

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: No. I will read the portion of the letter concerned. It is dated the 20th July and is as follows—

Arising out of the interview which you and — had with me this morning, I desire to inform you that the Department of Local Government has been notified that I am prepared to agree to your Company carrying until the end of August a load of five tons on the vehicle in connection with which you have, during the past three years, had a permit to exceed the regulation axle loading.

Here is the Public Works Department advising the Local Government Department—which has the right to grant and take away the permit—that the permit had been taken away. The Department of Public Works had no power to say to anybody what he should and should not carry on that particular section of road. That is the duty of the Traffic Department and the Transport Board. It was the duty of the Minister for Transport to determine whether the permit should be renewed or cancelled.

Dealing further with the questions I asked last week, I inquired whether the entire population of Shark Bay relied upon road transport for groceries and foodstuffs, and the answer was, "Yes," but in reply to another question as to the approximate weekly tonnage of these requirements that were transported by road, I was merely informed that the information was not available. I feel that before the permit was taken away, an inquiry should have been made as to the tonnage of the commodities required. What is it going to cost the people and the industry there and could not some other arrangement be made so that these commodities might still be transported there economically?

It is not sufficient just to refuse to extend the permit without making inquiries into the possibility of getting commodities there at a reasonably cheap rate, instead of making these charges as dear as possible. But apparently nothing has been done along those lines. The questions I asked of the Minister for the North-West—questions that mainly came under his department—were answered in a very satisfactory manner, and I appreciate that very much. He gave me quite a lot of detail which was very informative, and I wish to thank him. I believe in giving a little credit where credit is due. I support the motion.

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

*House adjourned at 8.33 p.m.*

# Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 24th August, 1955.

## CONTENTS.

	Page
Questions : Main Roads Department, (a) receipts, disbursements and interest	282
(b) use of Kwinana bitumen	282
Metropolitan local authorities, reason for reduction	282
Education, (a) automotive trade school, site	284
(b) Mayanup school quarters, removal, etc.	284
(c) Chowurup, cost of new quarters	284
(d) Mayanup school quarters, negotiations for sale	284
(e) Carnarvon school buildings	284
(f) technical school, Derby	284
Railways, (a) freights on timber	284
(b) minimising fire risks	285
Broken Hill Pty. Ltd., royalty on Cockatoo Island ore	285
Fishing industry, undersized nets, Shark Bay	285
Transport, private bus fares	285
Auditor General's report, tabling of Section "A," 1955	285
Rural & Industries Bank, capital from loan funds	285
Delinquent boys, Seaforth Home and Stoneville Farm School	286
Housing, land resumptions, Canning electorate	286
Address-in-reply, eighth day, conclusion	286
Speakers on Address—	
Mr. Owen	286
The Minister for Lands	292
Hon. Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver	298
Mr. Oldfield	303
The Minister for Native Welfare	306
Bills : Main Roads Act Amendment, 1r.	309
Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Act Amendment, 1r.	309
Medical Act Amendment, 1r.	309
Associations Incorporation Act Amendment, 1r.	310
Electoral Districts Act Amendment, 1r.	310
Jury Act Amendment (No. 1), 1r.	310
Police Act Amendment, 1r.	310
Spear-guns Control, 1r.	310
Electoral Act Amendment, 1r.	310
University of Western Australia Act Amendment, 1r.	310
Jury Act Amendment (No. 2), 1r.	310
Free Enterprise Protection, 1r.	310

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

## QUESTIONS.

### MAIN ROADS DEPARTMENT.

(a) Receipts, Disbursements and Interest.

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

(1) What proportion of the metropolitan traffic fees is paid to the Main Roads Department?

(2) For the last four financial years, what amounts were paid to the Main Roads Department under this heading?

(3) Is any amount paid to the Main Roads Department out of the transport co-ordination fund, and if so, what did this amount to for the same years?

(4) How much of the amounts referred to in Nos. (2) and (3) was expended in the metropolitan area as defined under the Traffic Act?

(5) How much of moneys derived from Federal aid road fund (petrol tax) was received by this State in each of the last four financial years?

(6) How much of amounts so received in each year was expended in the metropolitan area, and on what principal works?

(7) Did the Main Roads Department make any contribution to interest and/or sinking fund on loans previously used for road purposes, and if so, how much in each of the same financial years?

(8) Was the money mentioned in No. (7) derived from any specific source of the Main Roads Department revenue, and if so, from what source?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Twenty-two and a half per cent. after 10 per cent. has been deducted to recoup cost of collection. In addition to this 22½ per cent., metropolitan traffic fees provide for maintenance of roads specifically mentioned in the Traffic Act.

22½% Maintenance.

	£	£
(2) 1951-52 ....	85,196	20,000
1952-53 ....	94,428	44,000
1953-54 ....	103,836	43,000
1954-55 ....	117,139	48,000

(3) Yes.

	£
1951-52 ....	21,727
1952-53 ....	31,945
1953-54 ....	30,085
1954-55 ....	28,985

(4) (a) All receipts from metropolitan traffic fees are spent in the metropolitan area.

(b) Transport Board funds: Of an expenditure of £140,000 over the last four years, £2,000 was spent outside the metropolitan area.

	£
(5) 1951-52 ....	2,841,560
1952-53 ....	2,864,584
1953-54 ....	3,190,740
1954-55 ....	4,389,504

(6) Information is available for the expenditure in the metropolitan area from petrol tax funds for the years 1953-54 and 1954-55. Particulars concerning the years 1951-52 and 1952-53 will be supplied next week.

1953-54: Approximately 7 per cent.

1954-55: Approximately 15 per cent. which includes £360,000 set aside for Narrows bridge.

Principal Works:

Construction and improvement of the metropolitan road system.

New causeway.

Narrows bridge (funds in trust).

(7) Yes.

	£
1951-52 ....	70,272
1952-53 ....	70,000
1953-54 ....	70,000
1954-55 ....	70,000

(8) From petrol tax to recoup interest and sinking fund payments from traffic fees.

(b) *Use of Kwinana Bitumen.*

Hon. C. F. J. NORTH asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Is the existing Main Roads Department capable of utilising all the bitumen available from Kwinana?

(2) Will this mean taking on extra personnel and machinery?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No. The bitumen used by the Main Roads Department will only be part of the Kwinana production.

(2) Personnel and machinery will be built up to cope with the normal expansion of the department's programme, and will depend on the funds available for this class of work.

#### METROPOLITAN LOCAL AUTHORITIES.

*Reason for Reduction.*

Hon. C. F. J. NORTH asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

(1) Was the action taken to reduce the number of metropolitan local authorities based upon an attempt to reduce the cost of such government to the ratepayers?

(2) Is he aware that in certain of the areas affected, for instance in Claremont, claims are made that, on the contrary, fewer authorities will mean increased rates to the citizens affected?

(3) Would it be possible to have the conflicting claims tested before the changes are effected?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied:

(1) Yes, and to effect greater efficiency in administration.

(2) No.

(3) Such aspects were thoroughly investigated prior to Cabinet's decision.

## EDUCATION.

(a) *Automotive Trade School, Site.*

Hon. C. F. J. NORTH asked the Minister for Education:

Whereabouts is the new automotive trade school to be situated?

The MINISTER replied:

No site has yet been acquired.

(b) *Mayanup School Quarters, Removal, etc.*

Mr. HEARMAN asked the Minister for Education:

(1) Is he aware that the Education Department proposes to spend £2,850 in shifting the school quarters from Mayanup to Chowerup?

(2) What alterations, renovations and additions are envisaged to the existing building?

(3) Are prefabricated houses of the type built by the State Housing Commission regarded as suitable for school quarters?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) and (2) This matter is under consideration.

(3) Yes.

(c) *Chowerup, Cost of New Quarters.*

Mr. HEARMAN asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) What would be the approximate cost of erecting a prefab house at Chowerup that would be suitable for use as school quarters?

(2) Have any such houses been erected previously for use as school quarters?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Estimated cost, type 20A—2 bedroom and sleepout—excluding fencing, £2,250.

(2) Yes, at Rocky Gully and Frankland River.

(d) *Mayanup School Quarters, Negotiations for Sale.*

Mr. HEARMAN asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Is there any record in the Public Works Department of any negotiations having been entered into between that department and any local organisation for the sale of the school quarters at Mayanup? (Mayanup School is sometimes referred to as the Scotts' Brook school.)

(2) What figure, if any, was mentioned with regard to price?

(3) If the answer to No. (1) is "Yes," why did the negotiations break down?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) An inquiry of long standing has been received, but no negotiations have been entered into.

(2) and (3) Answered by No. (1).

(e) *Carnarvon School Buildings.*

Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Education:

(1) Has a decision been made yet for the old school building at Carnarvon to be removed and used as a manual training and drawing centre?

(2) Is it still intended to convert and use the general science room in the Carnarvon Junior High School for a domestic science training centre?

(3) If the answer to No. (2) is "No," what is the intention of the department with regard to a domestic science training centre?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) It is proposed to erect a new manual training and technical drawing centre on the new site at Carnarvon.

(2) Yes.

(3) Answered by No. (2).

(f) *Technical School, Derby.*

Mr. RHATIGAN asked the Minister for Education:

What action, if any, has been taken since he announced his intention of building a technical school at Derby?

The MINISTER replied:

It is expected that funds will be made available for the first two stages of this project during the current financial year.

Stage (1) The construction of a new school consisting of three classrooms and a home science centre and schoolmaster's quarters.

Stage (2) The conversion and equipping of the old school into a trades school.

## RAILWAYS.

(a) *Freights on Timber.*

Mr. BOVELL asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) What amounts of rail freight per ton mile are charged on timber scantlings and sleepers—

(a) timber mill to port for shipment interstate by sea;

(b) timber mill to Parkeston for rail to the Eastern States?

(2) In the event of freight being cheaper for timber forwarded by rail to the Eastern States, why is a concession allowed?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) (a) and (b) Due to the telescoping of freight rates, the average rate per ton mile varies with the distance the consignment is hauled. Without specifying loading and unloading stations, average rates per ton mile cannot be quoted. However, timber for export by sea is freighted at "A" Class and that for export through Kalgoorlie at "Miscellaneous" Class.

(2) This forms portion of a special inter-system rate in fixing which consideration was given to the fact that wagons were being hauled empty to Kalgoorlie to accommodate westbound freight.

*(b) Minimising Fire Risks.*

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

(1) Does he agree that there will be a heavy growth of grass and feed in rural areas during the coming summer as a result of copious rains?

(2) If so, is the Railway Department taking any special steps to minimise the risk of fires being started by locomotives?

(3) If so, what will be done?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Indications are that this will be so.

(2) and (3) Special attention will be paid to firebreaks and close touch will be maintained with inspectors of the Bush Fires Board appointed under the Bush Fires Act, 1954.

**BROKEN HILL PTY. LTD.**

*Royalty on Cockatoo Island Ore.*

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

(1) Has there been any increase of royalty paid by the Broken Hill Pty. Co. Ltd. on iron ore taken from Cockatoo Island?

(2) If so, what is the increased amount per ton being paid?

(3) Was this increase a voluntary action of the company, or did the Government make a request for increased royalties?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) 1s.

(3) By voluntary action of the company. However, about this time the price of steel increased by approximately 9 per cent.

**FISHING INDUSTRY.**

*Undersized Nets, Shark Bay.*

Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Fisheries:

(1) Has he any knowledge of freezer boats operating in Shark Bay waters with undersize nets?

(2) If so, will he advise the House what action has been taken?

The MINISTER replied:

Officers of the Fisheries Department are at the moment investigating complaints as to the use by one freezer-boat of a net having meshes smaller than the minimum permitted in Shark Bay. Arrangements have already been made for a senior officer of the department to be in Denham next week to follow the matter through.

**TRANSPORT.**

*Private Bus Fares.*

Mr. COURT asked the Minister for Transport:

With reference to my question appearing in the Votes and Proceedings of the 18th August, 1955, headed, "Transport—Increased Bus Fares," would he please advise the House—

(a) Which years of operation he referred to when he replied, "In past years some operators realised net profits of over 70 per cent. and even over 100 per cent. per annum on funds invested?"

(b) Were there any special circumstances in those years?

(c) Which operators achieved these results?

(d) Will he seek the approval of the operators concerned, and if such approval is given, table the accounts of such operators in respect of the periods covered by paragraph (a) above, together with the accounts for all periods up to and including the current accounts under review?

The MINISTER replied:

(a) The financial years 1941-42 to 1945-46 inclusive.

(b) Wartime restrictions were in force affecting liquid fuel, tyres, spare parts and vehicles.

(c) and (d) It is not the policy to divulge information received in confidence from individual operators. It is suggested that the members for Nedlands seek the desired information direct from operators.

**AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT.**

*Tabling of Section "A", 1955.*

Hon. A. F. WATTS asked the Treasurer:

How soon is Section "A" of the Auditor General's report for the year ended the 30th June, 1955, likely to be made available to this House?

The TREASURER replied:

It is expected that Section "A" of the report will be ready for presentation to Parliament during the latter half of October.

**RURAL & INDUSTRIES BANK.**

*Capital from Loan Funds.*

Hon. A. F. WATTS asked the Treasurer:

(1) Was any additional capital provided from loan funds to the Rural & Industries Bank for the year ended the 30th June, 1955?

(2) If so, what sum was provided?

The TREASURER replied:

(1) No.

(2) Answered by No. (1).

### DELINQUENT BOYS.

*Seaforth Home and Stoneville Farm School.*

Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Child Welfare:

(1) Was the decision to cease sending delinquent boys to Seaforth made at the request of the Melbourne headquarters of the Salvation Army?

(2) As the decision was based on an anxiety to expand the welfare work on behalf of delinquents, why was such expansion not undertaken at Seaforth Home, which had been caring for such boys for the past 35 years?

(3) Is financial assistance being given to the Anglican farm school at Stoneville for the erection or improvement of buildings, etc?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) and (2) The decision resulted from negotiations between the Government and the Salvation Army.

(3) Yes.

### HOUSING.

*Land Resumptions, Canning Electorate.*

Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) Of 106 blocks on which homes were already erected that had been resumed in the Canning electorate and were returned, were all such houses and blocks returned complete?

(2) If "No" is the answer to No. (1), how many blocks had certain areas excised by resumption and were not returned to the owners?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No. Inadvertently an incorrect figure was given on Tuesday, the 23rd August. Instead of 106 the figure should read 146. Error was caused through basing figures on new electoral boundaries instead of existing boundaries.

(2) 112.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

*Eighth Day—Conclusion.*

Debate resumed from the previous day on the motion of the adoption of the Address, as amended.

MR. OWEN (Darling Range) [4.45]: I propose to have a few words to say, first of all, on the problem of traffic control, road safety and traffic accidents. Other members have spoken on this subject and I think we must all agree that it is a most serious problem when, as has been recorded in the daily Press, there were 185 road deaths last year—an average of one death every second day. That is an appalling state of affairs and I am convinced that a great deal more attention should be given to questions of road safety. It has often

been contended that the majority of road accidents and deaths are caused by speed, but I do not altogether agree with that because I feel there is such a thing as speed with safety.

The Minister for Police: The police do not blame all the accidents or even a high percentage of them on to speed.

Mr. OWEN: Some of the statistics given in Press reports put quite a few accidents down to speed.

The Minister for Police: You should not take any notice of them.

Mr. OWEN: I believe that the slow driver can be a greater menace on the road than the sensible speedy driver.

The Premier: Was it the hon. member who passed me coming down from Mundaring the other day?

Mr. OWEN: It may have been.

The Minister for Education: You must have been moving.

Mr. OWEN: Perhaps I would not have to be speeding to pass the Premier, as he is very slow in some ways. I believe that the slow driver, particularly he who refuses to give way and allow faster traffic to pass, is the cause of many accidents. Only last Sunday week when journeying to Northam I had this point emphasised to me by slow drivers who would not give way. Very soon there builds up behind such a slow driver a queue of vehicles, each waiting to pass the vehicle in front. Suddenly some impatient driver decides to pass, often on a winding section of the road, such as that near Bakers Hill.

I witnessed several near misses when impatient drivers endeavoured to speed past other cars and were barely able to get back to the correct side of the road before some other vehicle came around the bend travelling in the opposite direction. In fact, I did see what could have been a very serious accident just outside the Army camp at Northam and it was caused by a slow driver refusing to give way to the traffic following behind him. I feel that there will have to be more done to educate drivers to exercise care and commonsense rather than drive slowly, because the slow driver is a definite menace to road transport and traffic generally.

In the metropolitan area and particularly the approaches, something will have to be done to speed up the traffic. It stands to reason that if the traffic is speeded up there will be less congestion on the roads and so I am sure that in the not distant future, we will have to make provision for minimum speed limits, with separate lanes or by-passes for slow drivers, horse-drawn vehicles and heavy traffic which cannot proceed at a reasonable pace. Very often one sees a slow vehicle in a lane of traffic and before long there is congestion for half a mile back.

If the slow or timid driver had a lane of his own or a by-pass in which to travel slowly it would allow the more speedy vehicles to go on their way without congestion. Another matter in which a bit of speed might well be used by those in charge of traffic is where an accident takes place and vehicles are involved in a smash. I feel that the first charge on the traffic authorities should be to get the damaged vehicles off the road as soon as possible. But instead they lie there until a traffic constable arrives and marks off the position of the vehicle in yellow chalk and, in the meantime, the traffic is allowed to pass by spasmodically.

The Minister for Police: And sometimes a person gets killed at the scene of the accident, too.

Mr. OWEN: Yes. It seems to me that such vehicles are left at the scene of the accident far too long. If the positions of the vehicles were quickly marked off and the vehicles then pushed off the road or allowed to proceed under their own power, it would assist in preventing hold-ups which lead to traffic congestion and accidents.

Some two or three months ago, the traffic police, in an endeavour to educate drivers of motor-vehicles, made several traffic blitzes on them. They seemed to choose certain faults that were committed by drivers and endeavoured to prevent or eliminate many of them and while so doing they prosecuted many of the offenders. That move in itself is very commendable, but immediately the police completed a blitz by concentrating on one fault they would proceed to blitz another fault and forget about the original one.

In the main I think the net result achieved very little towards educating drivers in good traffic methods. In fact, if one proceeded down St. George's Terrace or towards the Causeway at any time of the day, one could see many examples of faulty driving. Many drives have been made by the National Safety Council, the Junior Chamber of Commerce and other organisations on road courtesy and road safety. Apart from exhorting drivers to "Stay alive in '55," they pointed out quite a few driving faults.

One that struck me as being effective, but which was out of place in other ways, was the slogan, "Don't be a weaver." Any-one who constantly drives a vehicle does not appreciate another driver pulling in in front of him. Nevertheless, I consider that one has to be a weaver in many instances because if one believes in the principle of keeping to the left, one should drive on the left-hand side of the road. However, if one wishes to pass a vehicle, one has to pull to the right-hand side of the road and then pull back to the left-hand side again as quickly as possible. Therefore, the slogan "Don't be a weaver" should have been explained more fully and the

promoters of it should have asked people to keep to the left and, when passing a vehicle, pull to the right and then immediately cross to the left-hand side of the road again.

When a driver has to be a weaver is when he has to negotiate the rotary at each end of the Causeway. At those spots, if a driver is proceeding to traverse the Causeway from Perth and wishes to turn to the right round the rotary in order to proceed to South Perth, by keeping to the middle or the right-hand side of the Causeway and then turning to the left, he should proceed right over to the left between the turn-off to the Great Eastern Highway and the next section where Guildford-rd. enters the rotary.

If the traffic proceeds well over to the left of that point and then turns slightly right again, it would be travelling nearly parallel with the traffic that is coming from Guildford. In the short distance allowed—unfortunately, it is far too short—the traffic coming from Guildford should weave its way between the traffic that is going to Victoria Park and then, as it proceeds further round the rotary, those vehicles that wish to proceed to South Perth should weave their way to the extreme left, whereas those that are travelling from Guildford and Victoria Park to Perth should, by that time, have weaved their way to the right and have proceeded on to the Causeway.

Mr. Yates: Motorists take no notice of the regulations applying to the Causeway. They weave all over the place.

Mr. OWEN: That is quite right. I maintain they should keep between the white lines.

Mr. Yates: Those white lines have not been on the road for months.

Mr. OWEN: There should not be white lines on the rotary section. The motorists weave to get into their respective positions. There is no need for a driver always to give way to the person on the right because for a short distance he is travelling parallel with the traffic and the man who wants to turn to the left should slow down slightly, and the driver on his left then moves ahead to enable the following driver to go through. It is only a question of the driver watching the car at the side of him or the one in front of him and timing his weaving movement. If the correct hand signals are given, there should be no trouble.

However, what do we see now? All those that come on to the Causeway to enter the rotary pull right over to the right, or follow in single file, whereas there is room for two cars on the left of them. When the driver who wishes to proceed to Victoria Park is on the right-hand side and desires to cross the traffic to enable him to proceed along Albany Highway, he is

passing more or less at right angles to the traffic that is coming into the rotary from Guildford and, as a result, one has to give way to the other.

If, as I suggest, the motorist pulls over to the left and enters that section between the Guildford inlet and the lane coming off the Causeway, he will be travelling parallel with traffic coming from Guildford. The driver who wished to go to Victoria Park could gradually veer over to the left of the man coming from Guildford who wishes to go to South Perth who, in turn could veer over to the right. The traffic could then proceed in various directions quite steadily.

There is no need for a vehicle to stop if the driver takes his place in that short section between the inlet and the outlet to the rotary. If the motorists would observe those rules the traffic would move around the rotary much smoother than it does now. Also, by keeping on the move this would tend to avoid the hold-ups which often occur on the Causeway at present.

There is another aspect of the traffic regulations that deserves attention and that is in connection with hand signals. Unfortunately, in this State, there appears to be only two hand signals given. One is, if the driver wishes to turn to the right he extends his arm at right angles to his body and the other is that if he wishes to slow down, come to a halt or turn to the left, he bends the arm and holds the hand in an upright position. More hand signals than those now in force in this State should be used.

In Victoria several other hand signals are used, one of which is to indicate by the usual stop sign, an intention to stop only, and for nothing else. When a motorist desires to slow down, there is a different signal given to following cars indicating to them to slow down also. Another signal is used to indicate to motorists behind that the road is clear for them to overtake. If a motorist wishes to turn to the left, he indicates to drivers following that the road ahead is clear for them to pass. Those extra signals would give a much clearer indication of the intention of a driver.

Under the system used in this State, the stop signal indicates slowing down, or slowing down to turn to the left, as well as stopping. This can be rather confusing, particularly to drivers from the opposite direction, or to pedestrians. A motorist travelling in the opposite direction and seeing a signal might misinterpret it as indicating the intention of the driver to stop, and not merely to slow down and might cross over in front of him.

The same applies with pedestrians who could misinterpret the slow-down signal as a signal to stop. If they should cross over the road, they are liable to meet with an accident on the way. I suggest that

our system of hand-signalling should be examined with a view to evolving a few more signals to give a better indication of the intention of the motorist. After all, a signal given should be a clear indication to traffic behind or in the opposite direction, of a driver's intention.

I mentioned that it should be the basic principle of traffic laws to keep to the left. I find that on most roads this regulation is very often neglected. This can be seen at any time of the day between the Barracks and the Causeway. Drivers are inclined to hug the white line on the centre of the road—fast and slow drivers alike. They make no attempt to pull over to the left to allow other vehicles to overtake them.

Generally speaking, the slow driver is a menace to traffic because he prevents following motorists from going at the normal speed. The only recourse for following motorists is to pull over the centre line so as to pass a slow car on the right, and thus risk a head on collision with cars coming from the opposite direction. Very often drivers following a slow car which is hugging the centre, are tempted to pass it on the left, thereby breaking the regulation and endangering themselves and other vehicles. A lot of this could be avoided by erecting traffic notices "Keep to the left," as was done many years ago. If that rule is more firmly ingrained into motorists it will avoid many of the present-day traffic accidents. There is another matter which may not be out of place for me to mention at this juncture, and that refers to the section on the Causeway between the bridges where there is a stretch of lawn in the centre.

No doubt that serves a useful purpose at present by dividing the traffic and by adding a certain amount of beauty to the drive, but as the volume of traffic increases it may become necessary, as it became necessary on the Sydney harbour bridge, to utilise more than three lanes of traffic going in one direction, particularly during peak periods. Should that become necessary at the Causeway, then the gardens situated at the centre are very badly placed, and the fourth line of traffic would have to use a lane on the wrong side of the gardens. I contend that it would have been better to have left the gardens out altogether when that section of the Causeway was constructed.

I would like to make one or two observations relating to agriculture. I am sure the Minister is aware of one of them, and that is the urgent need for a horticultural research station. I know that this matter has received a lot of attention, and is still receiving it from the Minister and the department. I trust that the opportunity which now appears to exist for the purchase of a property will not be missed so that such a station may be established at an early date. This State has for many years

gone without a research station and I feel that the horticultural industry has suffered from the lack of one.

Of course, I realise that many of the delays were beyond the control of the Minister and the department, but at the same time I urge him to take every step possible to secure a property for this purpose. On several occasions I have mentioned in this House many matters which should be covered by research undertaken in this State. One which was brought to my notice recently is the need to introduce new varieties of the various fruits grown in this State. With apples there has been a great swing to the growing of the Granny Smith variety. Although it is an excellent variety and very easy to grow, unfortunately the large quantity grown causes difficulties in the handling of the fruit in a given period. Granny Smith apples now comprise nearly 50 per cent. of the apple production of Western Australia and this has resulted in the export season being greatly shortened. It is very difficult to handle the great amount of fruit in a shorter period.

Furthermore, I consider that many overseas customers would prefer a coloured apple to a Granny Smith. Although the growers in Western Australia and in the other States are doing their best to find suitable varieties that are easy to grow and acceptable for export, I feel that we should bring varieties from other parts of the world and give them a trial at our horticultural research station to determine whether they are suitable for local conditions, before they are made available to commercial orchards.

Only 12 months ago one of the leading apple-growers in this State paid a visit to the United States and Canada to examine the latest trend in horticulture. I am sure that this grower, Mr. Hector Price, of Karragullen, benefited greatly from the trip, but it does seem strange that when he returned to the State he should be placed in the position of having to advise officers of the horticultural branch on what they should do. The position should be reversed; the horticultural branch should be in a position to advise growers of the latest practice in the United States and other countries, and on the most suitable varieties here.

In this case, Mr. Price, as a commercial orchardist, gave lectures not only to his fellow-growers but to the horticultural officers as well, and to growers in other States. The knowledge thus gained by Mr. Price will be of great value to himself as well as to the apple-growing industry in this State. I contend again that the horticultural branch should have been given an opportunity to acquire the knowledge which Mr. Price gained. If a horticultural research station were available, then the opportunity would exist for departmental officers to gain such knowledge and to conduct research, so that

through the department's extension officers the results could be passed on to the fruitgrowers in the State.

The need for research applies to other branches of horticulture such as citrus and stone fruit. These sections are also in great need of advice as to the latest practice and the most suitable varieties that have proved themselves in other countries. I hope that the Minister will see fit to make officers of the department available to study those questions, and, if possible, to enable them to visit other States and countries, with a view to keeping Western Australia up to date on those matters.

There is one further matter relating to horticulture and viticulture which I would mention, and that is the need for a plant quarantine station in this State. Some months ago Professor Ilmo, who is a Fulbright scholar, came here to study problems of viticulture in Western Australia. He has been here for some time on this work. Recently a Press report was published giving publicity to the fact that in our vine-growing areas the presence of eel-worms or nematodes, which live on the roots and very definitely affect the health of the vines, had become apparent.

I might say that the first Press report gave the impression that the nematodes were the major cause of our vines declining. I felt at the time that that was a sweeping statement; and discussing the matter with the professor later, I was told that that was not the impression he had wished to convey. But it is certain that eel worms have a big influence on the health and vigour of our vines in the Swan Valley. The professor, who is possibly one of the leading authorities on viticulture, has suggested that the best way to overcome nematode trouble is to work any future plantings of vines on root stocks that are resistant to nematodes. Unfortunately, we have none of those resistant stocks in this State, and it would be necessary to import them from California or other American States.

Mr. Andrew: Have we not imported some of those vines?

Mr. OWEN: Not the nematode-resistant vines. There is another root trouble that affects vines, and that is phylloxera; and a certain number of phylloxera-resistant stocks have been imported into this State, though as yet there have been no widespread plantings of them.

Mr. Andrew: It is what they call the wild vine.

Mr. OWEN: That is one type of wild vine. The trouble of which I am speaking at the moment is that caused by nematodes, and there is also a vine which is resistant to them. I understand that vine is a native of South America, but is quite suitable for the propagation of commercial types of grapes. It is definite that we need that type of stock here; but because of the



danger of introducing other vine diseases, it is necessary that fairly strict quarantine precautions be taken. Therefore, after such vines have been imported, and before they are distributed to commercial growers, they must be grown under quarantine conditions, in order to prove that they are not affected by those other diseases. Consequently, we must have a quarantine station, preferably isolated from our commercial vineyards — and our fruit-growing areas for that matter — where the imported stock can be grown and kept under observation for one or two years prior to release.

I would urge upon the Minister that serious consideration be given to the establishment of such a quarantine station in Western Australia. Plant quarantine is a Federal matter, of course, and any work undertaken in that direction would have to be carried out in conjunction with the Commonwealth quarantine authorities. But as the superintendent of horticulture in this State is the chief plant quarantine officer for Western Australia, he would be in charge of any plant quarantine station here, and it would be run in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture. Previously, any imported plants that needed to be grown in quarantine have been kept at Muresk Agricultural College, and I think that that would be a very suitable place at which to establish a quarantine station. In conjunction with that station, it might be necessary—it probably would be necessary—to have a glass house in which to grow plants. It must be remembered that the climatic conditions of Western Australia are just the opposite of those of lands in the northern hemisphere, and it may be necessary to grow some plants under glass for a period in order to acclimatise them to our conditions.

I hope that the Minister will give serious consideration to the establishment of such a quarantine station. Apart from resistant vine stocks, it might be necessary to import trees of new varieties; and they, too, would have to be grown under quarantine conditions for one or two years. So a quarantine station, if established, would serve a very useful purpose both from the point of view of horticulture and that of other branches of agriculture.

Whilst speaking on agricultural matters, I would like to veer a little to another aspect affecting my own electorate. I refer to the need for extra land being made available for agriculture in the Darling Range district. Many places in the southern section of the electorate, embracing Pickering Brook and Carilla—which, incidentally, is one of the leading fruit-growing districts in the State—have been planted to their full extent, and there is no spare land attached to the existing holdings. Most of the orchard properties are being run by a second—and

some by a third—generation of proprietors, and the young folk cannot take up any land nearby to be run in conjunction with the property of their fathers.

Very often, if a property contained a few more acres, it would be suitable for two families to live on. Unfortunately, however, not much land is available, and it is necessary for the younger folk to leave their home districts and take up land elsewhere. That often leads to difficulties, particularly when it comes to the starting of a new place. Many young people are thus lost to the industry. If a man is in the same district or on a property adjacent to that owned by his father, it is easy for him to become established, because he can make use of many of the implements on the old property, and can receive some assistance from his parents.

In the area of which I am speaking, there are some small sections of land that would be suitable for agriculture, but are at present included in forest areas. I have never advocated that large areas of forest should be thrown open to agriculture; but in this locality, interspersed with orchards and other agricultural holdings, there are some small areas of forest land—sometimes only a few acres; sometimes 20 to 30 acres in extent—which may be producing one or two jarrah trees. Very often there are acres of land producing nothing. But the Forests Department is most reluctant to make any of that land available for settlement, preferring to keep it as forest reserves.

I advocate that the Lands Department, the Agricultural Department and the Forests Department should get together and have a survey of that district made with a view to seeing whether these small areas—after all, only a few hundred acres are involved—could be given over to agriculture, and deciding whether it would be more economical to retain them as forest reserves. I feel sure that, if that were done, many of the present holdings could be slightly enlarged and there would be additional areas available for new orchards and gardens. It would make a great difference to the district, inasmuch as it would keep there the settlers who are already established, and give them more economic holdings, as well as affording their children a better opportunity of establishing themselves in the area.

For the information of members, I can give an instance of the length to which some of those fruit-growers and gardeners are prepared to go to prepare land for agriculture. Much of the land comprising their holdings was at one time considered to be useless. It was covered with ironstone rock and was very steep. They have gone to the trouble of quarrying out the rock, and cutting off the tops of small hillocks in order to fill in the hollows and thus grade the land, reduce the slope and make it possible to work those small areas.

Recently I was on one holding, and the orchardist pointed out a small area of about one and a quarter acres on which he had spent £300 in bringing it to a fit state for the planting of an orchard. That is quite a large sum to spend on one and a quarter acres of land. The majority of those people are of Italian descent. Undoubtedly they are very good workers and are keen on market gardening and fruit-growing. They have shown what the land can produce. I feel sure that if the Minister for Lands and the Minister for Forests and their departmental heads could be induced to have a look at that country, they would agree with me that it would be better to allow some of the small areas to be given over to agriculture rather than kept for forestry purposes. There are some localities where die-back has taken place in the forest, and there is not a living tree on acres of land. But that land appears to be tied up for forestry purposes, and so far I have had no success in my efforts to have it released for agriculture.

In another part of my electorate, at the Mundaring end, there are areas of land held by the Forests Department—very marginal forest land, I would say—in the region of Darlington, Glen Forest, Mahogany Creek and Mundaring. That land could be utilised for agriculture. Because of the readjustment of local government boundaries, as a result of which Mundaring Road Board is likely to have a large part of its revenue-producing territory excised and given to the Helena Road Board, I feel that it would be very satisfactory if some of the area to which I have referred could be made available for settlement and so allow the revenue of Mundaring Road Board to be built up somewhat, as some compensation for the loss it has suffered in being deprived of the Greenmount ward. I hope the Minister for Lands will give consideration to the release of some of that land for settlement.

Another matter which needs attention—all members possibly have this problem—concerns school buildings and the provision of accommodation for the increasing number of schoolchildren. This question has reached large proportions and it is necessary to provide many new buildings. It is also necessary to renovate and repair many of the old school buildings. I am pleased to know that some of the schools in my electorate have been renovated and others will be done this coming year. A problem which has not, I am sure, received the attention it deserves, is that concerning the provision of better playgrounds and lavatory accommodation. Playgrounds are a problem in some of the Hills areas because it is difficult to get more than a few square yards of country without steep slopes.

Mr. Nalder: They are a problem in many country areas, too.

Mr. OWEN: Yes. The problem is particularly difficult at Greenmount, Darlington, Mundaring and Parkerville. Many of the parents and citizens' associations are doing a good job, but they are handicapped by the lack of funds, and very often because it is impossible to get the use of heavy earth-moving equipment at a cheap rate. There are many private bulldozing contractors, but it is difficult for them to come in and do the job required. If it were possible for the Public Works Department to bring its earth-moving equipment along, or for the Main Roads Department when it is working on nearby jobs to make its equipment available, the parents and citizens' associations and the schoolteachers would be able to provide better playing areas at the schools.

I have in mind particularly the Mundaring school where there is about an acre and a half of land with a small creek running almost diagonally across it. The Mundaring Parents and Citizens' Association has raised between £100 and £200 which it intends to spend on terracing part of that land. Unfortunately that sum it has will not go far with present-day costs. If the Public Works Department could make available at cost, some of its machines which are often operating in the district, or, if the department was a little more generous, on a £ for £ basis with the parents and citizens' association, it would assist in going a long way towards providing better playgrounds and there would be much satisfaction among the schoolchildren, the teachers and the parents.

Another matter even more pressing than that of the playgrounds is the question of the provision of suitable lavatory accommodation. Where a water supply exists, I think a septic system should be provided. The school teachers are doing their best to indoctrinate into the children the need for personal hygiene, but how can they have any success when the lavatory accommodation is as crude as it is at many of our schools? I hope the Minister for Education will give earnest consideration to the installation of septic tanks wherever a suitable water supply is available. If he does that, he will have the everlasting gratitude of the teachers, the children and the parents and citizens' associations.

I would next like to touch on the question of water supplies. I feel sure that the Minister for Water Supplies must be gratified at the present situation where nearly all the dams and reservoirs are full and overflowing. It will be unfortunate if restrictions have to be imposed in the coming year. Undoubtedly, where the reticulation is not adequate it will still be necessary to have restrictions, but I hope that sufficient finance will be available to allow the provision of comprehensive country water supplies to be proceeded with at full speed so that the areas concerned can receive the benefits of a reticulated supply.

I think also that every encouragement should be given both to local authorities and individuals to embark on their own supplies because, after all, there will come a time when every drop of water should be conserved and used where it falls, and not be allowed to run to waste into the ocean.

The Minister for Works: Do you say, it should be used where it falls?

Mr. OWEN: In the district where it falls.

The Minister for Works: We would be in a nice pickle if we followed that out.

Mr. OWEN: I mean that the water in the drier areas should be conserved there as well as in the heavier rainfall districts. I think the greater part of our State is in the drier areas. In the South-West, particularly in the Hills areas, running south from Perth, where we have short rivers and the catchments do not extend into the more salt districts, we have already impounded, for the metropolitan area, the waters of the Helena and Canning Rivers, and portion of the Wongong Brook.

Steps are now being taken to impound the waters of the Serpentine and, of course, the North and South Dandalup Rivers will be dealt with before we reach the Murray River where, because of the salinity at certain times of the year, it will not be possible to impound large quantities of fresh water. Further south, of course, the rivers are used for irrigation. The Collie River, will also be used for the southern part of the comprehensive scheme. It will not be long before the waters of all these rivers are impounded. I think that the metropolitan area will, in the not-very-distant future—another 50 years or so—be limited in size by the available water supplies.

Last week, "The West Australian" mentioned the work of the C.S.I.R.O. and its endeavours to seed rain clouds to induce them to give up their moisture as rain. It was pointed out that although widespread success had not been achieved in the drier areas, it had been possible to achieve a large degree of success in making the clouds give up their moisture in the form of rain in the heavier rainfall districts. A suggestion made there may have to be used here, and that is to seed the clouds over our hills water-catchment areas so that the rainfall from its present 30 to 40 inches may be built up to 50 to 60 inches and the dams there assured of being filled each year.

It may be possible if the rainfall is increased by that means, to build extra dams on these rivers and so overcome the limitations that we will be faced with in the not-distant future. I can see that there would be problems associated with any such move because, as was pointed out

to the member for Harvey last week, it has been suggested that some of the die-back in our forest areas was induced by the rise in the water-table caused, perhaps, by winters such as we have experienced this year and also by the heavy cutting over of the forests. This problem might arise if we artificially increase the rainfall in these areas. This is a matter in respect of which there is much room for research, and if we are to look ahead, this research will have to be undertaken very shortly. I support the motion.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. E. K. Hoar—Warren) [5.42]:** A number of members have dealt with agriculture and land matters. I assure them that I shall again this year, as I have in previous years, make arrangements to have their speeches thoroughly examined by departmental officers to see whether there is anything in them which we can incorporate in the general policy of running the various departments. I know that in years gone by many valuable suggestion made by private members when speaking on the Address-in-reply have been lost sight of, whereas they could have been of untold benefit to the State.

So far as the member for Darling Range is concerned, if he can put forward a proposition in regard to the smaller areas of land in his district, to which he was referring a few moments ago, I will have a look at what he submits and, if necessary, go there and examine the area to see whether something can be done to further the agricultural interests of the district. That applies to other members, too, but I mention it in passing because it is in my mind at the moment.

I think I ought to use this occasion to dispel some of the illusions that might be encouraged as a result of a speech made yesterday by the member for Toodyay, which speech in no way was based on facts. In fact the hon. member during the course of his remarks, showed himself to be appallingly ignorant of a subject which he himself administered for some six years. Because he had the advantage of some Press publicity in this morning's issue of "The West Australian," I thought it better at this stage to make some correction of what was obviously wrong in his speech in order that the public may not be generally misinformed on the position.

The figures I shall use are similar to those I gave twelve months ago, except that they have been brought up to date; and I received no publicity for them. Nearly two months ago, at the opening of the R.S.L. Congress, the same set of figures was produced in order to give the members of that league an opportunity of understanding just what was occurring in connection with war service land settlement. In spite of the fact that the reporter there

took all my notes, again no public statement was made in connection with them. The hon. member's statement was far removed from the truth, especially in regard to one matter, so, above all else, I think the matter should be clarified in order that nobody will have any misconception about it. It is not right for any Government to be placed in such a position and a man should not lose so completely his sense of responsibility when he speaks in public as to tell deliberate untruths. In the first place, he said that under this Government only 54 settlers had been placed on the land.

Hon. L. Thorn: That was according to your own figures.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is approximately correct. The number is 61 as a matter of fact.

Hon. L. Thorn: According to the Governor's speech the number was 54.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member did not tell us anything about the change in land settlement policy which brought that about. He did not tell us, for instance, that six months before his Government went out of office he himself initiated the policy that the present Government is continuing. It is the only sensible policy on which to work, bearing in mind that, due to the high market valuations of land, it is no longer an economic proposition to purchase farms for subdivision for war service land settlers.

But, of course, the hon. member carefully refrained from telling the House or the public generally. No doubt he had his own good reasons, and I do not blame him for it except that I, as the responsible Minister in charge of the department for the time being, ought to have an opportunity to correct that statement publicly. If we examine the record of the previous Government for the six months prior to its demise, we find, in regard to the number of settlers placed on the land under the new scheme, that very few were, in actual fact, settled.

Hon. L. Thorn: Of course, that is not true.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: As a matter of fact there were about 17.

Hon. L. Thorn: That is 17 for only six months.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The simple reason was that we had reached a stage where there was a delay in the system of land settlement because we could not purchase large areas of land for subdivision. We then had to accept new conditions thrown to us mainly as a result of the previous Government's inability to take advantage of land values some five, six or seven years ago. Had that Government taken advantage of the conditions then obtaining, we would have

been able to meet completely the requirements of the land settlement scheme without having to undertake the enormous task of carving farms out of the virgin bush.

Hon. L. Thorn: Do not you think that is a most valuable scheme?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: When the member for Toodyay was Minister for Lands he used to haggle over 2s. 6d. an acre when buying land for the war service land settlement scheme. As a result, much of the land available was not purchased and because of that short-sighted attitude and policy today we are compelled to follow the policy he himself initiated six months before the defeat of his Government. Now we are faced with the position of spending all the money we can obtain from the Commonwealth in carving some 350 farms out of the virgin bush in order to keep faith with applicants.

Hon. L. Thorn: Do not you think it is a sound policy?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes.

Hon. L. Thorn: To develop our undeveloped lands.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes.

Hon. L. Thorn: And so do I. I was very happy when I was able to get the scheme to that stage.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member should have been very happy to have told us something about it last night.

Hon. L. Thorn: I told you more than you liked, anyhow.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I would like to give the House the actual and factual figures relating to the balance of the scheme which, all things being equal, will be completed by 1958 at the latest.

Hon. L. Thorn: It is about time you told us something in regard to it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The number of settlers at present total 116 in the following areas:—Rocky Gully, Perillup, Denbarker, Bokerup, East Narrikup, Mt. Many Peaks, South Stirlings, Jarramungup, Gairdner and Eneabba. Due to the policy we are now following in developing new farms from the virgin bush, 20 properties will be allotted this year, 62 in 1956, 115 in 1957 and 129 in 1958, or an approximate total of 350 farms. According to our experience in recent times, and the number of applications we have received, and bearing in mind the number who have become dissatisfied with waiting, we assume that 350 farms will completely cover the remainder of the scheme.

That is the programme with which this Government is proceeding as fast as is humanly possible. We have a large number of machines operating in order to get the work done as early as possible. But one can never tell for sure how the

vagaries of the weather will affect the programme. One year we lost an opportunity of putting settlers on farms because of the shortage of water. It was a very dry season. Difficulties of development occur if we get too much heavy rain. But if all goes well, the programme will be completed and the last settler will occupy his property not later than 1958. When one imagines the immensity of the task that has to be undertaken to create farms out of the bush, knowing full well that the area has to be dozed, cleaned up, ploughed, seeded, buildings erected, machinery and stock provided, and so on, all within the space of three years, one can see that it is almost, if not certainly, an Australian record.

There is nothing wrong with the speed at which we are working. The delays have occurred, in my view at any rate, because the previous Government did not take advantage of all the opportunities it had to purchase land at a reasonable figure. Eventually it arrived at the point, some six months before it went out of office, where the Commonwealth Government could not find any more money to purchase land at inflated prices and consequently the McLarty-Watts Government had to inaugurate this new policy. I agree with that policy.

Hon. L. Thorn: You have given the answer today.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have.

Hon. L. Thorn: The price of land was so inflated we had to stop buying it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is so. I am not telling the hon. member this for his information because I assume that he knew all about it—if he did not, he should have done so—and did not mention it last night for reasons best known to himself. I am advising the House in the hope that members, and the public generally, will be given the opportunity of knowing exactly what is required and what faces us in order to tidy up the tail end of the war service land settlement scheme. The hon. member also said that he understood the settlers at Rocky Gully were not being charged any interest. According to "Hansard," those are the words he used.

Hon. L. Thorn: Yes, at present.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. I do not know whether that is true and whether the hon. member said it.

Hon. L. Thorn: Yes, that is correct.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, I understood that to be so.

Hon. L. Thorn: Yes, I said that.

Hon. D. Brand: This sounds like Greenbottle.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The people at Rocky Gully are not under any different system to settlers anywhere else, whether they be on dairy farms, wheat and sheep farms and so on.

Hon. L. Thorn: Are they paying interest?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, and they are expected to pay it. In most cases they were able to pay interest after the first year of occupation; some rent and some interest, but it is based on the economic production of the farm for the particular year in question. For the first time under this scheme, a policy was initiated by me, through our own departments and later accepted by the Commonwealth Government, under which if a settler finds, due to circumstances beyond his control, that his commitments have been over-estimated and he is in a position where he cannot meet all his payments he does not have to find rent or interest, and it is not accumulated against him. It is written off at that stage.

Hon. L. Thorn: Then they are not paying interest.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: In some cases they are. But when, as I said, the commitments are such that the settler cannot meet them from his normal income for that year, it is not held against him.

Hon. L. Thorn: That clears that point.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is a better condition than they have ever had before because their accumulated debts were worrying them to such an extent that some settlers had left their farms because they felt that they were unable to carry the burden and the additional load that was being added to it.

Hon. L. Thorn: That is an important point.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I think the hon. member will agree that it is a distinct improvement.

Mr. O'Brien: They could not get better terms.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The member for Toodyay also said that the issue of final valuations should be speeded up. I agree with that and the sooner we can let every settler under the scheme know exactly where he stands, the better it will be for everybody concerned. But we must remember that both the Commonwealth and State Governments have agreed that final valuations cannot be made known until the settler has reached an establishment period; that is to say, when he is paying his full commitments and not before. Obviously, unless his farm is fully developed he is not paying full commitments. If the farm is not fully developed, how can anybody issue the settler with a final valuation? It is simply impossible to do so: but we must remember that there is no particular hardship if a settler does not receive a final valuation at this stage.

Firstly, he is credited with any plant works that he carries out while he is waiting for his final valuation. Secondly, he is assured of a final valuation that will not be greater than the economic value of the farm; he cannot find any objection to that. Finally, the Commonwealth Government has said that after ten years it would be prepared to have another look at the whole scheme for the purpose of revaluation if the world situation and the market prices were not as good as formerly and there appeared to be a need for a revision and writing down. I do not know of any settler who, after knowing of those circumstances, has complained.

Hon. L. Thorn: That is a most important point. They should know of those circumstances.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have been telling them that ever since I have been in this job.

Hon. L. Thorn: I hope you get full publicity.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member said that this Government had done nothing at all since it had been in office. It has done a considerable amount. Already we have issued 436 leases and we are issuing others as fast as the Lands Department can prepare them. As the hon. member knows, they have to be prepared in duplicate and a considerable amount of work has to be done. A total of 420 final valuations have been issued and 83 are pending.

Hon. L. Thorn: They would be for improved properties.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. That will give an indication that we are not unmindful of the need to proceed as quickly as possible with the issue of these documents. However, no hardship is being caused because a settler is not called upon to do anything beyond what his farm will actually carry for a given period—that is, a twelve months' period. Each year the officers go around and talk the matter over with the settlers and come to an agreement either on the number of sheep they are carrying, the crops they will put in, the stock they are carrying, the prospects of their butter fat production, or, generally speaking, discuss with them the prospects of their farms for the next twelve months. They agree between them what are their proper commitments for that year, and in those commitments sufficient is always provided as sustenance to keep the settler's family.

But if at any time during that twelve months a settler finds himself in financial difficulties, the scheme is now so elastic that his obligations are stopped at that point and he is no longer liable for rent and interest. The scheme has proved very satisfactory and it indicates beyond doubt the Government's interest in the farmers on war service land settlement properties.

I now come to the queerest part in the hon. member's speech, and I cannot understand how a man of his experience could make the statement he did. He said that this Government had spent only £672,000 out of £13,000,000 expended on soldier settlement. That shows a complete lack of responsibility in a public man.

Hon. L. Thorn: My remarks referred to the amount of money that had been spent when we took office and the amount that was reached when we left office.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Where did the hon. member get the figure from to indicate that only £672,000 was spent in 2½ years? We spend more than that in six months. For the six months ended the 30th June, 1955, we spent £914,000, and for the 2½ years ended the 30th June, 1955, the Government has spent £4,250,000 as against £3,000,000 spent in the previous 2½ years. If we go back a further 2½ years, it will be found that our expenditure has been almost double what the hon. member spent.

Hon. L. Thorn: We spent £12,000,000 in the six years we were in office.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That may be so. The figures I have here do not include such matters as loans required for machinery, stock or anything else. They concern the development and maintenance of the farms only.

Mr. Nalder: Does that include administration?

Hon. L. Thorn: And the purchase of farms?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It includes clearing, building, fencing, top-dressing, cultivation, water supply, cropping and so on.

Hon. L. Thorn: What about the purchasing of improved properties?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have here all the expenditure on war service land settlement since we came into office; the details for every six-month period is here for the hon. member to look at.

Hon. L. Thorn: Does that include the purchasing of improved properties?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It includes the development of them. In addition to these figures, several million pounds have to be added. The hon. member's estimate of £13,000,000 is wide of the mark. It will shortly be £17,000,000, but the hon. member did not know that.

Hon. L. Thorn: Yes, I did.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: In the 2½ years this Government has been in office it has spent £4,250,000 on work on the farms under this scheme as against £3,000,000 which was spent during the previous 2½ years. If we go back another 2½ years beyond that, we will find the comparison very odious. A total of £7,250,000 has been spent on the items I have mentioned, and

in 2½ years the present Government has found and spent half of it. I would like to know where the hon. member gets his idea that the Government has done nothing over the last 2½ years. He is completely out of touch with all that has been going on. When I said he did not know what he was talking about, it was a complete understatement.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: I believe you are right.

Hon. L. Thorn: That boomerangs on you because you do not know what you are talking about.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member does not like me putting these facts before him.

Hon. L. Thorn: I cannot prevent you from making an ass of yourself.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I was surprised at the member for Vasse interjecting and saying that the conditions of settlers today are worse than they were under the Liberal Government.

Mr. Bovell: They are infinitely worse and nobody knows that better than you do.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am telling the hon. member they are not.

Mr. Bovell: And I am telling you they are.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Let us examine the position. It is only a matter of two or three months ago that somebody wrote a letter to "The West Australian" or, I should say, to a newspaper, indicating that conditions in the Karridale area were atrocious. As they generally do when they want to make certain of the position so far as their members are concerned, the R.S.L. immediately sent down a committee of inquiry to investigate the entire matter and to report on the rights and wrongs of the position. When that committee returned, it stated the report was grossly exaggerated, that there was a feeling of confidence in the minds of the settlers in the Karridale area and that the majority of them saw daylight and were happy.

Hon. L. Thorn: That is different from the story you were telling.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member knows as well as I do that there were only two or three men in the Karridale area who found reason for complaint, and their requirements have been examined and, as far as humanly possible, the position has been corrected. All this trouble arose out of one letter, but a competent R.S.L. committee found that the allegations were not proved. They also found that there were a number of matters that required attention, and they asked me to look into them. I did so, and one of the requests has actually been in operation for 18 months.

For instance, there was the condition which I found existed in the dairying industry under this scheme when the present Government came into office. I refer to the completely wrong picture of the amount of pasture the settler was supposed to have in the dairying industry under this scheme. They were credited with pasture which they did not have. Hardly any of them had pasture with which they had been credited by the member for Toodyay when he was Minister.

Hon. L. Thorn: What nonsense!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We found the situation where farmers were coerced, if not forced to go to the Rural & Industries Bank when they had only 23 or 24 cows on their properties, and they could not proceed a step further until a great deal more work had been done for them. What the member for Toodyay was concerned about was the figures he could get published in "The West Australian." He gambled with the lives of people under this scheme.

Hon. L. Thorn: Now your remarks are not responsible.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Since then, over the last two years, this Government has put into operation a scheme to correct the position so far as the pasture especially is concerned. The scheme is going on continuously. If members look at the figures of the number of milking cows that were on those particulars properties at the time when the member for Toodyay was Minister, and the number that are on them today, they will see to what extent this Government has assisted the soldier settlers today. The member for Vasse had no reason at all to make the interjection he did.

Mr. Bovell: I had.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am not concerned with propaganda, and the only reason I would like this published is because I think the people ought to be told the truth. I am merely concerned with telling members and the people of the failure of the previous Minister to accept his responsibility in this matter.

Hon. L. Thorn: You are putting out a different story from the attack you made on Senator McEwen. You said they were down and out.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: So far as this scheme is concerned, in my view we must endeavour to rehabilitate the settlers and help them recover from the raw deal they got from the McLarty-Watts Government.

Hon. L. Thorn: All political propaganda!

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Did you dispense with the services of the men who misreported things?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I will take the responsibility for what happens under my administration.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: That may be so.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If the hon. member really wanted to talk about war service land settlement, why did not he complete the picture and tell us about the tobacco farms he established under the scheme? He kept quiet about that. Quite a few members have spoken on war service land settlement matters, and not one of them has been game to tell us what happened.

Hon. L. Thorn: You asked for the tobacco farms to be established.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am not surprised at the hon. member being ashamed to tell us what occurred.

Hon. L. Thorn: I am not ashamed.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Well, the hon. member ought to be.

Hon. L. Thorn: Well, I am not; you asked for them to be established.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member made his speech last night.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There are not more than 25 or 26 who remain under the scheme. The reason is that the previous Government was so anxious to have figures published in the papers that it never bothered to find out whether the land would grow tobacco or not before they put settlers on it.

Hon. L. Thorn: That is not true.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is. Not one plot was tested to see if the ground was suitable for growing tobacco.

Hon. L. Thorn: I suppose you wanted me to go down and test the land.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The men who came out of the Manjimup school—20 of them each year—were put on to new land. It was not known whether it would grow tobacco; it was only considered to be a possibility. If the Minister of the day had done his job properly, he would have started that scheme for tobacco growing one year before he did, and employed the fellows who ultimately had to go on the farms themselves to prove whether the settlers were any good on the one hand and whether the soil was any good on the other. Now we are faced with the position where nine farms in the Karridale area have to be abandoned, not because of anything the present Government did, but because of the bad judgment of the Liberal-Country Party Government which had an opportunity of studying the situation for six years but did nothing in the matter. When I said the hon. member was playing with human lives, I meant it. There are

only a few people who are now endeavouring to make a go of it on the tobacco farms.

Hon. D. Brand: Are not you being advised by the same man?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, not on tobacco. The person who advised the previous Government on tobacco left long ago, and is now over in the Eastern States. It is not a question of advice, but a question of seeing whether the soil would grow tobacco or not. If a man advises the Government or a Minister, and says that in his opinion a certain block will grow tobacco, it must be tried before tobacco is grown.

Hon. L. Thorn: Did you want me to go down and try it?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Minister of the day took these men from school after a very elementary education in relation to the growing of tobacco, and dumped them on the land and prayed that tobacco would grow. The hon. member may laugh, but this is not a laughing matter. It is the greatest disaster that has happened in many years.

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

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Before tea I gave clear proof, I think, of this Government's intentions to carry to a logical conclusion the promises made by previous Governments in connection with war service land settlement, and indicated by figures, not only the work actually done but also the money involved, that the present Government is in no respect behind its predecessors in dealing with this work.

At this stage, especially as a fairly large section of war service land settlement has to do with dairy farming, it may be a good opportunity to mention briefly what has been done up to the present and what we intend to do in the way of providing worth-while assistance for the dairying industry generally. This is not to say that I am able now to give the details because they are still being threshed out, but I wish to make it perfectly clear that the Government is deeply concerned at the backwardness of the dairying industry generally and has every reason to feel alarmed at the recent rapid deterioration of the industry, due to a slackening in the demand of the export market.

While we anticipated a slackening to some extent, I do not think that anyone expected that, after Government trading was discontinued and the industry placed on a more competitive footing as between trader and trader, the impact on the industry would be as great as it obviously has been. Even though the Commonwealth over the years has made available quite a large sum of money to bolster up this industry and make it possible for dairymen to live and



develop their farms, and although I consider that the Commonwealth subsidies should be reduced at the earliest possible moment, I still feel that when an emergency such as this occurs, it is not the proper time to reduce assistance to the industry.

Doubtless the other States are similarly affected, though I think the situation in Western Australia is worse, inasmuch as our conditions do not provide the security to be found in most of the Eastern States, and so we are faced with the need for doing something of great magnitude for the industry. The first thing we did was to promise the dairy farmers that as soon as the results of the survey were made known, and we had an opportunity to examine them thoroughly, we would evolve a scheme that would not only meet with the approval of the dairymen and enable them to rehabilitate themselves to the point where their cost of production might ultimately be reduced, but also that we would examine the position and see what assistance we could give, firstly, as the State Government and, secondly, in combination with the Commonwealth Government.

Having arrived at the point where we had a clear knowledge of what the survey showed, the first thing we did was to take the dairy farmers into our confidence. I called a conference of representatives of the Rural & Industries Bank and the Department of Agriculture, together with the president and secretary of the dairy section of the Farmers' Union, with a view to agreeing on a rough outline of the main principles. We came to the conclusion at the first meeting that we should accept as a basis for assistance to the industry the report and survey presented to us not long ago.

Over the last two days, officers of the departments concerned have been working many hours in an endeavour to iron out a workable scheme by which we hope to assist the industry, and by the end of the week, I should have some knowledge of just what we shall be able to do. Meanwhile the confidence we inspired in those engaged in the industry still prevails. Within a few days I shall appoint an advisory committee, which will include an officer of the Rural & Industries Bank, an officer of the Department of Agriculture, an officer of the Treasury and two persons nominated by the dairy section of the Farmers' Union, to give advice at all times in future to the Government of the day as to the best steps that may be taken to improve the lot of the men on the land who follow dairying as an occupation.

I have said this in order to show that the promises given have not been lost sight of. We are making progress daily and the regular work of some of the officers concerned is accumulating while attention is being given to this matter. Consequently, I hope that in a few days we shall have the support of everyone, politically and

otherwise, in a scheme that I believe will lead to the great good and further development and security of the dairying industry.

**HON. DAME FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER** (Subiaco) [7.38]: I say quite frankly that I did not wish to speak to-night, but I do not want the debate to lapse as I believe every member is desirous of hearing Ministers answer the questions that have been asked during the debate.

The Speech of His Excellency naturally eulogises the work done by the Government during the last year. We accept that. The promises made and fulfilled have been stressed, but the promises made and not kept—or very few of them—have not been mentioned, and there were many and important ones.

One could have wished for greater vision to be shown regarding town planning. In the remarks I am about to make, I shall deal firstly with things that have been neglected, not only in the immediate past, but in the longer past by all Governments. The second matter I intend to deal with is that of the iniquitous s.p. betting shops, and especially the action in providing—as I believe have been provided—168 shops or dwellings—and I take it there will be many more—to be used by an immoral—I do not say immoral—class who live on the frailty of their fellows. Especially am I surprised that the Government should do this when we know that today there are people who wish to trade legitimately and provide the things that the public want, but cannot get shops.

I cannot imagine how the Government could have done what it has when we realise the number of telephones that will be used by these shops and the need for telephones for legitimate use. Members opposite only the other night spoke of the difficulty of getting telephones in the country, especially by people who live at some distance from the nearest village or small town, so that they might, in case of sickness, summon a doctor. Many telephones will be required to equip the betting shops and we have to consider the numerous houses that will be in contact with these shops by telephone.

We should also bear in mind the large number of men who will be working in these shops maybe a couple of thousand—and who should be working at something legitimate. They are not productive workers except that they do produce evil. They are non-productive workers catering for the people who visit these places.

Some members in their speeches have spoken about the depression of the thirties and the scarcity of money at that time and how awful it was to think of 7s. per unit per week. Of course, with the depreciation of the currency, the 7s. would be worth about 14s. now. Members told

us the other night that during the depression they had actually to feed some people so that families would not starve.

I entered this House in 1936 and I found that there was a tremendous aftermath of the depression and I had to do as some other members did—feed families during that time. People would come to me perhaps late on Saturday nights, perhaps women with two, three or four children, saying they had no food. I asked, "What about the money you received from the Government? You must have a little." The reply was, "No, my husband went to the betting shop and came home with empty pockets."

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: He was lucky to have something to go to the betting shop with.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: The hon. member should not interrupt. There is something that he will not like which remains to be said. These poor creatures had no food, and I had to take them to the shops at night in order that they might have food to carry them over Sunday. By legalising betting shops the Government has encouraged people to believe that betting pays. Those members whom I heard saying that they had given money to keep people in food during the depression years, will be called upon, within a very short time, again to do the same thing and provide food for people who have spent in the betting shops what they have earned or what the Government has given them.

Mr. Yates: Were not the betting shops operating during the depression?

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: I have just said that they were operating, and illegally. They are legal now, but that makes no difference. Betting shops will always exist, either legally or illegally, but I assure members that we will be called upon soon to do again what we did during the depression. We will have to keep people who have spent all their money in the betting shops, unless the Government—I say again, unless the Government—takes a realistic and Christian view and closes these places of evil, as it has the chance to do.

Many people say that racing is a sport and ask why the public should not bet on horse races if they so wish; but betting today is not a sport as the member for Fremantle knows, because he has been to Adelaide and is familiar with the position there. There is a racecourse almost in the heart of that city and although entrance to the flat was free, that part of the course was nearly always empty while there were legalised betting shops in Adelaide.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: That was not my experience.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: The people did not attend the free flat but went to the betting shops to

bet. I have been told by men in Adelaide that when the betting shops opened, their sons, who had previously attended football and other real sporting events on Saturday afternoons, no longer did so, but went to the betting shops. As members know, South Australia realised that a mistake had been made and remedied it.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: They have not stopped it.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: Do not talk rot! I will answer the hon. member in a moment. The point is that South Australia realised that the betting shops were no good. It was the tradespeople who first discovered the bad influence of the betting shops, because many people who bought articles on time payment were unable to meet the payments, having spent their money on betting, and so the goods had to be repossessed. Eventually the Government of South Australia took the right course and allowed the people to determine the question, with the result that today the only betting shops in South Australia are in Port Pirie where there are eight of them, five being next to hotels and the other three only a short distance from hotels. Those betting shops are crowded but they are the only ones operating in the whole of South Australia now, and they operate only by the will of the people. South Australia has learned its lesson.

I wish next to deal with the subject of town planning. For many years we have realised that Perth railway station, which is in the heart of the city, has divided Perth into two distinct areas. On one side of the railway there are numbers of foreigners, who are glad of their segregation and enjoy it, and on the other side there is a different community altogether. But next to the principal station of Western Australia—the Perth railway station—and running parallel with the railway line there is a street called Roe-st. It is narrow and contains a few warehouses and other buildings, which are intermingled with houses of ill-fame.

These establishments are difficult to supervise because they are built on one side of the street only, with the railway line on the other side, and if supervision was attempted it would be easily detected by the dwellers in these places and could be guarded against. Only a comparatively few yards away we have two large State schools attended by adolescent children and often some of them have to walk along that street in order to get to their schools.

A few yards further on we have the police station and then the traffic department, where hundreds of people go in and out daily. A little further on we have the Museum, to which many visitors are taken in order to view the cultural attainments of Western Australia. In the vicinity there are also the Public Library and many other

places of which members may know. Roe-st. has become quite a famous sight for visitors.

Mr. Oldfield: Famous or notorious?

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: We had here the other night a lady whose name I will not mention, but she is a very prominent person. She had just been down Roe-st. and told me how disgraceful it was to come to a place like Western Australia and be shown these bad houses—these houses of ill-fame—in Roe-st. The reason why people go to see this street is that these houses are enclosed with strong wire netting and on the other side of the wire netting they are often boarded up. A visitor is often encouraged to ask what is behind that fence. If a child is taken down there, he will ask what is behind the fences—especially children who have been to the zoo, or grown-ups who have seen munitions dumps guarded in a similar way.

If one passes at a slack time one sees highly painted women, either young or old, standing at the gates and if a male passes down the street they will ask him to come in; but that does not happen on Fridays. On Fridays there is sometimes a queue waiting to get into each of these places, because that is pay day. During World War I syndicates were formed and advertisements were sent to newspapers in the Eastern States asking for girls who could entertain our soldiers, and stating that the boys were about to give their lives for their country.

The advertisements said that if the girls sang or played or could entertain they would be sure of a position over here and the result was that many girls came here, often having spent their all on the journey, thinking they were coming to a legitimate job. When they found that they had come to houses of ill-fame, some of the girls were horrified and had to be rescued, as they had no money with which to return home or to maintain themselves until they could find other positions; but some succumbed and stayed there.

Many young men, who were probably unmarried—some were, at all events—felt that they would probably not return from the war and were induced to make over whatever would accrue on their deaths to these syndicates, or to the girls in these houses of ill-fame. During that time I was engaged in social service work and was brought into contact with some of these girls and some of the soldiers. I can assure members that the stories that I could, and will, write and the tales I could unfold would make any responsible man or woman feel a worm because nothing has been done to get rid of these places.

Mr. May: That book will be a best seller.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: The last war was even more sordid than the previous one. The Americans were here and in the first few weeks

a great many American soldiers were to be seen going down Roe-st., but after a few weeks no more of the white American soldiers went there but only the coloured soldiers, the negroes and half-caste Americans, and our own soldiers. These American soldiers used to march down 20, 30 or 40 at a time, two abreast and stand outside the houses waiting their turn to enter. We, members here, sang the National Anthem and did everything we thought was right, and here in this Chamber we prayed, as we pray every day—

Thy Kingdom Come, Thy will be done in Earth as it is in Heaven.

—but nevertheless allowed—everyone of us in this Chamber—these girls to live as beasts of prey, preyed upon by coloured soldiers.

I could take members to places in the world where the coloured people, if a white man did what was done in this particular street, would lynch him. These girls might have been our sisters or our children. At all events they were someone's daughters—perhaps the daughters of our neighbours. I am not blaming one member of this House more than I blame myself. I knew the difficulties. I talked with American officers and they were very sympathetic.

We in this House did everything possible and I would like particularly to congratulate the then Minister for Health, the late Mr. Alec Panton, on the wonderful work he did, in the clearing up of venereal disease. The Americans were very perturbed about it. They secured large houses for their men so that they need not go to Roe-st., but could take a girl to spend the night in these establishments. There the Americans took photographs of every girl who entered with an American and they also photographed every girl seen with an American, wherever possible, unknown to either the girl or the soldier concerned. This was done so that they could trace the spread of venereal disease.

I went into one of their offices and saw thousands of these photographs, taken for that purpose. It is now ten years after the war and we are encouraging migration, yet if we took a man from Holland down Roe-st., to begin with and showed him the conditions there, he would wonder what sort of a country he had come to. I assure members that if I went to England today and told the people what sort of places were waiting here for their children, we would not get many families to come here. We are definitely not encouraging migration by having in our midst places such as Roe-st.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: What would you propose to do with them?

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: If the hon. member will be patient I will tell him. At present I believe there are three syndicates and two

private concerns operating houses in Roe-st. After investigation I have ascertained that the profits they make are supposed to be £1,500,000 a year. Part of those profits goes to some big businessmen; all of the money is not retained by the girls who work there. Many young girls who are new to this country are engaged in decent employment during the day, but are encouraged to make a few extra pounds in the evening by going to these places, and that is happening now. Does that lead those girls to good citizenship? Do members know that this is true? When I asked the Minister to answer some questions on this subject, he gave me a very crude answer.

The Minister for Mines: It was a very truthful one.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: I will tell the hon. member whether it was truthful or not. What I was seeking was the truth. I have not the bureaucracy behind me that the Minister has now. If he had asked me the same question when I was a Minister, although I would not have had jurisdiction over this matter, I would have approached the Minister concerned for the answers. I am going to ask the Minister again:

Is he aware that there are houses of ill fame in Roe-st.—by that I mean houses where people who either own or rent the premises are making a living by trading the bodies of females to be made use of by males so that they (the owner or tenants) can make a living by such means?

That was question No. (1), and the Minister's reply was what? Nothing! Question No. (2) was as follows:

Are these houses licensed to conduct this trade?

Still no answer! Question No. (3) read—

If not, why does the Government allow these places to continue this inhuman trade?

Still no answer! The following question, No. (4), was—

Do the owners or tenants of these houses pay rates and taxes?

Still no answer! Does not the Minister know? Question No. (5) was as follows:—

If so, why does the council or the Government take rates and taxes from owners or tenants of an illegitimate, unlicensed trade?

I wanted to know why.

The Minister for Police: Why not ask the Lord Mayor? He controls the Perth City Council.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: I will tell the Minister who controls it in a minute. Question No. (6) read—

What other class of owner or tenant has a similar privilege?

The Minister did not answer. Questions No. (7), (8) and (9) were as follows:—

What is the approximate profit that these traders make per year?

Are their rates and taxes based on the disclosed profits?

As rates and taxes are a State or municipal matter, if the Government cannot disclose profits owing to its being a Commonwealth matter, how does the State or municipality assess the rates of profits of an illegitimate trading concern?

All members now know what the Minister's answer was and it is one of the crudest I have ever heard. However, I could not feel angry with him because—

The Minister for Police: You could not feel angry with me at any time.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: I thought that where ignorance is bliss, it is folly to be wise. Many of the members who smiled at the questions and the answer that was given felt very blissful, but they were not very wise. I felt sorry because of the answer that was given, as my object in asking the question was to let the public and the younger members of the House know the true position and to give the Government an opportunity of putting right—and this is what I want to impress upon the Premier—a long and grievous wrong.

The Minister for Police: Why did not you do it when you were Minister for Health, or even make some attempt to do it?

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: If the Minister will only listen, he will learn what I did when I was Minister for Health.

The Minister for Police: I know what you are trying to do now.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: What I am trying to get the Minister to do is that which is right and decent. The Minister, the other evening, should have given an exhaustive and lengthy reply to my questions, but he did not. To use an Australian colloquialism, he "missed the bus." When I first entered Parliament—the Minister will know now a little more of what I have done—I thought I might be able to do something regarding Roe-st. and s.p. betting. Those were the two matters that brought me into this House and that is why I am stressing them now. I made many speeches in churches and in the streets nearly 20 years ago on these subjects, but nothing was done. I interviewed the Commissioner of Police in regard to Roe-st. He said, "The Government preferred it to remain as it is" and the then Government was not a McLarty-Watts Liberal Government but was the same type as that which is in office at present.

The Premier: And what did the McLarty-Watts Government do about it when you were Minister for Health?

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: I have been telling the Premier. I spoke in the churches and I went to the Commissioner of Police in person and he told me, "The Government prefers it to remain as it is. The police can keep an eye on it if it remains as it is." I replied "Such places are against the law. Surely you, the Commissioner, must obey the law!" I told him all I knew, tales so terrible that I thought any man who heard them would take action; but nothing was done.

About the same time many years ago I interviewed members of the Police Force in regard to s.p. betting and the answer I received from each officer was practically identical. It was this: "The forces against us are too strong and if I were to take these fellows up, I would be sent to the Never-Never. I have a wife and a couple of children and I have lived here for some years, and I do not want to be sent away." That was the answer I received, not from the commissioner but from individual policeman. S.p. betting is now legal and the Commissioner of Police becomes a puppet.

Not only are the houses of ill-fame still operating—they should have been closed long ago—but also another trade equally demoralising and soul-destroying—s.p. betting—is made legal. The first principle in life that one should realise is that obedience alone gives the right to command. The present Commissioner of Police should obey the law, and it is not the law to have open these houses of ill-fame. However, the Government has not taken any action and has appointed the Commissioner of Police as head of the Betting Control Board in order that it may delude and gull the public. The Commissioner of Police may be a good man; I do not think he is a better or a punter. Nevertheless, the point is that the Government has taken him from one position and put him in another when, through the years, he has realised he has not been doing his duty in regard to the houses of ill-fame.

The Minister for Police: He was the Commissioner of Police when you were Minister for Health.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: I think there has been a great deal of graft going on. Members may laugh, but I am sure that if there were an inquiry instituted there would be brought forward evidence of instances which would prove that there has been a great deal of graft in allocating certain places to certain men. The Government had the opportunity of going to the people with a referendum to ask them whether it desired the legalising of s.p. betting or not, but it did not do so. Why?

The Minister for Police: What did your Government recommend after the report of the Royal Commission on Betting?

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: Do not be such a little boy! Do try and grow up!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: Well, Mr. Speaker, the Minister will continue to interject.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member to address the Chair and to ignore all interjections.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: Very well, Mr. Speaker. The Government had the opportunity of going to the country on a referendum to ascertain whether people wanted s.p. shops made legal, but it did not do so. The Government had the opportunity of saying to the people, "We will make this our sole issue at the next election." But it was scared to adopt such an attitude.

The Premier: What did the hon. member's Government do during its six years of office in regard to the problem?

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: I cannot address you, Mr. Speaker, because the Premier keeps on interjecting.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member will address the Chair and ignore interjections.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: The Government had the opportunity of making this an important issue during the election but the Government knew if it had done so, it would never have been returned to office. There is another issue which I think the Government does not realise exists. I consider there is a very subtle brain behind what is being done. It is a communistic brain. The Government decided to build up a few hundred strongholds in every electorate so that this communistic brain—operating behind the scenes—could win the people over to communism or some soul-destroying way of life.

The Premier: The member for South Perth looks interested.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: The story of establishing these houses of ill-fame and of legalising betting to win votes is a very old one. It will be remembered that the British adopted a similar policy many years ago in China when they established trade or establishments to sell dope or opium to the people. However, the people of Britain were spiritually awakened early and they decided that these places and the trade should be quashed, and they were.

Then we had similar instances in Japan and Manchuria. Dens were established everywhere to sell narcotics to subdue the people and to issue propaganda to them.

Also, in Nazi Germany, not through the peddling of dope, but through the youth movements and youth centres, propaganda was issued to create young Nazis so that they would hate their fellow men and work for Hitler. I do not say that all politicians in this House participate in the graft that goes on or in the profits that are obtained from certain places, but what I do say is that they probably do not realise that they are destroying humanity by encouraging these evil issues.

I venture to say that if the s.p. shops had more female patrons than males, they would cease to exist very quickly by a man-made law. I do not expect for one moment that this Government would keep them open if there were more women than men clients. I venture to say that if the houses of ill-fame in Roe-st. had male victims inside instead of women as we have now, and women paraded the street as men do now, all the 49 male members of this House would rise and close those houses without hesitation and ban their existence.

What is the reason for my saying that men would take this course of action? I say it because there exists in every man a sense of chivalry, a god-like spark in the heart of every man to protect his mother, his woman, his children; and if and when he sees her dignity, her sweetness and her love becoming sordid, he will fight to defend what he believes to be sacred. He believes that his woman, that his mother, is sacred.

A woman's cause is man's cause. They rise and sink together. But women can only fall when there is no strength left in man. I say to the men and to those who take this matter seriously, "Take this opportunity now of undoing the wrong which you have done. You have the opportunity of closing up the houses of ill-fame in Roe-st. and the betting shops in all districts. Be men and do what you should do. Protect your women."

**MR. OLDFIELD** (Maylands) [8.17]: In speaking to this motion there is one subject I must emphasise, and that is the problem with which we are faced in town planning. I commend the authorities for having produced a plan for the ultimate City of Perth and its environments. This, known as the Stephenson plan, contains grandiose ideas and is assessed to cost £70,000,000 to complete. When we refer to a plan of such magnitude and costing such a vast sum, we should realise that many years must pass before everything set out in the plan can be accomplished.

**Mr. Yates:** What is there to stop its implementation?

**Mr. OLDFIELD:** Finance. The £70,000,000 will take many years to budget for at the present rate of revenue.

**Mr. Yates:** What about the State railways?

**Mr. OLDFIELD:** It would take more than ten years, at the rate of £7,000,000 a year to budget for the total cost. The first step in the plan is to construct the Narrows bridge. I do not quarrel with this step, but twelve months ago I did question whether it was a wise choice to site the bridge there rather than north of the Causeway. It is still open to debate whether a bridge north of the Causeway should not be given a higher priority than the proposed Narrows bridge.

A decision having been arrived at for the construction of the Narrows bridge, it is mandatory on those responsible for the decision to proceed with the second step in the plan; that is, to construct a link road from the bridge to service the northern suburbs and by-pass the city. These two stages—the bridge and the link road—will cost millions of pounds. It is at present anticipated that it will take four years before the bridge is completed, so we cannot be sure when the link road will be built.

Whilst dealing with the subject of town planning, I would point out that as time is passing, Perth is bursting at its seams with its expansion, a natural expansion which all young cities go through. But we in Perth are confronted with a peculiar set of circumstances which very few cities in the world have faced. In the first instance the City of Perth was founded on the Swan River at one of the widest points—that is, the estuary or Perth Water. Then a railway line was built on the north side of the city, about three-quarters of a mile north of the river, thus completing the boxing in of the city on the second side. When we consider the site of the city on an angle of the river, we begin to realise that the city is hemmed in on three sides, because near East Perth the river takes a northward sweep and forms the third side of the square.

The railway almost completes a perimeter fence around the city. Traffic in the City of Perth has just about reached its absolute capacity, with the existing entrances and exits. The new Causeway and the roundabouts at each end did relieve the traffic congestion for a while in regard to entering and leaving the city. In the two short years since the Causeway was completed and opened, traffic within the city has expanded so rapidly that the Causeway has almost reached its peak carrying capacity.

**Mr. Brady:** Do not you agree that many businesses located in the city could be carried on in the suburbs?

**Mr. OLDFIELD:** Yes, I agree that the decentralisation programme should be carried further.

**Hon. D. Brand:** How do you propose that can be brought about?

**Mr. Brady:** By shifting a few Government offices into the suburbs.

Mr. OLDFIELD: This is happening in the City of Sydney today, not brought about by planning, but by evolution. Before touching on that aspect, I would like to point out the urgent need for providing further outlets from the city, north of the line. The western approaches to the city appear to be sufficient for people travelling to Wembley through Subiaco; there are alternate routes. There are Wellington-st., Hay-st., and to some extent Kings Park-rd. People travelling under the West Perth subway during peak hours experience great difficulty in getting to and from the city.

The traffic lights in William-st. have eased the congestion of traffic on the Horseshoe Bridge to some degree, but during peak hours the traffic entering the city at Beaufort-st. has turned into an impossible snarl. It is impossible to leave the city along Barrack-st. in the evening at any speed. I admit that trams do cause some congestion in Barrack-st.

Mr. Yates: They cause 60 per cent. of the congestion.

Mr. OLDFIELD: If that is the case, the trams could be removed from Barrack-st. At the same time we must realise that people have to be brought into the city by public transport. The most suitable suggestion is to provide some alternative route out of the city to the north.

Mr. Yates: What do you suggest?

Mr. OLDFIELD: The Stephenson plan does provide for an entrance to the city over the railway line in the vicinity of Wittenoom-st. in East Perth. This would bring the traffic travelling over the proposed bridge across the Swan near the railway bridge, into the city.

Mr. Yates: Then traffic along Wellington-st. will cause congestion again.

Mr. OLDFIELD: The traffic can take two routes. Some of the traffic will go into the city and some north of the line towards which the city is expanding. I may appear to be sinking my principles when I make the following suggestion, because for years I have been a critic of erecting temporary structures. The ultimate plan for providing an entrance and exit across the railway line will be accomplished only by lowering the railway line, and when we consider that angle we must realise that it will take the best part of 20 years before it can be done.

It is safe to say that within two years the traffic position will become almost impossible. Therefore I ask the Minister for Works to direct some of his experts to make an estimate of the cost of erecting a suitable temporary structure either under or over the line in the vicinity of the Royal Perth Hospital, between Pier and Wittenoom-sts. I have no idea of the cost of an overhead bridge, but no doubt

the Public Works Department is in a position to give a rough estimate. If such a structure is physically possible, I would ask the department to go ahead and provide a second entrance in that area.

The member for Guildford-Midland suggested a few moments ago that one of the solutions to traffic congestion is to move industry and businesses of all types into the suburbs. Recently I read a report in the newspapers that Councillor Plunkett had been at loggerheads with his fellow councillors over some aspects of the Stephenson plan, mainly relating to the planning for Victoria Park. He maintained Victoria Park would become a twin city. If experience of what is happening in cities throughout the world is anything to go on, he is entirely correct. Victoria Park will ultimately become a twin city. So any plan for the future expansion of Perth and its environs should contain provision for the expansion of Victoria Park as a city that will serve the southern suburbs.

It was also suggested by the member for Guildford-Midland that businesses should move out to the suburbs. That is what is happening in Sydney. There, the traffic on the harbour bridge has reached such proportions that at peak periods it takes 35 to 40 minutes to cross the bridge, a distance of 2½ miles from one approach to the other. What the member for Guildford-Midland suggested should occur here, as is happening in North Sydney, not by design, not by any planning, but by evolution, by the need for people in industry to expand.

The stage has been reached in Sydney where expansion south of the harbour is impossible. I was over there recently, and I found that large industries which have been operating in South Sydney, in areas such as St. Peters, Surrey Hills and Redfern, have discovered that the congestion has become so great that they cannot expand by remaining on their present sites. They cannot acquire land adjoining their premises with a view to expansion. Consequently, many of them are in process of erecting new factories on the north side of the harbour. They are shifting the whole of their businesses to North Shore and disposing of their existing premises on the south side.

One of the large insurance companies has seen fit to commence the erection of a 12-storey building on North Shore. It is one of the largest life assurance companies in Australia, and it found that its existing premises in Sydney were far too small to be adequate for the amount of business transacted. Expansion on the existing site was impossible. The company is already established in a 12-storey building, but it has nowhere near the ground frontage of the building which is in course of erection. That new structure, like all insurance buildings, will provide accommodation for doctors, solicitors, estate agents,

importers' agents, etc. Its erection will be followed by the erection of other buildings of a similar nature for other concerns.

What is happening will mean that Sydney will have a twin city in North Sydney, and it will be impossible for any town planning to prevent that and to keep the city compact on one side. I can visualise that within our time the city of North Sydney will be a thriving community servicing the people living to the north of Sydney harbour, while the present City of Sydney will service those living to the south. In other words, offices will be duplicated. The great trading concerns of Australia will have branch offices, if not duplicate offices, on either side of the harbour.

That state of affairs will eventually come about in Western Australia and, as Councillor Plunkett has foreshadowed, Victoria Park will become our twin city. Such a state of affairs has occurred to a lesser degree in Brisbane. The City of Brisbane has a satellite city in South Brisbane. That is all it is at the moment, but it will eventually become a twin city. South Brisbane is across the river and has important features. The interstate railway terminal is situated there. The main cricket and sporting ground is on the south side of the river. Most of the industries are there, and all the new industries being set up are being established on the south side.

I understand that almost everywhere in the world where a city has been built on the banks of a river or an estuary, the time has eventually come when a twin city has been established. I do trust that the town planners will allow for the expansion of Victoria Park along those lines. It is not bad planning to plan for a twin city, or a satellite city. It is rather good planning, inasmuch as it does assist with decentralisation. It creates another centre where industry may be content to carry on, and all enterprises are not crowded into the capital itself.

A decentralisation programme aimed at encouraging industry and trading concerns, both wholesale and retail, to commence operations on a large scale in areas such as Victoria Park, Fremantle and Midland Junction, can only lead ultimately to relieving the congestion which we will continue to experience in Perth while the present trend continues, that trend being to bring everything into the city in the way of industry, trade and commerce generally. When plans are made to keep vested interests—such as they are—within the city, major traffic and transport problems are created, some of which become almost insoluble for which no amount of expenditure can provide an answer.

Mr. Court: When you talk about a twin city, do you envisage a separate local government administration for Victoria Park, or would it still be part of the City of Perth?

Mr. OLDFIELD: That is something to which I have not given any consideration. At the moment Victoria Park is controlled by the Perth City Council. In his proposals, which were placed before the Minister for Local Government, Mr. White—the commissioner who inquired into the readjustment of local government boundaries—suggested that Victoria Park and South Perth should become one local authority, an entirely separate entity from the Perth City Council. He likewise suggested that the City of Subiaco be absorbed into the City of Perth. I agree almost entirely with the report brought down by Mr. White. His recommendations are soundly based on his own experience, which is not small.

So, in answer to the question by way of interjection from the member for Nedlands, I would at this stage consider that if the twin city of Victoria Park is to come into being, it probably would be preferable for it to be a separate entity from the Perth City Council so that it and the South Perth Road Board would become one local government area—a municipality. Whilst Victoria Park is part of the City of Perth, vested interests through the council will retard the growth of Victoria Park along the lines of its being a threat to city interests. Therefore it may be preferable, in the interests of the growth of Victoria Park, for it to become a separate entity at the earliest possible juncture.

To revert to where we were before we had the suggestion, by way of interjection, from the member for Guildford-Midland, I want to emphasise the necessity for an added outlet from the city somewhere in the vicinity of the Royal Perth Hospital. As one who has always condemned temporary structures, I suggest that all cases must be dealt with on their merits and that at times necessity demands that we do something which is not altogether in accordance with our normal principles. I therefore suggest that some emergency outlet of a temporary nature be provided in that area in order to relieve the congestion in Barrack-st., at the corner of Barrack and Wellington-sts. and also on the Beaufort-st. bridge.

If we do not provide an outlet in that area within two years, Beaufort-st. bridge will become impossible at peak periods; and as the member for South Perth claims that the trams are responsible for 60 per cent. of the trouble, the trams will find it impossible to get in and out of the town at those times. Certain immediate steps should be taken, with the co-operation of the Tramway Department, to relieve the congestion in Barrack-st. Unfortunately the management of the Tramway Department is, generally speaking, not cooperative in the best degree, especially in regard to stops. I am not going to have a quarrel with the Minister at this stage; I am not blaming him, but the manager



of the Tramway Department. I think the Minister will possibly agree that the manager is not as co-operative as he might be at times.

I remember that when the member for Narrogin was Minister for Local Government, the Traffic Advisory Council examined a proposal for the creation of a traffic circus by turning Stirling, James, Bridge and Beaufort-sts. into one-way streets where they form a block. The Traffic Advisory Council adopted the scheme with the recommendation that the trams should not go into Barrack-st., but travel round that circus; in other words that they should not cross the Beaufort-st. bridge. But the Tramway Department just would not play ball. At the time when the Traffic Advisory Council suggested to the Minister the advisability of adopting the course I have just outlined, providing the co-operation of the Tramway Department was forthcoming, the general manager of the department just would not listen to the proposal.

When we examine the Barrack-st.—Beaufort-st. tram route, we find that coming into town there is a tram stop at James-st. ostensibly because of the museum; another at the Bridge-st. junction opposite Roe-st., ostensibly because of the railway accounts offices and the police courts; and then another stop 30 to 35 yards farther along on the Beaufort-st. bridge. Mostly the tram gets about halfway on to the bridge and is held up because of a line of traffic ahead of it, the policeman on point duty brings the traffic forward and the tram moves on another 10 yards until the traffic in front clears, and then it stops at the intersection of Wellington-st.

Being a stationary tram, with people alighting from and boarding it, the traffic behind, which had all banked up when it first stopped, is again held up, and so it follows the tram all the way down Barrack-st. Coming out of town, at peak periods, the reverse happens. The tram travels along Barrack-st. and then into Beaufort-st. It stops at all the city intersections to Wellington-st., and as soon as it crosses the bridge it stops at Roe-st. and then at James-st. At peak periods the traffic leaving the city, via Beaufort-st. bridge is not allowed to make a right-hand turn into Bridge-st. and so leave the city by Stirling-st.; it must follow that tram into Beaufort-st.

When the tram stops at Roe-st. the traffic banks up, right back at times, so that it is across the intersection at Wellington-st. and an impossible snarl occurs because the pointsman on duty brings the traffic along to cross the bridge. Some of the traffic shoots past the tram on the inside, and when the tram stops at Roe-st. the traffic behind comes to a standstill, and the traffic which the policeman anticipated would move across the bridge is suddenly held up across Wellington-st. so he cannot even bring the traffic along Wellington-st.

So I suggest that certain of these tram stops be eliminated. Human nature being what it is, I could be rapped over the knuckles by some of my constituents because of this suggestion, as people wish to board or alight from trams at the corner nearest to their homes or to wherever they are going. The Tramway Department has elected to make only every second intersection a stop instead of every intersection, as was the case prewar. The Government omnibus stops have been spread even a little further apart than the tram stops and the bus using William-st. has only two stops, one midway between Murray-st. and Hay-st. and the other almost out of town, down past the Capitol Theatre.

If the buses using William-st. find it necessary to have only the limited number of stops that now exists, it must be safe to assume that it would be sufficient for the trams to stop at every second intersection. I know it might be said that a tram would often have to stop at an intersection which was not an authorised stop, simply because the pointsman on duty would stop the traffic in that street in order to allow right of way to the traffic in the intersecting street. That would occur, but the same thing is happening along Barrack-st. as occurs on the Beaufort-st. bridge.

The pointsman halts the tram, together with other vehicles, and the position may be such that the tram is stopped half-way between the intersections. Then the traffic moves on and by the time the tram reaches the intersection it may be stopped again by the pointsman, with the traffic once more banking up behind it. So it is obvious that the member for South Perth may be right in claiming that 60 per cent. of the traffic congestion is caused by trams.

I believe the pointsmen are intelligent men and could be instructed that, when they saw a tram approaching an intersection that was not an authorised tram stop, they should let it through, thus keeping the traffic moving. Of course, some mistakes would be bound to occur, but I think the suggestion I have made would facilitate the flow of traffic along the streets and I am sure the pointsmen could make the system work. There are a number of other matters that I wish to discuss, but I will deal with them when speaking to the Estimates.

**THE MINISTER FOR NATIVE WELFARE** (Hon. W. Hegney—Mt. Hawthorn) [8.55]: I wish to indicate that, like the Minister for Lands and Agriculture, I shall be pleased to give consideration to any suggestions or proposals raised by members during the course of the debate. I will undertake to examine the speeches of

members on both sides of the House and give consideration to any points raised by them that have relation to the portfolios that I administer.

This evening I rise, for the special purpose of passing some comment on the unwarranted and unjustified criticism by the member for Roe last evening in connection with native welfare matters. The member for Roe indicated that the Department of Native Welfare could do much more for the natives than could be accomplished by the alteration of Acts by Parliament and he proceeded to criticise the department for its lack of attention to natives suffering from trachoma in the Shackleton and other areas in his electorate.

He quoted from the paragraph of His Excellency's Speech which had reference to native welfare and said it seemed apparent that officers of the Department of Native Welfare were displaying less interest in the natives now than they did during the term of the previous Government. Since I have had the honour of being Minister for Native Welfare, I have tried to steer clear of politics as we know them, in regard to this subject, because I believe native welfare in this State should be treated apart altogether from any attempt by any person to obtain political advantage from it.

I will proceed, shortly, to discount the member for Roe's unfounded criticism, and I suggest that he would have demonstrated a much more decent attitude had he submitted his complaints or representations to the Minister for Health, the Commissioner of Public Health, the Minister for Native Welfare or the Commissioner of Native Welfare. Had he done that, he would not have demonstrated last night the fact that he did not know what he was talking about, and this is putting it in plain language.

Mr. Perkins: Plenty of representations have been made to your department.

**THE MINISTER FOR NATIVE WELFARE:** I am pleased that the member for Roe is in his seat. I wish to point out that this particular area constitutes approximately 40,000 square miles of country, in which there are about 1,500 natives and the native welfare officer in that district is a very conscientious man named John Harmon. I happen to know him personally and I knew his father before him and I suggest that any member who knows Mr. Harmon will appreciate that he has a humanitarian outlook and has the interests of the natives at heart. It is very discouraging to officers of the Native Welfare Department, who are trying to carry out a very difficult task, when we have these back-stabbing propensities demonstrated in this Chamber without their being given an opportunity of defending themselves—

Mr. Perkins: I was not criticising the officer—

**THE MINISTER FOR NATIVE WELFARE:** If the hon. member will contain himself for a few moments, he will see

where he was wrong. Like other Ministers administering departments, I do not resent fair criticism offered in regard to the Native Welfare Department. Members have made representations to me as to where the administration might be improved or faults corrected in various parts of the State, and such criticism is welcome. But for a member to rise in this Chamber and almost ridicule and vilify the Commissioner of Native Affairs and his officers hardly savours of justice or fair dealing. I would point out that the criticism is undeserved and I repeat that the member for Roe did not go to any great lengths to inform his mind as to what the actual position was.

Mr. Perkins: Just answer the criticism and you will be all right.

**THE MINISTER FOR NATIVE WELFARE:** The hon. member has had his say and my only interjection to him last evening was, "Is that all you have to complain about?" The hon. member does not want to complain for a few moments. He certainly did not disclose that he had any knowledge of what the Native Welfare Department was doing, or even what the members of the Bruce Rock Road Board were doing. The member for Roe should know something about that board whose members said that the treatment of trachoma was a matter for the Public Health Department.

On the 17th May, the Public Health Department was asked by the Bruce Rock Road Board to appoint extra staff to supervise the treatment, and appealed to the Native Welfare Department for support. I put these questions to the member for Roe: Is it unreasonable for the Child Welfare Department, in respect of white children in the community, to expect the Public Health Department to organise and control the treatment in cases of an epidemic in the white community? Is it unreasonable to suggest that the Child Welfare Department make the approach and expect the Public Health Department to carry out the necessary treatment? Of course, it is the usual practice. Yet, because some native children or natives are involved, the member for Roe tries to make out that the Native Welfare Department is apathetic and falling down on its job.

Mr. Perkins: The Minister is, anyway.

**THE MINISTER FOR NATIVE WELFARE:** The hon. member is shifting his ground again. I am not putting myself up as a pharisee but as an ordinary human being and subject to all the frailties of human nature. I hope now and again the member for Roe will think along those lines.

Mr. Perkins: Judging by some of your speeches in this House, one would not think so.

The MINISTER FOR NATIVE WELFARE: I have the floor for the time being. It is the accepted policy of the Government, and departmental practice, that the Public Health Department should take over the responsibility and control of hospitals throughout the State. I do not think anyone would suggest that any other department should try to usurp the functions of the Public Health Department. The initial trachoma surveys in the State were carried out by Professor Ida Mann under the jurisdiction of the present Minister for Health. She is a very able person in the treatment of this disease and has been the first to acknowledge the help given her by the native welfare officers in her journeys throughout the State, including the North-West. In the south, lists of natives and their whereabouts were compiled by officers of the department who accompanied her on the tour. They acted in their capacity as liaison officers with the natives and prepared data for Professor Mann.

As recently as the 29th June, 1955, the Commissioner of Native Welfare had a conference with the Commissioner of Public Health and Professor Mann to plan an effective trachoma treatment campaign. Both Professor Mann and the Commissioner of Public Health recognised that it was beyond the staff resources of the Native Welfare Department to carry out or supervise trachoma treatment and that the contribution of the Department of Native Welfare would be to provide the liaison between the Department of Public Health and the natives concerned. The conference agreed that the most effective method of dealing with the position would be the provision of mobile treatment clinics, to which the Minister for Health may later refer. These would be assisted by the Native Welfare Department by making initial contact with the natives in defined areas.

I am sorry that the Leader of the Opposition is not here because in a moment I will refer to Pinjarra. Despite the lack of resources, the department sent a patrol officer to Pinjarra where he remained for a fortnight and personally supervised the treatment of 110 natives in the Murray district. Drugs were supplied by the Health Department and the local health inspector assisted the patrol officer in prescribing doses. The calculation of a trachoma dose is a complicated matter and I understand that the weight and age of the patient must be ascertained when determining the dose required. I do not know the details and I do not propose to usurp the functions of the Minister for Health. The officers concerned worked all day and up to 11.30 at night for a fortnight at Pinjarra. They visited natives giving them treatment and at the same time co-operated with the chest clinic in making mass chest x-rays of all natives in the district.

The Native Welfare Department was responsible for arranging the visit of Professor Mann to the eastern wheat belt towns to survey the area. She was accompanied by a patrol officer who carried out the task at week-ends and in his own time. A total of 280 natives and 60 white children were examined in York, Quairading, Tammin, Shackleton and Kellerberrin. The work by the patrol officer was carried out in addition to his other work which concerned health matters such as the organisation of diphtheria immunisation clinics for native children in the York district on the first Friday of each month, which have been held since last May. The clinic was conducted at the York State school and the headmaster wrote a letter of appreciation to the Commissioner of Public Health in regard to the work performed by the native welfare officer in the district. It was because of this work that the headmaster agreed to carry out the trachoma treatment of the children at the school in York.

Following on the survey mentioned, during the next month the patrol officer assisted each local authority in making arrangements for treatment by interested persons. This was with the knowledge and consent of the Health Department from which he later ordered the supply of drugs required. At Kwoylin and Shackleton the interested persons mentioned by the member for Roe were approached jointly by the departmental officer and the Bruce Rock Health inspector and arrangements were mutually agreed upon.

Professor Mann advised that certain natives were in need of operative treatment and in a subsequent visit the patrol officer contacted the natives concerned to arrange for their movement to Perth for the treatment required. Therefore while this survey and attention to the natives in the area to which I have just referred has been going on, the district officer in charge of the metropolitan area, Sister Tremain, who is employed by the Health Department, conducted a tour of the metropolitan area so that a treatment campaign for trachoma could be arranged.

In addition to this field welfare work, the department has provided the Health Department with all the appropriate statistics required in connection with this treatment campaign. As I mentioned before, the patrol officer has a fair area to cover, and I know of my own knowledge that he has been working far in excess of 40 hours a week to try to give of his best to help natives and co-operate with the Health Department in trying to control, and, indeed, trying to eliminate trachoma in the area referred to.

Whilst I would not be hesitant to let an officer of any department know what the feelings of members are should there be any delinquency or neglect in carrying out his duties, I am satisfied that, in this case,

the officers of the Native Welfare Department are entitled to commendation rather than unjust condemnation. It is all very well for members to rise in this Chamber—not many do it—as the member for Roe did in this instance and recklessly, or, at least absent-mindedly, handle the truth as he did last evening, when he made statements on the attitude of the officers of the Native Welfare Department.

Mr. Perkins: You will not tell us about Kwolyin!

The MINISTER FOR NATIVE WELFARE: The hon. member told us about Kwolyin. The attitude of the hon. member last night was rather unconvincing. I obtained a copy of his speech and I am satisfied that he was wide of the mark in the statements that he made. If any member feels that the Department of Native Welfare, the Education Department, or any other department which I for the time being administer, is not carrying out its functions correctly, I would invite him, either personally or by correspondence, to put forward any suggestions or details of any complaint in order that either I or my officers will have a chance to investigate them and do everything practicable to remedy the position. I think that is fair enough.

The short reference to native welfare in the Governor's Speech is nothing extravagant. Only the actual facts are set out. There is no doubt that during the two and a half years the Government has been in office, it has shown a desire to improve the status of the native community. As Minister for Native Welfare, in conjunction with the Minister for Housing, I have endeavoured to obtain a number of houses to provide reasonable accommodation for natives whom we considered had a good standard of living and who would appreciate being given a house. In fact, 50 or 60 native families have been housed.

I make no apology for putting coloured children on the same basis as white children. This Government, since it has assumed office, has progressively increased the subsidies paid to native institutions. Today the missions that are looking after native children are receiving subsidies which are on a par with those granted to institutions which cater for white children. That is not an extravagant statement, but a statement of fact.

Mr. Court: Has there been any theory advanced as to why the incidence of this disease is so prevalent?

The MINISTER FOR NATIVE WELFARE: I am not an authority on the disease and all I know is that Professor Ida Mann has been paying special attention to the disease for some time, which is an indication that the Public Health Department is anxious to try to control or eliminate the disease. I understand that

Professor Mann is now overseas and intends to return to the State in November and she then proposes—

The Minister for Health: On her return she will make a thorough survey of the whole of the South-West.

The MINISTER FOR NATIVE WELFARE: That is so. I understand that she will do that with a view to trying to cope with the disease.

Mr. Court: Does the Minister know, from published reports, that there does seem to be an increase in the incidence of the disease, especially in the south?

The MINISTER FOR NATIVE WELFARE: I cannot say how long Professor Mann has been working on the disease of trachoma, but I think it is approximately two years.

Mr. Norton: Has not this disease been prevalent all the time?

The MINISTER FOR NATIVE WELFARE: Yes, but during the past two years, and particularly in regard to the instance I have mentioned, it has been apparent to the Public Health Department that some Government steps should be taken to try to cope with the disease. As you know, Mr. Speaker, trachoma has been prevalent in parts of this State for many years. However, I believe that, with a person of the status of Professor Mann working on it with the co-operation of the Public Health Department generally, this will do much, in the near future, to cope with the disease.

Hon. V. Doney: Do the health authorities consider that they are getting the disease under control?

The MINISTER FOR NATIVE WELFARE: I think so.

Hon. V. Doney: They are not sure?

The MINISTER FOR NATIVE WELFARE: Yes, I am now, because the Minister for Public Health has confirmed what I believed to be correct. I am pleased that I was given an opportunity of replying to the remarks that have been made and in future if the member for Roe has any suggestion or complaint to make which has some foundation, I will be pleased to give it the consideration it deserves.

Question put and passed; the Address, as amended, adopted.

## BILLS (12)—FIRST READING.

1. Main Roads Act Amendment.
2. Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Act Amendment.  
Introduced by the Premier (for the Minister for Water Supplies).
3. Medical Act Amendment.  
Introduced by the Minister for Health.

- 4, Associations Incorporation Act Amendment.
- 5, Electoral Districts Act Amendment.
- 6, Jury Act Amendment (No. 1).
- 7, Electoral Act Amendment.  
Introduced by the Minister for Justice.
- 8, Police Act Amendment.
- 9, Spear-guns Control.  
Introduced by the Premier (for the Minister for Police).
- 10, University of Western Australia Act Amendment.  
Introduced by the Premier.
- 11, Jury Act Amendment (No. 2).  
Introduced by Hon. A. V. R. Abbott.
- 12, Free Enterprise Protection.  
Introduced by Hon. A. F. Watts.

*House adjourned at 9.26 p.m.*

The MINISTER replied:

This matter is already receiving consideration.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

*Seventh Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**HON. L. C. DIVER** (Central) [4.35]: In supporting the motion I would, at the outset, like to say a few words regarding the late Charles Henning and the late Robert Boylen. I did not join in the expressions of sympathy to their relatives that were voiced on the first day of business this session; I think everyone will agree that it was a very depressing occasion. I feel, however, that I must have on record my deep regret at the passing of those members, for both of them made my first days in this Parliament very comfortable, and I very much appreciated their efforts on my behalf. Each in his own way was one of Nature's gentlemen; and, with other members, I deeply mourn their passing.

I would also like to make some reference to the condition of this Chamber and to congratulate all those responsible for the repairs and renovations that have been effected. It is indeed very pleasing to sit here in such surroundings.

In this speech, I do not intend to cover the different fields of agriculture in a comprehensive way, as Mr. Jones and other members of the Country Party have already dealt with many aspects of that industry. Of course, primary production in all its forms was the first to feel the impact of rising prices. We of the Country Party, and those we represent, did enjoy a short respite of rising prices, during which time we were the recipients of many jocular insinuations concerning our income. But, as members are aware — it is a matter of history — taxation caught up with us, as it would appear to be catching up now with secondary industries.

Those of us who are engaged in agriculture have gone over the horizon and it would appear that the whole of our income is dropping. It has dropped and is decreasing still further. I would issue a warning to all concerned, and especially to my fellow farmers, to see that as much as possible of the money they can lay their hands upon is conserved for the future. They should set aside as much as they can spare; for, by the way things are heading, I am not very optimistic as to what is going to occur. So much so that as far back as last March, in a broadcast, I appealed to my fellow farmers to be cautious in spending their money. I said—

May I be permitted to sound a note of warning as regards the future outlook for many of our primary products?

## Legislative Council

Thursday, 25th August, 1955.

### CONTENTS.

	Page
Question: North-West, long-service leave for Government employees	310
Address-in-reply, seventh day	310
Speaker on Address— Hon. L. C. Diver	310

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

### QUESTION.

#### NORTH-WEST.

#### *Long-Service Leave for Government Employees.*

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER asked the Minister for the North-West:

As an incentive to Government employees in the North-West, and to encourage people to stay and grow with the North, is the Government prepared to consider a proposal to grant long-service leave after seven years' service to all employees north of the 26th parallel?