

# Legislative Council

Wednesday, 21st September, 1955.

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particularly to speeches made on Thursdays. Mr. Royce, the Chief Hansard Reporter, has requested me to ask members to give this matter their urgent attention.

## QUESTIONS.

### WATER SUPPLIES.

#### *Pumping Equipment.*

Hon. L. C. DIVER (for Hon. N. E. Baxter) asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) Is it the intention of the Public Works Department to remove the old engines and pumps from the pumping stations on the Goldfields Water Supply when the new electrical powered pumps are installed?

(2) If the answer is "Yes"—

(a) Will the pumping equipment be used elsewhere or will it be discarded?

(b) Does he agree that it would be better to leave the old pumping equipment in place, to act as auxiliary plant in case of a major breakdown or any unforeseen happening in regard to electricity supplies?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) The units are not suitable for stand-by purposes. One pumping unit at No. 1 pumping station is being retained for historical purposes and useful parts from the remaining engines at Nos. 1 and 2 will be used as required in other stations.

(2) Answered by No. (1).

### ST. JOHN AMBULANCE ASSOCIATION.

#### *Grant to Bassendean Branch.*

Hon. L. C. DIVER (for Hon. N. E. Baxter) asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) Is it a fact that the Government has made, or agreed to make, a grant of £1,500 to the Bassendean branch of the St. John Ambulance Association for the purpose of erecting garage facilities and rooms?

(2) If the answer is "Yes," will a similar grant be made to all branches of the association who apply?

(3) Would he agree that in the more densely populated areas of the State particularly, the raising of funds for this purpose should be the responsibility of residents, rather than the Government?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) Yes. Assistance was given because Bassendean is an industrialised centre, and patients had to be conveyed to Perth, as no hospital facilities exist in the Bassendean area.

(2) Any application made would be considered on its merits.

(3) Yes.

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

## ELECTORAL.

### *Swearing-in of Member.*

The PRESIDENT: I have received the return of a writ for the vacancy in the South-East Province caused by the death of Hon. R. J. Boylen, showing that John Michael Adrenne Cunningham has been duly elected. I am prepared to swear-in the hon. member.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham took and subscribed the oath and signed the roll.

## CITY OF PERTH.

### *Tabling of Zone Map.*

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yesterday, Mr. Hearn requested that the City of Perth zone map be tabled. In tabling it, I express the hope that the hon. member will have a most interesting time checking through every block in the City of Perth.

Hon. H. Hearn: A profitable one!

## MEMBERS' SPEECHES.

### *Prompt Return of "Hansard" Duplicates.*

The PRESIDENT: I request members to return the duplicates of their speeches to "Hansard" more promptly. This applies

**TRANSPORT.***Permits for Horse Floats.*

Hon. L. C. DIVER (for Hon N. E. Baxter) asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) Is he aware that horse-float owners are required to pay a fee of 15s. for each permit issued to transport a horse or horses to country trotting and race meetings?

(2) If so—

(a) When did this requirement come into force?

(b) If by regulation what is the number of same, and date of gazettal?

(3) Would he agree that the issuing of permits for each meeting is unsatisfactory, and that it would be better in the interests of those concerned to grant a permit of 12 months' duration?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) The fee mentioned applies only where the distance of transport exceeds 300 miles. Fees are lower for shorter journeys.

(2) (a) Since its inception in 1934 the State Transport Co-ordination Act has required the payment of fees for licences and permits.

(b) In accordance with the Act, the Transport Board fixes the fee payable in the case of each individual application. To ensure uniformity of treatment as far as practicable, the board has, in practice, adopted a scale of fees for temporary licences and permits. In the case of racehorses fees are 5s. up to 100 miles; 7s. 6d. up to 200 miles; 10s. up to 300 miles and 15s. up to 400 miles.

(3) In the case of regular or frequent operators the board has a special arrangement whereby applications need be submitted only quarterly. In other cases no undue inconvenience need result from applying for permits as required.

**MOTION—BETTING CONTROL ACT.***To Disallow Licensing and Registration Regulations.*

Debate resumed from the previous day on the following motion by Hon. Sir Charles Latham:—

That regulations Nos. 24, 31, 68 and 92, made under the Betting Control Act 1954, published in the "Government Gazette" on the 6th May, 1955, and laid on the Table of the House on the 9th August, 1955, be and are hereby disallowed.

HON. SIR CHARLES LATHAM (Central—in reply) [4.39]: I am not satisfied with the answer given by the Chief Secretary yesterday in respect to this motion. In his speech the Chief Secretary stated

that it was not necessary to fill in the blank spaces on the licences that were issued to the people who were in charge of betting shops. The replies given to my comments were exceedingly evasive. This is what the form says—

This is to certify—has been licensed as a bookmaker in accordance with and subject to the provisions of the Betting Control Act, 1954, and regulations.

We know very well that if a licence is issued the holder comes under the control of the Act itself. That is definite. What we want to know is what the conditions are under the regulations. The wording continues—

This licence entitles the holder to carry on the business of a bookmaker in the grandstand enclosure on any racecourse in Western Australia subject to the conditions endorsed hereon.

We want to know the conditions that apply.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: There are plenty of them.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: There are none. The Minister said that any conditions imposed when the licence was issued must be those or part of those specified in the Act and regulations. I agree that we know what the Act specifies, but what we want to know are the conditions under the regulations. I have read the provisions and they do not indicate what ought to be put in the blank spaces on the licences. I have not had the opportunity of seeing one of these permits granted to a registered bookmaker, and I want the House to know what the conditions are.

The Minister for the North-West: You have had no complaints.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I am not concerned about complaints, but as to what the conditions of the licences are. That is a responsibility this House must accept. It does not matter to me what is in them, but I want to know that the law is being complied with. The Interpretation Act says that regulations shall be laid before us within a certain number of days of the House meeting, and disallowed within a certain period. We have no complaints about the licences being issued. All we want to know is what are the conditions in them? I can see nothing in the regulations or the Act which permits the board to make varying conditions.

I do not expect the Minister to draft the regulations; but at least he might check them and tell us what the conditions are, instead of merely providing blank spaces on the licences. It should be easy enough to do that. There may be varying conditions. For instance, the conditions that obtain in the metropolitan area may be

different from those required in the Goldfields or other parts of the State. But if we take no action to disallow these regulations, they will remain, and we will have no further power to move for their disallowance after a certain period elapses.

This House should accept the responsibility. I am not prepared to hand over the making of the laws of this State to executive officers. That is our responsibility. These regulations are made by a body of civil servants. I have no complaints about the licences being issued; I merely want to know what the conditions are under the regulations.

I do not wish to weary members by quoting extensively from the Act, but I will quote one or two relevant passages for the benefit of the two new members. Section 33 of the Betting Control Act states that the Governor may make regulations and may, by the regulations—

- (a) provide for the payment of remuneration and allowances to the chairman and other members of the board and their respective deputies.

That has not been complied with. If it has, the regulation has not been laid on the Table of the House as required. Section 33 continues—

- (b) provide for—

- (i) licensing of bookmakers.
- (ii) licensing of bookmakers' employees.
- (iii) classification of licences.
- (iv) terms and conditions upon which licences or respective classes of licences may be obtained and which shall be observed by the holders of licences.

I want to know what the conditions of that regulation are. All we have at present is a blank sheet.

The Chief Secretary: You want a short story on the back of every licence.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: There must be only three or four. There is one in the metropolitan area, and probably one in the Goldfields. I do not know whether the conditions on the Goldfields are similar to those in the metropolitan area; but outside a certain radius they vary again. There would not be more than four sets of conditions.

Hon. L. Craig: Every one might vary.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: It is wrong if every one varies. Why should the conditions applying to a bookmaker at the corner of the street vary from those applying to another 200 yards away?

The Chief Secretary: They would not.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Is Mr. Craig correct, or is the Minister correct?

Hon. L. Craig: I say they might.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Mr. Craig, of course, always defends the Government, whether he knows what he is talking about or not! This should be a matter for this House to decide, and one concerning which we should accept responsibility.

The Chief Secretary: You did not say that the conditions may vary between here and Kalgoolie. You mentioned a distance of 200 yards.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I said that in reply to Mr. Craig and not in reply to the Minister. I said there could be varying sets of conditions.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: I have already stated that there are too many conditions.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I cannot give the hon. member more intelligence than he has, but I would like to point out that this is not a frivolous matter. It is one on which this House must realise it should accept responsibility. After the period provided under the Interpretation Act, the regulations lying on the Table of the House become the law of the land. These are drafted by civil servants, and a penalty is also provided by the civil servants. I do not think that members have read the regulations at all. The Interpretation Act provides that members have the opportunity of either accepting or rejecting within a certain period regulations made by public servants.

The Chief Secretary: Are they made by civil servants or approved by the Governor?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Parliament has power over the Governor, because the Governor is an executive officer of the Executive Council. I know that. Ministers have not the power. I want members to realise that at the moment Ministers in this Chamber are accepting the same responsibilities as we are regarding these laws. That is the point I want to emphasise. We are being asked to accept blank pages on which conditions are to be placed. I cannot imagine that there would be more than three sets, because I believe that the board has divided the State into three groups. There is the metropolitan group and the Goldfields group, and probably others; I do not know, because we have not been given the information. I believe there is a group outside of the metropolitan area at a distance of 50 miles, but there may be only two groups.

What I beg members to appreciate is that we are shirking our responsibility by not seeing that the laws of this land are complied with. Let us accept our responsibility and not leave it to civil servants, to our subsequent regret. We give civil servants power to make regulations. I have no objection to that, provided that Parliament has the final say.

The Minister for the North-West: As a Minister, you approved of it.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Did I?

The Minister for the North-West: Many times.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I know. I am not blaming the Minister for approving in this instance.

The Chief Secretary: I did not.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Well, the Minister for Police did. I am sorry for the mistake. But the Minister in this House accepts responsibility on behalf of the Minister for Police. One or other of the Ministers in front of me accepts that responsibility. I do not know which one, but I think it is the Chief Secretary. If the matter concerned agriculture, then the Minister for the North-West would accept responsibility.

The Chief Secretary: I plead guilty.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The Minister has no more power than I when it comes to a vote of this House. I do not want members to treat this lightly, and I do not want to receive replies to my statements such as were put up by the board. I am not blaming the board, but I am trying to emphasise that members must accept responsibility; and we should advise our departmental officers that we do not intend just to take what they put up without knowing the conditions. I hope that I shall have the support of the House, and that these regulations will be sent back to the board with the intimation that we want to know the conditions of the various groups of licences that are issued. There must be some conditions. I believe that in some of them the hours during which premises may be open are set out.

I am not a betting man and have not been in a betting shop in my life. I have not seen a betting shop in this State since we permitted them to be established. I do not pretend to be an authority on the subject, but I represent certain people; and on their behalf I want to know what is happening. I also want members of this House to accept the responsibility that is theirs. Whether they agree with me or not is a matter for them to decide. I am not going to be put off by the statement that "different conditions apply in the various parts of our large State." Let us know what the conditions are. I do not know whether there is any application to the North-West.

The Minister for the North-West: Yes.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I want to know what the conditions are; and I am not going to hand over to the chairman or members of the board the responsibility that is ours. I ask that this matter be referred back to the board, and that it be asked to provide the information I have sought.

The Chief Secretary: You want to know what is on every licence?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: No. Surely I have made myself clear. I do not think there are different conditions on every licence. I do not believe anybody would be so foolish as to provide for anything like that.

The Chief Secretary: In every area, then.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Yes. I think that in the metropolitan area there would be different licensing conditions from those applying to the Goldfields area. I know there will be differing conditions in different areas, but there will not be many. I would say that probably there are about three sets of conditions. The board's reply to my statements was—

To sum up it can be said that there are no conditions, other than those in the Act and regulations, attached to the issue of bookmakers' licences.

There are no conditions in the regulations. There is nothing to say what are to be the conditions on the licences. It is provided that licences shall be granted subject to the regulations, and I want to know what the regulations say. The board's reply to my speech continued—

The days and hours of business are the only conditions attached to certificates of registration of premises. These were not inserted in the forms in the appendix as they have to be varied according to the location of the registered premises.

The regulations do not provide for that.

The Minister for the North-West: They provide for bonds in various areas.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Then let us know what the bonds are.

The Minister for the North-West: They are referred to in regulation No. 34.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: All right! But it does not say anything about the hours during which the shops may be kept open or about the days of betting. I suppose they would be set out on the licences issued to the individuals. If they were not, then the individuals concerned would be carrying a great risk. If the conditions are stipulated and set out for the individuals concerned, why should we not be acquainted with them? I ask for the backing of members in my attempt to ensure that we are given that information.

Already have I said that I know none of the bookmakers, but I objected and still object to the fact that a person has to pay a deposit of, I think, £2 when making application for a licence and that such deposit must be forfeited if the application is refused. My contention is that the money should be returned. The board's defence in regard to the retention of the deposit was that there would be many frivolous applications.

I do not consider that an applicant would be frivolous. Judging from the figures I have seen in the Press, I would say that this business is very remunerative, and there would be no frivolous applications. The position is that if there were 12 applicants, the deposits would total £24; and of that sum the Treasury would retain £22 when the licence was granted. In its statement through the Minister, the board dismissed the matter by saying that all fees paid by unsuccessful applicants would be refunded. I am pleased to know that. I hope we shall have an amended regulation to the effect that the money will be returned, instead of the existing regulation being retained, so that at any time it can be enforced.

The Chief Secretary: It will be cancelled.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: No cancelled regulation has been tabled.

The Chief Secretary: No; it was only done last week or the week before.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I am glad that if nothing else has been achieved, there has been a recognition of the justice of my contention in that connection. But I again appeal to members not to treat frivolously regulations that come to this House. Let us know what is being done by the people we are responsible for. My attention has just been drawn to the fact that the fee to accompany an application for a licence is, as I thought, £2. I am glad to have had the regulation brought to my notice, because I never like to make a statement that is not perfectly correct.

I consider that I have put up a sound argument why these regulations should be disallowed and why we should ask the board to give the people's representatives, who are responsible to the people—

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Why do you reckon they should get that £2 back?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I thought I had made it perfectly clear. The hon. member will know Broome—which is a small place—and Carnarvon, which is a much bigger place. He will also know that Kalsoorle-Boulder is a very big area in comparison with the others. Does he think that only two betting shops should be provided there? If only two are to be allowed, and a decent citizen like himself makes application, but has no chance of getting a licence because the board does not like the look of his physique, or something else, does he not consider that he should be entitled to a refund of his money?

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: What about all the investigation that has to be made?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: If that is the position, the applicant should perhaps lodge £100 or more.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: But what about—

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I am beginning to feel that the hon. member is only trifling with my feelings; and that he thinks he is perhaps a little cleverer than I am, which no doubt he is. For the benefit of the two new members, I want to say that when regulations are framed, this House is not consulted. But we have given permission for them to be made; and under the Interpretation Act, we must accept responsibility for them. We have only a short period in which to make up our minds about them, because once they have lain on the Table of the House for 14 sitting days, they become the law of the land, and their provisions are just as penal as those of any Act, the consideration of which might have occupied us for many hours.

I ask members not to treat this matter lightly. I hope that in future they will give great consideration to those clauses of Bills that provide for regulations. If I am defeated on this motion, I will still feel I have made an appeal to members; and if I have failed, I have failed in a good cause, and the responsibility is not mine.

Question put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	11
Noes	13

Majority against 2

#### Ayes.

Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. L. O. Diver	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. Sir Frank Gibson	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. H. Hearn	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	(Teller.)

#### Noes.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker	Hon. R. F. Hutchison
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. L. A. Logan
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. A. F. Griffith
Hon. W. R. Hall	(Teller.)

#### Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. J. McI. Thomson	Hon. E. M. Heenan

Question thus negatived.

### BILL—JURY ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Twelfth Day—Conclusion.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. F. D. WILLMOTT (South-West) [5.7]: Firstly, I would like to thank members for the very kind way in which they welcomed me to this House. The remarks passed about the service rendered by my

late father when he was a member of Parliament, leave me with the thought that if I can at the end of my term here leave an impression as good as the one he left, I will be satisfied.

I am here to replace the late Mr. Henning. During my recent tour of the South-West Province it was forcibly brought home to me how highly he was regarded by all members of the community in that province. Since entering this House, I have realised that the same high esteem for him applies here. I realise, too, that I have before me a fairly hard task in replacing him, but I will do my best to do so.

Dealing with the Address-in-reply, I would first like to make reference to the dairying industry in the lower South-West. The recent survey by the Bureau of Economics reveals that the average cost of butterfat production in Western Australia is in the vicinity of 6d. a lb. above the Australian average. Some of the developed farms that are milking a reasonable number of cows, and have highly developed pastures, are producing butterfat at considerably below the Western Australian average, which means that on the under-developed farms the cost of production is considerably above the Western Australian average. So it follows that some development must take place on those farms if they are to continue in the industry.

The need today is to make an attempt to bring the number of cows on these under-developed farms up to a reasonable figure. Many of them are milking only 15 to 25 cows; and that number has never been, and never will be, an economic proposition. I think that no fewer than 40 cows would be considered by most dairy farmers as being economic. These under-developed dairy farms should be brought up to the stage of carrying 40 or more cows, and this means an average pasture of approximately 160 acres. Many farmers in the lower South-West have only 50 to 70 acres of pasture.

For any Government to try to raise that acreage to 160 in one hit would end in failure, because to go into that heavily-timbered country and knock down 70 or 80 acres at one time would simply mean that before the farmer was able to burn it up and pasture the land, the country would be over-grown with regrowth, and so the work done by the bulldozer would, to a large extent, be lost. I think the development of these farms will have to be carried out by clearing a small number of acres at a time. The Government should give thought to the idea of making the development a gradual process.

An attempt should also be made to lower the costs in the dairying industry, because in many cases they are excessive. One of the costs that does not apply in the Eastern States to the same extent as it does here, is that of super. In the Eastern States

the farmers use the same amount of super per acre as we do here—they put a bag to the acre, and so do we—but one acre there will carry one cow; whereas four acres are required in the lower South-West to carry one cow. So the super cost in the butterfat industry here is at least four times what it is in the East, and the Government might give thought to some means of providing farmers with cheaper super.

I think another cause of our high production cost is the fact that in many of the dairy herds in this State there are bulls in use which should never have found their way into a herd. They should not have got past the butcher's block. It is easy to speak of getting rid of these bulls, and it is easy to get rid of them by killing them. But it is a hard task to replace them, because there are not many available sources of good bulls. With that in view, the Government might well give consideration to lifting the standard of the dairy herds by means of artificial insemination. I think that in the future this practice will play a big part in lifting our dairy herds to a higher average production.

Another factor that greatly affects the dairy farmer's cost of production is the ubiquitous rabbit. In the South-West, unfortunately, the myxomatosis virus, except in a few isolated areas, has shown no great signs of spreading. Farmers would be wise to continue their efforts to spread the virus, of course; but to date, the results have not been encouraging. On the other hand results obtained from the distribution of poison 1080 throughout the South-West have, on the whole, been very good. Nevertheless, the manner in which this poison has been laid up till now has been a little haphazard.

I want to make it clear that I am in no way criticising the methods used for its distribution up till now, because the spreading of 1080 poison has been regarded largely as an experiment. When the teams have moved into areas to lay the poison, instead of its having been laid over the face of large tracts of country, considerable pockets of badly infested land have been by-passed. The result is that the rabbits very soon find those pockets that have been cleared of rabbits and the area has to be treated again. The best results from the 1080 poison will be obtained by spreading it over a face and making sure that no infested pockets remain. If that is done, it will prove to be of great benefit to dairy farmers, and particularly to those whose properties are bounded by forest areas where rabbits breed.

At this stage I want to make a brief mention of the tobacco industry in the Warren district. The recent poor tobacco sales have been little less than a fiasco. The result has been that the traders in the Manjimup district, who have been carrying the growers through the growing period, are still carrying them. I do not profess to be an authority on tobacco growing; but

experts have told me that the cause of the poor sales does not lie in the bad grading of tobacco because, at the sales, where a grower had over five bales of tobacco of a similar grade to be offered, buyers have bought only one bale and left the remainder on the floor.

The result is that many growers are virtually faced with ruin unless they are able to sell their tobacco elsewhere. Also, as I have said, the traders in the Manjimup district are left with the burden of carrying these people. Many growers are paying freight on the unsaleable tobacco which is consigned to Perth; but eventually have it destroyed here, or pay freight on it back to the Warren district so that they may destroy it themselves. Therefore, the Government will have to make a survey of the position of the tobacco growers very soon to ascertain what can be done for this industry; otherwise, the growers will simply walk off their properties, and all the money that has been spent on development will have been wasted. Undoubtedly, a great deal of work and money has been expended on the tobacco industry. Many people think that all the work is done by tractor or mechanical equipment, but much of it is performed by a man's two hands, and, further, it is extremely hard work. So the Government should do something to alleviate the position of these growers.

The recent heavy rains in the southern areas have created many drainage problems in the various districts. One of the worst affected which I saw during my tour was in the Collie district in the housing area of Cheetara, where many new houses have been built virtually on a morass. The conditions are appalling, and they will remain so until the Government makes finance available to assist the Collie Coalfields Road Board with drainage work. The problem is far too great for any local authority to handle. Furthermore, the position will be considerably aggravated next winter unless something is done during the summer months to install a drainage system.

Another grave problem facing Collie people is the shortage of employment for miners. Some of the men and the machinery have been absorbed at Greenbushes by a small mining company called Tin and Strategic Minerals Ltd., which is mining for tin and tantalite. Up to date, that company has only been in the developmental stage. I think it has already absorbed about 20 Collie contractors with their trucks and equipment. The company started work in February 1954. Apparently it realised that the reason why many companies mining for tin and tantalite in the Greenbushes district have failed was the lack of a good water supply. So the first step this company took was to excavate a 100,000,000-gallon dam. That in itself is no small achievement.

Most of the company's equipment to date has been employed on developmental work and the water-supply undertaking. It

struck considerable difficulties during the wet period just experienced, but hopes to expand its activities shortly. Its plant has been used mostly in dredging the dam site. During that period, as a sort of sideline, the company produced 130 tons of concentrates valued at £72,000 for the tin content alone. This amount does not include the tantalite value in the concentrates. I think this company has proved that it will be able to produce considerable quantities of tin and tantalite when it really gets under way. At present it has only 22 men permanently employed and they are living in Greenbushes in homes provided by the company.

In addition, the company has in its employ the contractors it brought from Collie. The monthly wages bill is £2,000, plus £6,000 a month paid to the contractors for their labour and the use of their equipment. The company also pays approximately £1,000 a month to the State Electricity Commission. So it can be realised that the company is growing into a fairly large venture; and I feel certain it will prove to be of considerable value not only to the State, but also to Australia as a whole, because at present we produce only approximately 50 per cent. of the tin used in the Commonwealth. Therefore, I believe that when the company gets under way it will prove to be a great asset to the country.

I now wish to refer to the supply of fruit cases for the fruit-growing industry. During the season just concluded, fruit growers had considerable difficulty in obtaining fruit cases to export their product overseas. Had the regulations governing the quality of fruit cases in this State been enforced, many thousands of cases would have been rejected and would never have left the State. Last season, these regulations were relaxed. However, the growers have already been informed that in the coming season these regulations will be strictly enforced. So it is incumbent upon the Government to ensure that there will be adequate supplies of fruit cases available to fruit growers when they require them; and they will have to be cases of a standard that will pass the regulations.

Considerable difficulty has been experienced by growers with the cases that were put through the slicing machines installed to speed production, and I do not think those machines have proved very successful up to date. When the timber is prepared for the manufacture of cases, there is considerable splitting and curling of the board; and although the cases were passed by the inspectors last season, that will not be so in the forthcoming season.

So in the future I hope to see greater quantities of sawn boards produced for fruit cases. If it is necessary to revert to the use of the slicing machines, care will have to be taken with the type of timber

used. I understand that it is only the very young and sappy timber that gives the best results. If old trees are put through the slicing machines, the timber is of little value for the manufacture of fruit cases. I trust, therefore, that the Government will take into consideration that the position of the fruit-growing industry can change rapidly during a season, as it did last year.

Members know that there was a considerable fall of rain in February; something previously unheard of to my knowledge. I do not think that ever before, in that month, we have had such a fall of rain as we received last February. Instead of only a meagre crop, even with the best of normal conditions, these rains brought forth a bumper crop, which accentuated the shortage of fruit cases. Such an eventuality can happen again, so that any estimate of the apple crop, even if made in December, could be upset, and the production bumped up by the time harvesting commences in March. Consequently I hope the Government will see fit to make large quantities of good quality cases available to the fruit-growers in the coming season.

**HON. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM** (South-East) [5.29]: I wish to preface my remarks with a brief reference to the late Mr. Boylen whose province I now represent in this House. Most members knew Mr. Boylen intimately; but I venture to say that only those who live in his home town and who knew him as a friend, as I did, could appreciate the kindly nature he possessed. His many attributes are well known in Boulder, and his passing is regretted not only by members of this House but also by his townspeople. I could wish that my appearance in this House today had been occasioned by other circumstances.

I also wish to express my sympathy at the loss of the late Mr. Henning, who passed away after I left the House. He was a member of Parliament for only a short time and left us when he was a young man. It is regrettable that in the short space of time since I have been away so many strange faces in this House have appeared as a result of early demise of friends.

Unfortunately my parliamentary efforts in pressing for attention to the needs of my district were interrupted in 1954, and I want to say that I am amazed at the amount of work which still remains to be done. Apparently the projects have passed the stage when they are recognised as the needs of the district; and will never be realities. I refer to the many projects that were under consideration relating to the portion of the State I represent. Members representing my province keep before this House an up-to-date picture of its needs.

In the short period of my absence, I made a quick and brief survey of the outstanding needs. I found that literally dozens of projects, which at that time had passed the drawing-board stage, have come to a dead end. One district, as we all know, will be the most prosperous section of the State in time to come; I refer to the coastal district from east of Esperance to Ravensthorpe. It will contribute more to the food supply and economy of the State than any other district of equivalent size.

In a period of nine months, in a small area between Shark Lake and the coast, a matter of 17 miles either way, 60 new settlers have taken up land. Where one could leave the road and travel across the bush nine months ago, the land is now all fenced, and one can see new posts and fencing wire. That is how the district is growing; and it is growing entirely without Government assistance. The growth has been brought about by private and individual enterprise.

When one realises that farmers starting up in that district on virgin country have to go 30 miles roundabout to get into their property, which might be only seven miles in a straight line, one is aware of their difficulty. They cannot even bring superphosphate on to their properties over the tracks that are made. Yet it was barely 12 months ago that plans envisaged by the late Hon. G. B. Wood, were discussed with a view to a start being made. A network of access roads was planned, but many excuses were advanced as to why this could not be undertaken. Today there is still not one chain of road constructed to make the various holdings more accessible.

The Minister for the North-West: What road board is responsible?

**Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM**: I agree the road board concerned is lacking in enterprise; but something can be done by the Government besides the road board, as has been done in other parts of the State. Nothing has been done by the Government to attract people to this developmental area. We know that great plans have been laid; but unfortunately the State is littered with plans made for one project or another which has not been undertaken.

There is the matter of the Shark Lake siding. The residents made representations that a siding was absolutely essential. That was 18 months ago. Then the Government was convinced, but nothing has been done. The residents of Salmon Gums are still waiting for their bulk-wheat bin, and for cattle pens to be erected. There was a cry for the road between Norseman and Esperance to be bituminised, and 17 miles from one end was so built. Then the work was discontinued. After another public flurry the road was bituminised from the Kalgoorlie end.



The work is jumping from one end to the other, and when it will be wholly bituminised no one knows. Yet the traffic on that road more than warrants a bituminised surface—certainly far more than some roads in the metropolitan area, which in some cases are covered with bitumen for many miles and end up in the bush with not even a cart track to continue on. Money has been found for those other projects, but it cannot be found for this area where the people are crying out for land. Inquiries are not only made by people in this State but by people living in Queensland regarding land in the Esperance district, but nothing can be done.

The greatest development has taken place west of Esperance, between Ravens-thorpe and Esperance; but that is not the best land available. The land with the best rainfall and the best silt soil is east of Esperance, stretching for about 200 miles. Good water can be found within a few feet of the surface. Furthermore, the annual rainfall obviates any possibility of water shortage. We must remember there is an average rainfall of 30 inches per year, and it comes as regularly as clockwork.

Nothing is more enlightening than this instance which shows the fertility of the soil: In an area which was virgin bush, one farmer dragged a railway sleeper and some railway iron behind his tractor. After that, he sowed it in clover and at the end of the first year he took off £3,000 worth of clover seed. That was on Mr. Reigert's property. The potential of the district is something which the Government does not realise.

Since the death of Mr. Wood, who introduced the experimental farm in that area and showed the amazing results which can be obtained, the Government has done nothing. It has not helped in any form of development. Assistance has been granted elsewhere, and I cannot understand why it is not rendered to the district I refer to. That is something I would like to know more about, because I cannot help feeling that a district with such potentialities should be assisted, particularly when we realise that so much money has been spent by the Government elsewhere to clear land at fantastic rates; whereas in this district land can be made to produce in the first year by merely dragging a sleeper and iron behind a tractor. It seems unbelievable, but it is a fact. I am amazed at the slackening off of interest in so short a space of time. I am not completely critical of the Government. There are quite a number of developments which must be credited to its activities.

I am not on sure ground, but I understand that one plan which has held fire for many years is about to be brought to fruition, and that is a new hospital at

Esperance. Many people look on Esperance as a small town of 700 or 800 residents. A few years ago there were 500 residents but today it has a static population of 1,100. The activities under private enterprise carried on in that town have to be seen to be believed. During the six-months holiday period, covering the Christmas season, the population of that district jumps to 4,000 and 5,000 people; yet it has a hospital with only 10 beds. It is a fact that a week ago children at the Esperance hospital had to be accommodated in the maternity ward. Expectant mothers and children were housed in the same ward, and aged people slept on the open verandah, as that was the only accommodation available. Up to 25 beds have been crammed into the hospital which in the first place had been planned to accommodate 12 beds.

Plans were made to alter and renovate the hospital; but it must be realised that the building is a weatherboard and asbestos structure. It has outlived its use as a hospital. More land has been acquired for a larger building for this purpose, and plans have been drawn up. But for how long they will remain on the draftsman's table before the project is commenced, I do not know. I hope that something will be done in this regard in the very near future. When that time comes, I would like to see the Government giving consideration to turning the existing hospital into a home for the aged, not necessarily for those from the Goldfields. I understand the building is suitable for conversion into a home to accommodate up to 20 aged people. The site is also suitable. I believe it would be the answer to a need which at present is a pressing one in that district.

As members are aware, there is a scheme for building some houses on the Goldfields for pensioners; but that is not the answer to the problem of the aged people on the Goldfields—merely to supply the houses for them to live in. It would be all right if they could look after their own personal needs. There is a large group of aged people in the hospitals on the Goldfields who are not medical cases, but who merely need care and attention, which can be provided by some sort of home.

I predict that the houses to be built in Boulder will not be occupied readily. There is no shortage of houses there, and one can buy a number at a reasonable price. It is difficult for people to rent them, as the owners prefer to sell because of maintenance difficulties, particularly when they themselves are not resident in the town. If the building I referred to in Esperance can be made available to a suitable organisation or committee to be run as a home for aged people, the need of the district in this regard will be met to a certain extent.

Next, I shall mention the development that is taking place in what is known as the fringe area in my province—that is,

the Southern Cross, Marvel Loch and Bullfinch district, where mining and pastoral pursuits are carried on. Up to 12 months ago the pastoral interests were slowly increasing and putting the mining interests into the background. Some of the best crops in the State have been grown in that district.

Recently the Minister approved of the erection of a bulk wheat bin at Southern Cross, which has been completed since. Up till that time all the farmers at Southern Cross had to cart their wheat to Moorine Rock, and that course proved to be very costly. I believe that the bin has been filled once, and partly filled on the second occasion. It has proved to be a wonderful asset to the Southern Cross farmers because, as far west as Marvel Loch and 20 to 30 miles out, more and more land is being cropped every year.

I believe the time is very near when consideration will have to be given to providing some form of vermin-proof fence east of Southern Cross to prevent the ingress in large numbers of various types of vermin. Admittedly, it is possible to have pests on both sides of such a fence and the seasons are variable; but it is the migration of large numbers from one side to the other that is the difficulty, and the fence would have its greatest value in preventing that. Of course, the vermin can be trapped in small sections and destroyed, but it is the ingress of large numbers that causes the most trouble.

Hand in hand with farming in this district is the mining industry. Bullfinch is well and truly on its feet, and a find quite recently in the main holding more than ensures a continuance of operations and has inspired new hope in the district. On the other side of Southern Cross, the taking over by the new company of the Nevoria mine at Marvel Loch has had a wonderful effect on the town. It has a population that will not entertain the idea of the death of Marvel Loch. Some people have closed their houses and installed caretakers in the hope that Marvel Loch will come again. When people are prepared to do that in a town which has been completely isolated for years, there must be something worth investigating.

The people who have the new holding at Marvel Loch have requested the Government to drill it so that they will learn the value of the potential mine. The reply of the Minister was that drilling could not be undertaken for private interests, but I point out that it has been done for private interests. North and south of this holding, quite a large sum of money has been spent on private holdings, but the people who have this present property are not in a position to embark on a large drilling project.

I believe that the Government could easily make money available to small companies such as this in order to reveal what they have in their properties. I

urge the Chief Secretary to take up this matter with the Minister for Mines and give serious consideration to the request for money to carry out a drilling programme in this district. This is more than warranted in view of the development in other mines in the vicinity.

The balance of my remarks will be a little more parochial. During the last 12 months, my interests have been confined to a much smaller area than the province as it exists today. One of the things I am most concerned about is the attitude adopted by the Education Department, apparently with the approval of the Minister, towards the set-up of the high schools on the Goldfields. Outside the metropolitan area, Kalgoorlie and Boulder are the only centres having two high schools. The intention was that one would be used entirely for the children who had possibly an academic future while the other was more on the crafts and trade level.

It was expected that the academic school would have probably 25 per cent. or 30 per cent. of the children available for secondary training. The trouble was that in the first instance the old Boulder technical school was taken over. Some money was spent on renovations and it was then opened. Experience, however, has proved entirely the reverse of what was expected. The Boulder High School, intended for arts, crafts and trades with about 70 per cent. of children, has about 40 per cent, while the more academic side of the programme has something in the vicinity of 60 or 70 per cent.

Members would be amazed to see groups of schoolchildren trooping half a dozen times a week from one school to the other some three miles apart to attend various courses. The children of Boulder have to cycle, bus or walk into the Kalgoorlie centre, and the children from Kalgoorlie have to go to Boulder to do certain courses there. This is going on all day long under the present set-up and is most unsatisfactory.

Hon. G. Bennetts: It is a benefit for the medical profession.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: There may be some ground for humour, but in this case it is not humorous; in fact it is tragical. The other day I went to the Boulder High School and took some photographs which I shall make available to members; and if they do not agree with me that the present set-up is most shocking and a disgrace, then I do not know members of this House. I shall show a picture of a room for the arts and crafts section. It is a tin shed, unlined, and with no ceiling, and when 10 points of rain fall, there is four inches of water on the floor.

The department recognises that the less privileged a child may be, the more it is influenced by environment. Bright children can shake off the impressions created

by bad environment, but when underprivileged children are housed in such a building and not surrounded by beautiful things, the effect on them cannot be other than bad. The work of these children, which has taken many hours of their time, after being finished off with polishing and varnishing, is often ruined by reason of the wind blowing through the interstices and smothering the wet surface with dust.

In this school we have a staff of teachers so well and favourably known by the Goldfields people that they are addressed by their Christian names. These teachers have been holding the school together purely and simply by their enthusiasm. The Government cannot claim any credit so far as this school is concerned, and yet it is a section where 70 per cent. of the high school children are to be taught and trained and lifted above the environment in which they probably live. Members can picture the school grounds after 10 points of rain with a six inch pool of water right around the entrance track. This might be considered to be a trivial item, but that six inches of water possibly means that 12 or 15 pairs of shoes have been completely ruined, because the children cannot gain access to the building without paddling through the water. Such a state of affairs is disgraceful.

I feel most serious about this matter. There are children on the Goldfields who could become an asset to the State. We have teachers who are prepared to give up their own time in order to teach these children what can be done with their hands. It is a well-known fact that hoodlums and vandals are guilty of mischief really because they must find use for their hands. I do not know what the association is, but the moulding of clay with the hands is occupational therapy, and I understand that is recognised by the medical fraternity. We have a teacher who has asked to be supplied with a potter's wheel and a kiln, and claims that if they were provided he could teach the children pottery making. I am sure that he could back up his claims. If the Government will not give us a new building, while it is prepared to build high schools all over the metropolitan area—

Hon. L. C. Diver: And even at Merredin.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Merredin is a town with a very promising future, whereas the asset at Kalgoorlie is a wasting one. However, cannot we get some recognition for this school? Cannot the building at least be lined, if we cannot have a new building?

The Chief Secretary: How old is the building?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Much older than I am.

The Chief Secretary: You have been a long time waking up to find that you want something done.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: On the contrary, we have not. An application has been in for at least three or four years for this work to be done. If the present building is too old to line or renovate, give us a new one by all means; but if we are not to have a new one, let it be made into a decent arts and crafts room and not have the 4 x 2 rafters and studs showing on the inside. There are holes in the floor over which tin has been tacked, and I say deliberately that such a state of affairs is disgraceful to the electorate and to the province.

Until something is done to effect improvements, much more will be said about it. Plans have been drawn, passed and approved, though how many years ago, we do not know. We do know that an attempt to beautify the place has been made by the council and by private people. A block of land was made available for a playing field and arrangements were made for the council and the children to construct a basket ball court so that children from other schools could be invited to Boulder to play there.

Gravel was provided by the council. The kiddies spread and rolled it and made an excellent court of it, of which they were justly proud. The day before yesterday I took pictures of the court to show where brewery wagons and other traffic had driven across it and scored marks in the surface six inches deep. I saw the same children crying on the field after it was done.

I blame the department, which did not even answer our request to fence it or put up posts to stop traffic crossing the area. We are still waiting for that answer. We offered to supply the posts, from the mines, and put up the fence if the department would supply the wire. But we got no answer; and now, through the apathy of the department, that court is ruined. I agree that the citizens who did the damage are to blame up to a point; but one could not expect the school to do something to prevent what has been done, because the damage was caused by the same citizens who cleared and graded and gravelled the court. They had been driving across it while it was dry, and no damage was done; but after the rain, one truck drove across with a load of beer, and the court was ruined. Until that area is fenced off properly, and some thousands of pounds are spent on the building I have mentioned, and on the school generally, it cannot function as was first intended.

My next point contains both a bouquet and a brick. Within a matter of weeks now the Minister is going to visit the Goldfields to open the new water storage dam which is nearly completed, and which we trust will mean that the Goldfields, at long

last, will be free from the periodical shortages of water that have been experienced in the past.

We thought that would happen when the previous Government completed a dam in the district; but unfortunately a strike—not of great duration, but at a bad time—prevented that dam being filled when it might have had the effect that was intended; and as a result we had further water shortages after it was opened. With the new dam, I understand that the holding capacity to the east of Southern Cross will be in the vicinity of some hundreds of millions of gallons; and so we are hoping that we have seen the last of water shortages on the Goldfields.

However, I am perturbed at the action of the present Government in taking away from us the one comfort which we have had in the past in this regard. Whenever we have complained about water shortages, the reply has always been, "You have nothing to worry about, Mundaring Weir is entirely for the Goldfields water supply and nothing else is drawn from it;" but we have a climatic cycle which periodically reduces the volume of water in Mundaring Weir to a dangerously low level. That can still come about, in spite of the increased storage capacity of the weir, which unfortunately is no longer entirely reserved for the Goldfields water scheme.

The Chief Secretary: It has not been so reserved for many years.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: That is quite right. There has been a small pipeline which took a little water from it; but I understand that the conduit which was there was primarily to let the water flow from another dam to Mundaring, whereas today there is a substantial conduit drawing water from Mundaring Weir to supply part of the metropolitan district. That is something we have to thank the present Government for, and we are not very happy about it.

In spite of the wonderful season we have had this year, the time will come when Mundaring Weir will again reach a dangerously low level. Are the people of the Goldfields then to be penalised while the metropolitan area is allowed to keep up its big supplies? We think this change of policy is something to be regretted, and that is the brick which I wished to couple with my bouquet.

Quite recently I wrote asking the Government for assistance in putting into reasonable shape the cemetery for the Boulder district. The position is a peculiar one, in that the cemetery is actually in the Kalgoorlie Road Board district although it is almost isolated from the road board, as a centre, and the only road through to it lies through the town. Most people are amazed to find that it is a road board cemetery and does not belong to the Boulder municipality.

We have received complaints from as far away as the metropolitan area about the ravages caused by stock breaking the fences and getting into the cemetery. When I made application to the Government, it was pointed out to me that the Government is not in any way responsible for helping in the maintenance of such cemeteries, as that is entirely a matter for the local authority concerned. I would point out that it is a costly matter to maintain a cemetery in a district such as ours.

By appealing to our sister body we got a small sum donated, and a further sum was put up by the Boulder council, while the mines also assisted. As the result of our appeal, we will be able to go part of the way towards giving the cemetery a bit more prepossessing appearance for those who are unfortunate enough to have to follow the remains of their deceased relatives to the cemetery.

I cannot help feeling that the Government should give consideration to providing some assistance in cases of this kind, particularly when we remember that in a town of the size of Boulder the number of burials each year cannot possibly make up the cost of maintaining the cemetery. Members can imagine what the position is with a dry, barren area on top of a hill, where the few trees that exist are almost entirely native scrub, because it is practically impossible to grow any other kind of trees.

It is rather a squalid experience to have to go there and see where our pioneers and other deceased residents are laid away. I earnestly request the Minister to give some thought to the possibility of money being made available, after full inquiry and provision of adequate safeguards, so that cemeteries such as this might be brought into a reasonable state of repair.

I thank members for the hearing they have given me, and at the same time desire to express my pleasure at once again being a member of this Chamber.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. G. Fraser—West) [6.8]: I thought there would have been a few more speakers to the Address—

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: You should be truly thankful that there are not.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY:** I wish first to welcome the new members to this Chamber. My welcome could have been more robust if they had been members of another kidney; but I feel sure, having heard the completely new member this afternoon, that we will hear from him again. I believe he will do well in this Chamber and assist materially in the debate on the many questions that will come before us. To our other new member I shall simply say, "A politician's welcome!"

In regard to the Address-in-reply, I first want to assure members that either the Minister for the North-West or I have listened intently to their remarks. We have also obtained copies of each member's speech. Where possible, I intend now to try to answer criticisms, requests for information, etc. However, members will appreciate that it is not possible for me to deal with everything that was mentioned, and some information that was requested may have to be given later by letter to members.

An interesting and well-reasoned speech was made by Mr. Simpson; and while I cannot agree with all of his conclusions, it was well worth listening to. I do support his contention that the transfer of the railway marshalling yards from the centre of the city will release much valuable land which can be used to improve the flow of road traffic and to relieve congestion.

Several members made reference to town-planning matters. This, of course, was to be expected. Although I am sure all members could be described as town-planning minded, the Stephenson report and recommendations have given a considerable impetus to thoughts on town planning. Mr. Logan revived a matter to which he has referred on several previous occasions. He is of the opinion that the metropolitan and suburban food producing areas are being whittled away; and he drew attention to the fact that he could find no provision in the regional plan for the preservation of these areas.

This is not correct. Subsection (ii) of Section A, chapter 10, deals very fully with the reservation of land for agricultural and market gardening purposes. Generally speaking, the Spearwood area extending well to the south, and the Osborne Park area from Herdsman Lake northwards to Wanneroo, are reserved for market gardening purposes. Other localities for extensive agriculture are the Swan Valley for vine growing, and the areas around Gosnells and in the hills for orchards. Reservation of these areas has been made after consultation with the Department of Agriculture, and on the basis of providing a population of some 1,500,000 persons with fresh vegetables and fruit.

It is recommended that in the market gardening areas the minimum subdivision should be  $2\frac{1}{2}$  acres. It should be realised, however, that this is the minimum, and that a more suitable area is between five and 10 acres. This has been confirmed by recent discussions with the two main vegetable growers' associations in Perth, which have expressed the opinion that  $2\frac{1}{2}$  acres is too small for economic gardening purposes, except in very exceptional cases.

A suggestion was made by Mr. Lavery that a bridge be built between Point Walter and Point Resolution instead of at the Narrows. This is certainly a possibility in the

future, and is envisaged in pages 216 and 224 of Professor Stephenson's report. It is stated on page 216 that "at some point in the future it may be necessary to bridge the Swan River between the Narrows and Fremantle."

It should be quite clearly realised that one of the main objects of the new bridge is to give relief to the Causeway. A bridge at Point Resolution, while certainly serving the southern districts, could not provide this relief as satisfactorily, one reason being that most of the traffic generated from districts east of Point Walter and south of the river that wished to come to Perth would not be inclined to double back and cross at Point Walter.

An additional difficulty is that from Point Resolution the route would be either through the built-up area of Dalkeith or Nedlands to Stirling Highway, or round the river past Crawley Bay. This would give two different traffic flows, one from such a bridge and the other from the existing traffic on Mounts Bay-rd. These two flows would possibly meet at the very narrow point at the north end of Crawley Bay. Another mitigating factor is that a bridge between Point Walter and Point Resolution would be much longer than one at the Narrows.

It was stated by Mr. Lavery that Professor Stephenson is of the opinion that it should be the trend to bring everything into the congested city area. I must point out that neither Professor Stephenson nor the report have said anywhere that this should be the trend. The report simply says that this is the trend, and that unless something very extraordinary occurs the trend is likely to continue.

At present, a very large proportion of the traffic at the morning peak period is coming towards the city and leaving at the evening peak. The question seems to be whether provision should be made for this ever increasing volume of traffic or not. The Stephenson report does not attempt to explain the phenomenon of massive city growth, but simply faces the fact that the growth is taking place and appears very likely to continue.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY:** Before tea I was speaking about the Stephenson report, and I mentioned that it does not attempt to explain the phenomenon of city growth, but simply faces up to the fact that the growth has taken place and that it appears likely to continue. The recommendation is made on several occasions that every effort should be made to decentralise both in the region and in the State.

To Mr. Lavery the idea of a cutting near Milligan-st. was repulsive. The proposed cutting is further to the west across Mount-st., Malcolm-st. and Hay-st. and

seeks to provide separated grades for traffic on the switch road and in the streets mentioned. Intersection at grade is stated to be not desirable at these points. The road could go in a tunnel, if necessary, but it would be much more expensive and, in the experts' opinion, it is not warranted. A cutting need not be unattractive, and it depends entirely on how it is designed and how the work is carried out. It would probably not be noticeable from a short distance away. Where necessary, cuttings can be properly landscaped and planted.

Reference was made by Dr. Hislop and Mr. Simpson to the proposed Narrows bridge. The former deplored the fact that reclamation would do away with the sweep of shoreline around Mounts Bay. I would like to assure the hon. member that the proposals for the completed reclamation would not result in a straight line, but would be in the form of a curve from the Narrows to a point somewhere near the extension of William-st. From there onwards it is proposed that the alignment should be straight, reclamation taking place up to the existing southern end of Barrack Square. The proposed reclamation would, in fact, result in a new Mounts Bay of similar shape, although slightly smaller, to that existing.

The present shoreline of Mounts Bay is not natural. It is man-made, and there was considerable public outcry when that reclamation took place. Despite this, the consensus of opinion now is that it is very much better than it was previously. There appears to be no reason why the same should not apply to the reclamation now being carried out.

The matter of how much of the new reclamation area will be used for parking appears to be causing concern and some confusion appears to have occurred. The reclamation now taking place is stage 1 of the whole section which it is proposed will eventually extend from the Narrows to the foot of Barrack-st. Stage 1 involves some 43 acres and it is not intended that any of this land will be used for parking. Up to date this is the only part of the proposed reclamation that has been approved by Cabinet.

Stage 2, which has yet to receive Cabinet consideration, is intended to complete the reclamation from the present works around to Barrack-st. Of this, only a very small portion adjoining the existing car park at the foot of Spring-st. is proposed for parking. The total area of both reclamation stages is 80 acres, which is only a small fraction of the 970 acres of Perth Water. This is not a very great price to pay for the benefits that will be gained.

Concern was expressed by Dr. Hislop that with rebuilding taking place, opportunities had been lost for the widening of Milligan-st. He suggested that this street would eventually be of greater importance

in the city and could have been a means of exit from some of the northern parts of the city. Milligan-st. was one of the many alternatives looked at by Professor Stephenson for the western switch road.

It was finally discarded by the professor, the reason being that it is already a busy city street in the existing business area and is, and will be, needed in the future for cross movement between St. George's Terrace, Hay, Murray and Wellington streets within the proposed inner ring road system. It is already extensively developed for business premises, whereas George-st. is not. The latter also contains a lot of very old property which will be due for redevelopment before very long. The alignment of Milligan-st. is also not so satisfactory as George-st. for the switch movement for which the road proposed in the plan is designed.

Further, the hon. member asked whether consideration had been given for a tunnel from the vicinity of Bishop's House to the neighbourhood of Motor House at the corner of Wellington and Milligan streets. The possibility of a tunnel from Bazaar Terrace to Motor House was considered at one stage by Professor Stephenson who decided that it did not appear to offer any advantages. The high cost of tunnel construction, which is about £1,000 per foot, renders such a proposal prohibitive unless there is no alternative.

The object of the Narrows bridge-George-st. road proposal is to bring vehicles to the city, which is where the majority want to go, and to switch them to the north or south side on to the northern or southern part of the inner ring road. In this way it would not be necessary for vehicles to traverse the existing north-south city streets, although they could enter the central city area where they desire.

Thomas-st. will still be needed as a by-pass road to the northern suburbs. As such it is already extensively used by vehicles from the Fremantle area. It should be reiterated that the switch road was not proposed as a by-pass road, although it might carry some by-passable traffic. The proposed switch road was intended by the professor to lessen the congestion in the north-south city streets—that is Milligan, King, William and Barrack streets.

The points which were stressed in consideration of this problem were:

(a) The great majority of road users would want to come to the central city area at peak periods.

(b) If they are to be accommodated they must have fast traffic roads of adequate width and with as little interruption as possible.

(c) On arrival at the city area they must be provided with convenient parking places at strategic points and

with an adequate road system to enable them to reach the points of the city they require without having to weave through the busy streets.

In addition, Dr. Hislop asked whether there were any possible alternatives to the proposed switch road. Broadly speaking, there are two extremes—

(1) At Milligan-st. which is the central city area, it being considered that the switch road should be at the western edge of the city, and

(2) On the Havelock-st. line which is certainly at the western edge but where the engineering difficulty of connecting such a road with Mounts Bay and the Narrows bridge appears impossible without tunnelling, and which would result in a road line without the correct directional flow—that is, towards the city.

Both these extremes have been examined in detail by Main Roads Department engineers. A number of variants between these extremes have also been considered. In page 175 of his report Professor Stephenson says, "The line suggested offers the best solution among the many alternatives which have been considered." I hope that the information I have given will be of use to Dr. Hislop and other members.

Might I add that we realise quite frankly that the proposals put forward by the professor are certainly ones upon which there could be a good deal of debate; but I can assure members that before any final decision is made as to the exact route that will be taken by the proposed link between the Narrows bridge and the northern access road, serious consideration will be given to all aspects.

I think that members know that already an all-party committee has been appointed. It has had many sittings and has been considering various parts of the Stephenson report. Members can be sure that this committee will take into consideration the interests of all persons, because it is representative of the Government, the Opposition and the local authorities. Before any item of the Stephenson plan is decided upon, all angles will have received consideration.

Another matter ventilated by Dr. Hislop was whether some of the unfit members of the community might be admitted to superannuation schemes. While as a suggestion this may have considerable merit, thought would have to be given to a number of aspects. Some of these that come to mind are—

(1) Every superannuation scheme is based on a contributor making payments over a specified period of time, and after contributing for that period living on the average to enjoy the benefits from the date of retirement to the age shown in the Australian mortality tables.

(2) From the financial point of view, it has to be accepted that the contributor is likely to remain a contributor for the normal working years span and, to ensure that he is likely to do so, he is called on to pass a medical examination to prove that at least he is fit at the time of becoming a contributor. If he is not fit, then the fund, which provides the ultimate benefit, could not accept him as a contributor without creating a burden on its finances, which would have to be met by increased contributions by the fit members.

(3) This burden would be payment of full pension benefits without return of contributions from the date pension commenced, and the strong possibility that those pension payments would be spread over a very lengthy period in a lot of cases.

(4) For any scheme to carry the unfit members, the actuary would require to load, very heavily, the present contribution rates, and the population of the fund, who already pay extra in premiums to cover the possible breakdown of a certified medically fit member, may not be very amenable to the suggestion.

(5) In the State scheme, although certified medically fit at the date of becoming members, there have been over 400 cases where invalidity pensions have been granted over a period of 16 years.

(6) The only sound method which might be suitable for "unfit" persons would be a separate scheme for such people, with a rate of contribution fixed by an actuary to allow for their possible and almost certain earlier retirement on the grounds of ill health.

While emphasising he was not opposed to the development of secondary industry, Mr. Jones felt that the Government should pay greater attention to the development of our primary industries and that secondary industry should be permitted to grow naturally in open competition with overseas concerns. However, recent Governments have accepted the view that in the past Western Australia has been too dependent on primary industry, and that this has resulted in an unbalanced economy. The danger then is that when prices for primary products fall, the whole State suffers severely, as a fall in primary income affects the bulk of our population.

It is considered that a better spread of employment and production between primary and secondary industry would render the State less vulnerable in times of recession. Regarding the cost of production of Australian manufactures and of any subsidies paid, industry, of course, is not subsidised by the State, except on rare occasions. Subsidies to manufacturing

concerns are paid by the Commonwealth on the recommendation of the Tariff Board, and in implementation of a policy of assisting establishment of secondary industry throughout Australia.

Hon. H. K. Watson: That is, except the North-West.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There are, of course, a number of things that we do at times to parts of the State other than the metropolitan area.

The Minister for the North-West: The less privileged areas.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is understood that it is the Commonwealth Government's policy to grant subsidies or protective tariffs only for an establishment period, but it must also be borne in mind that other older and more industrialised countries support by bounty commodities manufactured for export.

In his speech, Mr. Baxter referred to the charcoal iron industry, and quoted what he considered to be excessive stocks of pig-iron. The hon. member and others must realise that Wundowie has always given priority to Western Australian needs. These needs were at a low ebb during 1953-1954 and this resulted in stocks of over 9,000 tons accumulating. Subsequently, a steady market has been developed overseas for charcoal pig-iron which is surplus to local requirements. A total of 13,722 tons was shipped during the year 1954-1955, and stocks at the 30th June, 1955, were reduced to 2,477 tons, at which date orders for 7,280 tons were on hand. Further orders for over 30,000 tons could have been accepted, at a price considerably in excess of that charged to Western Australian foundries, had the production capacity been able to meet them.

Local requirements are increasing every month, and there will soon be very little available to satisfy overseas customers, who are constantly pressing for a decision to expand. These overseas customers have expressed themselves as highly satisfied with the quality of Wundowie special irons which they have described as outstanding and excellent.

The statement by the hon. member that "it is almost impossible to compete on the world's markets against the manufacturers of coal production iron" is completely wrong. Wundowie has standing orders for 2,000 tons per annum for special irons for foundries in the Eastern States, including the New South Wales railways. These foundries are willing to pay standard prices, plus freight and handling costs, to get Wundowie charcoal iron.

Wundowie is producing at an economic cost, and the whole plant is now paying all expenses, meeting depreciation charges, and a small part of the interest bill. This interest charge on the experimental plant, developmental costs and initial losses, is a heavy burden in carrying on a plant with

a comparatively small and restricted production. It should be appreciated that interest is equal to a surcharge of £4 15s. 5d. per ton of iron produced.

If Wundowie were placed on a similar footing to the Albany superphosphate works, which was financially assisted by the previous Government to the extent of a loan of £675,000 free of interest for 10 years it would have no worries whatever. The Albany assistance is a continuing charge on the State, whereas there are good prospects of the Wundowie losses being fully recouped.

The existing plant, which was set up as an experimental one, has proved all that it was planned to prove—that is, that forest and sawmills waste could provide the fuel for the economic running of a charcoal iron furnace. It has established beyond doubt that charcoal iron can be produced competitively with coke iron; and that if expanded production is provided at Wundowie, a substantial net profit can be achieved. The Royal Commissioner found that the establishment of this industry was justified and recommended its continuance. Mr. Baxter alleged that nowhere in the world has the production of charcoal iron proved a financial success. This is quite wrong. The hon. member has apparently not heard of the high reputation held by, and the premium prices paid for Swedish charcoal iron.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Very small quantities.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Wundowie costs are approximately two-thirds that of Swedish iron, and the local hardwood makes a denser charcoal with better results. Our charcoal iron industry cannot be compared in general terms with past or present operations overseas, for we have extensive hardwood forests full of waste wood as well as modern improved equipment. It is the only fully-integrated wood-distillation, charcoal-iron industry in the world. Other countries in which charcoal iron industries are in operation are Austria, Yugoslavia, Russia and India. There is a large charcoal iron industry in Brazil which is based on the continuous planting of Australian eucalypts.

The general manager of Wundowie, Mr. Constantine, has gone overseas with several objects in view. He will study the most up-to-date method of wood carbonising that is now in operation in France and Belgium. This process is continuous and has many advantages over other systems and would be of great importance to this State for future forest utilisation generally. Mr. Constantine will also investigate markets for certain special pig irons for the production of which Wundowie plant is particularly suitable. He will interview Wundowie's many customers abroad, to ascertain the extent of their future requirements.



I must mention there is no wish to expand in competition with ordinary foundry iron while there is a big market potential for special premium grades of charcoal iron. Mr. Constantine will not be booking orders; in fact, Wundowie must try to keep its customers content on token supplies only, until production is expanded.

Reports already received from Mr. Constantine indicate a lively interest in England for Wundowie Spheroidal Graphite iron for nodular castings, a type of iron which we are supplying to all Australian patentees as well as to Europe, U.S.A. and Canada. All things considered, Mr. Baxter is far from correct when he refers to Wundowie as a "white elephant", or as an industry that any responsible Government, knowing the facts, would be justified in closing down.

The attention of the House was drawn by Mrs. Hutchison to the plight of women who are left with young families to care for. The hon. member was appreciative of the fact that the Government had quite substantially increased the assistance given by the Child Welfare Department to these unfortunate persons. As Mrs. Hutchison said, the Government is keenly sympathetic to these persons and will do all in its power to alleviate their circumstances.

Some attention was paid to traffic matters by Mr. Jones. He stated that police action should be taken to compel slow-moving vehicles to keep to the edge, instead of using the centre of roads. While, no doubt, the hon. member has observed many cases of this nature, this does not mean that the police have been inactive.

During the 12 months ended the 30th June, 1955, 201 drivers were prosecuted for failing to keep to the left-hand side, and 306 for crossing the double white lines. In all 507 drivers were therefore prosecuted for failing to keep to the left. I can assure the hon. member that the police are constantly taking action in an endeavour to compel drivers to keep to the left-hand side of the road. This has also been shown by photos which have been taken by the police and published in the Press of drivers failing to keep to their left. To catch all drivers that hug the centre of the road would require a large increase in our force of motor cycle police.

The same hon. member drew attention to the fact that he considered pedestrian crossings should be illuminated at night. Such a proposal, of course, would have to be carried out by the local authority responsible for the upkeep of the road. When the white pedestrian-crossing was put down at the intersection of Stirling Highway and Dalkeith-rd. arrangements were made by the Main Roads Department with the State Electricity Commission to erect two spotlights on either side

of the road way to show up the crossing. I am informed, however, that after a trial of two weeks the lights were removed as being unsatisfactory.

Hon. A. R. Jones: The light needs to be directly overhead, I think.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: They placed the lights in what was considered the most suitable position for showing up the crosswalks. The placement of stop signs has given rise to some criticism, it being suggested that some of the signs are at intersections where there is no necessity for vehicles to stop. Mr. Jones was one who mentioned this fact. However, the hon. member was guilty of considerable exaggeration in stating that 1,200 or 1,300 had been erected in the metropolitan area. The correct number is 566.

Again contrary to the hon. member's suggestion, the signs were not erected haphazardly and without thought. Before they were placed traffic counts were taken and the danger of the various intersections was observed. It is agreed that at some points complete stoppage of vehicles is not warranted, and for that reason tenders are being called for the supply of "Slow, 15" signs.

These will indicate that at the intersections at which the signs are erected motorists must reduce speed to not more than 15 miles an hour and watch carefully. Until these slow signs are available, the stop signs will remain at the intersections concerned, as it is considered some warning is necessary and it is better to be sure than sorry. The main object of the stop signs is to prevent accidents.

I do not agree—nor do the traffic authorities—with the hon. member's contention that if every driver obeyed the stop signs as he should, traffic would never get anywhere. On the contrary, if stop signs are obeyed, traffic is able to keep moving because of the prevention of accidents, and if a driver obeys a stop sign and any other regulation he should safely get to his destination.

Hon. A. R. Jones: In about a week's time.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Another complaint by Mr. Jones referred to the licensing of bicycles. He could see no need for the issue each year of a new number plate and suggested that the same method be adopted as in number plates for motor-vehicles. He confessed to breaking the law by not attaching current plates to his own bicycles. Actually the main object of licensing a cycle is that the Police Department can obtain a record of the cycle's frame number. The local authority receives nothing from the licensing as the 2s. is hardly sufficient to cover the cost of the plate and the administration involved.

Each cycle practically without exception, has a frame number stamped thereon and this information is invaluable to the C.I.D. when tracing stolen cycles. The reason for the change of plates each year is to indicate the cycle is licensed in a similar manner to certificates of registration on motor-vehicles.

The position regarding certificates of registration for push-cycles and the fitting of the necessary container has been investigated. The cost of the holder and certificate of registration would be about the same as for a number plate, and therefore it is considered the change of the plate is the best method of indicating a cycle is licensed. If the hon. member is seen riding his cycle with the old licence plate still on it, he leaves himself liable for prosecution. It is suggested that as a member of a law-making institution he should set an example to the public and join the ranks of the law observers.

Mention was made by Mr. Jones that trolley-bus and motor-bus drivers are often handicapped by finding their stops are being used for parking purposes, and he asked that I look into this matter. As a matter of fact, I am already doing so. Some bus stops are gazetted as such. Where this is done, parking on the stop is an offence. However, the prohibition of parking at all bus stops in the metropolitan area is not warranted. This is only done where it is believed parking would constitute a traffic or pedestrian hazard. However, I have asked for a report indicating at what ungazetted stops parking appears dangerous, either at all times or at peak periods.

It was pointed out by Mr. Davies that in other parts of Australia pedestrian crossings were marked with diagonal stripes. He suggested these should be used here, as he considers they give motorists a clearer view of pedestrians than the right angled stripes used here. I will request the Traffic Branch to experiment with the diagonal stripes, and will advise the hon. member of the result. Actually there is no difficulty in doing this as our traffic regulations allow the use of both diagonal and right angle stripes. The point was raised by Mr. Lavery that he and other people considered that stop signs are too high. When one considers the hon. member's height, that is a little difficult to understand. One could have understood it better had the complaint come from Mr. Watson!

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: You still look at it from the same height in the car.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member suggested the signs should be lowered 18in. Members are probably aware that the traffic and transport authorities throughout Australia are working towards complete uniformity of traffic regulations in the Commonwealth. This

is a very wise move. It means that motorists can drive from State to State and never be confused or prone to accidents through conflicting sets of by-laws. One of the methods by which uniformity is being achieved is by standardising road signs. The sizes, heights, etc. of the signs are recommended by the Australian Standards Association and decided on by the Governments of all States. Western Australia is therefore bound by this agreement so far as the heights of the signs are concerned. However, the matter is being brought before the Standards Association and will be discussed by all States.

The hon. member drew attention to what he said was the anomaly of the speed limit on Stirling Highway being 35 miles an hour and that on Rockingham-rd. being only 30 miles an hour. This matter has already been referred to the Traffic Advisory Committee, and I am awaiting its recommendations.

Some time was spent by Mr. Hall on traffic matters. He stated that, despite hopes, the staggering of the issue of licences had not obviated congestion and queues at the Traffic office. However, Inspector Hickson, the acting officer in charge of the Traffic Branch, does not agree with the hon. member. He states that queues are seldom seen at the Traffic office.

Hon. A. R. Jones: He must be blind, then.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: In view of the fact that he spends approximately 80 per cent. of his time there, I think he should be in a better position to judge than someone who just pays an odd visit.

Hon. A. R. Jones: Every time I go there, I find a queue.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: How many times is that?

Hon. A. R. Jones: Five or six times a year.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: And the hon. member sets his opinion against that of a man whose office is on the spot, and who is there for not less than 80 per cent. of his time! Inspector Hickson says that the fact that queues are seldom seen at the Traffic office is due to the staggering of licences and the provision of a cash register on the front counter. He adds that the only time there is any congestion at the front counter is during June and July when a great number of country vehicles are brought in for examination and licensing, or perhaps when some of the staff are away at lunch. The hon. member will appreciate that it is impossible in any organisation to prevent queues at all times. The staff required to bring about such an ideal circumstance would not have their time fully occupied and a great waste of money would occur.

A complaint was made by Mr. Hall that the present type of number-plate was susceptible to damage and that the charge of

7s. for a plate was too high. I can advise the hon. member that the use of another type of plate, less liable to damage than the present enamel one, is under consideration.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: And will cost twice as much!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No; it will cost approximately 33 per cent. more.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: That was not a bad guess!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The figure of 7s. for a set of plates is not one on which the department makes any profit. That sum meets only the cost of the plates, plus a very small margin for administration. As a matter of fact, quite a number of local authorities have, for a long time, been wanting an increase in the price of plates; but we considered that the present charge—which I would say is 7s. 6d., though my notes give the figure as 7s.—is a reasonable one.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I suppose they have a big store of them.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes. We have reached the stage at which the 100,000th plate has been issued. Admittedly not all the plates up to that number have been distributed; but, for special reasons, that one was issued; and we have now arrived at the point of considering whether a different type of plate should be introduced.

Hon. A. R. Jones: I thought that was not permissible.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: What?

Hon. A. R. Jones: I thought it was against the law to issue a plate out of sequence.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Plates are not issued in sequence. There are a number of reasons why they may be issued out of sequence. An attempt was made to meet the wishes of customers. There are firms who take out as many as 15 licences and like to have their numbers consecutive. In order to provide for additions, the department may keep back 20 to 25 plates in order that such firms may retain the sequence in their numbers.

Hon. L. A. Logan: And then you jump 2,000 or 3,000.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There was a special reason for the issue of the 100,000th plate. I think the firm concerned said that it had produced its 20,000th car and asked for a distinctive number. I do not believe anyone would object to our trying to meet a little request of that kind. Consideration is being given to a new type of plate. I have some samples in my office. They would be dearer—probably 33 per cent. more. That is to say, the new plate would cost about

10s. as against 7s. 6d. But, in view of the better value, I do not feel that any motorist would complain if we decided to adopt a new plate.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Would he still have to buy two plates when he required only one for replacement?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That will have to be sorted out, because there have been several complaints.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Would the plate be of plastic?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No; it is a kind of aluminium that will bend. When the enamel is knocked off the present plates the numbers are disfigured. The new plates can be bent without the numbers being damaged.

Hon. W. R. Hall: What is wrong with having uniform plates throughout Australia?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not know what the hon. member means.

Hon. W. R. Hall: Plates with 3in. lettering instead of 4in.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Some of the samples we have may be along those lines; I have not measured them. But if there is anything to be done in the way of securing uniformity, as I am a great advocate of uniformity I will give the suggestion serious consideration. One direction in which our plates differ from those in other parts of Australia is that elsewhere the plates have distinguishing letters, whereas ours contain only numbers. For the sake of uniformity, we are considering that aspect.

The statement by Mr. Hall that when the auditor arrives plates are destroyed, appears to imply that it is only at that stage that such destruction takes place. That is not so. Plates are destroyed when they have been condemned. The auditor certainly makes a check to ensure there are not two sets of plates with the same number, and that is quite the correct procedure for him to take. It is customary for a motorist to take both plates when he orders a replacement.

Attention was directed by Mr. Hall to delays in the hearing of traffic offences in the courts. This, of course, was caused by the ever-growing number of these cases. However, the situation has been improved, and prosecutions are now being dealt with more expeditiously. Consideration is being given to a scheme whereby the load on the courts would be lightened, and I hope that before long information in this regard can be provided.

The hon. member was not correct when he stated that blinking lights are illegal. They may be used; but a hand signal must also be given, in accordance with the regulations, to indicate the intention of the

driver. The blinking lights may be visible to car drivers, but they are not visible to a pedestrian on the side of a car or to a driver approaching a car from the side. The lights show fore and aft and not to the side, and therefore they are insufficient indication to all users of the road that the driver intends to turn either left or right.

The same hon. member mentioned parking difficulties in the city. These are realised; but to provide ample parking space, it is essential that suitable areas for that purpose be provided by the local authorities. It is necessary to impose parking restrictions to enable moving traffic to utilise at least some portion of the road to which it is entitled. The regulations were recently altered to try to assist traders who, because of the imposition of parking laws, stated that they were losing business.

In alleging that money is not being provided this year for the building of workers' homes under the State Housing Act, Mr. Logan was far from the facts. Apart from the provision of funds for the completion of homes under construction at the 30th June last, finance is being made available for the erection of further new homes; for the financing of second mortgages; and for assistance to self-help builders.

Hon. L. A. Logan: I was not wrong at all.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member comes into the House and makes various statements; and when he is given the official and true explanation, he always replies that he was not wrong. He always finds some little excuse to hedge.

Hon. L. A. Logan: That is getting away from the point. You are not answering what I said.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: We are getting quite used to the hon. member saying, "I am right, and the officials"—who have all the records—"are wrong." That is the attitude the hon. member is getting into. I hope he will take the opportunity later on to show where the statements I have made are incorrect.

The present Government fully appreciates the importance of housing. Apart from a record number of homes being built this year under the Commonwealth-State rental scheme, 798 workers' homes were completed under the State Housing Act. The number of workers' homes erected during six years under the previous Government was 358. The average rental at June, 1955, of the 8,940 homes let under the Commonwealth-State rental scheme was £2 11s. 9d. per week.

It was suggested by Mr. Logan that the Railway Department might use some of its land for car-parking purposes. I am pleased to be able to tell him that the department already has a programme for the provision of car parks at suburban

railway stations, and that a number have been constructed and are now in use. While these are designed primarily to encourage people to use the trains, the department in some localities has co-operated with the local governing authorities to enlarge the station car-parks so as to allow for general parking and thus ease congestion in the local shopping centres, particularly those on Stirling Highway.

Hon. L. A. Logan: I am on the right lines sometimes.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes. The hon. member is only on the wrong lines when he doubts official statements. That is a dangerous thing to do. I always like to give the hon. member the best of advice, and I suggest that he make a check before he indulges in assertions that statements made are incorrect.

Hon. L. A. Logan: I will. Don't worry!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: To make the car parks weather-proof, as suggested by the hon. member, would be a costly proposition and one which the Railway Department does not think it should be called upon to undertake. The department feels it is a matter for the car owner himself if he wishes to protect his vehicle from the weather. Contrary to the hon. member's view, the leases granted to oil companies for the erection of service stations in no way encroaches on, or affects, the provision of car parks for railway patrons.

Delays to passenger trains carrying perishable traffic, overnight travel, the Childs shelter shed, and the Midland Junction Workshops were mentioned by Mr. Jones. The Railway Department asserts that no undue delay occurs to passenger trains at wayside stations where limited quantities of perishable goods are off-loaded. I am advised that scheduled stops for all trains are kept to an absolute minimum, the duration of a stop depending entirely upon the type and purpose of the train concerned.

The hon. member was not very specific in his criticism; but my advice is that the scheduled time for the Kalgoorlie express, which handles limited quantities of highly perishable goods, and which covers its 380-mile journey, with stops, in little over 1½ hours, compares favourably with schedules for trains working under similar conditions in the Eastern States of Australia and overseas.

It has been the experience of the department that the majority of long distance passengers prefer overnight to day travel so that they may avail themselves of sleeping accommodation. People travelling for business reasons have also shown preference for overnight journeys. Both the Kalgoorlie and Albany trains carry a predominance of long-distance passengers, and for that reason they are tabled to run at night. It is not desirable to have

these trains arriving at their terminal stations at night-time owing to the difficulties with which many travellers would be faced in having to acquire suitable accommodation for the night.

Hon. G. Bennetts: We do not want the Kalgoorlie express altered.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: All right. The hon. member will see it is not. If it is we will hear about it!

Hon. G. Bennetts: We want it run on time. That is all.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: In any case, there are day trains operating between Perth and Albany, and between Perth and Merredin on the Kalgoorlie line; and the choice of day or night travel is therefore available to the majority of travellers. Railway time-tables are framed for the majority and not a small minority of the travelling public.

At present, the station buildings at Chidlow, including the refreshment-room and passenger and goods shelters, are being completely reconditioned. Possibly, the structure referred to by Mr. Jones is the passenger shelter. The men carrying out the work are not employed exclusively on this particular structure.

So far as the Midland Junction Railway Workshops are concerned, Mr. Jones's remarks are a repetition of his earlier allegations. The men employed in the shops are representative of a cross section of the community and, speaking generally, they are well trained, do a fair day's work and take a pride in their trade. The organisation is such that all men should be fully employed.

The Railway Department has asked me to tell Mr. Jones that if he is sincere in his desire to correct something he believes to exist, it would like him to produce facts which would enable definite action to be taken. It has thrown it into his lap now to assist the department in taking whatever action is necessary to remedy what he considers is wrong. The information he has given is vague—he admitted he could not pinpoint anything in particular—and it comes from what seems to be a doubtful source. That is referring to the man who gave the information, not to Mr. Jones.

Hon. A. R. Jones: What would happen to him?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I think he would get the decision he justly deserves.

Hon. A. R. Jones: He would be sacked?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes; I think he would, and he would be entitled to be sacked. A man who would do three hours work a day, accept his pay and allow that sort of thing to go on without informing those concerned would not justify being kept in employment.

Hon. A. R. Jones: You get protection for him, and I will bring him to the Bar of the House.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I would not give a man like that protection. I do not think he deserves it.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I do not think he would come to the Bar of the House either.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is so; and I do not think many members would give him protection. Mr. Logan raised the question of a new hospital for Geraldton, saying that the terms of my reply to his recent question on this matter were almost the same as he received in 1950. This may be so, but, unfortunately, it is a matter of insufficiency of loan funds. In 1950, although there appeared to be money available, there was insufficient labour and materials to get on with major building projects. Having regard to housing problems, etc., the construction of all works was beyond physical capacity to undertake.

Today we are brought face to face with the fact that the Commonwealth has restricted the loan programme of the States in such a way as to make it impossible to construct hospitals urgently necessary, particularly when individual hospitals, such as those for Albany, Bunbury and Geraldton, will cost in the vicinity of £1,000,000 each. This year, for instance, the Commonwealth has restricted loan funds to such an extent that new large hospital construction cannot be undertaken.

The Medical Department is aware of hospital deficiencies at Geraldton, and at present a programme of work, involving complete renovation and repair, is proceeding. This will cost many thousands of pounds, but it is work which must be done, and it does not follow that a new hospital has been lost sight of. The construction of a hospital on a new site has to be considered in order of priority with other hospital work and in the light of the loan funds available. The hon. member indicated that the situation at Albany and Bunbury is similar to that at Geraldton. The Medical Department's opinion is that Albany is at a disadvantage with the other two towns with regard to hospital facilities and beds available and, consequently, Albany's need for a new hospital is the more urgent.

Hon. L. A. Logan: They were all on an equal priority, once.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Dr. Hislop wondered whether it was necessary for weirs to overflow. I am advised it is not possible to explain in detail to the hon. member the numerous factors that influence the ultimate decision on what type and size of dam should be constructed at a certain site at a particular time, but he can be assured that a very thorough study of all available information is made, and future developmental possibilities considered, before a decision is reached.

Regarding his more specific questions, the following comments are made. Mundaring Weir is the only one that has been raised. The structure as it stands at present was designed and built to carry 4ft. high crest gates so that the height of stored water could be increased by 4ft. This is considered the maximum that could be justified economically, and will amply fulfil the needs for which it was designed. Much of the additional water that could be caught by a somewhat higher dam, constructed at a substantially increased cost, would be lost by evaporation.

When the full volume of water required for the Goldfields and northern section of the comprehensive water supply scheme is being drawn from the weir each year, it is anticipated that the weir will overflow, on an average, about every second year. However, there are bound to be recurring periods, such as we have experienced, when the enlarged weir would not overflow. It would not have done so during the past six years—that is, since 1948. The installation of crest gates has not been undertaken yet as there have been more urgent demands for the funds available.

The present Wellington Dam was built some years ago with a view to raising it when conditions justified it, and circumstances permitted. It is planned to raise the dam in due course, increasing the capacity to approximately  $4\frac{1}{2}$  times that now existing.

Regarding Dr. Hislop's questions, whether there is a necessity for weirs to overflow, and whether the overflowing of a weir ensures that the water retained remains potable, the following advice may be of help in indicating some aspects that have to be considered:—

- (a) Conditions at individual dam sites are never comparable.
- (b) On most rivers of reasonable size it would be impossible to construct a dam, or dams, that would conserve all water in years of heavy flood.
- (c) On smaller streams it might be possible, but financially impracticable, to conserve all water.
- (d) In cases where there is a possibility of an increased salinity occurring, a flushing by occasional overflow is essential.
- (e) In large dams the bacterial count reduces as the period water is held in storage increases.
- (f) It is the duty and the responsibility of the professional staff to develop the cheapest and most economical sources of water supply first.

Reference was made by Mr. Davies to the restricted reticulation of water at Hamilton Hill. In this regard the further water reticulation of the Hamilton Hill district is dependent on the provision of

a feeder main from Lake Thompson Reservoir to Fremantle. This work has been commenced, but it will not be completed until 1957, when it is hoped water will be available to Lake Thompson Reservoir from Serpentine. Progress, of course, will be determined by the amount of loan moneys which can be made available.

The hon. member asked whether the Government could ascertain whether the extension of the fish-markets breakwater had assisted in the erosion of sand at South Beach. I am advised that it is the considered opinion of the Public Works Department that the breakwater has not contributed in any way to beach erosion in the locality. The western coastline has been subjected to erosion throughout the State's known history and, in the particular locality mentioned by the hon. member, substantial erosion was recorded long before the first section of the fish-markets breakwater was constructed in 1920-21.

Conditions in the Price-st.-Ada-st. section in 1901 were such that the western boundaries of early surveys were at least 100ft. out in the sea. Protective measures by timber sheeting were carried out in 1893 between Grey-st. and Essex-st., and the sea wall was constructed in 1908. From time to time prior to the commencement of the fish-markets breakwater, repair works to the sea wall were necessary, due to storm damage.

In the course of his contribution to the debate, Mr. Jones castigated the behaviour of some apprentices and quoted complaints from several employers. While much of what was said might be true, he was very wrong in suggesting that instructors of trade classes at technical schools are not prepared to do anything for lads who are wayward and who show a tendency to wag it from school, and that, in such instances, the instructors do not use any pressure to bring them to heel.

This statement is most inaccurate. Should apprentices be absent from their classes, absentee cards are sent out regularly to the employers. If an apprentice has been absent from two consecutive classes, a special letter is sent to the employer asking him to discuss the problem with the technical school authorities. If this does not bring about the desired result, employers in Perth are contacted by telephone.

The remarks made by Mr. Roche in connection with the future of primary industries were most interesting and will give members much food for thought. Personally, I am not in a position to suggest a remedy for the ills so ably described by him, but I have sent a copy of his speech to my colleague, the Minister for Agriculture.

Hon. H. K. Watson: You have your limitations.

Hon. H. L. Roche: We are gradually finding him out.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have always been a modest man, prepared to admit my failings, and I shall continue in the same strain.

Hon. H. K. Watson: You had your halo polished before reading your Address-in-reply speech.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I shall dim it before I finish. Mr. Bennetts acquainted the House with some of the advantages obtained by the community during the present Government's term of office, and his remarks made impressive hearing.

Hon. G. Bennetts: I told you I would.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have referred his comments regarding some young police officers to the Minister for Police in order that possibly instructions in this regard can be issued.

A most interesting speech in regard to economic conditions was made by Sir Charles Latham, and just when I was really getting interested he spoilt it by castigating me for the decision to amend certain metropolitan local authorities' boundaries. First of all I must state, as I have said on several other occasions, that this was a Cabinet decision.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Introduced by the Chief Secretary.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not suggest it was not prompted by me.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I know.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member said he had no doubt that amalgamations of local authorities would have no effect in lessening expenditure. However, those people whose lives have been spent in local authority administration do not agree with Sir Charles. Before the decision regarding the boundaries was made, the situation elsewhere in Australia and overseas was carefully examined. It became increasingly obvious that certain metropolitan local authorities were too small to efficiently and adequately administer their districts.

Then again, Mr. Logan criticised the Government for increasing water rates in Geraldton. As the hon. member stated, valuations were increased recently and the water rate was reduced from 3s. to 2s. 6d. in the £. Mr. Logan suggested that a reduction to 2s. would have been more commensurate with the increase in valuations. I have obtained some figures which set out the financial position of the Geraldton water supply scheme. In 1938-39 the capital expenditure had amounted to £259,189 and in that year, exclusive of interest and sinking fund, the undertaking showed a profit of £2,232. By 1954-55 capital expenditure was £645,095 and even allowing for six months at the increased values, the loss for the year was £31,713. Interest and sinking fund again were not included in this figure.

In 1954-55, not taking interest and sinking fund into account, operating expenses amounted to £65,642, and revenue to £33,854 only, this, as I have said, including six months of payments at the increased values. It will thus be seen that a reduction to 2s. in the £ would have considerably increased the loss on the undertaking. The price for rebate water was not altered during the current rating year, and as a result ratepayers will receive more water in return for their increased payment.

Hon. A. R. Jones: Whether they use it or not.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is so.

Hon. H. Hearn: They will be able to have two baths a week!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: To those who beautify their homes by using water on their gardens and lawns, it will mean less charges for excess water.

Hon. L. C. Diver: Will there be sufficient water if everyone uses what he pays for?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have not got a clue on that. During 1953-54 the total cost of supplying water, inclusive of sinking fund and interest, was 5.26 shillings per 1,000 gallons. Excluding interest and sinking rate it was 4.47 shillings, while the cost of pumping only was 2.13 shillings. Against this, rebate and excess water is sold at 3s. per 1,000 gallons.

A suggestion was made by Mr. Heenan that a select committee representative of each political party be appointed to consider ways and means to broaden the franchise of the Legislative Council, and this is a proposal to which consideration can be given.

Hon. G. Bennetts: That is very fair.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Mr. Thomson's remarks on building materials were extremely fair and most interesting. I have forwarded his suggestions on the school-building programme to the Minister for Works for his consideration. Other members, such as Mr. Diver, spoke on agricultural matters and I left the Minister for the North-West to reply to them.

With regard to members who spoke today, naturally I have had no opportunity to obtain information so that I may reply to the questions they raised, but I do not want them to think that they have been neglected or overlooked. The usual procedure I have adopted in the past is to forward copies of the speeches made by members to the departments concerned and when answers are received from them, I pass the information on to the members who have raised such questions. The same procedure will be followed on this occasion.

If any member has referred to a subject which he considers requires some consideration and attention and I have made no mention of it in my reply, I hope that he will not regard any action on my part as a slight because from the remarks I

have just made, members must realise that, in view of the long reply that is necessary to cover all the matters raised by members, that portion which deals with an individual member's problem must be cut down as much as possible. Therefore, I hope no member feels slighted or neglected.

If there are matters to which members referred in their speeches that require some consideration and I have not mentioned them in my speech, I can assure them that I will give my attention to them later. I thank members generally for the manner in which they spoke to the Address-in-reply. We heard a lot of congratulations and many condemnations—

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Not enough!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: —and I think, overall, the congratulations would vastly outweigh the condemnations.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: We did not get enough of them.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Of course, when a Government does a good job it is extremely difficult to find reasons to condemn it. So we find that the Address-in-reply debate this year has been such that members have been hard up to find something to growl about.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: It is not a growling debate, really. I would not encourage that line of thought.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is generally regarded as a parish pump session, but I do not think it has been so on this occasion. Again I thank members for the excellent manner in which they have contributed to the debate. I also thank them for their efforts and both my colleagues and I will take due notice of what has been said. I now conclude by saying that I support the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

Question put and passed; the Address adopted.

#### *Presentation of Address.*

On motion by the Chief Secretary resolved:

That the Address be presented to His Excellency, the Governor, by the President and such members as may desire to accompany him.

#### **MOTION—CHAMBERLAIN INDUSTRIES PTY. LTD.**

*Tabling of Reports by Sir Edwin Nixon.*

HON. SIR CHARLES LATHAM (Central) [8.34]: I move—

That the two reports made on Chamberlain Industries Pty. Ltd., about the end of 1952, by Sir Edwin Nixon, be laid on the Table of the House.

Some time ago I asked the Chief Secretary a question in regard to laying on the Table of the House two reports by Sir Edwin Nixon following an inquiry made by him about the end of 1952 into Chamberlain Industries Pty. Ltd. In his reply, the Chief Secretary pointed out that this was a private company and consequently he did not think he would be justified in tabling the papers. I am therefore obliged to move this motion requesting that these papers be tabled.

My remarks in support of the motion will be few because I do not think it requires a lengthy speech to convince members that this enterprise is not entirely the affair of a private company because it is heavily subsidised by the Government. Whilst I was Minister for Agriculture in 1952, the Government of the day obtained the services of a prominent chartered accountant from Melbourne, Sir Edwin Nixon, to conduct an inquiry into the affairs of this company because of the financial difficulties it was experiencing and the large amount of money that had been advanced to it by the Government.

I understand that Sir Edwin submitted two reports. We sought to obtain these reports by requesting the Chief Secretary to lay them on the Table of the House, but he refused the request. Theoretically, as the Chief Secretary suggested, Chamberlain Industries Pty. Ltd. may be a private concern, but actually it is nothing of the sort because this venture has been completely financed by the Government. Consequently, we can hardly say that the company is purely a private concern because I believe that the total amount of its subscribed capital is only £155.

Before I sit down, I think I shall be able, with the assistance of a Treasury report and the Auditor General's report, to convince this House that the company, itself has very little financial interest in its activities and I think that members will be concerned about the increased indebtedness of this company to the Government. All preliminary agreements between the company and the State Government were made prior to 1947 and prior to the McLarty-Watts Government coming into office. The Government under the Premiership of Mr. Frank Wise and the succeeding non-Labour Government were the people who, in good faith, encouraged this firm to come here and who advanced large sums of money to the company.

At the outset I want to say that at that time there was a great shortage of tractors and farming machinery generally in this State. The company manufactured quite a good product and it supplied many tractors and certain farming machinery that were in short supply. It produced, among other equipment, a large disc plough and a large cultivator.



The Minister for the North-West: Its establishment was justified.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: If we are prepared to pay the price and also admit that the financial interest of the company is extremely small, I would say the Minister is right. Nevertheless, although it did the work, the Government supplied the money. It is true that at that time the value of money was totally different from what it is today, and the money advanced to the company then, in comparison with the value of money now, represented a much greater amount than a similar sum advanced today.

I have already mentioned that the subscribed capital of the company was £155. On page 83 of Treasury return No. 23 of 1954—I would like members to get a copy of that return—the Treasury reported that at the 30th June, 1954, the company owed the State a total of £2,335,393. That was the sum that was guaranteed by the Government to cover the bank overdrafts made by the Rural & Industries Bank. On page 114 of Section "A" of the Auditor General's report on the public accounts for the financial year ended the 30th June, 1954, we find, under the heading of "Chamberlain Industries", that the position of the company at that date was as follows:—

	£	£
Foundry building at cost .....	50,836	
Add interest during construction capitalised .....	5,164	
	56,000	
Less repayment credited Revenue Fund, 1950-51 .....	513	
		55,487
Machinery and equipment—		
Under hire purchase agreements (costs, including capitalised interest, less repayments) .....		278,755
Not under hire purchase .....		4,848
		339,090
Rent of factory premises and steam sales outstanding .....		15,429
Interest outstanding—		
Foundry rent instalments in arrear .....	6,581	
H.P.A. agreements—instalments .....	29,704	
		36,285
Maintenance reserve instalments (foundry) outstanding .....		1,644
		£392,448
Total instalments due and unpaid at 30th June, 1954—		
Foundry .....		9,924
H.P.A. agreements .....		109,174
		£119,098

As I have already pointed out, in addition to the indebtedness shown above of £392,448, there were guarantees given by the Government to cover overdrafts totalling £2,335,393. Unless the company has progressed sufficiently to place itself in

the position of not needing to borrow any additional capital, that would be approximately the total of its indebtedness, but I understand it has become more involved financially than that amount indicates. So I think the Government will admit that because of its small subscribed capital of £155 and the indebtedness it has to the Government, one can hardly say it is a private concern.

I am alarmed about the position; and although I would like to see the company continue, there is a limit to the amount of money that can be spent by the Government on ventures of that kind. I admit that at present we must be in a position to supply all the tractors that are required by importations. One has only to visit the establishments of large farming machinery firms and one will notice that much equipment is lying outside; and, in consequence, I think there is hardly any necessity for us to continue finding additional money so that this firm may continue its operations.

It is only fair to the taxpayers of this State that we, as their representatives, should be able to peruse the reports submitted by Sir Edward Nixon. If he gave advice to this company as to what action it should take to try to make ends meet and it has not done so, I think the Government should take steps to try out the suggestions made by Sir Edward Nixon. There is no need for me to say anything more. I do not wish to harm the firm. I have made out a sufficient case for Parliament to show its desire to become aware of the position.

The Minister for the North-West: A case to close the company up.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I do not know what its assets are and we should have that information before us. It is then for this House, for another place or for the Government to find out what the assets are in comparison with the liabilities. I hope that members will agree with me that this course of action is necessary and will do no harm to the company.

In conclusion, I might mention that the Federal Government was invited to participate in this venture, but it was much more cautious than the State Government. On page 114 of the Auditor General's report for 1954 the following is set out:—

In addition to the indebtedness shown above of £392,448 there were guarantees given to cover bank overdrafts totalling £2,335,393. These are subject to a recoup by the Commonwealth of half of any losses sustained; the Commonwealth liability not to exceed £40,000.

The Minister will be pleased to learn that the Commonwealth liability was not to exceed £40,000! Even when that amount is paid, the debt would not be decreased by a very great amount. I trust the House

will agree to my motion in order to find out what Sir Edward Nixon had to say about this concern and whether he suggested any solution to the financial position, or whether any help should be given in the future.

On motion by the Minister for the North-West, debate adjourned.

### **BILL—CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT.**

Introduced by Hon. R. F. Hutchison and read a first time.

### **MOTION—HOUSING COMMISSION RESUMPTIONS.**

#### *Return of Land to Owners.*

**HON. A. F. GRIFFITH** (Suburban) [8.50]: Before I proceed with the motion standing in my name on the notice paper, I ask leave of the House to amend it by striking out the word "urges" and inserting in lieu the word "requests."

Motion, by leave, amended.

**Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH:** I move—

That in the opinion of this House the fact that the Government has already returned to the owners much of the land resumed by the Housing Commission (see "Government Gazette," the 8th October, 1954) in the Bentley Park, Welshpool, Morley Park, and Belmont Park, Fremantle and other districts, indicates that prompt action should be taken by the Government similarly to deal with those others in such districts whose land has not been returned and desire to have the same; and this House strongly requests the Government to take immediate action to return such land to such persons forthwith.

The series of events that I am going to relate to the House will, I feel sure, stir some members at least to the point of indignation. They will see when this story is revealed what the present Government has been responsible for, and, may I say in chosen words, is capable of doing to people in connection with their ownership of land.

In order to trace the series of events, it is necessary for me to summarise in detail as briefly as possible some of the happenings between the 8th October, 1954, and the present time, and also some of the things that took place before the 8th October, 1954. In the first instance, members might recall that in order to find out how much land the State Housing Commission held in 1953, I asked a series of questions which revealed, as reported on page 156 of the 1953 "Hansard," that the State Housing Commission at that time—namely, the 19th August, 1953—held 12,400 acres of land, including land acquired on behalf of the Director

of War Service Homes; that the 12,400 acres embrace 9,000 acres of land acquired in the Wanneroo district for long-term development; and that the land held includes future schoolsites, playgrounds, parks, roads and other amenities to be provided for in subdivisions.

Members might recall that, shortly afterward, I also had occasion to ask the Chief Secretary a question concerning the activities of some officers of the State Housing Commission in the Queen's Park district, where, without any advice to or leave from the owners, they entered into and upon certain lands in Queen's Park, and placed certain survey pegs; and, on the owners inquiring what the officers were doing on the land, they were told that survey pegs were being placed there with a view to resumption.

I asked the Chief Secretary these questions, which are recorded on page 157 of the 1953 "Hansard"—

(1) Is it a fact that Government surveyors, acting on behalf of the State Housing Commission, were surveying land last Thursday, the 13th August, in the vicinity of Wharf-st., Queen's Park?

(2) Is it also a fact that such surveying operations were again continuing during Monday, the 17th, and Tuesday, the 18th August?

(3) Is it a fact that the survey is being completed on behalf of the State Housing Commission with the intention of resuming certain land for State Housing Commission purposes?

(4) If so, how much land is it intended to resume?

(5) Is there any particular reason for haste in the operation of this resumption?

(6) If so, what is the reason for such haste?

The Chief Secretary replied as follows:—

(1) and (2) Certain survey work is being carried out on behalf of the State Housing Commission in connection with the proposed development of land that has been held by the commission since 1950.

(3) and (4) Minor resumptions may be necessary to give effect to the proposed scheme of development.

(5) and (6) There is need to utilise any suitable commission land within reasonable proximity of services to provide, as early as possibly, accommodation for those in need.

It is reasonable to assume that when the Minister said that minor resumptions of land might be necessary, we were entitled to accept the statement that only minor resumptions of land would be made. That statement was accepted by me and by the people whose land was being surveyed, and also by the people who live in the locality.

The next step in the story was that the Government brought down a Bill to continue that section in the State Housing Act which gave the commission the right to resume land for the purpose of home-building.

Members will recall that I opposed the continuance Bill presented to the House by the Chief Secretary, and that I moved an amendment to alter the time of the continuance measure from two years to one year, with the idea that a period of 12 months would be sufficient in which to clean up the resumptions that had already taken place, and to complete the planning that had already been implemented up to that stage of the proceedings.

I want to recall to mind once again the undertaking given by the Chief Secretary when this Bill was moved. He gave that undertaking on the 4th September, 1953, and it is reported on page 2361 of the 1953 "Hansard". I quote—

This Bill seeks to extend the period for another two years, as the Government feels that in order to acquire land where necessary to complete subdivisions; provide services to estates being developed by the Commission; carry out slum clearances; and meet any exceptional cases of national importance—I think one has occurred today—it is essential to have power under the Act to acquire land by resumption. I am assured that it is not the intention of the Commission to undertake any large-scale resumptions.

He went on to say how much land the Housing Commission held at that time. He reiterated his assurance to such an extent that when the amending Bill was sent to another place and returned to this House, we agreed to allow the condition of two years to remain, as provided in the amending Bill, and did not insist on the period of time being reduced to one year. That actually was completed on the 15th December, 1953.

In addressing the House the Chief Secretary gave us that assurance. Everything went along nicely and quietly. Personally, I felt satisfied that the undertaking the Government had given through the Chief Secretary was an honourable one. I went among the people who questioned me and told them that the Government had no intention of resuming further large areas of land, and that I felt certain they could rest assured that nothing further in that way would occur. Much to our surprise, on the 3rd October, an article appeared in the "Sunday Times". It is headed, "S.H.C. Short of Land has Acquired 3,260 Acres." So much for the undertaking given by the Government!

On the 19th October, there appeared a headline in "The West Australian", "S.H.C. Takes up Big Areas of Land", and details were given of the land intended to be resumed by the Housing Commission.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: The Government should be censured.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: We can well imagine the indignation of the people who owned the land—people who were informed by short notice through the post that the "Government Gazette" of the 8th October, 1954, contained a description of their land, and that it then belonged to the Housing Commission. This was done without any notice, without any negotiation, without any prior intimation of the Government's intention to resume any further large areas, and so we find that these people have been very sadly let down.

Members will recall from reading the Press that the action of the Government led to meetings of irate landowners in many parts of the metropolitan area. During the course of the previous debate in this House, I was credited by the Chief Secretary with having gone right through the metropolitan area whipping up the ill-feeling that existed amongst these people and organising meetings in so many places in the province of Mr. Lavery and in my own province. Of course, such stories were basely untrue.

However, these meetings were held, and the upshot was that there was formed an organisation calling itself the Land Resumption Protest Federation. This consists of a body of people who, because of the actions of the Government, have banded together to form a federation to continue what they consider is a justifiable fight for the return of their land. Some of the landowners in my district approached me to ask whether I could do anything about it. On the 21st October of last year, I moved a very simple motion in this House—a motion that brought forth much protest from the Government, and—I say advisedly—much abuse from some supporters of the Government.

It was again suggested that I had been responsible for the entire activities of those people and that I was conjuring up this story as a political trick and bringing all sorts of disasters on the heads of the people whose land had been taken. I appreciated at the time, as those people know now, that that was the only possible defence the Government had to offer against my motion. Members will recall that the motion was passed by this Chamber. Before it was passed, the Chief Secretary, as reported in "Hansard" of 1954, at page 2317, said—

The fact is that it is not the intention of the commission to retain any houses in the areas resumed, and every effort will be made to return the homes and as much land as possible within the next few weeks. It is, however, not possible to determine the amount of land which would finally be required for housing until the areas have been fully planned for roads and other facilities. Up to date, a number of owners

have been interviewed by the commission—owners from each of the resumption areas—and when the full position was explained, they invariably expressed satisfaction at the way in which they are to be treated.

That was the statement of the Chief Secretary. I shall return to it presently. By the 25th November, it was apparent to me that the Government had taken no notice whatever of the motion passed by this House in regard to the matter of land resumptions, so I put a question on the notice paper. I asked the Chief Secretary—

What action has the Government taken with respect to the motion carried by this House in relation to land resumption by the State Housing Commission?

The Chief Secretary replied—

The attitude of the Government was expressed by me when speaking on the motion. The Government is unaware of any "gross unfairness", but on the contrary all cases are being dealt with on a most generous basis in accordance with original intentions. No departure from the initial proposals is deemed necessary.

Upon receiving that reply, I directed a question to the Chief Secretary, without notice, in these terms—

Do I take it, from the answer given by the Chief Secretary to my previous question, that the attitude of the Government is to treat with disdain the motion passed in this House on the question of land resumption, and to completely ignore it?

The Chief Secretary replied—

The hon. member's assumption in that respect is not correct. The Government gives consideration to all motions passed by either House of Parliament, but as the result of consideration given to this motion, the Government decided that no alteration in its original policy was necessary.

When Mrs. Hutchison was speaking on the Address-in-reply, I interjected, asking her whether any of the land she was speaking of had been given back to the owners, and she replied, "All that was applied for." The knowledge of the hon. member on this question is very limited, but that is quite understandable, because I would not expect her to know how these people feel. They certainly would not tell her how they feel. They came to me and told me.

The Government has returned large areas of this land to certain people. At this stage I want to reveal to members to what extent some of this land has been returned; and when I do so, I believe that members will be full of indignation, especially in view of what the Chief Secretary told us. He said it was necessary to plan roads and replan these subdivisions, and it was not possible to say how

much land would be returned until all the planning had been carried out. I display for the information of members a plan in red and white, and I want the Chief Secretary to look at it.

The Chief Secretary: I am doing so.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The area shown in red, before the blue squares were put in, was the complete resumed area in the Queen's Park district. The blue area shows the land that has already been returned to the people who formerly owned it. In some cases there has been a total return; in other cases it has been a small portion. I ask members to bear in mind what the Chief Secretary told us when he said the return of land in this area must take place after it had been fully planned for roads and other facilities. Would it be possible for any town planner to plan that area now? Obviously, the Chief Secretary does not think so. I say it is not possible. The land has been given back to its former owners, as I have indicated, and I am glad of that; but the way in which the area has been messed about makes it absolutely impossible to do anything with it in the way of replanning.

Here is another plan which refers to the Morley Park district, and the same sort of thing has occurred. The land shown in brown has been resumed; the land shown in red has been returned to the owners, and the land in purple has been retained by the Housing Commission. Would the Chief Secretary say that it would be possible to replan that area now? Once again, he does not answer because he knows that it would be impossible.

The Chief Secretary: I am trying to keep out of trouble.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I can assure the Chief Secretary that he is not going to keep out of trouble.

The Chief Secretary: I meant, not with you, but with the President.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Here is another plan, this time the Fremantle area. Here, too, the land shown in blue has been returned to the owners who requested its return. Once again I ask how it is possible to totally plan that area; and once again I say it is not possible to replan it.

There is not much left to tell of this story, except that I would like the pictures to be taken down and the Minister to look at them and see what the department has been responsible for doing, bearing in mind that the motion I have moved tonight, like the one I moved in October last, is a very simple one. It asks simply that this land be given back to the owners. In spite of the lack of knowledge on the part of Mrs. Hutchison, who says that all those who applied to have their land returned to them got it back, I here and now tell the Government that all those who desired it did not get their land back, and I have the names of 63 of them here.

The Chief Secretary: How much land did your Government give back to the people when it resumed in one lot three times more than we have taken altogether?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I knew full well that sooner or later the Chief Secretary would—

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: —swallow the bait.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It is not possible for the Chief Secretary to sit for more than ten minutes without interjecting.

The Chief Secretary: You were inviting me to.

The PRESIDENT: The Chief Secretary well knows it is disorderly to interject.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: He is often disorderly. That is the only defence that the Government can put forward to the motion I moved last year or to this one.

The Chief Secretary: It ill becomes a man who made no protest previously—

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: And what did the Chief Secretary do?

The Chief Secretary: What did your Government do?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: We first of all negotiated with the people who owned the land.

The Chief Secretary: Did you do that at Kwinana?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That was a different matter altogether. The Chief Secretary knows that the Kwinana resumptions were dealt with in a Bill which came before Parliament.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: People got £4 per acre for their land, and your Government sold it to the companies for £70 per acre.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Chief Secretary knows how the Kwinana resumption was made.

The Chief Secretary: It was a blanket resumption, stretching for miles.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Chief Secretary knows full well it was dealt with by an Act of Parliament.

The Chief Secretary: It gave power to make a blanket resumption.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It is contained in a statute—

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I will get it, if you wish.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: According to a recent Press statement, a resumptions Bill will appear soon, and the Minister for Works is reported to have said that the Public Works Act is going to be amended. I am pleased to hear that.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: I guess you are.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I suggest that Mrs. Hutchison knows so very little about this matter that she would be well advised

to keep quiet until it is her turn to speak, and then she can make one of the usual kind of speeches that she makes here. We are informed that the Government intends to amend the Public Works Act—

The Chief Secretary: Your Government had six years and did nothing but resume three times as much land in one hit.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: And for three years there were no such meetings taking place in the metropolitan area as have been referred to in all these Press reports.

The Chief Secretary: No; because there was no one to go around and stir them up.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I take great exception to that remark.

The Chief Secretary: It is true.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It is not; and I call on the Chief Secretary to prove it. I do not like becoming personal in these matters; but the Chief Secretary's attitude last year, in an endeavour to discredit my action, was to go to the A.B.C., not to Parliament—whether at night or not I do not know, but he should have gone there at night—and make an address over the air; an address which was a deliberate and direct attack on me and which had nothing whatever to do with the Bill. No doubt his colleagues got together and said, "When you are faced with the truth, the only thing to do is to abuse the man who is telling the truth."

Hon. E. M. Davies: Why did you not think of that when you sat behind the McLarty Government?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: If you sling enough mud—

Hon. E. M. Davies: It is sticking to you now.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: No doubt all these interjections are made in an endeavour to score a point in a difficult situation. In this instance the Government is not in a difficult situation but a very simple one, and I ask the House to lend assistance. I have here the names and addresses of 63 people who, through the Land Resumptions Protest Federation, have asked me to submit their names to Parliament as owners of land which was compulsorily resumed, and to request the return of their land in full. I hope it will be realised that this list—

The PRESIDENT: Order! The hon. member can speak only from his seat.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am sorry. I was endeavouring to facilitate the work of "Hansard." I do not wish to read out the names in the list, as that would make unnecessary work for "Hansard." I will be satisfied if the list can be laid on the Table of the House. I ask members to be tolerant of the interpretation which the typist may have made in connection with the

transcribing of some of the names. Certain of the signatures are hard to read. Some of the land is owned by foreigners, and we may not have been quite correct in our interpretation of their names.

The PRESIDENT: If the hon. member wants the names recorded, he must read them out.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I hoped to save "Hansard" work by laying the list on the Table of the House.

The PRESIDENT: If they are tabled they will not be reported in "Hansard."

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not think that it is necessary they should be, if the Chief Secretary will accept the list as laid on the Table. I hope he will not take the opportunity of saying that a person of such-and-such a name does not exist, just because of a bad interpretation of the name in the list—

The Chief Secretary: I never take a mean advantage like that.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am sure the Chief Secretary would not do so. There are contained in this list some 63 names with the signatures of the persons concerned, the lot or street numbers of the blocks and the addresses of the persons owning the land. There is nothing difficult, complicated or intricate about the motion. I would like to assure the Chief Secretary doubly, so that he will not gallop off to the A.B.C. and make another attack on me, that I did not go around looking up these people. They held their meetings and compiled this list, and they want their land back. They are people from all over the metropolitan area—from my province, that of Mr. Lavery and the provinces of Mr. Davies and the Chief Secretary.

Hon. E. M. Davies: They did not come to me with their names.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Perhaps they realised that they would not get much sympathy from the hon. member.

Hon. E. M. Davies: They would get more sympathy from me than from you. When your Government did this you said nothing.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I ask members to treat the motion on its merits, as it simply requests the Government to return to these people the land that has been taken from them. Some whose land was resumed have already had it returned to them, and these people desire to have the same treatment meted out to them. Some have received a portion of their land back and want the balance of it. It is no use the Government saying that planning can take place, in view of the plans which I have exhibited in the House tonight; or saying that Lot 286 in George-st. could not be returned when we know very well that Lot 287, next door, has been returned. I ask members to support the motion in

the hope that the Government will return this land to its owners. It is not my fault that the people concerned did not go to Mr. Davies. Had they gone to him—

Hon. E. M. Davies: They came to me when they wanted a deputation to the Premier.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I was going to put a feather in the hon. member's cap, but he interrupted. I was about to say that I felt sure that he would have done whatever he could for them; but he did not expect me to give him that much credit, and he came in like a big biting fish.

Hon. E. M. Davies: And I have some pretty good bait.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not know why these people did not go to Mr. Davies—they went to him once before—but that is entirely their business. On this occasion they came to me.

The Chief Secretary: Even from the West Province?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes. Does that surprise the Chief Secretary?

The Chief Secretary: Yes; because if people come to me from another province, I refer them to the appropriate member.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That might be an attempt to have a hit at me. I did not go through this list name by name, picking out the people in the West Province. It was submitted to me by the organisation to which I have referred, and I would not care whether the people on the list came from Timbuctoo. I would still submit their names to the House if asked to do so, and there is nothing wrong in that. Does the Chief Secretary suggest that I should have segregated the names of the people living in his province and that he would have moved a motion for them? If so, I think they would have been left weeping and lamenting, waiting for him to assist them—

Hon. E. M. Davies: As they did when the McLarty-Watts Government was in power—

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I ask members to support the motion. If they do so and the land is returned to these people—as I trust it will be—that will only be in keeping with the practice that the Government has employed towards those who have already had their land returned to them.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, debate adjourned.

#### BILL—LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Introduced by Hon. Sir Charles Latham and read a first time.

*House adjourned at 9.32 p.m.*