

Legislative Council

Tuesday, 11th September, 1956.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Questions : Metropolitan high schools, girls' change room facilities	697
Efficiency of teachers, methods of assessment	697
Wanneroo school, building priority, funds and plans	697
State Brick Works, "seconds" on hand, sale price and disposal	697
Carnarvon transport vehicles, prosecutions and fines imposed	698
Address-in-reply, eighth day	698
Speaker on Address— Hon. F. R. H. Lavery	698
Bills : Criminal Code Amendment, 1r.	701
Plant Diseases Act Amendment, 1r.	701

The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.

METROPOLITAN HIGH SCHOOLS.

Girls' Change Room Facilities.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN asked the Chief Secretary:

What facilities in the way of change rooms are provided for girls in each of the metropolitan high schools?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

Perth Girls.—A change room and two showers. However, these are rarely used, as the girls change in the undercroft.

Girdlestone.—Change room and 12 showers.

Kent-st.—Change room.

Perth Modern.—There is a small change room attached to the gym. However, the girls use the classrooms.

Claremont.—Change room and four showers.

Midland Junction (old school).—Nil.

Princess May.—Nil.

EFFICIENCY OF TEACHERS.

Methods of Assessment.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM asked the Chief Secretary:

In view of the evenly divided opinion indicated at the Teachers' Union conference on the proposed change from numerical to verbal marking of teachers, and of the obviously more equitable and dignified method of assessing a teacher's merit, does the Minister concerned intend to go ahead with the proposed alteration?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

No decision will be made until the department has received official advice from the Teachers' Union regarding the conference decision on the proposed change in the method of assessing the efficiency of teachers.

WANNEROO SCHOOL.

Building Priority, Funds and Plans.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN (for Hon. N. E. Baxter) asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) Is the Wanneroo school high on the list of projected school buildings?

(2) What is its actual position on the list?

(3) What is the estimated cost of the buildings envisaged by the sketches which have been prepared?

(4) How many classrooms, other rooms and facilities are provided for by these sketches?

(5) When does he anticipate that consideration of the allocation of funds is likely to be completed?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) (2) and (4) Wanneroo school has been listed for the provision of two classrooms and a lavatory block.

(3) No estimates have yet been prepared.

(5) As soon as possible after the amount is known.

STATE BRICK WORKS.

Seconds on Hand, Sale Price and Disposal.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) How many pressed bricks classified as seconds are stacked at—

(a) Byford;

(b) Armadale?

(2) At how much per thousand are these bricks being offered for sale?

(3) What are the efforts being made to dispose of these bricks?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) (a) 729,800.

(b) 88,225.

(2) Price per thousand.

(a) Byford, £11 5s.

(b) Armadale, £11 15s.

(3) The same methods are employed as for the disposal of the total weekly production of approximately 700,000 bricks, namely, constant contact with the trade and advertising.

CARNARVON TRANSPORT VEHICLES.

Prosecutions and Fines Imposed.

Hon. W. F. WILLESEE asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) How many prosecutions were lodged against Carnarvon transport vehicles on the Carnarvon-Geraldton-Perth service by the W.A. Transport Board from the 1st September, 1955, to the 31st August, 1956?

(2) What was the amount imposed in fines in each case, and what did they total?

(3) What are the number of prosecutions pending at present, and what are the nature of their offences?

(4) What are the comparisons under similar headings for the previous year?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) Two.

(2) £6 and £10. Total £16.

(3) One. Operating an unlicensed vehicle for the transport of fuel from Geraldton to Carnarvon on the 27th July, 1956.

(4) Ten prosecutions, three offences being committed by one operator and seven by another. Fines were £4, £5, £7, £10 (in each of 5 cases) £25, and £35.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eighth Day.

Debate resumed from the 5th September.

HON. F. B. H. LAVERY (West) [4.37]: Like other members, I feel that before speaking to the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply, I must make some reference to the passing of the late Hon. H. Hearn and the late Hon. D. Barker. I had a very great personal feeling for the late Harry Hearn because I well remember that when I first entered this Parliament I was unfortunate enough to be involved in a motor accident. The late Mr. Hearn had not known me until I had become a member of this House; but despite that fact, he offered me some appreciable financial help. That was typical of him. What he did in Parliament was nothing. It was his philanthropic acts outside of this House that counted.

The same applied to the late Mr. Barker. I was agreeably surprised to hear the remarks regarding him made by Dr. Hislop the other evening, because they expressed my own feelings towards Mr. Barker. After reading his articles in the Press and his speeches in Hansard, and hearing him in person in this House, I do not know whether we will ever again have a member who will represent the North so ably, because there is no doubt that he just lived for that part of this State.

In welcoming to the Chamber Messrs. Mattiske and MacKinnon, and my friend Mr. Jeffery. I must say that, like other members, I was greatly interested to hear their maiden speeches which, unlike my own, were short, sharp and very business-like. I feel sure that the way in which they addressed their speeches to this House augurs well for them in the future. I wish them a very happy and co-operative legislative career.

I wish to refer briefly to four or five matters and, in regard to one—hospitalisation in the Fremantle district—I am going to be a little parochial. I know that this problem is State-wide; and the Minister, with the money that is available to him, does all in his power to effect relief throughout the State. Instead of trying to meet the needs of the Fremantle hospital and others in turn, he has endeavoured to spread the available finances equitably on the hospitals throughout the State.

The position in Fremantle has become very acute. One portion of the Fremantle hospital—which has a capacity of about 200 beds—is very old. In the last four or five years new housing settlements have grown very rapidly in the surrounding district (as has the industrial section, brought about by the foresightedness of the Fremantle City Council. Shipping activities have also increased. The Fremantle hospital is the only medical centre to serve the old district, and all the newly developed areas.

Under Dr. Rowe, the superintendent, the hospital has been able to hold its own only because, as I pointed out last year, the patients receive a shorter term of treatment. At the Royal Perth Hospital the average treatment for a patient is 18 days, but in the Fremantle hospital it is only 10.5 days. From this it will be obvious that patients are being sent away from the Fremantle hospital when they are in a convalescent stage.

I hope the Minister will have sufficient funds available to at least make a start on the regional hospital at Hilton Park, particularly when there is the incidence of unemployment in the building trade. That is the time when schools, hospitals, water supplies, and projects of that nature should receive first consideration in the expenditure of Government funds. While referring to the co-ordination of the building of hospitals with unemployment in the building trade, I might point out that the Government has not displaced one employee from its works programme. On the contrary, it has employed a further 140 men.

The time has arrived when the staff, the doctors, and the patients of the Fremantle hospital should receive more favourable consideration from the Government than they have received in the last eight to 10 years. Last Thursday I was invited by the

doctors of the Fremantle hospital to lunch; and, looking at the records of the wards, I found there was not one vacant bed on that day. On the contrary, in three wards the position was "minus." By that I mean that 11 patients were accommodated on lounges.

How serious the position is can be judged from the fact that a man suffering from a gangrenous foot, which is normally a hospital case, has been admitted and discharged from hospital three times in the last fortnight. This happened because there was insufficient accommodation. The doctors reduced the pain as much as possible, and sent the patient home until the pain became severe enough for him to return. That is a sad state of affairs in a big centre like Fremantle where a single hospital has to treat cases from all the new settlements which have arisen and those arising from the increased shipping activities; and the position is accentuated because there is a lack of convalescent homes in the district.

Speaking of regional hospitals, I have had many discussions with the doctors at Fremantle; and I entirely agree that the maximum capacity of a hospital there should be not more than 200 beds. I hope that the Minister will see his way clear to commence the new regional hospital this financial year.

While on that subject, I am concerned with reading almost every week in the newspapers that some country hospital is in dire need of nurses or is about to close down for the want of a matron. It seems strange to me that nurses should be sent to hospitals in country centres other than Geraldton, Northam, and Kalgoorlie—which are really large training centres—but return very quickly to the city. That applies not only to trained nurses but also to matrons. I wonder if something is not amiss. I feel there is.

In the building of hospitals in the country areas, some thought must be given to providing a social life for the nursing staff. In some centres country women have gone out of their way to open their homes to nurses in order to give them some social life. On the other hand, there are cases of nurses in country centres who have nowhere to go to when the day's work is done.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Some of them are not even invited out.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I am speaking about something with which I am familiar. Some of the country hospitals are not so much short of nursing staff as of domestic staff. The breakdown occurs, I believe mainly because of the shortage of domestic staff. The nurses themselves would be prepared to stay longer, I am sure, if they were not called on—as I know occurred in one instance—to do the laundry for the hospital, or duties of that kind, in

order to ensure a sufficient supply of sterilised linen for an operation that was to take place. If a nurse is posted to a hospital, that is not the end of the matter. If it is under-staffed she has to face the music and attend to domestic duties.

I feel that the insufficient domestic service in country hospitals is one of the main reasons why nurses do not remain there longer. I have discussed this question with Dr. Hislop, with Matron Jones of the Fremantle hospital, with Dr. Rowe, and with Dr. Cato. There does not appear to be any set reason why the nurses do not remain in the country; but I have found that because of the shortage of domestic staff in country hospitals nurses have been called on to perform duties which they did not even have to carry out when they were trainees.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Are any of those domestics unemployed?

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I do not know. In a local community, invariably there is a number of young people who can be employed in the hospitals.

Turning to another subject, and becoming more parochial, I refer to the Cockburn cement works at Spearwood. The factory is located on the east side of the main market gardening area. This was at the desire of the Market Gardeners' Association. It was originally proposed to put the cement works alongside the explosive magazines. Now that they are on the east side of the market gardens, every evening throughout the year when a change of wind takes place, particularly from the east or south-east, it casts the effluent from the smoke stack on to the vegetable gardens.

To test the claim by one grower that if a motorist left his car in the street for a couple of hours he would not know it when he came to get it again, I washed my black car and took it to a place in Russell-rd. and remained inside a house for two hours. When I went to the car again, I found it was covered with a fine, gritty substance. I brought the car to Perth, and the only member of Parliament who was available to show it to was Mr. Wild. When he saw it, he could not believe that in two hours so much dirt could fall from the smoke-stack of the cement works. So while people in Perth are confronted with this problem, we have it also in Fremantle; and it is a very serious problem when an east or south-east wind is blowing on to that area of 1,300 acres from which almost £1,000,000 worth of produce came last year. I hope the authorities will be able to do something about it.

The shortage of school accommodation in the West Province continues. Only four years ago Mr. Davies pointed out that a mistake was made in building only four rooms at the Hilton Park school. Since

then two buildings of five rooms each have been constructed and an infants' school containing five rooms has been erected. That infants' school is already having two rooms added to it, but the main school is still two rooms short. An additional two rooms are also required for the South Coogee school which is now a training school. At Medina school there are 17 rooms, though it is only three years since there were but four. It is proposed also to build four school rooms in Callista, and the building of a high school has a high priority. It seems to me that in view of the fact that there are so many unemployed in the building industry, here are ample opportunities for some of these jobs to be done, particularly as they require more expenditure on labour than on materials.

The siting of the access road from Kwinana to Welshpool has not yet been carried out to the satisfaction of those planning it. The consequence is that planning for the railway for that area has been held up. It is hoped that the authorities will be able to do something about the matter fairly soon, because a number of people are ready to commence development of big parcels of land that have been lying idle for years. I trust that the Main Roads Department will be able to decide on a plan for the road through the Bibra Lake area at an early date.

It will be agreed, I think, that I have never played party politics since I have been in this Chamber. That certainly should not be done in a speech on the Address-in-reply. However, I feel that on this occasion I must say something concerning the necessity for this State to receive loan funds from the Federal Government to enable public works to be undertaken. I consider that money spent on social services is completely wasted when there are men ready and willing to work on reproductive enterprises. A sum of £10,000 to £15,000 spent on unemployment benefits would meet interest on capital loan for public works. I feel that the Federal Treasurer, Sir Arthur Fadden, has not been unmindful of Western Australia's requirements, but that some of the Western Australian members of his Government have undermined his attempts to help this State, by using party political tactics and complaining that the State Government has been wasteful in its expenditure of loan funds and has thus caused unemployment.

I said earlier in my speech that the State Government has not retrenched one worker. On the contrary, it has 140 more employees than was the case last July. The time has come when the Western Australian members of the Federal Parliament should put their State first and their party second. I have always tried to do that, and have never played party politics. It is

time that those gentlemen faced up to their position and tried to help the State Government keep people in employment in Western Australia, even if they do object to the fact that in order to maintain the building rate the Government last year bought what was required on the time-payment system, just as private citizens purchase wireless sets, motorcars and refrigerators.

At present people are leaving this State. I travelled to the Eastern States in June on the train by which Dr. Robertson, the Director of Education, was travelling on the first stage of his trip to Canada. On that train more than half the passengers were new Australians who were on the way to the Eastern States in search of work. If we are going to bring people into this country, we must find employment for them. The unemployment position has become acute only because of the recession in the building trade, and that recession has not occurred merely in connection with Government enterprise.

One attends meetings in Fremantle and finds that half of the unemployed are new Australians. What can one say to them? A lot of them do not understand what one is saying or trying to do for them. This is a Commonwealth responsibility and not merely one for the State, and I hope that the Western Australian members of the Federal Parliament will withdraw their objections and assist the Federal Treasurer to make funds available for this State for expenditure on public works.

Furthermore, there are many works that could be undertaken with Commonwealth money for Federal departments. The telephone department is sending out thousands of letters explaining that it has not the equipment to provide telephones and postal boxes. Not many months ago 350 houses were erected at Brentwood, and there was not a single postal box, let alone a telephone.

Finally, I wish to speak on a matter that was first mentioned by Mr. Mattiske and later by Dr. Hislop and, I think, by Mrs. Hutchison. I refer to the proposed social centres for aged people. I do not want to take any credit from any particular person or organisation in connection with this matter, but the campaign that has been commenced in Perth is exactly the same as what was planned for Fremantle in September of last year. The Fremantle project was not proceeded with then, because at that time we had the medical school appeal, and it was felt that two appeals could not be held at the one time.

However, I think we in Fremantle are a little further advanced, inasmuch as we are setting out to raise £25,000 to build a centre for the aged people in that district, and almost one-third of the money is now in sight. It will be on much the same lines as the centre in Perth but it will not

be quite so big; and I agree with Dr. Hislop when he says that the letter "s" should be inserted to make it "centres" instead of "centre." We are planning for more than one centre in Fremantle, and a board has been elected with that idea in view.

This Government has been most gracious during its three years in office, in that it has helped considerably in the provision of social amenities. It has made a good deal of money available to different organisations to assist them and has advanced £500 to help finance the scheme for providing guide dogs for the blind. However, I do not think that is sufficient, and in my opinion the sum should be increased to £1,000 at least.

The Government should give all the support possible to the centres for the aged in Perth and in Fremantle, because they will be the nucleus of further centres which will be built in the future. These old people do not want a place where they can go to sleep; they want some centre where they can meet during the day, and where they can gather and talk. We in Fremantle are lucky because we have the land and almost one-third of the money required in view.

I wish the Government success in its efforts in this direction, and I hope that the aged people, whose plight is so much before the public at the moment, will receive their just reward and all the comforts they require in their advancing years. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

On motion by Hon. W. R. Hall, debate adjourned.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Criminal Code Amendment.
 - 2, Plant Diseases Act Amendment.
- Received from the Assembly.

House adjourned at 5.4 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, 11th September, 1956.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Press photographers, statement by Deputy Speaker	701
Questions: Fishing industry, marketing, metropolitan area	702
Mining, gold and other mineral production	703
Education, (a) Kwinana High School	703
(b) Frankland River school additions	703
Transport, licensed carriers charged and fined	703
Police, personnel in road districts	704
Pig compensation fund, amounts outstanding and paid	704
Motor-buses, average hourly operational cost	704
Geraldton harbour, plan and constructional details	704
Native Welfare, declaration of reserve, Broad Arrow-rd., Kalgoorlie	704
Goldfields local authorities, rates and other income	704
Mine Workers' Relief Fund, payments to silicosis sufferers	704
Medical School Appeal Fund, use for constructional purposes	706
Civil defence, organisation for public protection	706
Censure motion, (a) Thursday's action by Opposition	706
(b) time of debate	707
Constable Hardy, (a) long service leave	707
(b) qualification for leave	707
Marketing of Potatoes Bill, delay in securing assent	707
"The West Australian," (a) flouting of ruling by Deputy Speaker	707
(b) action on report	708
Motion: Censure, payment by Government to Constable Hardy, defeated	715
Bills: Profiteering and Unfair Trading Prevention, Message	702
Criminal Code Amendment, 8r.	703
Plant Diseases Act Amendment, 8r.	703
Evidence Act Amendment, report	708
Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement, 2r., Com., report	703
Albany Lot 184 (Validation of Title), 2r., Com., report	749

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Moir) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

PRESS PHOTOGRAPHERS.

Statement by Deputy Speaker.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I wish to comment on certain happenings and to make a statement to the House. The happenings to which I refer took place on Thursday of last week. I was approached by Press representatives of "The West Australian" prior to the sitting of the House, and they asked my permission for photographs to be taken here. I refused that permission.