

# Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, 1st September, 1953.

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(2) How many acres of irrigation land are served by earth channels?

(3) What is the cost of maintenance of—

(a) cement-lined channels;

(b) earth channels?

(4) What other costs are taken into consideration when cost of maintenance is assessed?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Areas served directly by concrete-lined channels—

	Acres.
Harvey irrigation area	2,800
Collie irrigation area	150
Waroona irrigation area	1,000
	3,950

(2) Areas served directly by earth channels—

	Acres.
Harvey irrigation area	8,200
Collie irrigation area	8,950
Waroona irrigation area	3,000
	20,150

(3) The average costs of maintenance per annum covering all sizes of channels are estimated to be—

(a) Cement-lined channels—£31 per mile.

(b) Earth channels—£56 per mile.

(4) Items taken into consideration are as follows:—

(a) Maintenance of channels proper.

(b) Maintenance of structures on channels.

(c) Operation of district—i.e., distribution of irrigation water plus incidentals and local management.

(d) Minor improvements to the systems.

(e) Renewals of structures at end of their useful life.

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY CHAMBER.

*As to Installing Air-conditioning and Cooling Systems.*

Mr. McCULLOCH asked the Premier:

(1) Has consideration ever been given to the installation in the Legislative Assembly Chamber of—

(a) air-conditioning;

(b) comfort-cooling?

(2) Is he aware that an air-conditioning system is operating in the N.S.W. House of Parliament?

(3) What would be the approximate cost of installing—

(a) air-conditioning;

(b) comfort-cooling systems?

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

## ELECTORAL.

*Swearing-in of Member.*

Mr. SPEAKER: I am prepared to swear in the member for Dale.

Mr. Wild took and subscribed the oath and signed the roll.

## QUESTIONS.

### IRRIGATION.

*As to Cost of Channels and Maintenance.*

Mr. MANNING asked the Minister for Works:

(1) How many acres of irrigation land are served by cement-lined channels?

The PREMIER replied:

- (1) (a) Yes.
- (b) Yes.
- (2) No.
- (3) (a) Approximately £38,000. (Both Houses approximately £70,000.)
- (b) Approximately £10,000. (Both Houses approximately £20,000.)

### EDUCATION.

*As to School at South Stirling.*

Hon. A. F. WATTS asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) When was the school at South Stirling ready for occupation?
- (2) When was a teacher appointed to that school?
- (3) What number of children are now enrolled there?

The MINISTER replied:

- (1) The school at South Stirling was ready for occupation on the 15th July, 1953.
- (2) The teacher took up duty on the 12th August, 1953. The delay was due to the difficulty in finding a single male teacher prepared to batch in the quarters.
- (3) Eleven children are enrolled at present and four more are expected after the September vacation.

### EX-SERVICEMEN'S LAND SETTLEMENT.

*As to Recommendations of Select Committee.*

Hon. L. THORN asked the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Will he inform the House the number of properties allotted under the soldier settlement scheme since February, 1953?
- (2) Does he intend introducing a Bill this session to amend the soldier settlement agreement to discontinue averaging the cost of development of repurchased estates?
- (3) Did he state at the R.S.L. land conference that the Government had implemented in almost every respect the recommendations contained in the report of the Select Committee on War Service Land Settlement? If so, what are the recommendations that have been implemented?

The MINISTER replied:

- (1) Seven since February, 1953, and sixteen for six months prior to February, 1953.

This period is the period between allotment of acquired properties and properties being developed from Crown lands.

- (2) A Bill will be introduced this session to ratify and legalise those conditions under which the Commonwealth Government has authorised the making avail-

able of funds to the State for the purposes of the War Service Land Settlement Scheme.

The averaging of the cost of development of a project is one of the conditions which has been rigidly adhered to by the Commonwealth.

- (3) Yes, in so far as they could be implemented by a State Government.

The following are the recommendations which have been implemented or are in course of being implemented:—

- (a) A Bill to be introduced to ratify the conditions laid down by the Commonwealth Government.
- (b) The provisions of Subclause (4) of Clause 6 of the original agreement to be incorporated in the lease. This has been done subject to confirmation by the Commonwealth.
- (c) The basis of assessment of cow carrying capacity prior to the paying of full commitments, to be based on the individual farm's capabilities and the presence of the settler himself, after a full investigation, is now policy.
- (d) Dairy farmers will not now be transferred to the Rural and Industries Bank until the 35 cow unit stage is reached.
- (e) Full allowance is now made in the final valuation for planned works carried out by the settler at his own expense.
- (f) An appeal board to be set up for both allottees-designate and lessees.

The first has been appointed, and the second only awaits finalisation of appointments.

### HORTICULTURE.

*(a) As to Backyard Orchards and Fees.*

Mr. McCULLOCH asked the Minister for Agriculture:

When the Bill increasing backyard orchard fees was passed last session, did not the then Minister in charge of the Bill give an assurance that fees could be paid in advance up to a period of five years?

The MINISTER replied:

No, but he believed the Department of Agriculture intended to take action in this regard by regulation.

Hon. Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver: I have paid mine for three years. What is happening?

The MINISTER: What did you say?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

*(b) As to Apple and Pear Loadings at Fremantle.*

Mr. HILL asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) How many ships have loaded 500 or more cases of apples and/or pears at Fremantle since the 1st January, 1953?

(2) How many of these ships had a draught of 26ft. or less?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) 57 shipments taken by 35 ships.

(2) Five.

### OUTPORTS.

*As to Recommendations of Royal Commission.*

Mr. HILL asked the Minister for Transport:

As he has replied that the Government intends to give serious consideration to the report of the Outports Royal Commission, will he explain what action the Government proposes to take with regard to the matters referred to in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4, column 2, page 19, particularly the last sentence in paragraph 4?

The MINISTER replied:

The Government is continuing developmental work commenced in 1948.

The work at present proceeding is:—

(a) Construction of new timber berths.

(b) Maintenance dredging to re-establish the original 27ft. 6in. depth at the existing No. 1 berth.

With reference to paragraph 4 of column 2, page 19, of the Royal Commission's Report, it is considered that remedial measures already taken have reduced siltation to a minimum.

These measures—developed over the past few years—include:—

(a) Construction of the river diversion cut and river plug or dam.

(b) Extension of the breakwater and construction of an intermediate spur.

These measures have eliminated river siltation in the harbour and greatly reduced sand movement along the coast into the harbour from both the north and the south.

### HOSPITALS.

*As to Regional Buildings, Albany.*

Mr. HILL asked the Minister for Health:

(1) Has the Government definitely decided on the site for the new regional hospital at Albany?

(2) If so, where is the site selected?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) and (2) The Medical Department has selected a site in Spencer Park, which is the property of the State Housing Commission.

Negotiations are proceeding with the Commission.

### RAILWAYS.

*(a) As to South-West and Great Southern Lines.*

Mr. HILL asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Is the closure of the Elleker-Nornalup railway under consideration?

(2) Has the Government ever considered completing the railway between Northcliffe and Nornalup so as to relieve congestion at Fremantle and on the Bunbury-Fremantle railway by the greater use of Albany, and for the purpose of assisting in the policy of decentralisation?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Not at present.

(2) No.

*(b) As to Freight Capacity and Road Transport.*

Mr. COURT asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Is the Government still of the opinion that the railways will be able to transport all freight offering from now until the 30th June, 1954, including timber, super, wheat and wool?

(2) Is the announcement that farmers will be allowed to cart their own super in their own trucks during the coming season without first bringing to Perth forward loading, a straight-out concession to farmers, or is it related to the railways' capacity to transport super?

(3) Will the Government give consideration to transport of wheat from bins not at rail-head with a view to calling tenders for road transport of this wheat direct to port instead of from bins to rail-head only?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Concession to farmers.

(3) No.

### S.P. BETTING.

*As to State-wide Enforcement of Law.*

Mr. YATES asked the Minister for Police:

Is it his intention to see that the law is enforced equally throughout the State in connection with starting price betting?

The MINISTER replied:

The enforcement of all laws is in the hands of the police departmental officers. The Government will shortly be giving consideration to the starting price betting question for the purpose of deciding whether legislation should be introduced this session in connection with the matter.

**PENSIONERS.***As to Approach to Commonwealth Government.*

Mr. BRADY (without notice) asked the Premier:

Will he represent to the Commonwealth Treasurer the difficult financial position of the pensioners in Western Australia as recently disclosed by the "Daily News," with a view to obtaining an increase in the pension rate before income tax deductions are made?

The PREMIER replied:  
Yes.

**COMMITTED PENDING DEPORTATION.***As to Case of Richardson.*

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN asked the Minister for Justice:

(1) Is he aware that a man named Richardson has lately been committed to gaol to be deported, his only crime being that he entered the State without the necessary papers?

(2) Is he further aware that this man has married, and has made good since entering the State?

(3) If so, will he see what can be done in order to allow Richardson to remain in the country?

The MINISTER replied:

(1), (2) and (3) I am not aware of the position of Mr. Richardson, but I will have the case investigated to see what can be done.

**HOUSING.***(a) As to Proposed Flats, Subiaco.*

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY (without notice) asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) Does he consider the proposal to build 242 flats at Subiaco on 2½ acres of land conforms with modern town planning and health advancement?

(2) To what extent will this proposal affect future home-building activities?

(3) Were the Town Planning Commissioner and the Commissioner for Health consulted on the proposal?

If so, would he agree to place the file containing their comment on the Table of the House?

(4) Are any further similar flat building projects contemplated by the Government?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes, and in support of this view, Professor Abercrombie, the famous British town planner during his recent visit to Perth strongly recommended the erection of flats in large groups as the only possible solution of housing problems in a modern city.

(2) Contractors of this type of structure are not likely to be cottage builders; furthermore, the quantity of materials and labour used in the flat project will provide more units of housing than if used for single dwellings.

(3) This area is already gazetted as a "flat" area, therefore the Town Planning Commissioner has no further jurisdiction.

The proposal was approved by the Subiaco City Council which is the local health authority.

(4) No consideration has been given to the matter.

*(b) As to Risk of Creating Slum Area.*

Mr. OLDFIELD (without notice) asked the Minister for Housing:

Is he aware that the proposed flats at Subiaco will tend to create what is known as a slum area?

The Minister for Lands: What makes the hon. member think that?

The MINISTER replied:  
No.

**LICENSING ACT.***As to Hotel Trading Hours.*

Mr. HUTCHINSON (without notice) asked the Premier:

(1) Did the Minister for Justice consult the Premier prior to expressing his view regarding extension of hotel hours (including Sundays) to a deputation on the 31st August?

(2) If the answer is "No," does the Premier still hold the views on Sunday hotel trading which he expressed so frequently in the debates in 1951 on the Licensing Act Amendment Bill, and if he does, and in view of the public statements of the Minister for Justice, which view on this matter is the public to accept as the view of the Government?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) No. Each Minister, when replying to a deputation, is at liberty to express his own views.

(2) My views are still the same. The public are not expected to accept either the view of the Minister for Justice or mine as being the view of the Government, because it has not yet considered the matter. However, it will do so in due course.

**PRESS ADVERTISEMENT.***As to Inquiries.*

Mr. NIMMO (without notice) asked the Premier:

Has he yet received a reply to the question I asked a few days ago in regard to the "Pot of Gold" advertisement?

The PREMIER replied:

Yes. I have here reports from police officers who investigated this matter. In their view, the scheme is quite within the law. However, they are not at all keen about it as being one that provides a gold pot for those who invest in it. Any member who wishes to peruse these reports is at liberty to do so during the tea suspension.

### MEAT.

#### *As to Loss on Stockpiling.*

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN (without notice) asked the Treasurer:

(1) Is he aware that many thousands of pounds were lost by the previous Government's handling of the stockpiling of meat?

(2) Is he aware that up to date an amount approaching £100,000 has been lost?

(3) Was this done in order to keep up the price of meat?

(4) Is he also aware that the mutton could not even be disposed of to the Zoo because it was in such a condition that even the lions refused to eat it?

The TREASURER replied:

I understand that a fairly substantial loss has been made on the meat in question, and I will have detailed inquiries made and report the result to the House at a later date. I have no knowledge whatever of the niceties that lions display in regard to the age of meat which is offered to them.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Does the Premier desire me to put the question on the notice paper?

The PREMIER: Yes, please.

### SELECT COMMITTEE — KALGOORLIE AND BOULDER RACING CLUBS ACT AMENDMENT (PRIVATE) BILL.

#### *Report Presented.*

Hon. H. H. Styants brought up the report of the Select Committee, together with type-written copy of the evidence and correspondence referred to in the report.

Ordered: That the report and recommendations be printed.

### SELECT COMMITTEE—COLLIE CLUB (PRIVATE) BILL.

#### *Report Presented.*

Mr. May brought up the report of the Select Committee, together with a type-written copy of the evidence and correspondence referred to in the report.

Ordered: That the report and recommendations be printed.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

#### *Tenth Day.*

Debate resumed from the 27th August, on the motion for the adoption of the Address, as amended.

HON. DAME FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER (Subiaco) (4.50): It has been the custom, at least since we have been in Parliament this session, to convey to you, Mr. Speaker, congratulations. If I do not do so it is because I am rather sorry you will not be on the floor of the House to give your constituents the benefit of the fine speeches you have made in the past. When the member for Claremont spoke, he said he had not addressed the Chamber for six years. I know that would be rather awful for you, but perhaps you will not be in your present position for as long as that. Whatever you do, however, I feel sure, Sir, you will be honest and just and that you will treat us with the great courtesy you have shown in the past. I am going to speak only a very few words. How much time am I allowed?

Mr. SPEAKER: One hour.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: I do not think my speech will take an hour. The first point to which I wish to refer is the promising or, shall I say, unpromising remarks made by the Premier as to what he would do during his term of office. The second point to which I will allude has regard to controls and the third will be a reference to our present trend towards communism. The fourth point will deal with Subiaco sabotage.

Personally, I did not have any intention of speaking on the Address-in-reply debate until I heard the speech made by the member for Vasse in which he gave an actual word for word recital of the Premier's remarks in his policy speech at Northam. That speech was made no doubt, with the idea that the policy speech would be recorded in "Hansard" so that we could look it up sooner or later to see whether the promises made were fulfilled. We have had a great deal of debate already on these matters, and I am not going into that. When the Premier—the then Leader of the Opposition—made those remarks, he did so in the full knowledge that those promises could not be fulfilled under present conditions.

Thousands of people who might have heard him, or read the papers, believed what he said; but the Premier knew that it was impossible to fulfil the promises, firstly, because there was very little money. Every member in the former Government knew, every member in the House knew, that there was very little money left to the McLarty-Watts Government to fulfil its commitments and that it would be impossible to carry out what the present Premier had promised. I heard the Premier say he was going to revise his budget, and that is what made me feel I ought to say a few words. Can the Premier carry

out his promises? He says, "No;" that is why he is going to revise his budget. On the other hand, I say he can, provided he wishes to do so. I feel sure he can. I believe that millions could be got for this country from overseas.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! There is far too much conversation going on.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: This money could be obtained for the State. Further funds could be saved in this State to help the Premier carry out all that I will suggest a little later on. I do not know whether the Premier read a speech made by the chairman of the Standard Vacuum Oil Coy., of New York. Many members might have done so. When speaking in Melbourne the chairman of that company had this to say:

Overseas capital could be used to develop our natural resources and to build new factories which would furnish more work for Australian labour, more products for Australian markets and export. Capital from other countries, however, would not seek investment in Australia unless it was encouraged. The capital would not come to Australia unless there was the opportunity to make a return on the investments which was at least as good as the return which could be expected if that money were invested in the home country. Investors would not send money here unless they had confidence that Australia would continue to develop a vigorous, expanding economy.

That is how I think a great deal of money could come to Australia generally, and to Western Australia in particular. I am almost sure that the money would be available and that most of the promises made by the Premier, when he was Leader of the Opposition, could be fulfilled if he and his party would advocate, and obtain, longer working hours. If longer working hours were secured for the people, costs would decrease here in our industries and in the Government departments by at least one-third to one-half.

The Minister for Lands: Are you advocating longer working hours?

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: I advocate longer working hours; I say that quite definitely. It might be contended that that would bring about unemployment, but that would not be so. As the Minister for Health knows, many of our institutions are under-staffed and many of the people work overtime and consequently get time-and-a-half and double-time. I might say that a large number of people who work the ordinary 40-hour week go out at night to other jobs, with the result that in the day-time they are physically tired and unable to carry out their tasks next day as they might wish.

Members know that because of the 40-hour week many of the private hospitals closed down. They could not stand the expense, nor could they get the staff, so they had to cease operations. The costs are very heavy and in spite of the new health scheme, the Government and our board hospitals this year will lose approximately £2,000,000. The member for Netherlands made an excellent speech. He gave the House a record of what happened in some European countries where they rehabilitated themselves. Many of their railways and industries had been bombed out of existence; people had become homeless—millions of them were homeless—but these countries rehabilitated themselves. Why? How?

Mr. Lawrence: That is what I would like to know. If they had been bombed out of existence, how could they be there to rehabilitate themselves?

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: They had the courage to work; they worked more than 40 hours a week. All I ask members to do is to see that we get back to a normal working week. I do not suggest that we go to extremes because the day may come when we shall have a 25-hour week due to the increased use of machinery and so on. All I want the Premier, the members opposite and the unions to do, is to put some enthusiasm into the people and go forward and say, "We will work at least a normal working week." Let us go back to conditions as they were prewar.

The Minister for Lands: Which war?

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: The last war. As I have said I do not ask for extreme measures to be taken, but I do expect our folk to do what the people on the continent have had the courage to do, put this country back on the map and help put value into the £, which today is only worth about 8s.

The Minister for Housing: Better have a go at Menzies!

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: Members must realise that we cannot compete with other countries of the world unless we are prepared to advocate longer working hours. I ask members, especially the Minister for Housing, to say how long women work in a week. Does he know anything about a woman's hours?

The Minister for Housing: I have never been a woman.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: Women work 12, 14, 16 hours a day, seven days a week. At the recent election, one party went out on its record of achievement, showing what it had done, but the present Premier went to the electors on what he intended to do, and I maintain that he cannot do it unless he gets industry back to an ordinary work-

ing week. He could get it back; he could get millions of money from overseas if he and his supporters had the pluck to go to the unions and create an agitation so that, if the matter went to the Arbitration Court, we would be able to revert to an ordinary working week.

Mr. Moir: Do you think that the workers should get a better share of the production of industry?

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: From where I am speaking, I cannot hear the hon. member. I wish to quote an extract from "The Industrial and Mining Review" of August, containing the speech of the chairman of the Australian National Committee of the International Chamber of Commerce, as follows:—

It is not sufficiently realised that Australian prosperity relies absolutely on international trade—in short the sale of our wool, wheat, butter and metals abroad. Our industrial structure based on a forty-hour week is not facing up to world realities and the danger in attempting to face world competition on such an unreal basis is something that the worker here has much more to fear than even the employer. As one who has been on the wage roll all my life, I say unhesitatingly that, in my opinion, the continuance of a 40-hour week in Australia in the face of a rapidly rehabilitating world economy constitutes the gravest danger of a depression in the industrial employment field. Already some factories that were established and able to keep going with an unreal wartime economy are closed down or now running on short time, and the position undoubtedly will get worse. The remedy largely lies in the employees' hands, and there will be no need for any reduction in wages if only unionists will realise that the answer is to give more output for the same wage. This will be unpalatable to some Labour leaders, but I assure you that many sane thinkers in the Labour movement fully agree with me.

Mr. Moir: Who said that?

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: I have told the House once and shall not repeat it. That is a sane policy. The Premier and his confreres, if they would talk in that strain and not pander to the unions, would definitely assist in putting the country into a safe economic position, and everybody would be very grateful for it. I have already stated that in many industries employers are paying time-and-a-half and double time because they have not the requisite number of employees. We must get back to a longer working week. The Premier did a wonderful job in reaching the position he now occupies, and if he has such

influence with the public, surely he has the influence necessary to place the country on a safe economic basis, seeing that he has only to tell the people that, if they would work longer hours, more labour and production would result!

The second point I wish to make is that I should like to get rid of a lot of controls and, in saying this, I am sure that I am voicing the opinion of some members on the Government side. These controls are costing the country untold money. We read in the newspaper recently that the Price-fixing Commission was costing Australia over £1,000,000 a year just for the staffs engaged on that particular work. We have a Potato Board, and an Onion Board; people cannot sell milk unless they have a license. Are the potatoes any better than they were before growers had to take out a license? Some of the potatoes being sold to consumers are of very bad quality, and I say that as a housewife.

The Minister for Housing: You supported most of those boards!

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: How does the Minister know?

The Minister for Housing: By your vote.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: Various boards have been in existence for many years.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: You would not support the proposal to appoint a woman to the Milk Board or the Prices Commission.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: Did I not?

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: No.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: Let the hon. member look up the records and see. The quality of the potatoes being sold today is very bad and the price is very high. We have an Egg Board which is costing no end of money and many people cannot afford to buy eggs. Under the Milk Board, less milk will be sold. A smaller quantity is being supplied and therefore the public will not get it and the possibility is that some of the milk produced will go down the drain, just as happened a few years ago. All these boards are occupying accommodation and using light, fuel, furniture and transport, and to what end? Simply to put up prices to the consumer.

My next point is that Labour is leaning towards communism.

Several members interjected.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: Perhaps some of those members will live to be purged some day. When I was young, I was very much in favour of Labour. Though I did not vote for that party, I thought it was doing wonderful work. Many of its representatives were older men and were really

pioneers of the movement. Most of them have passed away and younger men, mainly union secretaries, have taken their places; and it was thus that socialism was born. Today there is no Labour movement. Labour is dead; it died long ago; died with the birth of socialism. I wish to recall the words of a former Labour member (Hon. W. D. Johnson), who was respected not only by his colleagues but also by every member of the House. He said—

Our weakness today is that political expediency is dissipating that which we have accomplished and this is not as it should be. I have begun to wonder if 40 years of service have got us anywhere, I say emphatically that the reason for this statement is that the old type of Labour leader no longer exists, and the present type is a capitalist of the worst type. He lives on the credulity of his one-time fellow-worker. Promises are made which cannot be kept. Boards are created so that others may take responsibility. Bills are deliberately overloaded for the purpose of seeing that they will be rejected so that the rejection may be an election-cry to again deceive the worker.

Another statement was made by a veteran parliamentarian whom some here may remember. I refer to Mr. C. B. Williams, formerly a member of the Legislative Council, who said—

The present Administration is supposed to be a working-class Government. If the workers cannot get a fair deal from the Labour Party to which their cash, their work and their loyal support in season and out of season are given, the time will come, and come speedily, when the Labour Party will go out of existence.

He then goes on to speak of graft in the railways, which I am not going to touch upon today, and he ends by saying that the Labour movement is all right but the leaders are not genuine.

While Mr. Williams said that the Labour Party would go out of existence, I contend that it has already done so. There is no such thing as a Labour movement; it is a socialist movement. During the last election campaign the Premier, when speaking at Subiaco, was asked whether he was a socialist. He said that he was. He did not say that he was a Labour man, but that he was a socialist. Anybody who has any brains at all must know that socialism does not pay without regimentation. We have seen from what has occurred in England with regard to the railways and the coalmining industry and with everything else that has been socialised in that country, that socialisation does not pay.

Mr. Lawrence: What about the State Saw Mills?

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: When I was in England years ago, the railways were owned by ordinary companies and there was not a line that did not pay dividends ranging from 2½ to 8 per cent.

The Premier: Can the hon. member tell us how much profit the Midland Railway Coy. in this State is making?

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: Very little. To be honest, I do not know what dividend is paid, but it is not much. The company is making very little indeed, but the line is being better run than are our Government railways.

The Minister for Education: Better run down!

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: The Midland line is not costing the State £5,000,000 a year. Socialisation cannot pay without regimentation. There must be a regimented society if socialisation is to be made to pay, and regimentation means communism. The fact must be faced that under socialism there must be workers, and they must do the work or be penalised in one way or another.

Mr. Lawrence: Is there not regimentation in the army?

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: I cannot hear the hon. member.

Mr. Lawrence: And cannot answer, either!

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: Many people do not know what socialisation means. It sounds nice and they think it means that under socialism there would be a more equalised income, and that sort of thing. Many people—quite good people—believe in it; but it is not true. We cannot socialise without regimentation. I suppose members have looked up the meaning of the word "socialisation" in the encyclopaedia. I do not think I have the definition here, but it means the same as communism. About "communism," the Encyclopaedia Britannica declares—

Communism advocates a form of production in which the ownership of the means of production is vested in the community. It is, however, more usual, and also more practical, to confine the words "socialism" and "communism" to those systems and movements which aim at communalising the means of production. It is convenient to apply the term "communism" to those movements in particular which rest to a greater or lesser degree on Marx's and Engel's Communist Manifesto, which identifies communism with the cause of the proletariat as a party to the class war.

Lately there has arisen a new movement in what is called the Labour movement. It is not a Labour movement but a socialist movement. This new body is called Progressive Labour. How many here



belong to it? "Progressive Labour" sounds good, and the term will delude the people into thinking that Labour is becoming progressive. This new body, however, is the left wing of the Labour Party, and only the other day it was said that the right wing of the party was going to finance the Progressive Labour movement.

The Premier: Is there any definition of the Country and Democratic League in the book you were quoting from a little while ago?

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: I will give members that in another speech. I do not wish to take up too much time. All I wish to say is that Labour is dead. It died when it gave birth to socialism, and socialism cannot work, and will not work, unless there is regimentation, which means communism.

I want to say a few words about the sabotage of Subiaco. Until I saw today's paper I did not know anything about the proposed flats in Subiaco, but I made inquiries there today and learnt about them. I found that the Minister for Housing had been to the Subiaco Municipal Council and had persuaded that body that it was the intention of the Commission to build these most beautiful places in which two-unit families could have homes. There was also going to be a considerable portion for people with children, but those with too many children were to be passed over. If on the other hand, some of the children of a family died, the parents could transfer to one or other of the smaller flats, but if more children than was stipulated came to a family, the family would have to get out. However, the flats were to be most wonderful flats. They reminded me of the flats I saw in Russia, Manchester, Vienna and parts of London. They were the same type exactly.

The Minister for Housing: Like Sherwood Court in the heart of the city, where Sir Hal Colebatch lived?

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: I found that these flats are to be a facsimile of what I saw in Russia. The only feature the Minister has not included is Lenin's red room, such as exists in Russia. That is a part of every flat in that country.

The Minister for Housing: We must have a picture of the Dame in each one!

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: I think the Minister is doing the most wicked thing that could be done. These flats are to be built right in the outskirts of the municipality where the passing traffic will be a great danger to children rushing over the roadway and to old people trying to get across.

The Minister for Housing: I think you had better get the facts clear before you speak on the matter.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: I have got them. I have been down to Subiaco and know every word the Minister said. If what he said was not correct, then I am not correct, but I took it all down. What the Minister proposes to do is, as I have said, a wicked thing. If what has been stated in the paper is correct, it means that on two-and-a-half acres of ground, hundreds of people are to be placed. Does the Minister think that is fair and right? Fifteen years ago, or more, I tried to get hold of that land for building purposes, but I could not obtain it because, I was told, it belonged to the Education Department. But I found out that the Education Department did not own the land. I do not think the Minister has the right to take that land.

Mr. Lawrence: You are frightened that it will interfere with your majority, I think.

Hon. L. Thorn: You have a one-track mind there.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: What the Minister intends to do is something I have seen done in all the countries I now mention. First of all, I have seen it in Russia.

The Minister for Housing: Do you know of one major city in the world which does not build that type of structure?

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: I have seen it done in Vienna and London, and a few years after the flats were built I returned and found they were merely slums. We cannot allow people to grow up and be educated in places like that. We must give them homes if they are to love their country.

The Minister for Lands: The slums of the metropolitan area are the single-unit dwellings.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: If the Minister wants his name handed down in future for having done something for the people who really need homes, he can definitely get land a few hundred yards further out. Look at the land just past Daglish—acres and acres of it! He can give people homes there—not flats, but homes. When I looked at the Speech made by His Excellency, I saw where the Government was going to give homes to all evictees. The Minister for Housing wrote today to tell me that for two people in Subiaco who had been in their home for 18 years and are being evicted—respectable people who have a family who come to see them occasionally—he cannot make a home available because they have not any young children.

The Minister for Housing: About 90 per cent. of the evictees are being catered for now. Be patient and give us time and we will make it 100 per cent.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: If he had said he was building for the aged and the two-unit families, I would have agreed with him and said, "Do it, and God speed." To put children into a place like this shows that the Minister knows nothing about family life.

The Minister for Housing: Sometimes the two-unit families have children. That is the only difficulty.

Hon. L. Thorn: There is nothing new about that. You do not think a one-unit family would have them.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: Of course they have children, but the point is that we have many two-unit families today who have been evicted from homes that they have occupied as good citizens for 18 to 20 years, so that I ask the Minister whether he can give them a home, and he says, "No."

The Minister for Housing: They have been living in tents and on back verandahs under your Government. They will be given far better accommodation than that. You are afraid we will succeed in giving them proper accommodation, and that is what is making you excited.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: The Minister is very young.

The Minister for Housing: Not as young as he would like to be.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: He does not know anything about family life.

The Minister for Housing: You know all about it.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: I do. We have always had a home.

The Minister for Housing: You have been gallivanting around the world half your life.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: A one-bedroom or two-bedroom place on a piece of land where the traffic is passing all day and there is no quiet, is not a home. The Minister says he has taken that land from the Education Department. What right had he to take it?

The Minister for Housing: I did not. The department presented it to me.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: The Minister has to find out yet whether the department owns it. For 16 years I have been trying to get it for homes and institutions. I tried to get it so that the trainees could have an extra home, but it was impossible to get the land. But the Minister got it. It is beyond me. I suppose the Minister will have it called "Grahamville", and I hope I live long enough to write under it, "The Saboteur of Subiaco".

MR. OWEN (Darling Range) [5.25]: I wish to touch on one or two points in the Governor's Speech. One in particular is the reference to agriculture in which he said—

The State's agricultural advisory services are being strengthened to assist in the drive for greater food production.

I am pleased to hear that because I believe that, by a good agricultural advisory service, the farmers, and primary producers in general, can be shown how to produce more. Although good work has been done over the last 20 or 30 years by the Agricultural Department, there is still room for further improvement.

It was also stated in the Speech that during recent years the professional and technical staff of the department had been doubled. That is a hall-mark of the McLarty-Watts Government, and it will be shown, I feel, in the increased production for many years to come. One thing I am particularly keen on in agricultural production is the field of horticulture. I hope the Minister for Agriculture will give serious thought to the establishment of a horticultural research station not too distant from the metropolitan area.

Practically all other forms of agriculture in the State have one or more stations where research and technical work is carried on and information is made available to the primary producers through the extension services. Only last week I had the opportunity to see some of the work carried on at the Wongan research station which has been established for about 30 years. I am sure that the information that has been made available from the research work there has meant many millions of pounds to Western Australia, particularly in the light lands of our inner wheatbelt.

In the metropolitan area we have a research station for the poultry industry, and in the South-West there are stations covering the dairying industry, potato-growing, and practically all other forms of primary production, but there is still lacking a horticultural research station. I know that investigations have been made with a view to securing a suitable site. I have been told that there is one which is suitable and available, and I hope the Minister will take immediate steps to secure it, and put in hand as soon as possible the preliminary work of establishing a station. The fruit industry of Western Australia is worth many hundreds of thousands of pounds annually. In fact, it is well over the £2,000,000-a-year mark, but much information is still needed to put the horticultural industry on the footing it deserves.

I would like members to realise that there is a great distinction between research work and extension work. The horticultural branch has given good service in the research field but is handi-

capped by lack of a property of its own on which to do this work. Many private or commercial growers are willing to make their properties available for experimental purposes of this nature, but some of it is long-term research, and the department has no guarantee of continuity of access to those properties. Quite a lot of research is required to find out what are the best root stocks from which to propagate fruit-trees.

Experiments in this direction have continued in the Eastern States and other parts of the world for many years, but the information gathered in those places is generally applicable only to their climatic and soil conditions, and so the whole question is still a matter of trial and error in this State. Ever since fruitgrowing was established in Western Australia, growers have been experimenting with different types of root stock, and many of them have the information but are not always in a position to hand it on to the industry in general. A good deal of work has been projected but cannot be done until the department has its own research station on which to experiment.

The same thing applies to the new varieties of fruit trees that are constantly coming into use. The more progressive growers try them out and they are successful or otherwise according to whether or not the soil and climatic conditions are right. Orchardists have wasted many years in work of this type. Even when a certain variety is shown to be successful in one district, it must be tried out elsewhere before it can be accepted as one that may be grown throughout the State.

There is urgent need also for research into the control of both insect pests and fungus diseases. A great deal of work on these lines has been done by officers of the department, but they are sadly handicapped by not being at liberty to walk on to a commercial orchard and take over. The aim of the commercial grower is to grow fruit for a living, and research work often results in restricted production, if not in the death of the tree. It is often necessary deliberately to infect a plant with a known disease so that the officers may work out the best control methods.

Under the conditions prevailing in commercial orchards, it is possible, when a tree is infected, for the disease to get out of hand and spread throughout the orchard and possibly others in the vicinity. Experiments of that kind could far better be done on a research station where the spread of a disease could be properly controlled. For the advancement of cultural methods generally, it is desirable that there should be a Government-controlled orchard. I have seen the C.S.I.R.O. research station at Griffith, where different methods of cultivation have been tried over the last five or six years, though the results are still not conclusive and the work must continue for many years. Experiments of that sort cannot be done successfully in

private orchards. There are individual orchardists working along those lines now, but their experiments are not scientifically controlled and the results are not always reliable.

If we had a research station situated within 50 miles of Perth, the scientists and technicians employed by the department, as well as those from the University and the C.S.I.R.O., could make use of the facilities provided, and the information gained could be disseminated to fruit-growers by the extension officers, with great profit to the industry as a whole. Conclusive results would not be available for a number of years, but the sooner such a station is established, the sooner the required information will be available to orchardists, making for a greater yield of fruit for both the local and overseas market.

I was interested to see, at the Wongan research station, the results of manurial trials that have been carried on for years. There can be shown the ultimate effect of both heavy and light applications of manure over the years. Recently a conference was held of apple and pear growers from all the States of the Commonwealth, and at that meeting were discussed some of the problems experienced in Western Australia. It was interesting to hear what horticultural experts from other States have found out.

One point of particular interest to growers in the hills areas was the increasing acidity of soils that had been cultivated and heavily manured with fertilisers containing sulphate of ammonia. In such soils, the pH is decreasing; that is to say, the soil is becoming more and more acid. Under such conditions, it is, apparently, not uncommon for a certain mineral toxicity to develop. When that happens there is no benefit to be gained by applying more manure, and steps must be taken to correct the condition. I believe that that stage has already been reached in some of our heavy-rainfall areas, but until we get information as to how to overcome such conditions, orchards in those areas will decline further.

The Minister for Health: What is the normal pH?

Mr. OWEN: From 5.5 to 7 is quite suitable for orchards, but in some orchard soils the figure is as low as 4.3. When it reaches that stage, the position becomes dangerous and it is possible for toxic substances to be built-up in the soil. With regard to fruitgrowing matters, I would like to mention the difficulties that the growers, particularly the citrus growers, are experiencing in disposing of their products this year. For several years we have had a series of light crops with consequent high prices. The orchardists have not been receiving a greater remuneration because they are handling only light crops and, although prices have been high, both in the markets and to the consumers, the orchardists have not been receiving greater incomes.

This season there has been a much heavier crop, but, possibly because of the colder weather, the sales of citrus fruits have been lagging and prices have been low. On top of that, the demand for fruit juices for cordials has not been great either in Western Australia or in the Eastern States. Growers in this State have been unfortunate because the prices offered by factories here have nearly always been sufficiently low to enable the juices to be marketed in the Eastern States in competition with the juices produced there. That has resulted in our growers being paid a price of about £6 to £8 per ton lower than growers received in the Eastern States.

There has been a shortage in the Eastern States for a number of years and prices have been in the region of £24 to £25 per ton, and in some cases £40 per ton has been paid. Growers in this State have, for a number of years, been receiving about £16 a ton for lemons, which is really only a salvage price to the lemon grower. Because of the saturation of the market in the Eastern States great difficulty has been experienced in disposing of our juices in those parts. There has also been some uncertainty in the overseas market because of greatly increased supplies in Europe, particularly in Italy, Spain and Palestine, and as a result prices have fallen.

Growers have been faced with the problem of having their market prices reduced to £12 a ton, so I can see that many who have produced lemons for factory purposes, will cease production in that field. In fact, I am sure that many would have ceased production already but the lemon tree, like most fruit trees, continues to produce fruit for sometime even though it may not get any particular attention. Consequently the trees go on yielding for a number of years, and I am sure it is only that fact which makes it possible for lemons to be produced for factory purposes at the present time.

Mr. Ackland: Does it not all boil down to excessive costs of preparation?

Mr. OWEN: There is quite a lot in that, too. It has been estimated that on a bottle of citrus juice cordial, which sells on the market for about 3s. to 3s. 6d., the grower receives approximately 4d. for the juice used. If the grower gave his fruit away, the price to the consumer would not be reduced by more than a few pence.

Mr. Ackland: We still could not compete with the rest of the world.

Mr. OWEN: We can in Australia because the import of juices is controlled. We, in Australia, produce much more than we can consume, and we have to rely on overseas markets for the sale of that juice. For many years we have enjoyed a good market in Malaya, particularly Singapore; but there is increasing competition there

from both Palestine and South Africa, and unless our price can be kept at a minimum we may lose that market also.

Mr. Andrew: You say that the growers get 4d. but that a bottle costs from 3s. to 3s. 6d. Can you tell me where the rest of the money goes?

Mr. OWEN: Many factors are involved, including the labour used in the recovery of the juice. There is the cost of concentrating that juice to enable it to be transported to other States, the cost of bottles, sugar and a number of other incidentals. But it is a fact that about 4d. worth of juice is used in each bottle of cordial.

I mentioned, too, the lower prices being received by growers for fruit juices marketed in the metropolitan area. Lately there have been many comments in the newspapers as to the difference between what the grower receives and what the consumer has to pay. We all know that someone is getting a rake-off; the shopkeepers deny that they are making excessive profits although, in many instances, they are receiving more than the percentage they obtained when their activities were controlled. In those days they were allowed a profit of 30 per cent. and many cases recently have shown that they are receiving more than that.

In my view there are too many agencies between the grower and the consumer. Prior to the last war most shopkeepers in the metropolitan area did their own marketing and bought their own requirements, but during the war, because of the labour position, shopkeepers did not have an opportunity to do their own buying and they appointed somebody to do it for them. We now seem to have reached the stage where we have a whole chain of buyers starting from those who buy at the wholesale markets until the produce finally reaches the shopkeepers, who are entitled to add a 30 per cent. profit on to the cost into store. By that time, in many instances, the cost of the produce is more than double, and sometimes treble, the price the grower receives.

Mr. Moir: And in many cases it is beyond the limit of the purchaser.

Mr. OWEN: That is unfortunately the case. In many instances prices have become so high that there has been definite buyer-resistance and a shopkeeper who is unable to turn over his produce suffers losses because fruit in particular is perishable. Consequently, instead of the fruit being in a shop for one or two days, in many cases it is there for a week. By that time the shopkeeper has lost a large portion of it. For that reason he has to add on a larger margin to account for the loss.

So the vicious circle goes on. We, the fruitgrowers, have been seeking a better way of getting the produce to the consumer, but without going back to the old kerbstone market days, when each grower sold his fruit with satisfactory results to

the buyer there is no simple way. The work of producing fruit is becoming more specialised. The grower cannot afford to leave his orchard to sell his fruit. Therefore he is forced to leave the selling of it to agents and there seem to be subagents all along the line. I consider that something will have to be done to enable the consuming public to receive their fruit at a cost that will permit them to buy at reasonable rates and enable the grower to carry on.

Mr. Moir: What does the hon. member suggest as a remedy?

Mr. OWEN: We have gone into that question on many occasions, even in the days of controlled prices, but the same old procedure continues. I have taken deputations to the present Prices Commissioner to see what could be done. Promises were made and more inspectors were appointed, but I still did not see any prosecutions being launched. The sellers went on their same sweet way, receiving at least a legitimate profit and in many cases, I think, a much higher return. That seems to be analogous to what we have come to expect as more or less the fixed condition now, namely, prices on a cost plus basis. No matter what the cost profits are being added wherever possible, with no benefit to the producer or the consumer.

The tourist industry was also mentioned in the Governor's Speech and it was pointed out that steps had been taken to appoint a representative of the State Tourist Bureau in Sydney. This is a move in the right direction because unless we make our tourist attractions known in other States and countries, such trade will not be forthcoming. However, we must go further than that. If we desire to encourage tourists to make a return trip to our State, together with their friends, we must have the facilities here that will enable them to enjoy their stay and the tours they make in our State.

Hotel accommodation was referred to and I think we all know that the standard of hotels remained low not only during the war years but also since, although lately steps have been taken to improve the accommodation at some of the licensed premises. In order to attract large numbers of tourists from overseas and other States, we must have better accommodation. Those conducting hotels and also prospective hotelkeepers must be given every encouragement to improve that side of their business.

Mr. J. Hegney: Does the hon. member think that the lengthening of trading hours to 10 p.m. will assist in improving the position?

Mr. OWEN: Many hotel licensees have concentrated on the sale of liquor rather than on the provision of accommodation, and I consider that steps should be taken to improve the board and lodging aspect of the hotel trade. Further, our transport

must be modernised so that tourists, particularly those from overseas, will have a chance of travelling from one place to another in comfort and in the shortest possible time.

Mr. Yates: They have fast tourist buses now.

Mr. OWEN: Yes, they have, but after all is said and done, sitting in a tourist bus for long periods is not altogether one's idea of comfort. The conditions in many of the buses are cramped, especially when passengers are travelling long distances. I have heard many complaints from people who have been forced to sit in the buses for hours on end. They are not the last word in comfort, and I think they could be improved for tourists.

The Railway Department, too, should encourage tourists to travel by rail by improving the conditions on the trains. Those who have travelled on the Trans. line to the Eastern States and on other railways in those States, particularly since the Trans. diesel locomotives have been in operation, cannot help but notice on their return to this State, that the local trains do not compare favourably. Therefore we will have to give serious thought to the improving of such facilities if we want to attract tourists to Western Australia.

There is no doubt that we have much to interest them here and there is a great advantage to be gained in that we can sell many of our attractions to tourists but still retain those attractions to show to others. The State is losing thousands of pounds annually because these tourists are likely to pass Western Australia by, but if they do call here and do not receive the treatment to which they are entitled and for which they are willing to pay, they are not anxious to recommend Western Australia to other would-be travellers in their own State or country.

Another hardy annual referred to in the Governor's Speech is the subject of water supplies. Last year I mentioned that there had been a great deal of discrimination between metropolitan consumers and would-be country consumers because every year large amounts of money are spent on improving the supply to the metropolitan area, which in many instances is not appreciated. Millions of gallons are wasted each year because water happens to be available at a cheap rate. In the country areas, however, people do not get the opportunity to use water extravagantly, and to obtain any at all they are forced to conserve rainwater in their tanks or obtain it from an underground supply.

Some Goldfields members bewailed the fact—and quite rightly, too—that water restrictions had been imposed in their electorates. Considering that the scheme water has to be pumped many hundreds of miles, the restrictions can be excused

because of the lag in keeping the maintenance work on the mains up to date. However, there are many other people in country towns who have not enjoyed the privilege of being able to turn on a tap and get water. Many would be happy to do so even if they had to be subjected to water restrictions. In my electorate, there are many people, some who have been on the scheme for many years, that are still unable to get an adequate supply of water. This, in spite of the fact, that some of them are within five or six miles of Mundaring Weir.

From Mundaring right down to Darlington there are many consumers who, in the hot weather, keep the taps turned on all day without getting any water at all. This situation is brought about because of the hilly nature of the country, and because of the restricted flow through the mains, which are inadequate and in many instances were put in 30 years ago. It was not so bad when they supplied a few consumers, but they are now called upon to meet the demands of three or four times as many—in some cases ten times as many—as it was originally intended they should supply. Besides that there have been blockages in the pipes and there is not the flow to the summit tanks that there should be.

On top of all this, of course, people living on the lower levels have an ample supply of water and make use of every drop they can get. As a result, the summit tanks are never really full, and the water will not flow through to the consumers on the higher levels. This is a great handicap and causes considerable hardship. These conditions apply not only to people who need the water for domestic use, but also to those who require it for stock and minor irrigation purposes.

I was very perturbed to know that the Minister responsible for the allocation of funds this year has not seen fit to put aside enough to complete the pipeline from Mundaring to Kalamunda. This scheme was approved several years ago and it was estimated to cost between £70,000 and £80,000. Work was commenced approximately three years ago and to date something like £44,000 has been expended. But there is no water yet on the way from Mundaring Weir to Kalamunda. There is certainly a pipeline which starts a few hundred yards from the weir and finishes some three miles from Kalamunda.

If the Minister could have spent, say another £20,000 on that scheme this year I am sure we could at least have got water to Kalamunda, where there is a big demand for it. Besides this, some revenue would have been collected with which to pay the interest and sinking fund charges in respect of the money already spent. As it is now, this is a white elephant; there is nothing practical to show for the £44,000 spent on the work and there is no water in Kalamunda. I real-

ise it will take a long time to complete the whole scheme because the reticulation of the town itself will be a difficult job for the Water Supply Department. They have not put their reticulation pipes underground and it will be a considerable undertaking for consumers to have to convey the water from the boundaries to their houses.

The Minister for Health: So near and yet so far! Whose fault has that been?

Mr. OWEN: Of course, the State Government blames the Commonwealth for restricting loan moneys, but I feel that if the finance available were allocated a little more equitably—perhaps a little less to the metropolitan water scheme and a little more to the country scheme—we would have a lot more water in the country. This would help in the decentralisation not only of the population, but also of industry which, I think we are all agreed, would be of great benefit to the State. I do hope the Minister will give consideration to that point, and if he should find any more moneys available for water supply works, I feel sure that a little spent in the direction I have indicated will return at least some revenue to the department and make a few more consumers happy to live in the country.

**THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION** (Hon. J. T. Tonkin—Melville) [6.5]: I propose to make a few remarks concerning the loan funds position and deal with one or two criticisms that have been made during the course of the debate. In order to get a proper appreciation of the financial situation in which the Government found itself on taking office a few months ago, it is necessary to remind members what was said a year before when the McLarty-Watts Government occupied the Treasury benches.

The other evening the member for Stirling said that there was no justification for blaming the Commonwealth Government for the loan funds position in this State. I intend to show that there is every justification for blaming that Government, because the situation that has been brought about has been deliberate and was foreshadowed months ago. During the debate on the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company Bill in March of last year. I quoted from a statement that appeared in "The West Australian" of the 12th of that month. This is recorded in "Hansard" of the 12th March, 1952, at page 1958, and states—

The Cabinet is planning an austere Australia in the next 18 months on the theory that by 1953-54, there will be stability unless a major drought or a world catastrophe intervenes.

There was a declaration of the Commonwealth Government's intention in 1952.

The statement continued—

The Federal Government has already decided that it will not guarantee the loan programme next year.

So, in March, 1952, before any meeting of the Loan Council had been held and before any survey of the loan position in the States had been made, the present Commonwealth Government declared that it had already decided not to guarantee the loan programme next year. When I directed attention to the statement, and pointed out that we in this State would be placed in extreme difficulty as a result of that predetermined policy, the then Premier said—

That is a hurdle we shall take when we get to the Loan Council. That is the body that decides what the borrowing shall be, not the Commonwealth Government.

How far from the truth that is! It is well to remind members that, at the Loan Council, the Commonwealth has three votes and the States one vote each. When the vote is taken, should it prove to be an adverse one, although the Commonwealth may exercise three votes, the Commonwealth Government declines to take any notice of it. The present Leader of the Opposition told us on that occasion that it was the Loan Council, not the Commonwealth Government, that decided the amount of the loan programme. The hon. member must know that that is not the position, because the Commonwealth Government this year decided that the loan programme would be many millions less.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: The Commonwealth Government did so the year before, and it has to raise the money.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I am dealing with the hon. member's statement to the effect that the Loan Council, not the Commonwealth Government, was the body that decided the amount of the loan programme. The hon. member knows full well that the Commonwealth Government decides it, despite any vote of the Loan Council. Consequently, how can the member for Stirling justify his statement that we cannot, with any justification, blame the Commonwealth Government for the loan position.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: The Loan Council decides the amount and the Commonwealth Government raises the money.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: But the Commonwealth takes no notice of the decision of the Loan Council.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: The Commonwealth Government attempts to raise the money.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: At the last meeting of the Loan Council, the Acting Prime Minister, who presided at the meeting, told the Loan Council before the vote was taken that if it de-

cided in a certain direction, the Commonwealth Government would take no notice of the decision.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: He probably told the Loan Council that the States were asking for more money than could be raised on the loan market.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Despite the decision of the Loan Council, the amount of money that was allocated was not the amount decided on by the Loan Council; it was the amount that the Loan Council was informed by the Treasurer would be the sum available.

Hon. D. Brand: Did not the States finally accept that as the decision of the Loan Council?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: They had no option.

Hon. D. Brand: Did not they finally agree to it?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: No; the decision was that many millions in excess of the figure that the Federal Treasurer said would be available should be provided, and despite that decision, reached in the face of the fact that the Commonwealth had three votes and exercised them, the Loan Council was informed that the Government, not the Loan Council, was determining the amount of loan money to be made available to the States. Thus members can see how wide of the mark was the statement of the member for Murray in 1952 that he would take the hurdle when he came to it and that the Loan Council, not the Commonwealth Government, was the body that decided what the borrowings should be.

Hon. D. Brand: Is not there a difference between the actual loan money decided upon and the amount underwritten?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member knows nothing about it.

Hon. D. Brand: I know as much as you do.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I said last year that we would be short of loan money and the hon. member said we would not. In the same volume of "Hansard" at page 1968, the member for Greenough, who was then Minister for Works, answered a question put by me. I asked—

How are you going to get the money?

The hon. member replied—

That is a question which might be asked year by year. The Premier has told me that we may optimistically face up to the expenditure that must be met over the three years, especially that relevant to the agreement made with the company.

I expressed the wish that the member for Murray would tell us where he would get the money. I should like to be informed now, because the situation I fore-

shadowed is the one that has come about. I stated on the same occasion that, because of the contract we were entering into, we would find the greatest difficulty in meeting requirements elsewhere.

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

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Before tea, I was proceeding to an examination of the loan fund position as it was towards the end of last year. I had previously pointed out that the ex-Minister for Works had said that his Premier had advised him that he could optimistically look forward to the future so far as funds were concerned. In September, I asked the ex-Premier a series of questions to disclose what the loan fund position was. I now quote from page 976 of Vol. 1 of "Hansard" for 1952. I asked the then Premier the following questions:—

(1) Has he been successful in avoiding or having deferred, any of the State's contractual commitments?

(2) What are the particulars of such avoidances or deferments?

His replies were—

(1) Yes.

(2) Total commitments for 1952-53 have been reduced from £19,628,000 to £13,559,000 by deferment of payments on certain overseas contracts and the slowing down of deliveries on local contracts.

So it is perfectly clear that that very substantial reduction was not the result of the Premier's having paid the money but because he was successful in having the amounts held over; that is, in having them deferred so that they would be left to some other Government to pay in the next financial year. My next question was—

What is the total amount of loan money involved in these avoidances or deferments?

The answer was: £6,069,000. My next question was—

Are any penalties payable by the State as a result of these avoidances or deferments?

The reply was—

Interest will be payable at the rate of 5 per cent. on payments deferred in respect of overseas contracts. These deferred payments total £3,762,000.

My next question was—

Are the deferments of indefinite time? If of certain periods, for what periods in each instance have the deferments been made?

The reply was—

Deferred payments in general have to be met during 1953-54.

So, obviously those debts incurred by the previous Government were deferred for payment during 1953-54 and therefore have to be met by the present Government, as I foreshadowed.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Has the Premier not had some deferred?

Hon. D. Brand: They have all been met for 1952-53, with the exception of £266,000.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I will show the hon. member how they have been met.

Hon. D. Brand: It does not make any difference.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes, it does.

Hon. D. Brand: The money was found in the same financial year.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Did not the Premier get further deferments in London?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: He was not very successful.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: What do you mean by saying he was not very successful? What amounts were deferred?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I do not know. He did not tell me.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: That is a strange thing.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: No, it is not at all strange; he is the Treasurer.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: One would think he would tell you. Your department is the great spending department.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I did not ask him.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: I thought you were more interested than that.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I am concerned about money being made available to me and not money that is owing. After the ex-Premier gave me the replies I have quoted, I said, "It is bad luck for the next Government." The ex-Minister for Lands then interjected, "We shall be here." What a bad judge he was!

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: The luck was not as bad as you thought it would be, judging from your answers, and the Premier's answers, to questions.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I quoted those figures to show there was no justification whatever for the ex-Minister for Works having any optimism about the money available, because there was so little money available that the Government had to defer payment of more than £6,000,000, since it was unable to pay that amount.

Let us have a little more on these deferred payments, so that we can get the picture exactly right. I now quote from page 2306 of Vol. 3 of "Hansard" for 1952. The then Premier was dealing with the Loan Estimates, and had this to say—

Of the total sum of £5,360,000 provided in this year's Estimates, £4,250,000 is required to meet railway commitments, chiefly on account



of the rollingstock rehabilitation programme. Actually, this amount of £4,250,000 is nearly £3,500,000 less than is due for payment under contract conditions but, through the good offices of British and Australian contractors, it has been possible to postpone payment by either deferment of payments, deferment of deliveries, or in some cases, partial cancellation of orders. Unfortunate as the need for these arrangements is, the limitation of funds left no alternative.

So this optimistic view which the ex-Minister for Works took in February was a view he was not entitled to take, as was pointed out at the time; and within a matter of months, the Government became so embarrassed, because of shortage of loan funds, that it was obliged to defer payments and cancel contracts for urgent delivery. That position was brought about by the deliberate policy of the Commonwealth Government to introduce the austerity which it had mentioned previously as part of a predetermined plan; and it followed it out this year, because the amount of loan funds made available to the State this year is only slightly in excess of that made available to the previous Government.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: What was the total this year? Was it not £200,000,000 to the States?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: What help is that to us? We can only consider what is available to us. I am dealing with what was made available to the present Government and what was made available to the previous Government last year. The figures are such as to indicate that, in accordance with a predetermined plan of the Commonwealth Government, it has deliberately restricted the loan funds of the States.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Yes; but be fair.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That is perfectly fair. I am quoting facts.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: You were told when you were there that it was expected the market would find £105,000,000 and the Commonwealth had the responsibility of finding £95,000,000.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Who said it would?

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: That is the estimate.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Whose estimate?

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: The Federal Treasurer's estimate.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes, but not that of the Loan Council.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Take what they have asked for year after year.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The ex-Premier has an entirely different idea of what the Loan Council does when

he is sitting in Opposition from what he has when he is in the Government. Previously he expressed the opinion that it was not the Commonwealth Government that determined what the loan raisings would be, but the Loan Council, and he was going to take that hurdle when he came to it.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Take the 1951-52 year! The Loan Council agreed to a total borrowing of £225,000,000 and the Commonwealth Government had to find £150,000,000 of that sum. Was that niggardly treatment?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Surely the Leader of the Opposition will not deny that it was stated authoritatively that the Commonwealth had determined upon an austere period in order that by 1954-55 stability would be attained.

Hon. D. Brand: It has been.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member cannot have it both ways. He has either to agree that the Commonwealth Government deliberately set out to do it, and give it credit for what it did achieve, or else he has to say that that Government did not deliberately set out to do it, and then he cannot give it any credit. Which way is he going to have it? I say it was part of a deliberate plan to restrict the loan funds of the States, and whatever the reason might be is beside the point for the time being. It was a deliberate policy, and for that reason the Commonwealth has to take the full responsibility if the States are unable to do the things they want to do.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: It could not meet the fantastic demands of the States.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: They were not fantastic at all. Look at the difference an extra £1,000,000 would mean to Western Australia. Is the Leader of the Opposition saying that we have enough money to do what we ought to and that if we had another £1,000,000 it would be bad for the State?

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: You would spend another £2,000,000 or £3,000,000 if you could get it.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Would that be bad for the State?

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: It would depend on how the money was spent.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The Leader of the Opposition could depend upon our spending it properly.

The Premier: On the Bridgetown water supply, for instance.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: That would be all right.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I can mention many projects that we could embark on immediately if the money were available.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Where do you suggest the Commonwealth would get this extra money when it has already saddled itself with £95,000,000 this year?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The Loan Council suggested to the Commonwealth that the loan market would yield a sum greater than £105,000,000. That is a sum greater than the Commonwealth said it would raise, and on that basis it decided upon a loan programme which the Commonwealth refused to accept.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Which do you think would have the greater knowledge of what the loan market would supply, the Commonwealth or the States?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: There was no evidence submitted to show how the Commonwealth arrived at this figure.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Has not the Commonwealth the advice of the Commonwealth Bank?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It might have, but it submitted no evidence to justify its selecting that figure. It was made obvious to us that this was part of a plan thought out months before to reduce the spending of the States and to leave more money available to the Commonwealth so that it could make substantial tax reductions in the pre-election year.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: You are mixing loan with revenue.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I am dealing with the situation that confronts the States, and it is not a situation of the States' making because what is being overlooked in this loan restriction programme is that in Western Australia we are expanding rapidly with a large increase in population. This inevitably means a greater call upon the various services which have to be provided, with less money to provide them.

Hon. D. Brand: Do not you agree with the suggestion of a reduction in taxation?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I welcome it and think it is a wonderful idea.

Hon. D. Brand: I would think so.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Do you think on the market this year you could raise £200,000,000 of public loans?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Why does the Leader of the Opposition select £200,000,000? Who talked about raising that amount?

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: That is the sum the States are getting to spend. The Commonwealth says it will have to raise £105,000,000 on the market, therefore it is saddled with £95,000,000.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Saddled with it?

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: The Commonwealth has underwritten it.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It has raised all the money.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: That is doubtful.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The Commonwealth Government had a substantial revenue surplus which the States did not have. To talk of saddling it with this burden when it has a substantial surplus, seems a bit ludicrous to me.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: A great deal of that surplus has gone to finance the loan programmes of the States.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Who is making this speech? I thought it desirable to remind the Premier of this background.

The Premier: Which Premier?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The ex-Premier. The present Premier does not need a reminder as he has a constant reminder at the Treasury.

Hon. D. Brand: The new financial position—

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The ex-Minister for Works cannot keep quiet! Members can see how close to the spot this criticism is.

The Premier: Right on the spot.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I thought it necessary to give this background in order to deal with the attempt which the Leader of the Opposition made the other night to prove that the Government had more than £1,000,000 tucked away somewhere which it could spend. The Leader of the Opposition referred to two statements of mine, one which mentioned a figure of £20,750,000 of loan money and another which mentioned a figure of £17,000,000. A close examination would have quickly revealed that the figure of £17,000,000 referred to the money for loan works. The total of £20,750,000 includes the £3,750,000 available specifically for use under the Commonwealth-State rental housing agreement—money which cannot be used for any other purpose.

So I could not have referred to a loan works programme of £20,750,000 when only £17,000,000 was available for the purpose. How anyone could get confused over the issue is beyond me. I said earlier that I would tell the ex-Minister for Works how these debts that were left over were paid, and paid during the last financial year, because he seems to have an idea that there was a substantial surplus of cash lying around somewhere which the present Government was able to use without affecting the amount of money

available to it this financial year. The Leader of the Opposition will know that under the arrangement with the Loan Council, Western Australia had to have a carry over of £4,000,000 and that amount did not exist in cash, although it should have.

Hon. D. Brand: Has it always existed?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It should have. Last session, when I asked why the then Premier had not used that money, he said he was obliged to have this carry over of £4,000,000 and the indication was that he had to have it in cash whereas, in fact, his Government had already spent most of it.

Hon. D. Brand: What are the prospects for next year?

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Did we not have goods to show for it?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes, but the hon. member did not have the money and one cannot buy overseas with goods in cash here. One has to have the money.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: You have found it handy to have the goods.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: To have the goods is better than nothing but when one has debts to pay and expects to have £4,000,000 out of which to pay them, it is awkward to find that there is no money available, but only goods. Let us examine the position further. This carry over of £4,000,000 was mostly represented by goods which had to be held and could not be used, because they represented a large proportion of the carry over. When the matter was argued at the Loan Council meeting this year, it became apparent to us that if we could turn those goods into cash in some way or use other cash available to take the place of the cash tied up—

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: What do you mean by "turning the goods into cash"? Do you mean to sell them, or what?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: If the hon. member gives me a chance, I will tell him.

Hon. D. Brand: Does a similar condition exist in all the other States?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: What does the hon. member mean by that?

Hon. D. Brand: I am referring to the £4,000,000, which you said should have been there, instead of the goods.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: No, because the other States did not show that they had the full carry over.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Will you make your explanation about selling the goods?

Mr. SPEAKER: If it were not for this cross-examination, perhaps the Minister could proceed.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The ex-Minister for Works sought some elucidation of the position in the other States and I tell him deliberately that the other States did not do as we did. They spent their carry over, or a large portion of it, and showed in their returns that they had spent it. What was done here was to utilise a good deal of the money in buying stores, which were kept and regarded as the equivalent of the money expended upon them.

The question arose as to how the present Government could improve its credit in London and facilitate further deferments of debts which it found difficulty in meeting because of the extreme shortage of loan funds and the necessity to carry out some works. It was ascertained that it was possible to utilise the nominal carry over of £4,000,000 and to transfer loan funds against the amount of goods held in store and, with the trust funds released in that way, to meet a certain proportion of the overseas debts—perfectly legitimate and with no legerdemain about it. That enabled us to meet the debts, but it did not give us any more money.

We still had to pay, out of money available to the Government this financial year, debts that were owing from the previous year, and so little satisfaction can be taken by the present Opposition from the fact that these debts, which had been deferred for payment last year were in fact, paid before the end of the financial year. The money was not left behind with which to pay them. Had it been, the previous Government would obviously have paid those debts instead of cancelling contracts. The position with which we are confronted is that because of the necessity to meet these contractual commitments, which we could not have further deferred, we have a very limited sum of money available to carry out the loan works programme, and therefore drastic reductions have had to be effected in all departments.

To give one simple illustration—the requirement of the Education Department to meet normal needs and to meet the deficiency that has resulted from the inability in past years to provide the required number of classrooms—forcing upon the department the use of public halls—is now between 300 and 350 classrooms, with not sufficient loan funds to build 100, as matters now stand. That is why the Government has been endeavouring, in a number of ways, to obtain additional funds for use in this State. One way was to approach the Commonwealth and ask it to give assistance in connection with Kwinana development, where we are committed to an inescapable expenditure of £4,000,000 odd this year. We asked the Commonwealth to assist us £ for £ with that expenditure so that, to the extent to which we were assisted, we would have money left available for use in other directions.

If the Commonwealth agrees—as I think it should because we have a very strong case—to the extent that it does assist in the development of Kwinana, we will have money available for additional water supplies, hospitals, schools, sewerage works and the various other undertakings that it is necessary to carry out. Of course, the Government is not letting the matter rest there. The Premier, when in England, endeavoured to interest the British Government in the provision of water supplies in this State and he has informed me that there is a definite prospect of our receiving assistance in that direction. If he succeeds in gaining money from that source for use on the comprehensive water scheme, that will free funds which we will not hesitate to use in extending water supplies in other parts of the State.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: If you got money from London would not that be taken into account in the Commonwealth loan allocation?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: There is a difficulty there to be surmounted, and we cannot shut our eyes to the position; but we will put it to the Commonwealth that, as this money in no way affects the borrowing capacity of the Governments of Australia, it is money which would not otherwise be available and we should therefore be permitted to take advantage of it.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Would it not be a question for the Loan Council and not for the Commonwealth Government?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: We believe the Loan Council will take the right view in this regard because what we propose is different from a Government going on the market and endeavouring to raise money which would otherwise be available for the general loan programme.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Yes, but it is raising money overseas.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes, but raising it in a way entirely different from the procedure followed previously. This is not a question of going on the market for money but is a Government-to-Government transaction where the Premier has put up to the British Government the proposal that in the interests of Britain herself and of this State, money might well be invested in the extension of the comprehensive water supply scheme because that would substantially increase our productivity and make available an increased quantity of products for consumption by the British people.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Other State Governments have put up similar requests, have they not?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I do not know.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Yes, they have.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I accept the word of the Leader of the Opposition, but what point is there in it?

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: The other Premiers were with our Premier and saw Mr. Butler, the British Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Premier: Tasmania was the only one that put forward any specific suggestion.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: I thought Victoria did.

The Premier: No, nothing specific.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I cannot see what point there is in that argument, or how that will affect our getting additional funds in Western Australia. What some other State has done in this connection will not affect the position here if we succeed in getting money, and that is the important aspect for this Government—that the limited amount of loan funds available now shall be substantially increased in order to permit of an extension of loan works which we are anxious to undertake.

Now I propose to deal with some criticism which the member for Stirling levelled at the Government in connection with the appointment of Mr. R. C. Green as Under Secretary for Law. I am amazed that the member for Stirling had the temerity to deal with this when what has been done by the Government in this connection was also done by the Government of which he was a member; it was done in precisely the same way and if we have contravened any rules of conduct as regards this matter, so did the previous Government in exactly the same way.

Mr. Bovell: But two wrongs do not make a right.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I am not admitting that it was wrong; I think it was right. I am endeavouring to point out that the previous Government did precisely the same thing. Now let us examine the facts. Applications were called for the vacant position and, after considering the applications, the Public Service Commissioner made a recommendation to the Government. He recommended the appointment of a man who is a magistrate, but the Government considered that the magistrate, having chosen to take that branch of the profession, should continue in it and that the position of Under Secretary for Law should be available to those men who had not chosen the magisterial branch. So the Government declined to make the appointment on that recommendation, and I find that when Mr. Shean was appointed the previous Government took exactly the same stand regarding a recommendation of that nature.

Hon. A. F. Watts: I told you I did not disagree with that part of it.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member did say that. What was the next step? The Public Service Commissioner recommended to the Government a radical change in the organisation of the Crown Law Department. He proposed that the Solicitor General should be the administrative head of the department and that he should be assisted by some other person who was to be appointed as well. So there would be two positions, somewhat analogous to the situation that exists in the Education Department where there is a Director of Education and a Chief Administrative Officer. The Government declined to accept that suggestion, believing that the present organisation of the Crown Law Department was preferable. That situation did not arise when the previous Government was considering the position, no such recommendation having been made by the Public Service Commissioner. But the member for Stirling said that he did not object to the Government's decision as regards that proposal of the Public Service Commissioner.

What was step No. 3? The Public Service Commissioner gave further consideration to the applications and recommended to the Government that Mr. R. C. Green be appointed to the position. That was his recommendation, and Mr. Green was a junior among a number of senior applicants. One of the senior applicants was Mr. Glynn. The member for Stirling took several examples from the list of applicants and dealt with them to show their seniority to Mr. Green and Mr. Glynn was one of the examples. The member for Stirling said this—

The only justification that I can see for declining to promote a person inside the department to such a senior position was that the person in question did not have the knowledge, experience and ability to handle the job.

If that is true, it would apply to Mr. Glynn.

Hon. A. F. Watts: It would not apply nearly as strongly to him as it would to Mr. Green.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It would apply to Mr. Glynn, because Mr. Shean was junior to Mr. Glynn and Mr. Glynn was passed over in precisely the same way that Mr. Green was junior to Mr. Glynn and Mr. Glynn was passed over.

Hon. A. F. Watts: But at least Mr. Shean was in the Crown Law Department for 30 years.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That may be.

Hon. A. F. Watts: It is so. There is no "may be" about it.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Then it is so, if that makes any difference.

Hon. A. F. Watts: It makes a lot of difference.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: What difference does it make?

Hon. A. F. Watts: Mr. Shean's experience in the Crown Law Department was undoubted.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Let us take the hon. member's statement—

The only justification that I can see for declining to promote a person inside the department to such a senior position was that the person in question did not have the knowledge, experience and ability to handle the job.

So according to the member for Stirling, Mr. Glynn did not have the knowledge and experience.

Hon. A. F. Watts: It does not mean anything of the kind.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Of course it does.

Hon. A. F. Watts: Do not take text from context! Read the rest of it!

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: There is no need to read anything else. There is a plain statement of the position.

Hon. A. F. Watts: You have taken text from context.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I have not. The member for Stirling would have to admit that Mr. Glynn was senior to Mr. Shean. That is undoubted. Mr. Shean was promoted over Mr. Glynn. According to the member for Stirling, the only justification for that would be that the officer concerned did not have the knowledge, experience and ability to handle the job. I do not agree with that.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Of course there might be the other answer.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Of course, there might be anything.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: He had infinitely more experience.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I am dealing with the case put up by the member for Stirling. If the member for Mt. Lawley will put up a case, I will deal with that too, but so far he has not done so.

Hon. A. F. Watts: What about dealing with the merits of the case.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I am dealing with the merits of the case.

Hon. A. F. Watts: No, you are not. You are going all round it.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I am not. I am dealing with the merits of the case as put up by the member for Stirling. If it is correct to pass over one man for a special reason, the same reason would justify passing over half a dozen.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Yes, but there was no justification, because there was no comparison. Mr. Shean was the most experienced officer in the whole of the Crown Law Department.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: But he was a junior officer.

Hon. A. F. Watts: He might have been, but he was still the most experienced in the Crown Law Department when he was promoted.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: He was a junior officer and we faced that same position with Mr. Green who, we were told the other evening, has all the qualifications.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: He did not have the qualifications of the other men, did he?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: If the hon. member wants a further example of how a departure from this principle is justified, I will give it to him. It is not exactly the same, but it is similar. The example is the present Director of Education. I supported his appointment very strongly and undoubtedly I say that his appointment was the best to make. However, the present Director of Education was appointed over four or five well-qualified applicants within the service in this State. They were well qualified officers in the Education Department of this State, occupying important positions: but they were passed over by the appointment of a person who was not then in the State service, because it was considered that his special fitness for the job justified his promotion over the State officers.

Hon. A. F. Watts: He was highly qualified in education and if Mr. Green had been qualified, in any way in the work of the Crown Law Department, there would have been no argument against what the hon. member is saying, but he was not.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I am dealing with the argument as to whether it implies that if a junior officer is promoted over a number of seniors, all those seniors are incapable of carrying out the job. I say it does not imply anything of the sort. However, in jobs of this kind there is provision to enable the Public Service Commissioner to make the choice of a junior officer who, in his opinion, has special qualities for the job that is to be undertaken, and his recommendation to the Government was, having considered the applicants, that Mr. Green possessed special qualities for the position which befitted him over the other applicants senior to him.

That was the advice tendered to the Government and as it is the duty of the Public Service Commissioner to inquire into these matters and make a recommendation, we would have had to search very strongly for adequate reasons to justify us in again refusing to appoint the nominee that he put forward. I do not know whether anybody is thinking that somebody chose Mr. Green beforehand and gave the Public Service Commissioner the idea that he would be the satisfactory choice; but if that is so, I say, without any hesitation, that they are mistaken.

Hon. A. F. Watts: I think the complaint is that the hon. member did not send that recommendation back in the same way as the others, and that he did not get an officer from the Crown Law Department to do something about it.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I cannot accept that. That would have been tantamount to a vote of no confidence in the Public Service Commissioner.

Hon. A. F. Watts: I do not know about that. It was done in the case of Mr. Hayles some time ago.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: How often did it go back?

Hon. A. F. Watts: Four or five times.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member seems to think that, in dealing with the applications that came forward, the Government saw the applicant in each instance. I have dealt with the matter tonight to show how inconsistent was the member for Stirling because he used as one of his examples a person who was an applicant for the job when Mr. Sheehan was appointed. That example completely demolished the argument that he put forward that it implied the senior officer passed over was not fit for the position. So far as I am concerned, it does not imply anything of the sort. We can say that a number of officers who were senior to Mr. Green are very good officers who are doing an excellent job, in their respective positions, but we were advised that for this particular position Mr. Green possessed special qualifications over and above the other applicants, and we accepted that opinion and recommendation.

There is very little time left at my disposal and therefore it is not possible for me to deal with a number of matters raised in this debate. A good deal of reference has been made to water supplies and some mention of roads, both of which works require substantial funds. There will be other opportunities of dealing with the allocations of funds for roads and water supplies, but I want to assure those members who are interested in water supplies for their respective districts that the Government is very water-minded.

Mr. J. Hegney: I heard otherwise the other night.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: We have always desired to extend water supplies in Western Australia, and the record of past Labour Governments stands out in the provision of reservoirs and reticulation schemes. The only thing that is holding us back at present is the shortage of loan funds. As further moneys become available, members can be assured that more water supply schemes will be established. These are under consideration at present and immediately funds become available, the work will be put in hand.

Unfortunately, the rate at which steel supplies can come forward is limited, and we cannot place orders until we have the money. After orders are placed, it will be a lengthy period before those supplies can be expected. However, taking those governing factors into consideration, it can be confidently understood that steps will be taken to implement our intentions.

**HON. J. B. SLEEMAN** (Fremantle) [8.18]: In making a few remarks on the Address-in-reply before the debate closes, I want to endorse all that has been said by previous speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on attaining the Speakership. I am sure you must be tired of hearing such remarks because they have been repeated so often. However, there is one person in the Chamber who has not been congratulated, and that is the Leader of the Opposition. The people have declared that he is in his proper place and as he has taken that position in the Chamber, I think he will fill it with dignity. I hope he will be long spared to occupy the office he now holds. I was rather interested this evening in listening to the member for Subiaco. She took the Premier to task for having made promises and not fulfilling them.

The Premier: Did the member for Subiaco say that?

**Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN**: I think the hon. member should be the last to take anyone to task for breaking promises. I remember when she first came here she promised to uphold the rights of women in this country. After my long association with the hon. member, I am satisfied that if the women want legislation to benefit themselves in this country, they will have to rely on the male members of the Legislature. I have been fighting for women's rights ever since I have been in this House. On one occasion I moved to give women the right to sit on juries.

**Hon. Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver**: And the hon. member blocked my Bill.

**Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN**: However, I was unsuccessful, but later when the member for Subiaco was elected as a member of this House, I thought, at last I would have someone here to support me when I advocated the appointment of women to public positions. I moved that a woman should be placed on the advisory committee in connection with the Prices Commission, but unfortunately the member for Subiaco opposed it. If there is anyone who understands prices in this country, it is the housewife because men know nothing about prices of every-day needs. There was another occasion on which I missed out, but later, when the question of appointing a milk board came before the House, I moved that a woman be included on

that body. Although the member for Subiaco had talked milk, and nothing but milk for 12 or 14 years, to my surprise she was absent when the vote was taken.

**Hon. Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver**: I did not vote because I do not believe in the board.

**Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN**: Will the hon. member kindly speak up a bit?

**Hon. Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver**: I am doing my best.

**Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN**: The hon. member tried her best to get out of the road so that it would not be necessary for her to record a vote. When the vote was taken, I was left stranded with only a few men behind me; the lady was missing. I would like to say to the women of this country through this House, that if they want anything done for them in the legislative halls of this State, it is not much use their sending women like the member for Subiaco here; they should send women who are prepared to fight.

**Hon. Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver**: It is no use their sending men who do not know anything about women.

**Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN**: Will the hon. member kindly speak up? I trust the next woman we get here will stand up for the public rights of the women of this country.

I was much interested the other evening when I listened to the speech made by the member for Moore, who is not here at present. He started by congratulating the previous Government on the very fine job it had done. He did not mention however, for whom it did the good job. He did admit by interjection, however, that he could not understand why he was allied with the member for Mt. Lawley. I agree with him that there is not very much in common between the farmers of the country and people who belong to the L.C.L. The latter represent the big money; what interests would they have with farmers and country people?

**Hon. D. Brand**: I heard somebody growling about the big estates left by farmers.

**Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN**: But, as I have said, he did say he could not understand why he was allied with the member for Mt. Lawley. He did not tell members for whom the good job was done. I will tell the House for whom the previous Government did the good job; it was for its own supporters. It smashed the Rents and Tenancies Emergency Provisions Act Amendment Bill and made it so that it would be in the interests of landlords. Evidently they obeyed the note sent out by a gentleman named Mr. Collins, which said—

Property Owners—Abolish "War" Rent Control, including returned soldiers who own property.

I suppose there are as many returned soldiers paying rent as there are owning property. The note continues—

Join in the fight for an immediate 50 per cent. rise in rents to be included in the new rent Bill to operate forthwith and the abolition of rent control after 31/12/1951.

Evidently the then Government fell into line, because it did quite a lot for Collins and what he was advocating by smashing the Rents and Tenancies Emergency Provisions Act Amendment Bill.

The Premier: You are referring to the previous Government, of course.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Most decidedly. When a vote was taken on the prices referendum, the Leader of the Opposition fooled the people into voting "No." He told them that if they voted "No," prices would be right, and that those who represented the people in the L.C.L. and the Country Party would see that prices were not increased. Accordingly, he fooled the people of this State into voting "No," but, of course, prices have not been controlled ever since.

Hon. D. Brand: What about Queensland? They must think it is not a bad idea to drop controls.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: The Leader of the Opposition said—

A "No" vote will not end price and rent control. The State Government has always controlled rents and it will control prices when Canberra's control ceases.

We know the result. The people in this State and in Australia were foolish enough to vote "No," with the result that prices have never been, and cannot be, controlled. Before he made that statement, the Leader of the Opposition knew that the State would not be able to control prices; that the Commonwealth Government is the only authority that is able to control prices. So, he fooled the people into voting "No," and prices have never been controlled as they should have been.

That is the second thing the previous Government did. This is what must have struck the member for Moore, because I notice that in one year the previous Government paid £240,000 for the transport of super by road. The member for Moore must have thought it was a good Government that would do that. We find £240,000 of the taxpayers' money going to help farmers to cart super by road. Nobody objects to helping farmers when crops and prices are bad, but they were not bad. However, that Government spent £240,000 of the taxpayers' money so that super could be carted by road.

The next matter to which I wish to refer concerns Broken Hill Pty. Ltd. We know what the previous Government has done for that company. That Government sold our birthright for a mess of potage. There are over 40,000,000 tons of iron-ore in

Cockatoo Island and over 40,000,000 tons in Koolan Island, which it never controlled. In all, there is an estimated total of 95,000,000 tons given to this company for what? For a steel-rolling-mill! All that this company has promised to do with this mill is to produce enough steel to supply the State.

The Premier: You mean, to roll enough steel.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Yes. The steel will be brought from the Eastern States and will be rolled here. That is all it proposes to do. It guarantees it will roll enough steel to supply Western Australia. That is the lot. I shall be very disappointed if the present Government cannot induce Broken Hill Pty. Ltd. to do a good deal more than that. Nobody objects to the company having the iron-ore if it is going to produce the iron and steel necessary for our needs. But all it proposes to do is to roll the steel in the rolling-mill, which is to be established here. As I have said, I shall be most disappointed if this Government does not say, "If you want our co-operation, you must do more than establish a steel-rolling mill in this State."

Mr. Lawrence: The agreement has already been made.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: That is so, but there are ways and means of making things awkward, even although the company has the agreement.

Hon. D. Brand: You spoke to me about Persia last year.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Speak up like a little man! I hope the time has arrived when something will be done. I also notice from the agreement that it is intended to spend £200,000 on dredging one berth, a basin and two channels. I think that Broken Hill Pty. Ltd. has as much money as this State has. The company has been treated well. The time has arrived when something should be done even though an agreement was made by the previous Government. I feel sure that Broken Hill Pty. Ltd. will be considerate enough to do more than it is bound to carry out under the agreement if the Government approaches it about the matter. It would be like a drop in the ocean to that concern, and I think something more should be done. It is getting control of a total of 95,000,000 tons of iron-ore, and I trust the Premier will tell the company that if it wants the co-operation of the Government it should do a good deal more than it proposes.

The next point I wish to deal with has reference to the £34,000 given by the previous Government to its friends, the industrial users of cement, and this is the hurdle where that Administration should have fallen last year. Unfortunately, when I took action, we were beaten. You will recall, Mr. Speaker, the efforts I made to ensure that the Government should be dismissed for having broken the law. There was no doubt that a breach of the



law had been committed, but so far as my action was concerned, I succeeded in getting nowhere.

I was told to bring the matter back to Parliament. Well, I ask you, Mr. Speaker, what was the use of bringing it back to Parliament when the Premier who had broken the law had a majority sitting behind him? That was too stupid for words. When Jack Lang was Premier of New South Wales and he broke the law, the then Governor of the State, Sir Philip Game, did not advise him to take it back to Parliament. This is the letter Sir Philip wrote to Mr. Lang—

Sir Philip Game to Premier Lang  
13/5/32.

I have received the copy of the circular for which I asked you. It appears to me that the terms of this circular directing public servants to commit a direct breach of the law as set out in Proclamation No. 42 of 1932, published in "Commonwealth Government Gazette" of May 5th and the notice issued in accordance with the last paragraph in the "Commonwealth of Australia Gazette" of May 6th, I feel it my bounden duty to remind you at once that you derive your authority from his Majesty through me, and I cannot possibly allow the Crown to be placed in the position of breaking the law of the land. I must ask you, therefore, to furnish me with proof that the instructions in the circular are within the law or alternatively, to withdraw the circular at once.

That shows how very considerate he was. He went on to say—

I do not wish to press you unduly, but the matter appears to be of an urgency which admits of no delay, and I must ask for a definite reply by 11 a.m. tomorrow.

Hon. D. Brand: Were you dissatisfied with the answer you received from the Governor of this State?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I have never been satisfied with any answer received by me from the previous Government. The next letter is one from Premier Lang to Governor Game as follows:—

I received your letter of 12th inst. at 6 p.m. and must say that it is hard to understand how you do not wish to press me unduly, and yet insist on a definite reply by 11 a.m. today.

The circular of which you do not appear to approve represents the decision of Cabinet, and no doubt was arrived at after the consideration of the primary duties of maintaining the essential and social services of this State.

The only reply you can be given is that the circular cannot possibly be withdrawn.

A further letter from Mr. Lang stated—

If your letter of today's date means that you are requesting the resignation of the Ministry, you are hereby informed that your request is refused.

Thus implying to Sir Philip Game, "You can jump in the lake." I took action here but, as I have explained, nothing came of it. There has been a similar case in Pakistan where the Governor dismissed the Premier for breaking the law, just as was done by Mr. Lang in Sydney and by the McLarty-Watts Government in this State. Mr. Lang was dismissed for breaking the law and so was the Premier of Pakistan. Unfortunately, the previous Government in this State was not dismissed. I have a newspaper cutting about the dismissal of the Premier of Pakistan as follows:—

A British Commonwealth Relations Ministry spokesman said this morning that the dismissal of Mr. Nazimuddin's Pakistani Cabinet was constitutionally legal.

The Governor-General (Mr. Chulam Mohammed) had the constitutional right to dismiss the Ministry just as the British Sovereign had the right to dismiss the British Cabinet.

In that instance there was no suggestion of referring the matter back to Parliament and asking the Premier, who had broken the law, to do something about it in Parliament.

The spokesman was commenting on Mr. Nazimuddin's statement that he had been dismissed illegally after refusing to resign.

I decided not to rely upon the newspaper report and so wrote to Pakistan in order to obtain official information. I addressed my letter to the Speaker, and here is the reply I received—

Please refer to your letter, dated the 25th May, 1953, on the subject noted above.

I am enclosing herewith a copy of His Excellency the Governor-General's Order, dated the 17th April 1953, by which the Pakistan Cabinet was dismissed, and the Press report about the view held by the Commonwealth Office, London, regarding the said action.

His Excellency, the Governor General's communication, dated the 17th April, read—

I have watched with growing uneasiness the exceedingly difficult conditions with which Pakistan is faced. There is the very grave food situation. The general economic outlook presents several features which must be dealt with vigorously. The law and order situation needs firm handling. There has been most serious criticism of

Government measures, and even more of lack of measures to meet the situation.

I have been driven to the conclusion that the Cabinet of Khwaja Nazimuddin has proved entirely inadequate to grapple with the difficulties facing the country.

Mr. Lawrence: I did not know that Pakistan formed part of your electorate.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: The communication continued—

In the emergency which has arisen I have felt it incumbent upon me to ask the Cabinet to relinquish office so that a new Cabinet better fitted to discharge its obligations towards Pakistan may be formed.

I have, therefore, in exercise of my powers under Section 10 of the Government of India Act, as adapted, relieved Khwaja Nazimuddin's Cabinet of its responsibilities as my Council of Ministers.

I have called upon Mr. Mohammed Ali, Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States of America, who is now present in Karachi, to form a Government. I call upon the people of Pakistan to stand firm and united in their resolve to see that their needs are adequately served through a Government which fully enjoys the confidence of the country.

Here is an item from the "Daily Dawn," Karachi, dated the 19th April, 1953—

The British Government, which was informed yesterday of the dismissal of Khwaja Nazimuddin's Cabinet and the appointment of Mr. Mohammed Ali two hours after the communique issued by the Governor-General announcing the change of the Government, is keen to know what policy the new Pakistan Prime Minister would adopt regarding his country's present links with the Commonwealth.

This view was expressed today by a spokesman of the Commonwealth Relations Office. He said that Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom took the view that the change of Cabinet in Pakistan as announced by Mr. Ghulam Mohammed, Governor-General, is constitutionally correct and that HMG would co-operate with Mr. Mohammed Ali's Cabinet in the same way as it did with the two preceding Cabinets.

I hope these instances will be sufficient to settle the question whether a member should refer back to Parliament after the Premier has broken the law. Could we expect the member to say to the Premier, "You have broken the law; what are you going to do about it?" Of course, nothing would be done. Since the cases I have

mentioned, another has cropped up in Kashmir within the last few weeks where the Premier was dismissed.

Mr. McCulloch: What was his name?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I cannot say, but will let the hon. member have the information when I receive it. I think I have said sufficient to show that the previous Government should have been dismissed for a breach of the Audit Act, which, of course, was a breaking of the law.

The next reference concerning the previous Government has to do with the Black Diamond coal leases at Collie. It is an instance of the Government of the day having sabotaged the State Electricity Commission. The former Labour Government provided the Black Diamond leases to meet the requirements of the Electricity Commission, but that was too much for the succeeding Government, because the heads of the Liberal Party were linked up with the coal companies. The result was that the then Government decided to hand back the leases, which had been made available by a Labour Government to the Electricity Commission to ensure that the commission would have its own source of coal supplies.

Now we find that even the officers of the Coal Commission protested. On page 53 of the file dealing with the matter, they expressed regret at the Government's decision and the chairman remarked—

The other decisions of Cabinet were of even deeper concern to the future economic well-being of the Commission. There was a great danger that the cost plus system would be permanently established. They (the Commission) were told by the Minister that at the Cabinet meeting in April, 1948, the Government had decided that the Black Diamond leases and the 200 acres of freehold land were to be handed back to Amalgamated Collieries. The Commissioners unanimously expressed dissatisfaction with this proposal.

I would say that the previous Government did not care what the consumers thought or what it would cost them so long as its friends and supporters, the coalmining companies, were given back their leases. The commission had already spent £2,500 putting down bores on this property. The Electricity Commission's surplus for last year was £46,618. If it had only had its own coal supplies, I am satisfied the amount would have been very much larger than that. I feel sure that if the commission were given the right to have its own coal mines, the price of electricity could be reduced. Perhaps at present, on account of the way it is buying coal, to reduce the price would be pretty difficult; but if the commission were given its own coal mines and allowed to handle its own coal, the price of electricity could be reduced.

Furthermore, I believe that the price of gas could be reduced, although Collie coal is not exclusively used in the manufacture of gas. However, quite a lot of it is used. The Fremantle Gas Company is making use of a large quantity of Collie coal, and if it could purchase supplies from some source other than that from which it is at present obtained, it could reduce the price of gas to people in its district. I trust that this sabotage movement of the previous Government, now sitting in Opposition, will be rectified by the present Government. There is no doubt that coal leases could be made available so that the commission could provide its own coal and supply electricity at the price at which it should be made available.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: By open-cut methods?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I am not concerned about open-cut methods. I will leave that to the people at Collie, who are the ones to decide. I am not going to interfere with the arrangements at Collie. I only want it to be made possible for the commission to obtain its own coal direct instead of having to pay an enormous price to, and provide an enormous profit for, the coalmining companies. Members opposite gave these leases back to those companies immediately they came into power. The previous Government had been in office for only a week or two when it made sure that its supporters, the coalmine owners, were given back the Black Diamond leases. I want the commission to have those leases so that it can obtain its own coal at a fair price instead of being charged the exorbitant rate now being paid to the companies.

It was my intention to say something about the shortage of money of which we hear so much, but the Deputy Premier has dealt with that matter. I will say, however, that during the time I have been here I have become sick and tired of being told, year after year, that the Loan Council would not agree to this and would not agree to that; and then, when the Loan Council did agree, when the time came that the Commonwealth Government had a majority against it, and the Loan Council agreed to something, the Deputy Prime Minister told the members of the Loan Council where they got off, and said they could not have it.

I remember seeing a cartoon in the paper the other night showing the Deputy Prime Minister with two pennies and the caption, "Heads I win, tails you lose." I believe that is what happened. So long as the Loan Council agrees to anything that suits the Commonwealth Government it is all right, but let the Loan Council disagree with something that the Commonwealth Government wants and it is all wrong, and the members of the council are told where they get off. However, I will

not continue speaking on that subject, because the Deputy Premier has dealt with it exhaustively.

Let me say a word about the housing of the workers in this State. I believe that something should be done about the monstrosities erected by the previous Government, which carried out this work in a very high-handed manner, defying everyone with the assertion, "We are the Crown and we are going to do this irrespective of what the local governing bodies say." I remember that one night the ex-Minister for Housing and his chief were at Mosman Park, and the Mosman Park people told them in no uncertain language that they could not agree to what was proposed. But they were told, "We are the Crown and we are going on with it." And they went on with it. These places are the biggest monstrosities ever perpetuated on the people of this country.

If I had my way, I would put the ex-Minister for Housing in one of these buildings for two months in the worst part of the summer and for two months in the worst part of the winter and would say, "Now try it yourself and see how you like it!" If the present Minister does not do something, I would have him put in with the ex-Minister and let them both have a go so that they would both know what these monstrosities are like to live in.

The Minister for Housing: What about joining us and making it a trio?

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: No. I have objected to this all along, and I am not going to be punished for something I tried to stop. I believe that, if possible, these places should be brought up to standard. I do not think it is possible, but something should be done about it. If they cannot be brought up to standard, new buildings should be erected. I would not ask anyone to live in such premises. There are women and children occupying them, and there is no lining or anything else. I suppose, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that you know as much about these places as I do. You have seen them and been in them, and you know what they are like. Something should be done immediately to ensure that people will not have to live in them any longer.

I also want to speak about the blocks of land which I have discussed once before. The Deputy Premier had a bit to say about this, and he finished up by indicating that he was not the Minister concerned. I hope we shall hear from the Minister concerned; the Minister for Housing appears the one to whom the remarks should be directed, since the Minister for Lands has decided to hand the land over to him. I want to know what has been done and I trust I will not have

to mention the subject again. I say deliberately and definitely that if this land is sold, the workers will be robbed of something that they morally and legally own at present.

This was and is a reserve for workers and was dedicated for that purpose. There are 92 blocks still dedicated to the workers, 32 having been revoked. I assert that those blocks belong to the workers of this country. No matter what argument is used, nobody will make me agree that they are not the property of the workers. The land was dedicated many years ago. If previous Governments had been able or willing to build houses at the time, workers' homes would be established on those blocks today. But they were not willing or able to build, and the land was held, and now there is the unearned increment on them due to people building around them and roads being made and bus routes started in the vicinity. These improvements have sent the price up.

Hon. C. F. J. North: Where is that land?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: At Preston Point-  
rd., just the other side of Leeuwin, if the hon. member knows where that is. I think the Minister should tell us something. If he is not going to let us have the lot, we should have 50 per cent. The people are anxious to get these blocks. The East Fremantle Council and everybody else concerned used to be unanimous on that, but the members of the council seem to have changed their minds a bit, because, I suppose, they can see the big values offering and the sumptuous buildings that could be erected on some of this property. I hope the Minister will tell us he has agreed to do something to provide that most of this land will be reserved for the workers of this country.

It is no use saying to the workers, "You can go to other places and find land," because there is no other land available unless they go a long way out. When the East Fremantle Council first spoke about it, only a few blocks were left that were suitable for workers' homes and war service homes. It is all right to send workers out into the backblocks, but I think they are entitled to a few of the amenities that are available when they live closer in.

I wish to mention the dust nuisance from the Mt. Lyell superphosphate works in Mosman Park. They have a large stockpile of phosphatic rock, and I understand that they are now going to stockpile pyrites, with the result that the people living nearby will be covered with dust throughout the summer months. The other evening I asked the Minister for Lands if he would withdraw the lease unless something was done by the company. The stockpiles are on a Government lease and it is possible to give the company three months' notice of termination of the

lease. I hope the Mt. Lyell company will do something to see that the people of the district are not smothered in dust any more. The people living in the district did not pick the blocks themselves. The Housing Commission picked the blocks and built the houses, and these people are now suffering the dust nuisance all the summer.

Next I want to say just a word about Kwinana. While I agree it is very nice to have the Kwinana people here and I think we should co-operate all we can with them, I am of the opinion that there is a little too much Kwinana. Everywhere we go we hear that this and that cannot be done because the money has to be spent on Kwinana. It grates on the ear. I think there could be a word in the company's ear—"You people are quite powerful enough to help yourselves a little more than you are."

Although the Government made an agreement with the company, and most members on this side agreed that we would like to have it operating here, I do not think that everything else should sink while it swims. If it were told to help itself a little more, I think it would be only too pleased to do so. When it was doubtful whether the company would come here, I mentioned the matter to one of the heads of the Navy. I said, "Do you think it is coming here?" He said, "If the Anglo-Iranian Coy. wants to come to Fremantle, it will come. If it does not, it will not. The Anglo-Iranian Coy. is more powerful than the Commonwealth Government." I do not know that we should be expected to do quite as much as we are doing for so powerful a company. I trust that some overtures will be made to it so that some money will be left over for works other than those at Kwinana.

One other matter I shall mention is the way the previous Government dealt with the Industrial Arbitration Act. It was the most wretched Bill introduced into the House since I first came here. It reminded me of the "Iceberg" Irvine Bill that was introduced into the Victorian Parliament some time ago. The law made then was that if two or three people congregated in the street they could be arrested under the Unlawful Associations Act. "Iceberg" Irvine went down in history for sponsoring that Bill in the Victorian Parliament. I say that the present Leader of the Opposition, because of this Bill, will go down in history—with the industrial workers of Western Australia, at any rate—as the "McLarty Blot"

It is a blot on the industrial legislation of this country. Fancy saying that if two or three people agree not to offer themselves for employment in any one industry, they can be declared to be on strike. I hope the present Government will do its best to see that some of the worst

phases of the Act are done away with. I believe it is possible to make a much better Act of it than it is at present. I am waiting for the time to come when our Industrial Arbitration Act will be brought up to date so that it will be a decent one for the men and women of this country to work under. I trust that time will not be far distant.

**THE MINISTER FOR FORESTS (Hon. H. E. Graham—East Perth) [8.55]:** For a period of ten years I have been a member of this Parliament, and the experience gained in that time has taught me that if one hits hard then he can expect hard knocks in return. It is a matter of months only that I have been a Minister of the Crown, and almost from the opening day of Parliament a number of members of the Opposition have made it their aim to make things as uncomfortable for me as possible in connection with my portfolio of Forests. I am afraid they spoke and asked their questions without a knowledge of the subject.

Let me say that I am making a speech this evening that I would prefer not to deliver. I think that to some extent it is unfair that I should be placed in the position of having to make it, but there is a limit to my endurance when I am being constantly—almost daily—peppered with questions seeking to embarrass me by, as I stated earlier, members who have no knowledge of the administration of the Forests Department. I shall endeavour, so far as possible, to refrain from expressing my personal viewpoint with regard to the administration of that department, but I feel it is necessary, even though it may be untimely, to recount some of the history of the situation which now confronts us.

Certain members of the Opposition have been endeavouring to create a situation under which the public generally would imagine there is something sinister and improper being done in the higher administration of the department, particularly by the Minister in charge of it. Because I felt it necessary in the interests of the State not to speak too freely in connection with the matter, endeavours were made on many occasions to make capital out of the situation. I feel the time has come, however, for a little straight speaking and some factual remarks in connection with the whole subject.

I refused to lay on the Table of the House certain papers, and there was nothing unusual in that attitude. In the matter of appointments and administration, particularly when action is taking place, the usual procedure is that such papers are not publicly made available. I was asked questions by the member for Moore and the member for Darling Range in connection with the production of certain papers, and I gave an undertaking to both members that if they cared to call at my

office all the papers in connection with this matter would be made freely available to them; and that that invitation would go for any other member.

To reveal how insincere were those who were seeking to embarrass me—and other people, too—not one member of the Opposition came down to my office for the purpose of viewing these papers. They preferred to stand up in their places in this Chamber to embarrass the Government when it was faced with a rather delicate situation created by the previous Government, as members will appreciate if they will bear with me.

The member for Vasse asked whether I would be prepared to lay certain papers on the Table of the House—I refer to the first report of the Forestry Advisory Committee. I informed him that such papers would be made available at the conclusion of my discussions with the Conservator of Forests; and I will be only too happy to lay them on the Table of the House. If it be the wish of members of this Chamber that personal papers be laid upon the Table, I can give an assurance that that will be done, but only after the present matter, which is under action, has been finalised. I believe that anyone with an ounce of sincerity or a sense of responsibility will appreciate the necessity for that.

When last February there was a change of Government—shall I say, with advantage to the State—what was the position that confronted me so far as the Forests Department was concerned? The term of appointment of the senior officer of that department had expired 23 days before I became a Minister—that is to say, on the 31st January—and I asked myself why that position had been allowed to develop. I discussed the question with the Premier and he suggested that I might look thoroughly into the matter before making any recommendation.

Mr. Bovell: Did you sign a renewal of his appointment, or a recommendation?

**THE MINISTER FOR FORESTS:** The position is as—

Mr. Bovell: Answer the question!

**THE MINISTER FOR FORESTS:** Will you have the decency to observe ordinary good manners, please? There was a pretence made the other evening, that the previous Government was so occupied with its electioneering that it simply had not time to deal with the position of the Conservator of Forests, although it had time, four days before polling day, to make a certain important decision with regard to timber royalties on private property and time, five days after the election, to make appointments—about which the Conservator of Forests protested—to the Land Utilisation Committee.

For some reason—and echo answers "Why"—time was not found to deal with the position of Conservator of Forests

when it was known to the Minister and the Government months previously that on the 31st January, 1953, Dr. Stoate's term of office would expire. Nothing was done about renewing the appointment of the Conservator. I had discussions with that officer and one of his earlier requests to me was to arrange for a better classification of the position he occupied. He informed me that in January, 1952, he had approached my predecessor on the question but, in Dr. Stoate's own words, "to date nothing has been done." I took the matter up with the Public Service Commissioner and he reclassified the position, increasing the salary by £400 per annum. The Government then, if I may breach a Cabinet secret, decided unanimously to call applications throughout the Commonwealth of Australia for the position.

Mr. Bovell: As applications closed on the 29th August, how many applications were received?

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: Fourteen, if it makes the hon. member happy. At the same time, the Government decided that a forestry advisory committee should be appointed for the purpose of advising the Minister in respect of certain matters. We have already had a few things to say about the tremendous areas, totalling 400,000 acres, that were made available under permit, and action was subsequently taken by me to withdraw those areas from sale. I wish to make it clear that I had discussions with the Conservator of Forests and he submitted to me a report in respect of certain areas but I say, quite frankly, that I had no conception of what it was that the Conservator of Forests intended to do.

In a minute to him which I signed—as approving—there was, in one case at least, a definite misunderstanding on my part because the recommendation to me, which I misinterpreted, gave a totally different effect and implication to the basis of agreement between the Conservator of Forests and myself at earlier discussions. In any event, that minute from the Conservator of Forests did not cover all the area subsequently advertised for sale and certainly I had no opportunity of scrutinising the conditions under which those areas were to be made available.

It may be of interest to read an extract, not from a letter to me, but from a document that was left with an officer of the State Housing Commission—a document from one of the sawmillers who was a bit upset about the position. My only reason for reading this—there is no occasion to mention the name of the writer—is to indicate the circumstances which influenced me to take a decision to stop the sales until such time as I could better inform myself.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Do you think it wise to read a letter without disclosing who it is from?

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: Very well! It is not a letter and, according to the note attached to it, it was written by a person named Antonovich. It reads—

In connection with the timber concessions which were put up for sale last week, I visited Mr. Graham in his office and lodged a complaint as to the unfair conduct of the Forests Department to all sawmillers excepting one particular firm. In Saturday's issue of "The West Australian" newspaper the Forests Department withdrew all tenders involved in the complaint. I am very interested in this matter and have watched closely the various timber firms' movements. In my opinion, Mr. Graham has done the right thing for all concerned. Still I consider Mr. Graham has a difficult task ahead of him in settling this matter because of the strong opposition that will have to be met.

How true, and how prophetic! I should have said that all the steps taken by the Government in connection with the administration of the Forests Department were discussed by me with the Public Service Commissioner and he concurred in every one of them. Again I asked why had the previous Government not taken steps to fill this position and so I carried out some research on my own account and the results were most revealing. I repeat that I do not wish to make observations of my own, but will recite to members the facts as shown by the papers and the activities of the previous Minister for Forests and the previous Government. I desire to make it perfectly clear that I do not want my attitude to be construed as unnecessarily criticising my predecessor who took certain steps because, in his view, it was necessary to take them.

There is no need for me to go into details as to the reasons for them; it will be sufficient if I outline what was done and what procedure was followed. I wish to speak particularly to those who felt that they had a mission in launching a crusade for one whom they considered was about to be done a grave injustice. These papers will show whether the previous Government was satisfied or worried about the administration of the Forests Department. Firstly, there is a minute dated the 1st December, 1950, from Mr. S. H. Good, Solicitor General, to the Attorney General. I quote—

The Hon. Minister for Forests, Mr. G. P. Wild, desires advice as to whether he can give directions to the Conservator of Forests in regard to the granting of permits, licenses and forest leases under the Forests Act. In my opinion he can, and so long as the direction is within the Act the Conservator will be obliged to comply with the direction.

That minute was passed on to the then Minister for Forests by the Attorney General. That suggests to me that my predecessor was not very happy in the circumstances, and he endeavoured to ascertain what his powers were, so that if need be he could enforce certain things to be done which he felt were not being properly attended to at the time. Then there is a minute from the then Minister for Forests to the Conservator of Forests, dated the 1st December, 1950. It reads—

I am far from satisfied with the action taken in regard to fire prevention at sawmills, since a minute was forwarded by Mr. D. Brand, then Assistant Minister for Forests, on the 13th February, 1950. Please see Crown Law Department and arrange for a regulation to be promulgated immediately.

It goes on—

Please also detail your officers to obtain reports immediately.

Have these reports furnished to your office by the 15th December, 1950, and sent on to me immediately for perusal.

I think that is couched in rather strong terms, and it suggests that the Minister was a little impatient because of what had or had not been done. Then follows a minute signed by L. Thorn, Minister for Lands. It is addressed to the Minister for Forests, dated the 4th July, 1951, and reads as follows:—

On the 20th June, 1950, the Conservator of Forests applied for the reservation of Crown land in the vicinity of State Forests Nos. 32 and 33, and was advised on the 10th November that I was not prepared to allot further land until such time as I had been supplied with a return giving particulars of land held by the Forests Department for the purpose of pine planting. This information was received on the 6th December and advice sent to the Conservator that I was not prepared to release the surveyed locations but would release the unsurveyed Crown land east of Road No. 114. I am now advised that the area released is insufficient to meet the requirements of your department, and further, that part of the area refused has recently been cleared and another large area prepared for bulldozing. I am astounded to think any departmental official would proceed to carry out developmental work on land over which he has no control and despite my refusal to approve of the release of the land. It would almost appear that this work was done to force my hand. I see no reason to alter my previous decision, and should be pleased if you would advise the Conservator accordingly.

I have not the preliminary papers leading up to the next part, but it would appear that the Government determined that a Royal Commission should be appointed to report upon forestry and timber matters in Western Australia. There were nine original terms of reference, and one of them, No. 4, required the Royal Commissioner "To inquire into and report upon forest regulations and administration." I think it might be agreed that the Government must have had some doubts as to the administration of the Forests Department. On the 6th June, the then Minister for Forests, courageously in my opinion, appeared before the Royal Commissioner and gave evidence. In the report of the proceedings, at page 1024, he stated—

In certain cases when applications have been called through the Press for persons desiring to submit applications for various areas, certain phraseology has been used which would only make it possible for one or, possibly, two millers to be in a position to submit applications. In another case, one company has been allowed to erect two large mills on one permit area, whilst similar applications by the State Sawmills have been disallowed.

Mr. Bovell: You want to nationalise the timber industry, by the look of it.

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: At page 1025 the Minister said—

I am certain that the Forests Act and policy in regard to supply and delivery of timber needs drastic alteration.

At page 1030 he said—

I would ask you, Sir, to give my suggestions your careful consideration: (1) A forestry board be set up in Western Australia, consisting of three members.

Mr. Bovell: Read the findings of the Royal Commissioner.

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: If the hon. member will be patient he will have the findings of the Royal Commissioner. Speaking of 1947, the Minister said, on page 1034—

The Minister for Forests of the day gave instructions to the State Sawmills to erect a fruitcase mill at Pemberton. I understand that the Forests Department refused to give the State Sawmills extra cutting rights for this mill. As a result, there was dillydallying, and no decision was made between 1947 and 1949. There was a lag of two years before this timber area was granted.

On page 1053, the then Minister said—

All I can say is that 75 per cent. of his time—

That is the Conservator's time.

—is spent in the country. I am generalising, of course, but as Minister it is extremely difficult for me to be able to interview the Conservator.

On page 1055, the then Minister said—

I have seen very few who are good technical men and at the same time good administrators. I agree that such a man as you suggest would be ideal, but my experience has been such that the two qualifications very rarely run together.

Mr. McCulloch: Hear, hear!

**THE MINISTER FOR FORESTS:** That evidence was given on the 6th June, 1951. In view of the attitude of the Royal Commissioner, and his obvious desire to skate all round the question of the administration of the department, the Government of the day decided that there should be a further term of reference, and it became No. 10. The Royal Commissioner was asked, "To inquire into and report upon whether any, and if so what, changes are desirable in the administration of the Forests Department." There were officers who were prepared to stake their names and reputations, and their experience, and give evidence before that Royal Commission, which—

Mr. Bovell: Which was more than you were prepared to do before a certain Royal Commission.

**THE MINISTER FOR FORESTS:** At present we are discussing forestry matters, and I can see that my remarks are becoming increasingly distasteful to the member for Vasse.

Mr. Bovell: They are nothing of the kind. You are the one who is becoming distasteful.

**THE MINISTER FOR FORESTS:** I can assure the hon. member that, compared with what is to come, he has heard nothing!

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: I think you are taking a rather unfair advantage of an officer who cannot reply. Does the Minister call hitting hard—

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I ask the hon. member to keep order in the House.

**THE MINISTER FOR FORESTS:** I think the member for Mt. Lawley, knowing the facts as he must have appreciated them, would have been well advised to have counselled those who sit behind him, to use an Australianism, "to pull their heads in."

Mr. Bovell: Does the Minister think we will pull our heads in if an injustice is being done?

**THE MINISTER FOR FORESTS:** Then I suggest to the member for Vasse that he should take what is coming to him and not complain of what I am doing.

Mr. Bovell: I will take it.

**THE MINISTER FOR FORESTS:** Very well. I only hope the hon. member will remain silent in the process. I could read copies of letters that were written by a certain witness who was prepared to give evidence on detailed matters of administration and personal aspects of it, but the Royal Commissioner decided that he would place a most limited and restricted interpretation on that term of reference. So it was not possible for this willing witness to proceed. Nothing was done about it, and the significance of it will be seen shortly. In due course the Royal Commissioner delivered his findings and made a number of recommendations. On page 59 of his report he said—

... it is not considered any extensive changes are necessary or desirable in the form of administration.

And that notwithstanding that he did not inquire into that aspect! Continuing—

It is recommended that—

- (1) The form of administration of the Forests Department as provided for under the Forests Act, 1918, be retained.

That was his recommendation. There was great concern about the Government having decided to appoint an advisory committee. What a shocking thing that was in its implications respecting the Conservator of Forests, forgetting, of course, that the previous Government had appointed a prices advisory committee upon which there was not one member from the department concerned! The member for Vasse is one who voted for the Bill embodying the provision because I well remember our desires to have the constitution of the prices advisory committee altered.

Mr. Bovell: I thought the Minister was talking about forestry.

**THE MINISTER FOR FORESTS:** But there is something wrong when a similar course is taken with regard to forestry—that is, in the eyes of the member for Vasse!

Mr. Bovell: There was something wrong with the former Royal Commission that inquired into your accusations made against the State Housing Commission.

**THE MINISTER FOR FORESTS:** Once again we see evidence of the member for Vasse desiring to get away from the subject as it becomes increasingly repugnant to him. On the 14th March, 1952, the then Minister for Forests addressed a communication to the Premier in Cabinet with regard to this matter which arose out of the report of the Royal Commissioner. On the administration of the Forests Department, this is what the Minister said—

The Commissioner recommended the retention of the present form of administration of the Forests Department stating—"In my opinion, the operations of the Forests Department have always been and are still being



conducted as economically as those of any other Forests Department in Australia." He further referred to the lack of an accountancy system within the Department and recommended that one should be set up accordingly. If the Commissioner considered that there was not a proper accounting system then I fail to understand how he could arrive at the decision that the department was being run economically.

Some witnesses before the Commissioner, including the Minister, recommended a commission of three similar to that operating in New South Wales and Victoria. Whilst recommending the retention of single control—i.e. the Conservator of Forests—the Commissioner must have had some doubt on the matter as he left the opening when he stated in his report—"If, despite the above facts, it is decided to appoint a multiple board or commission, it cannot be too strongly urged that the necessary legislation should provide that at least two members should be highly qualified foresters of considerable experience and that one of these two should be the senior member of the commission."

The amended Term of Reference No. 10 was added in July, 1951, with the object of the inquiry into the administration of the Forests Department as the trend of the inquiry to that date suggested that the matter might not be adequately covered under the original Terms of Reference. In this regard the Commissioner refused to hear evidence on this account from Mr. —, who, although giving evidence on their behalf, also asked that he be permitted to give evidence in a private capacity. The senior officers of the Forests Department were asked to express views on the administration of the department, privately and confidentially to the Commissioner, with an assurance that there would be no reference to views expressed in any public proceedings of the Commission. On ordinary conceptions of loyalty, inquiries on these lines could not expect to be anything but abortive. The method of approach was, in my opinion, unethical, indicating as it did that the Commissioner would receive confidentially, adverse comment on administration without giving parties who might be concerned in criticism any right of defence. The evidence does not disclose and as far as is known the Commissioner did not make any approach to senior officers in other departments for evidence on administration of the Forests Department, as, for example, the Department of Industrial Development, the Housing

Commission, the Treasury, the Public Service Commissioner, or the Commonwealth Division of Forests Products. Had such evidence been called for, then I have no doubt that there would have been much adverse criticism of the administration of the department. In this regard Mr. Byfield, the Assistant Under Treasurer who was appointed to assist the Commissioner on finance and administration was not consulted in any way. Further, the senior Assistant Conservator was written to by the Commissioner and asked if, as a senior officer of the Department, he had any suggestions to make with regard to the directions in which he might consider the administration of the department might be improved. The senior Assistant gave the Commissioner a statement as requested, listing the weaknesses of the present administration but was not given the opportunity to give evidence on oath.

From my own experience and from indications given by my two predecessors, Sir Ross McDonald and Mr. Brand, Minister for Works, I am certain that the administration of the Forests Department leaves much to be desired.

As Minister for Forests, during my first twelve months, the Conservator was mostly in the country and rarely was I able to ascertain his whereabouts, whilst continual information reached me that he was at his own property near Busselton. With the commencement of the proceedings of the Forestry Commission, the Conservator spent the greater portion of his time in the city and asked to see me on an average, once or twice per week. Latterly the Conservator has been out of the State for several weeks on the Commonwealth Sirex Wasp Committee and has also agreed to go to New Zealand for a period to advise the New Zealand Government on forestry matters and recently has been pressing to be allowed to go to Canada for a period of four months to attend a Forestry Conference. During his absence from the State no Deputy is appointed and as a result the officers of the department are unwilling to make decisions.

Members will recall that the Royal Commissioner recommended that the present form of administration be retained in the Forests Department. On the 21st April, 1952, the Minister for Forests writes this to the Attorney General—

As a result of the discussions in Cabinet on my report on the Royal Commission into forestry and timber, I was requested by the Crown Law Department to draw up amendments to the Forests Act.

And so the letter goes on. Here let me first say that a Bill was prepared and it set out that there should be a forestry commission of three members, namely, a commissioner and two assistant commissioners. It also provided that the commissioner was to be the senior man and who, at the time of coming into effect of this measure, was to be the Conservator of Forests. That was the original draft. A note attached in a letter from the Minister for Forests to the Attorney General bore these words:—

In view of the deletion of the subsection providing for the appointment of the Conservator as first commissioner, should not subsection 18E (2) (b) be deleted?

From which it will be seen that a decision was made that the Conservator of Forests should not necessarily be the commissioner; he need not necessarily be even one of the assistant commissioners. Yet it is pretended that I, as Minister, and this Government, are doing something to undermine the status of this particular officer.

Mr. Bovell: Did that become an Act?

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: No.

Mr. Bovell: Well, what are you moaning about?

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: Allow me to tell my own story in my own way.

Mr. Bovell: You will do that.

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: This was the Bill or the relevant portion of it:

For the purpose of this Act there shall be a commission by the name of the Forests Commission of Western Australia.

The commission shall consist of three persons appointed by the Governor as members, of whom one shall be Commissioner of the Forests Commission of Western Australia, and of whom each of the other two shall be an assistant commissioner of the Forests Commission of Western Australia.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Was there any Cabinet decision on that Bill at all?

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: Unfortunately the papers are not complete. I am not concerned about that. The point I desire to make is that the Minister in the previous Government, who was in charge of this department and who was familiar with the administration of it, by this Bill or the contents of it, amply reflected his attitude and his concern for some change to be made in the administration. As I stated earlier, I offer no criticism of him for any action he took; I am merely reciting a fact.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: You are making a very nasty attack on a public servant. You say it is necessary, go ahead.

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: I have not said a word. To continue—

The persons appointed to the office of commissioner and to one of the offices of assistant commissioner shall have such academic qualifications and knowledge and experience in the management of forests as the Governor thinks fit.

There is no mention of the Conservator of Forests being one of the persons concerned. Then it goes on—

Subject to the provisions of this Act each person appointed to an office on the commission as a member shall hold that office for a term of seven years and at the expiration of this term be eligible for reappointment.

At a meeting at which the Commissioner and both assistant commissioners are present, the resolution of the majority shall be the resolution of the commission.

In other words, even if the Conservator of Forests had been a member of the commission he could still have been overridden. I would like to mention that the terms in which the Bill was drafted and the intentions of the legislation were never discussed with the Conservator of Forests. They were, however, discussed at length with a subordinate officer. Let me make myself perfectly clear. I do not criticise that officer in any way. There was an approach by his Minister and he gave advice according to his lights as sought by the Minister.

On the 10th April of this year the Conservator of Forests addressed a letter to me, comprising 2½ pages, setting out the reasons why the Forests Department should not have a commission and why the office of conservator should be retained. So it will be seen that the Royal Commission and the present Conservator were both of the opinion that there should be retained the present form of administration. But the Minister and the Government, according to their experience and according to their lights, decided otherwise, and that indicates to anybody, surely, that there were doubts as to the efficacy of control under the present administration. The proposed legislation went further, and this ties up with the criticism about the Forestry Advisory Committee. The draft of the Bill provided as follows:—

For the purposes of this Act there shall be a board by the name of the Forests Appeal Board.

The appeal board was to consist of three members who would be appointed by the Governor and

Of the three persons, one, who shall be chairman of the board, shall be a stipendiary, police or resident magistrate; one shall be a nominee of the commission. One shall be a person who, not being a member of the State

Public Service, has knowledge and experience of the practical or financial aspects of the sawmilling industry in the State.

The members of the board shall hold office as such for such time as the Governor thinks fit.

Here are three gentlemen to comprise a board and to be placed in the position of sitting in judgment, if I might use that term, over the forests administration. These are the notes in connection with it:—

A royalties and appeals board shall be appointed by the Governor to hear and determine any appeal relating to royalty appraisal and the issue of permits.

The permit shall not be issued until any person or persons so desiring, have been heard and the appeal or appeals determined by the appeals board.

The decision of the board, or of a majority of the members of the board, shall, in each case, be reported in writing to the commission and shall be final, and effect shall be given to every such decision.

That is what was proposed. All the present Government has done has been to appoint an advisory committee and each and every one of its recommendations can be rejected by the Minister in his wisdom if he so desires. But under what was proposed by the previous Government—

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: You cannot say that! When I asked you if it had been the result of a Cabinet decision, you said you did not know.

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: If the hon. member is feeling a little touchy, I will say "A Minister of the previous Government." Will that suit him?

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Very well.

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: There was a further recommendation by the Royal Commissioner as follows:—

That the Conservator of Forests be regarded as the adviser to the Government in all forestry matters and that all communications from the department to the Minister be forwarded through the office of the Conservator.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: I suppose the present Minister for Justice has tentative ideas of his own on liquor. I do not suppose they are your views or those of your Government.

The Minister for Lands: What has that got to do with it?

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: We seem to have got a long way away from the subject under discussion. There appears to be a desire to deal with matters not connected with forests. I noticed members on the other side of the House following with considerable relish what they

considered to be my discomfort at a whole barrage of questions that were addressed to me.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: And you were not man enough to take it! You must attack a civil servant!

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: I am merely setting out the matter as it was proposed by the previous Government. I have not yet expressed my own opinion—and I will not do so—as to the satisfactory nature or otherwise of the present administration.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: You are making all sorts of implications that are probably not justified.

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: The implications were made by the previous Government or a Minister of the previous Government. As I was saying, the recommendations of the Royal Commissioner were that the Conservator of Forests should be the medium through whom the Minister should do all his transactions. The reason was that the previous Minister for Forests found it necessary, I assume from the circumstances, to do his business, important and otherwise, confidential and otherwise, through a subordinate officer. That was criticised, but it was done.

I well remember when I paid my first call on the Conservator at his office, his saying how embarrassing it was to him that this procedure should have been followed by my predecessor. May I say it was equally embarrassing and uncomfortable for the Senior Assistant Conservator, who was the officer employed by the Minister of the day for the transaction of this business. I informed the Conservator that, while I was Minister and he was Conservator, my business would be done through him, directly with him, or through some officer authorised by him but not otherwise, and I have followed that practice.

There was set up what is known as a Land Utilisation Committee. The Conservator wrote to me on the 26th February last—only three days after I had assumed office—as follows:—

In February after an announcement in the Press in December, a committee called a Land Utilisation Committee was set up and held its first meeting on the 9th February.

I was not informed, but some action was taken in December during my absence in New Zealand.

The existence of a committee (Land Settlement Co-ordination Committee) which has operated since 1943 when it was set up by the Willcock Government, was apparently overlooked.

This committee which was not dissolved by the last Government, consists of the Surveyor General, the Director of Agriculture and the Conservator of Forests.

The Land Utilisation Committee was set up without the Conservator of Forests having been consulted, without his having been asked to occupy a seat on it, and one of his officers was placed on the committee by the late Government without any reference having been made to the Conservator. Yet I and this Government are being hounded on the ground that we are doing something that is not proper, fair and square and above-board.

Those members who have occupied seats in the House for several years might recall that a Bill was introduced into this Chamber dealing with the Kauri Timber Coy. The Conservator, who has certain very definite functions and responsibilities under the Act, was not consulted in respect to that piece of legislation. His first knowledge of it was when the late Mr. Coverley forwarded a copy of the Bill to him on the same night as it was introduced into the House. Yet it is said that the present Government is taking steps to undermine the authority of, and do an injustice to, a public servant.

There are other comments I could make and there is other evidence I could adduce. Had I felt that I could delay making this address until after a final determination had been reached by the Government, I should not have hesitated to strip everything bare and expose it, because apparently that is the wish and desire of the members for Vasse, Blackwood, Moore, Darling Range and Harvey. I wonder whether there are any more. They do not know the first thing about the departmental administration. They were kept in ignorance of the position and of what was being done by their own Government.

Mr. Bovell: We are here to see that justice is done.

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: The hon. member was not in the least interested to see that justice was done. He imagined that he had a big stick with which he could beat the Minister for Forests and undermine the standing of the present Government. He was being informed by public servants and was attending meetings of public servants where he had no business to be.

Mr. Bovell: To whom are you referring?

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: The member for Vasse.

Mr. Bovell: I never attended such a meeting.

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: He has also discussed with senior officers matters that have passed between them and myself.

Mr. Bovell: I deny that emphatically.

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: I know the hon. member does, but that does not alter the truth. The hon. member stood in his place and shouted that

he knew to his certain knowledge that every officer of the Forests Department was perturbed at what is going on at present. I should be surprised if he knew of the approaches being made by senior officers of the department in this matter. Consequently I am not in any way influenced by the extreme utterances of the member for Vasse.

Mr. Bovell: You are influenced only by your own ego.

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: I am not influenced by something entirely irrelevant such as that remark. So we had the predeliction on the part of the hon. member last week and the week before to discuss forestry matters and tonight he is most anxious to run away from the subject. In view of what I have recounted tonight, largely without comment and taken from records which I was fortunate enough to locate—they are not official files in the ordinary sense but contain miscellaneous papers that were in the Minister's office—

Mr. Bovell: They were personal matters belonging to the former Minister.

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: I was assured that was not so, so the hon. member cannot take a trick even in that way. In view of what I have been able to adduce here tonight in a restricted sense owing to the delicate nature of the situation, is any member now in any doubt whatever as to why the previous Government was hesitant in the matter of making an appointment? It is obvious that the previous Government was giving serious consideration to the question of making most radical changes in the administration of the department. I am not aware that I, as a brand new Minister, was expected to make a decision immediately and prevail upon the Government to accept it. On the counsel and advice of the Premier, I decided to wait a while, and I believe that subsequent events and information that has reached me amply justify the steps that have been taken.

There is every justification for the Government having taken the steps that it has done. Let me say quite frankly that, as Minister for Forests, I perhaps had certain big advantages over others who have held that portfolio. I was born and reared in the country; I worked for six years in the Department of Lands and Surveys and for 10 years in the Forests Department in a professional capacity, not as a junior officer as stated by the member for Vasse.

Mr. Bovell: And now you have become a professional politician.

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: I did that 10 years ago. What has the present Government done? It realised that there had been a hesitancy on the part of its predecessor to make an appointment and

accordingly delayed for a period taking any specific or precipitate action. As time dragged on, in conformity with the requests of the Conservator of Forests, the position was reclassified, something which 18 months ago the previous Government or the previous Minister apparently did not, or would not, do. It then decided that as the seven-year term had expired, and there was no obligation, implied or otherwise, for a reappointment, to call applications for the purpose of reviewing the situation.

In the meantime, in order to deal with certain pressing questions, the Government decided that the Minister for Forests, who could not hope to have an intimate knowledge of 400,000 acres of forest country, should get information from persons who were qualified, who had had experience in the Forests Department, and none of whom was connected with a sawmilling enterprise that cut timber over which the Forests Department had any control. Was there anything very dreadful in what the Government did? There is no need to labour the point. Sufficient has been said this evening—and I have spoken with great reluctance—to indicate that the action of the Government has been amply warranted. It is all very well for the member for Greenough to have a smile to himself in connection with this matter, as though he doubts my word.

Hon. D. Brand: I thought it did not sound as reluctant as you made out, that is all.

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: It is all very well for the Opposition to assume the role of the righteously indignant. One of its counterparts in the Legislative Council has at this moment an indication on the notice paper of his intention to move that certain papers be laid on the Table of the House. That was not attempted here, because it was known that the numbers could not be obtained. When that notice of motion was given there was no regard whatsoever as to what might be revealed, not only to members here; but to the public of Western Australia.

Mr. Bovell: Do you not think they are entitled to information?

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: The hon. member is getting some information tonight, and he and the member for Mt. Lawley are both protesting that I am disclosing things that should not be revealed, whereas a few short days ago one of their fellow members in the Legislative Council was anxious for certain papers to be disclosed—a remarkable reversal of form! They cannot have it both ways. As members know perfectly well, I am built in such a fashion that I do not take kindly to people throwing punches at me right and left and I usually endeavour to throw a few verbal ones back.

It has been all I have been able to do for the past several weeks to restrain myself as long as I have; and I have endeavoured this evening to submit facts, as revealed by the papers and records, without giving my own impressions, which would be improper, of what I think and what my experience has been as Minister for Forests. I can assure the entire House and the people of Western Australia that much consideration has already been given by the Government to this matter and that this important question will receive the consideration it deserves when final decisions are made. All may rest assured that such decisions will be reached without personal favour but in the very best interests of the State.

On motion by the Minister for Railways, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 9.55 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 2nd September, 1953.

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