theatres Act.

The "Law Journal" comments: "The English example should be followed and s. 27 of the Theatres and Public Halls Act repealed. It is an anachronistic survival of an era which tolerated powers of censorship unthinkable in this democratic age."

### Ready-made square

IT is difficult to fault the plan to convert the section of Martin Place between George and Pitt streets into a Civic Square. The wonder is that this simple idea has not been seriously developed and pressed before.

Sydney sorely needs a central plaza. Here is a site whose conversion would not involve demolition, as in the proposal to pull down the Queen Victoria Building to create an open space.

The area is too small to be ideal, but in all other respects it would serve the purpose splendidly. The colonnaded G.P.O. provides a natural setting on the southern side; the height of buildings opposite would need to be limited to avoid shutting out the sunlight.

The City Commissioners doubtless would be delighted to have this project, inexpensive and pleasing designs for which have been prepared on behalf of the Civic Reform Association, approved during their regime; and Sydney would gain a restful oasis centred around the Cenotaph. Why wait?

### Advice from Victoria

DEAR ONLOOKER: Re the cost of the Opera House (C.C., 15/9/68).

Let us forget interstate idiosyncrasies and remember that, irrespective of where the finance comes from, the crucial point is whether its use could have been better employed elsewhere.

I hope for Australia's sake the Sydney Opera House ceases to become a controversial point as soon as possible.

A. ROGERS, Elsternwick, Vic.

### On the road

WHILE the normally lush coastal



An artist's impression of how the proposed \$170,000 Martin Place Plaza will look with its new trees, flower stalls and pavement of marble.

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# HUGE FACELIFT FOR SYDNEY MAY BE ON WAY

The proposed giant 30,000 sq. ft. Martin Place Plaza could be the first step in a complete facelift for Sydney, town planners believe.

The planners predict that, with the Plaza as Sydney's central "heart," sweeping changes in the city would follow almost automatically.

Under the plan, Martin Place, between George Street and Pitt Street, would be closed to traffic, covered in South Australian marble and would feature newly designed kiosks for flowers and books.

If the \$170,000 project is approved by the City Commissioners, town planners believe:

- Other parts of Martin Place (between Pitt and Castlereagh Street, for example) could also be opened up for pedestrians, with outdoor cafes and park benches. An underground carpark could be built under this section.

- Suggestions have been made that the buildings opposite the G.P.O. be replaced by two giant towers with plenty of room be-

tween for more outdoor eating.

- It could be possible to build a system of plazas, walkways and arcades so that people would be able to walk between the Australia Square building and the Martin Place plaza without seeing a footpath or traffic light.

## Gratitude

- Many more areas of Sydney could be closed to traffic and redeveloped if the Martin Place scheme proved successful. Rowe Street was one example quoted by planners.

A deputation from the Civic Reform Association put the suggestion for the Martin Place plaza to the

Chief City Commissioner, Mr V. H. Treatt, this week.

Mr Treatt's first reaction was to express gratitude and to note that something like the plan had been needed for a long time.

Mr George Clarke, a senior partner in the architectural firm of Clarke, Gazzard and Partners, who designed the plaza, listed some of the activities which could be held in the closed section of Martin Place.

## Towers

He mentioned folk dancing, official receptions for Heads of State, openings of Health Week, Education Week and Aborigines Week, an improved Dawn Service for Anzac Day and—most important—a place for Sydney people to meet each other.

"We have deliberately kept the space open, without cluttering it with fountains, statues or sculpture," Mr Clarke said.

"For the Plaza's everyday use you will have

people walking and strolling about there with the vastly improved flower stalls and kiosks coming into their own."

The chairman of the Civic Reform Association's Planning Committee, Mr Leo Port, said: "It has already been suggested that almost the whole block on the northern side of Martin Place be pulled down and replaced by two big towers.

"With the Martin Place Plaza this would mean a complete revolution in Sydney's way of life."

Mr Port said that, even if areas were closed off to most traffic, buses, garbage collection vehicles and delivery trucks could still use the streets in off-peak hours.

He said the Martin Place scheme was the best-planned development ever submitted to the City Council.

Everyone concerned had been consulted—from the R.S.L. to the P.M.G. and traffic engineers.

"Even the traffic experts are happy about this because it will speed up traffic in George and Pitt Streets,"

Mr Port said.

He said the time was long overdue when planners should make parts of the city free for pedestrians to stand, walk and talk "without fear of being jostled or knocked over by cars."

"This is the type of development which makes enormous improvements in the life of pedestrians," he said.

"And this scheme cannot be looked at in isolation—it's a sign that things are really starting to happen in Sydney. Suddenly there has been a big change in all the dusty thinking that has been around too long."