

Unless it is from a commencement of Government spending, and the stimulus therefrom, it is difficult to see how it may be done. When we remember that from an income-tax collection of nearly £600,000,000 this year the States have £160,000,000 reimbursed to them, it is quite easy to understand—is it not?—how such national matters must become matters of attention for all Australia; matters of attention for all taxpayers and matters of attention for all State Parliaments.

I hope we may live to see, very shortly, a little bit of unbuttoning of the Commonwealth purse, and a little bit of opportunity given to the States to develop the areas where they know the potential lies, in the interests, not merely of State by State, but of the future of this great Commonwealth.

Question put and passed; the Address adopted.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday, the 16th July.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 5.50 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 10th July, 1957.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Questions : Transport, (a) rates of travel for pensioners	86
(b) regulation re backing in rights of way	87
Education, (a) method of supplying teachers	87
(b) construction of ten high schools	87
(c) transport for country school children	87
(d) tabling of wheatbelt agricultural high school file	87
Esperance, development of land by Chase Syndicate	87
Charcoal iron industry, inquiry into possibilities	88
Wool, establishment of selling centre	88
Imports, prevention of dumping in Western Australia	88
Railways, (a) approaches to crossings, Great Eastern Highway	88
(b) details re Gnowangerup-Ongerup line	88
(c) closure of Narrogin-Kondinin line	88
(d) cost of rehabilitating Malcolm-Laverton line	89
(e) number of motor cars and utilities owned by department	89

CONTENTS—continued.

Questions—continued.	Page
Car parking scheme, use of Wellington-st. railway land	89
Metropolitan regional plan, Government's intentions	89
Hospitals, constructional details of Albany regional institution	89
Civil defence, introduction of legislation	90
Finance, assistance to established industries	90
Water supplies, (a) Government policy on fluoridation	90
(b) Swan-rd-Kalamunda-rd. main	90
War service homes, eligibility of New Zealand ex-servicemen	90
Narrows bridge, (a) use of main roads funds	90
(b) Inspection of project by members of Parliament	91
King's Park aquatic centre, approval of scheme and legislation	91
Unemployment scheme, (a) amount expended to 30th June, 1957	91
(b) centres of relief distribution	91
Traffic, details re survey held in May	92
South-West power scheme, connection of Eaton residents	92
Land tax, amount received, 1956-57	92
Bunbury harbour, availability of dredger	92
Agriculture, animal health and nutrition laboratory, Nedlands	92
State Government Insurance Office, retirement of manager	92
Chamberlain Industries Pty., Ltd., report of parliamentary committee	93
Main roads cost, of Charlie's Creek bridge, Donnybrook	93
Road Board Association, invitation to Minister to attend conference	93
Hire purchase, Government legislation	93
Housing, flat project, Mt. Pleasant	93
Coal, cost-plus system	94
Committees for the session, Council's message	94
Bills : Local Government Bill, restoration to notice paper	94
Supply (No. 1), £21,000,000, Message, Standing Orders suspension, all stages	94

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

QUESTIONS.

TRANSPORT.

(a) *Rates of Travel for Pensioners.*

Mr. W. A. MANNING asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) Is it a fact that a pensioner travelling from the country to Perth by railway bus has been, or would be, refused travel at half-fare?

(2) If so, why is there differentiation between country and suburban pensioners when they travel between their place of residence and the city?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Half-fare concessions to pensioners are granted on W.A.G.R. buses where rail services are not available.

(2) In the metropolitan area, the concession applies on tramway buses.

(b) *Regulation re Backing in Rights of Way.*

Mr. COURT asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) In view of the revised arrangements agreed to by him in respect of backing into and out of rights of way in the city area following the Chamber of Commerce deputation, is it proposed to withdraw the original gazetted regulations and replace them with an amended set?

(2) If so, when is it proposed to gazette the amended provisions on this subject?

(3) If not, how is it proposed to operate the amended arrangements under the previously gazetted regulations?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No. The only amendment is the date when the regulations shall come into operation, which date has been amended to the 1st January, 1958, by notice in the "Government Gazette" of the 1st July, 1957.

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

EDUCATION.

(a) *Method of Supplying Teachers.*

Mr. W. A. MANNING asked the Minister for Education:

(1) Is it the policy of the Education Department to calculate the total number of children attending a primary school, divide by 50, and supply the resulting number of teachers?

(2) If not, what method is used?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No.

(2) Schools are staffed according to Regulation 109 but more liberal staffing may be provided if circumstances are considered to warrant it.

(b) *Construction of Ten High Schools.*

Mr. BOVELL asked the Minister for Education:

At what centres are the ten high schools to be under construction during this financial year?

The MINISTER replied:

(a) It is proposed to continue with the construction of—

John Curtin;
Midland Junction;
Mt. Lawley;
Tuart Hill;
Belmont;
Armadaale.

(b) Approval has been given already for Applecross and Hollywood first stages to be commenced.

(c) Consideration is being given to the erection of high schools at Kwinana and Busselton.

I might also indicate that the first stages of the Merredin and Manjimup high schools have been completed.

(c) *Transport for Country School Children.*

Mr. BOVELL asked the Minister for Education:

(1) What amount is expected to be saved by the Government's policy of curtailment school bus spur services in country areas?

(2) Is it the Government's intention to continue its policy of denying school children in rural areas adequate transport services to and from school?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) It is expected that a saving of £50,000 will be effected through the rationalisation of bus spur routes.

(2) The Government does not admit that it is "denying school children in rural areas adequate transport service to and from school."

(d) *Tabling of Wheatbelt Agricultural High School File.*

Hon. A. F. WATTS (without notice) asked the Minister for Education:

Has he the file regarding the proposed agricultural high school in the wheatbelt, which, yesterday, he promised me he would lay on the Table of the House?

The MINISTER replied:

Yes, but as a matter of courtesy to the members of the Opposition I was waiting until they finished the questions without notice. I have all the files here. For the benefit of the Leader of the Country Party, I have obtained all the files possible so that he can extract any information he desires.

ESPERANCE.

Development of Land by Chase Syndicate.

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Minister for Lands:

Is he satisfied with the progress to date of the development of the area of Crown land at Esperance made available by the Government to the Chase syndicate?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Lands) replied:

Yes.

CHARCOAL IRON INDUSTRY.

Inquiry into Possibilities.

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Premier:

(1) Can he advise what expert inquiry was made into economics and future stability of the establishment by the State of a charcoal-iron industry in Western Australia?

(2) Has private industry in any country been approached with a view to interesting them in the project?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) By the board of management of the Charcoal Iron Industry at Wundowie.

(2) Yes. An overseas private company has made an offer to become interested in the project.

WOOL.

Establishment of Selling Centre.

Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Is it his intention to oppose the setting up of a wool-selling centre in Japan, if such a move is proposed from this State?

(2) Can he give an assurance to the smaller wool producers that they will receive the same consideration as the larger producers?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Agriculture) replied:

(1) Details of any such proposal as it relates to Western Australia will be required before this question can be answered.

(2) Yes.

IMPORTS.

Prevention of Dumping in Western Australia.

Mr. HALL asked the Premier:

What machinery is available to the Government to stop the dumping of imports into this State on the relaxing of import controls.

The PREMIER replied:

Under the Federal Constitution, trade between the States is absolutely free and therefore no machinery is available to the Government to stop the dumping of goods from other States into Western Australia.

Only the Federal Government possesses legal powers in connection with imports from other countries into any part of Australia.

RAILWAYS.

(a) Approaches to Crossings, Great Eastern Highway.

Mr. EVANS asked the Minister for Works:

(1) With reference to the two rail crossings near the 108 and 124 mile pegs on the Great Eastern Highway, what was

the reason for the straight approaches to these crossings being dispensed with, in favour of the present "S" shaped turns over such crossings?

(2) How many traffic accidents have been reported within the last three years as having occurred at both of these crossings?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) At both of these railway crossings the original alignment consisted of 150 ft. radius curves and less which, of course, would create a serious traffic hazard on a high speed road such as the Great Eastern Highway. The Railway Department permits an angle of crossing of 70 per cent. and at these two situations the radius of curvature was increased to 1,000 ft. and 500 ft. radius respectively.

(2) Traffic accidents are reported to the appropriate traffic authority—in this case Tammin and the Kellerberrin Road Boards—and this information is not available in the department.

(b) Details re Gnowangerup-Ongerup Line.

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

(1) What was the mileage of railway proposed to be closed between Gnowangerup and Ongerup?

(2) What was the total tonnage carted on this line for the twelve months prior to the 1st July, 1957?

(3) What is the mileage of railway between Donnybrook and Northcliffe?

(4) What was the total tonnage carried on this railway for the same period as that mentioned in No. (2)?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT replied:

(1) 35 miles.

(2) This information is not yet available. For the year ended the 30th June, 1956, the tonnage, excluding Gnowangerup, was 22,617.

(3) 107 miles.

(4) This information is not yet available. For the year ended the 30th June, 1956, the tonnage, excluding Donnybrook, was 244,807.

(c) Closure of Narrogin-Kondinin Line.

Mr. W. A. MANNING asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) Is there any possibility that the Narrogin-Kondinin railway will be closed for traffic?

(2) If so, when?

(3) If so, why?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The Government will not close any railway without prior reference to Parliament. This line was excluded from the list of proposed closures by the Government.

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

(d) Cost of Rehabilitating Malcolm-Laverton Line.

Mr. ACKLAND asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

(1) Does he still maintain that it would cost the Government £753,000 to rehabilitate the 64 miles of railway between Malcolm and Laverton?

(2) Does he agree with the statement that the 30 miles westward from Laverton has had 61,500 new sleepers placed in this section during the past two years?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT replied:

(1) £753,000 is the estimated cost of bringing the line to a standard to carry maximum axle loads at maximum permitted speeds.

(2) No. The number is 6,000.

(e) Number of Motorcars and Utilities Owned by Department.

Mr. ACKLAND asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

(1) What was the number of motorcars and motor-utilities owned by the Railway Department prior to 1950?

(2) What was the number of motorcars and motor-utilities owned by the Department as at 30th June, 1956?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT replied:

(1) Registrations on the 1st July, 1949, included four motorcars and 19 motor-utilities.

(2) Registrations on the 1st July, 1956, included five motorcars and 54 motor-utilities.

CAR PARKING SCHEME.

Use of Wellington-st. Railway Land.

Mr. COURT asked the Minister for Transport:

What is the current position with reference to the Wellington-st. railway land to be used for the City of Perth car parking scheme, regarding—

- (a) tenants under notice to quit;
- (b) rental charge to City of Perth;
- (c) projected date for completion of the area?

The MINISTER replied:

(a) The remaining tenants occupy the land on a weekly tenancy awaiting completion of their new premises elsewhere.

(b) No decision has yet been made.

(c) The City Council estimate that the widening of Wellington-st. and the car park can be completed within six months of the date the work is commenced.

METROPOLITAN REGIONAL PLAN.

Government's Intentions.

Mr. COURT asked the Minister representing the Minister for Town Planning:

(1) Does the Government intend to legislate for the metropolitan regional plan this session, or is it proposed to seek extension of the interim legislation?

(2) What is the current incidence of applications for development, subdivision, sale or the like in respect of land and which have been refused or are held up because of the interim legislation?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied:

(1) It is intended to legislate for implementation of the regional plan at this session. It is possible that as a result of this legislation an extension of the interim development legislation will also be necessary.

(2) (a) Since the Metropolitan Region Interim Development Order was gazetted on the 7th September, 1956, 140 applications for building development in the metropolitan region have been dealt with by the Town Planning Board. Of these:—

100 have been approved with or without conditions;

36 have been refused;

4 are still to be dealt with.

(b) The Interim Development Order only applies to building development on land and does not cover subdivision.

(c) The Interim Development Order does not prevent the sale of land nor are any applications required under the order for permission to do so.

HOSPITALS.

Constructional Details of Albany Regional Institution.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON asked the Minister for Health:

(1) Is the proposed new Albany regional hospital to be a multi-storey or pavilion type hospital?

(2) Did not the Government promise the people of Albany a multi-storey hospital, and cause to have publicly exhibited in Albany plans and drawings of such a hospital, prior to the last election?

(3) What are the respective advantages of a pavilion type as against the multi-storey hospital with particular reference to—

(a) the construction; and

(b) the operation?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Single-storey regional hospital.

(2) The hospital promised was a new regional hospital and no mention was made of type. The first sketch plans provided for multi-storied construction,

which plans were shown to the local people in March, 1956, in accordance with an undertaking given to the Albany Municipal Council.

(3) The single storey hospital will provide—

- (a) a substantial saving in capital cost;
- (b) greater flexibility in planning and make possible future additions to any particular section without disruption of hospital services.

The Premier: It will cost over three-quarters of a million.

CIVIL DEFENCE.

Introduction of Legislation.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON asked the Premier:

(1) In its planning for civil defence, does the Government intend to introduce any legislation this session?

(2) Is the Government's planning for civil defence forward enough for him to make a public statement on the State's preparedness?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) No. Preparation of a Bill is under consideration, but introduction this session is not contemplated.

(2) Civil Defence policy in this State is based on a strategic appreciation supplied by the Commonwealth Government. Planning for civil defence is proceeding but until the Commonwealth Government indicates the necessity, it is not proposed to go beyond the planning stage.

FINANCE.

Assistance to Established Industries.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON asked the Treasurer:

Will he give the details of the £300,000 financial assistance given to established industries during the past year?

The TREASURER replied:

It is not thought advisable to make this information public at this stage. However, I shall be pleased to make the information available to any member of the House who desires to see it.

WATER SUPPLIES

(a) Government's Policy on Fluoridation.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON asked the Minister for Health:

(1) Is his department, he, or the Government, giving consideration, or intending to give consideration, to the matter of fluoridation of water supplies?

(2) Has the Government power to fluoridate reservoirs without reference to Parliament?

(3) Will he inform the House what would be the annual cost of the fluoridation of public water supplies?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The Public Health Department recommends that water supplies should be fluoridated provided the bulk of public opinion supports its introduction.

(2) The Government has not considered this matter.

(3) This has not yet been determined but the cost in the metropolitan area would be approximately £40,000 per annum.

(b) Swan-rd.-Kalamunda-rd. Main.

Mr. OWEN asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) When is work likely to start on the 10in. water main along Swan-rd.-Kalamunda-rd. to Cyril-rd. at Maida Vale?

(2) What is the estimated cost of this work?

(3) What amount of money is being contributed to this extension by the proprietors of the High Wycombe land estate?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Subject to delivery of pipes, work on the 10in. water main to be laid along Vale and Kalamunda-rds. to Cyril-rd. is expected to commence during August, 1957.

(2) £19,700.

(3) £5,000.

WAR SERVICE HOMES.

Eligibility of New Zealand Ex-Servicemen.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) Are New Zealand ex-servicemen eligible for assistance from the war service homes section of the Housing Commission?

(2) Will he state whether Australian ex-servicemen in New Zealand are eligible for the type of assistance mentioned in No. (1)?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No. Must have been domiciled in Australia prior to enlistment in one of the Australian armed services.

(2) No. The War Service Homes Act, which is a Commonwealth measure, provides for assistance to be rendered to ex-servicemen who are residents in any of the States of Australia or territories. There is no reciprocal arrangement as between the Commonwealth Government and the Government of New Zealand.

NARROWS BRIDGE.

(a) Use of Main Roads Funds.

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Treasurer:

(1) What amount of main roads funds has been placed in trust fund accounts for the purpose of meeting the cost of the Narrows Bridge?

(2) Have the funds been used by the Government for other purposes?

(3) If so, what amount remains in the particular fund today?

The TREASURER replied:

	£
(1) Year ended the 30th June, 1955	360,000
Year ended the 30th June, 1956	432,000
Year ended the 30th June, 1957	432,000
	<hr/> £1,224,000

(2) No.

(3) Amount in fund at the 30th June, 1957—£647,633.

(b) *Inspection of Project by Members of Parliament.*

Mr. COURT asked the Minister for Works:

Is he prepared to arrange for those members of the State Parliament who so desire to be conducted on a tour of the Narrows Bridge project—both north and south sides—and an on-the-spot explanation of what is planned in respect of the Narrows-Canning Bridge sector of the proposed fenced highway, with particular reference to beaches and access thereto?

The MINISTER replied:

Yes.

KING'S PARK AQUATIC CENTRE.

Approval of Scheme and Legislation.

Mr. COURT asked the Premier:

With reference to the answer given to my question without notice on the 4th July, 1957, dealing with legislation for the Perth City Council King's Park aquatic centre project, will he state—

- Whether consultations have taken place between the Minister concerned, the Perth City Council and King's Park Board?
- Has the Government or the Minister approved the scheme in principle?
- When will a decision be made on legislation?

The PREMIER replied:

- Yes.
- and (c) The Government has not yet considered the scheme but will do so in the near future.

UNEMPLOYMENT SCHEME.

(a) *Amount Expended to the 30th June, 1957.*

Mr. COURT asked the TREASURER:

(1) With reference to the Minister for Works' Press statement of the 7th July, 1957, that the Government would make

£1,000 a week available to meet cases of hardship, due to unemployment, how much has been expended under this scheme up to the 30th June, 1957?

(2) How much has been expended during the month of June, 1957?

(3) How much is expected to be expended for the 12 months to 30th June, 1958?

(4) What is the machinery used for approving cases to receive assistance, and what form does the assistance take, and through what channels?

(5) To what extent are employee and employer organisations co-opted to advise or assist with the administration or running of the scheme?

The TREASURER replied:

(1) £16,648 15s.

(2) £3,105 2s. 6d.

(3) Estimate, 1957-58—£36,100.

(4) The machinery used is as follows:—

- The unemployed persons must first register for employment and for Commonwealth social services unemployment benefit with the Commonwealth authorities.
- On production of documentary evidence from the Commonwealth Social Services Department that he is so registered and on signing a statutory declaration that he has not more than £50 in available assets and is unemployed, he is assessed for State unemployment relief.
- Payments are made weekly on the applicant completing a statement of earnings and signing a new statutory declaration.
- The claims of persons who make repeated applications are checked with the Commonwealth Social Services Department and also by visits to their homes by an officer of the Child Welfare Department.

The form of assistance is by cash to the extent of 67s. 6d. for the first week of unemployment and 17s. 6d. for each succeeding week.

The channel through which assistance is assessed and paid is the maintenance and relief section of the Child Welfare Department.

(5) Not at all, at present.

(b) *Centres of Relief Distribution.*

Mr. ROBERTS asked the Treasurer:

(1) What amount per week has been distributed by the Government for unemployment relief since its announced intention to distribute £1,000 per week for such purposes?

(2) Where were the centres of distribution for such moneys, and how much was distributed to date at each of such centres?

(3) How many persons received relief at each centre?

The TREASURER replied:

(1) Total expenditure from the 15th January, 1957, to the 5th July, 1957—25 weeks—was £17,595 4s. 6d.; i.e., an average weekly expenditure of £704.

(2) Perth—£12,960 13s.
Fremantle—£4,521 14s.
Midland Junction—£112 17s. 6d.
(18/2/1957 to 1/4/1957 only).

(3) Perth	1,962 persons
Fremantle	651 persons
Midland Junction	27 persons

Total	2,640 persons
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TRAFFIC.

Details re Survey Held in May.

Mr. COURT asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Was the Perth traffic survey in May, 1957, successful?

(2) Has the information from the origin and destination "Quiz" cards been collated, and with what result?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) The information is still being coded.

SOUTH-WEST POWER SCHEME.

Connection of Eaton Residents.

Mr. I. W. MANNING asked the Minister for Works:

When, approximately, will the residents of Eaton be connected to the South-West Power Scheme?

The MINISTER replied:

When the number of prospective consumers justifies an extension.

LAND TAX.

Amount Received, 1956-57.

Mr. BOVELL asked the Treasurer:

(1) What was the total amount received from land tax on agricultural land—

(a) for the year ended the 30th June, 1956;

(b) for the year ended the 30th June, 1957?

(2) What is the total estimated revenue from this source for the year ending the 30th June, 1958?

The TREASURER replied:

(1) (a) 1956—£529,412.

(b) 1957—£1,008,173.

(2) £1,330,000.

BUNBURY HARBOUR.

Availability of Dredger.

Mr. ROBERTS asked the Minister for Works:

When is it now anticipated a dredger will be made available to carry out urgent work in the Bunbury harbour?

The MINISTER replied:

It is anticipated that a dredger will be available early in the second half of this financial year.

AGRICULTURE.

Animal Health and Nutrition Laboratory, Nedlands.

Mr. COURT asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) What is to be the future of the Animal Health and Nutrition Laboratory, Smyth-rd., Nedlands?

(2) If it is to be moved—

(a) when will the move take place;

(b) will continuity of the work of this laboratory be ensured?

(3) Are the principal and senior staff fully informed on what is proposed?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Agriculture) replied:

(1) The Animal Health and Nutrition Laboratory will be moved to South Perth when necessary to free the present buildings for use by the Hollywood High School.

(2) (a) Not before adequate alternative accommodation has been provided.

(b) Yes.

(3) Detailed plans have not yet been made, but the principal is aware of the principles involved.

STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE OFFICE.

Retirement of Manager.

Mr. COURT asked the Minister for Labour:

(1) When is the manager of the State Government Insurance Office due to retire?

(2) (a) Has his successor been selected?

(b) If so, who is he to be?

(c) If not, what method of selection is proposed—e.g.: Will the appointment be made from within the present S.G.I.O. staff, the State Public Service, or outside the S.G.I.O. staff and the State Public Service?

(d) If a decision has not been made, when can such decision be expected?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The 24th August, 1957.

(2) (a) No.

(b) See answer to No. (2) (a).

(c) This is receiving consideration.

(d) As soon as possible.

CHAMBERLAIN INDUSTRIES PTY. LTD.*Report of Parliamentary Committee.*

Mr. HEARMAN asked the Premier:

(1) Has the parliamentary committee examining the affairs of Chamberlain Industries Pty. Ltd. completed its task?

(2) Will a report of the findings of this committee be tabled?

(3) If so, when?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) No.

(2) A decision in this matter will be made by the committee at a later stage.

(3) Answered by No. (2).

MAIN ROADS.*Cost of Charlie's Creek Bridge, Donnybrook.*

Mr. HEARMAN asked the Minister for Works:

(1) What was the estimated cost of the 40ft. bridge built over Charlie's Creek near Donnybrook by the Main Roads Department?

(2) What was the actual cost?

(3) What timber was specified for decking this bridge?

(4) Was the timber supplied up to specifications?

(5) Who supplied this timber?

(6) How many pieces of bridge decking were originally supplied?

(7) How many pieces of bridge decking were rejected as unsuitable?

(8) Who bore the cost of replacing this rejected timber, including the cost of transport?

(9) Who inspected this decking on behalf of Government instrumentalities?

(10) Who bore the cost of these inspections?

(11) Who was the bridge foreman on this construction job, and how long has he—

(a) been a foreman;

(b) been engaged on bridge work?

(12) Why is the foreman's opinion as to the suitability of timber not accepted by the Government?

(13) Is any more timber being supplied to the Main Roads Department from this source?

(14) Is he satisfied that the quality of timber being used in bridge construction by the Main Roads Department is up to the required standard?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) £1,490.

(2) £1,298.

(3) Sawn jarrah.

(4) Timber not conforming to reasonable standard was rejected.

(5) State Saw Mills.

(6) Fifty-six.

(7) Twenty.

(8) (a) State Saw Mills—replacement;

(b) Main Roads Department—transport.

(9) Main Roads Department officials and the Forests Department's timber inspector.

(10) The departments concerned.

(11) Foreman O. L. Langley.

(a) Eleven years.

(b) More than 20 years.

(12) It is not known that the foreman's opinion was not accepted.

(13) Yes.

(14) Yes.

ROAD BOARD ASSOCIATION.*Invitation to Minister to Attend Conference.*

Hon. D. BRAND (without notice) asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) Has he seen in today's "Daily News" the kindly invitation from the Road Board Association conference to attend and address it at 11 o'clock tomorrow morning?

(2) If so, is it his intention to make an appearance?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No.

(2) I have another engagement and will not be in attendance.

HIRE PURCHASE.*Government Legislation.*

Mr. COURT (without notice) asked the Minister for Justice:

Does the notice of intention by the member for Leederville to introduce a Bill dealing with hire purchase mean that the Government has abandoned its intention to introduce a Government Bill on that subject?

The MINISTER replied:

There will be no Bill introduced this session by the Government.

HOUSING.*Flat Project, Mt. Pleasant.*

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

In view of the editorial footnote in this morning's paper, apropos the question asked by the member for Canning in regard to a State Housing Commission project for flats at Mt. Pleasant, can he inform the House how the Melville Road Board came to be in possession of a map and, presumably, an application to the State Housing Commission, when the Minister in the House yesterday denied the fact that there had ever been any talk of a building project in Mt. Pleasant, or in that area?

The MINISTER replied:

All I can do is reaffirm that the State Housing Commission has not for one moment, at any time, considered the erection of any flats at Mt. Pleasant. What document the member for Dale refers to, I know not, but I am stating what is a fact; what I was informed by the Under Secretary for Housing. It is not to be construed that I did not accept his word, but I called for the papers and satisfied myself on the point. I also had discussions with other members of the State Housing Commission.

COAL.

Cost-Plus System.

Mr. WILD (without notice) asked the Premier:

Approximately this day eleven months ago, and on three subsequent occasions, I addressed questions to the Premier asking when we were going to have this infamous cost-plus system discarded by the Government and something substituted in its place. Will the Premier advise me when this is to take place?

The PREMIER replied:

I have to thank the hon. member for having sent me a mental telegram about his intention to ask me this question. The answer to the question is that the system should be out of existence within the next two or three months.

BILL—LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

Restored to Notice Paper.

On motion by the Minister for Justice, the Local Government Bill was restored to the notice paper at the stage it had reached in the previous session.

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1), £21,000,000.

Message.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

Standing Orders Suspension.

On motion by the Treasurer, resolved:

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable resolutions from the Committees of Supply and of Ways and Means to be reported and adopted on the same day on which they shall have passed those committees, and also the passing of a Supply Bill through all its stages in one day, and to enable the business aforesaid to be entered upon and dealt with before the Address-in-reply is adopted.

In Committee of Supply.

The House resolved into Committee of Supply, Mr. Moir in the Chair.

THE TREASURER (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam) [4.59]: I move—

That there be granted to Her Majesty on account of the services for the year ending the 30th June, 1958, a sum not exceeding £21,000,000.

This procedure, as all members of the Committee well know, is the normal procedure adopted by a Government to obtain parliamentary approval for the expenditure of money from the Consolidated Revenue Fund and also from the General Loan Fund in the early months of the financial year. It is necessary for this procedure to take place because it is never possible to bring the Budget down together with the annual estimates of revenue and expenditure until some months of the financial year have passed by.

I think that we will be able to introduce the Budget much earlier this year than has been the case for some years past. That is desirable, too, because we are meeting a month earlier than usual and the bringing down of the Budget at an earlier stage of the session will give all members a better opportunity than has been possible for some years to discuss fairly thoroughly, or as thoroughly as they wish, the Revenue and Loan Estimates.

It is something which will be all to the good to have a full discussion on financial matters this session. We know that the inflationary processes which started to some small extent and continued to some small extent during the war, and which became very much intensified after the war, are still operating. It is true that in the last two or three years the processes have not been moving as quickly as they were in the previous three or four years.

Hon. D. Brand: Would you think that the decision of the Federal Arbitration Court to suspend quarterly adjustments would have anything to do with that?

The TREASURER: I think it might have had something to do with it; but it was a very vicious method of achieving a good objective, an objective which should have been achieved by action in the national Parliament, rather than by the action of an industrial tribunal. When an industrial tribunal takes action to arrest or slow down inflation, or to reverse inflation, the burden falls almost entirely on those who come under the jurisdiction of the court and, consequently, the burden which has to be borne as a result of the court's decision does not fall fairly and squarely upon all sections of the community. I should hope that we might see in Western Australia in the very near future a flattening out of these inflationary processes.

Several times before in this Chamber, I have said that the nominal wage is not any real measure of the worth of a wage; it is the purchasing power of wages and, of course, in the general sense the purchasing power of money which is the real

test of value. The recent increases in the cost of living as decided by the State Government Statistician, and as adjudicated upon later by the State Arbitration Court, have not been very substantial, but they have all been in the upward direction. It is not a good thing now for that process to continue quarter after quarter. Certainly increases in the cost of living do benefit some people, I suppose, but they have the exact opposite effect upon the great majority of the people.

We have seen some reductions in prices of commodities in recent weeks, commodities which find a place in the "C" series index, which is used by the Arbitration Court and by the State Statistician when compiling figures for presentation to the court. I think the reductions in prices were brought much more prominently before our notice than were the increases in prices; therefore we could, in connection with the events which have taken place in recent weeks, possibly gain a wrong impression. We have seen substantial reductions in the price of tea following a decision by the Commonwealth Government to allow tea to be imported from Formosa.

Hon. D. Brand: We also have in mind the publicity about the steep rises in tea from time to time. Real publicity was given to that.

The TREASURER: I know, and I will come to that point. But it seems strange that as soon as this Formosan tea is put upon the market in Australia, those who were importing other brands of tea, the normal brands from countries with which we usually trade for tea supplies, were able to bring down their prices very substantially. However, whether the reductions which were made in the price of tea took place sufficiently early in the March-June quarter to be recorded either in part or in full in figures which the State Statistician will present to our local Arbitration Court in the near future, I do not know.

If the result on the figures for the last quarter is not very great, the full effect will be felt during the quarter which began on the first day of this month. There have been some reductions in other prices but, unfortunately, there were rather substantial increases in the prices of some of the goods in the "C" series index during the quarter which ended on the 30th of last month. I am not in a position to say, at this stage, what the net result for the March-June quarter was; but I should think that on balance there would be a slight net increase in the cost of living for that quarter as compared with the cost of living for the previous quarter. Whether that be so or not, I certainly hope that every effort will be made by everyone concerned during the current quarter to take whatever action is within their power to keep the cost of living, as it now is, on a stable basis and, if possible, to have it reduced.

I think all sections of the community can play a part in this direction. I do not say that it is only the responsibility of the manufacturers, the importers, the wholesalers and the retailers to do something towards achieving this objective. I agree that everyone, or almost everyone in the community, can play a part. The Government possibly can play a part and the workers in industry can play a part. I do not know that there are a great many people in Western Australia who are over-worked at present.

It is possible that everybody from the office boy to the managing director, as it were, could make a slightly better contribution day by day and consequently bring about a reduction in the total cost of producing goods which come on to the market from time to time. I would regard this problem as one of considerable urgency and of very great importance. It probably could be regarded as the No. 1 problem in urgency and importance in Western Australia. Provided there is a full co-operative effort by the community as a whole, I think something of a practical nature could be achieved along the lines I have suggested.

Last year the sum of £19,000,000 was granted by the passing of the Supply Act (No. 1) and this year we are asking, by the introduction of this measure, to be granted a sum of £21,000,000 under the headings of the Consolidated Revenue Fund and the General Loan Fund. A comparison as between the Supply Act (No. 1) of last year and the amounts now sought might be of interest to members. The amount granted last year under the heading of Consolidated Revenue was £13,000,000 and the amount now sought is £15,000,000, whereas under the heading of General Loan Fund the amount granted last year by the passing of the Supply Act (No. 1) was £4,000,000 and the amount now sought is the same, £4,000,000. The advance to Treasurer last year was £2,000,000 and this year we are also asking for £2,000,000, making a total last year of £19,000,000 and the amount sought this year £21,000,000.

The additional amount required this year, as compared with last year, is to meet additional expenditure which will have to be met in many directions as compared with the rate of expenditure which had to be met in the early months of last financial year. I think all members are aware that during the last 12 months costs have increased. There have been increases in wages and salaries consequent upon the increases in the cost of living to which I referred a few moments ago. We find, too, that the expenditure under the heading of "Interest Payments" keeps on piling up from year to year. This is understandable because the debt of the State is increased each year by the

amount of loan money which is expended, and interest rates have also increased slightly during the last year or so.

On looking through the preliminary estimates of expenditure from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, I find that expenditure is continuing to rise quite rapidly and substantially through the medium of the Health and Education Departments. I suppose it is understandable in these days when people are health conscious and when everybody places great importance upon health, that the cost of maintaining our health services should increase substantially year by year.

I think I have said before that in a State like Western Australia, with a climate such as we have, it is always amazing to me that there is so much sickness. However, sickness seems to be emphasised much more these days than ever before. The experts seem to have come very much to the top in the health world and consequently it has become necessary to provide a great deal of additional money each year to maintain the services of the Public Health Department. I am not saying that this is not a good thing; it could, in fact, be a very good thing, but I have a lingering suspicion that the individual could do much more for himself to maintain good health than perhaps many individuals in the community do. Maybe, one of these days, when I feel sick I will change my view very quickly.

It is also true that some very wonderful discoveries have been made in the health field in more recent years and the application of these discoveries to individuals who need such application to cure them of their ills is an expensive process, but one, I submit, which every self-respecting and worth-while community must provide. We cannot measure the great value which these health services confer on and through the community of the State. I think it is probably within the memory of almost every member of the Committee that, some years ago, tuberculosis was a fatal disease in almost every instance. It was regarded with the greatest possible fear.

When any person was found to be suffering from tuberculosis years ago, that person was regarded as being doomed to certain death and, in many instances, to a quick death. We have seen an amazing change in the cure for that disease. I think it is not exaggerating to say that the fatal consequences of this disease have almost entirely been eliminated during the last few years. In that direction I think we could fairly give a great deal of credit to our present Commissioner of Health, Dr. Henzell. If I remember correctly, he was brought to Western Australia especially to take charge of the Wooroloo Sanatorium and to concentrate his attention, his knowledge and his skill on such research and work that would reduce the fatal incidence of t.b.

In a comparatively few years we have seen a marvellous change for the better in the incidence of this disease which was so terrible not many years ago. It is not possible to measure in money terms the value of work of that kind. So, although when I receive the Estimates of the Public Health Department from year to year, I knock at the knees for a time, considerations such as those I have just mentioned come pressing in upon the mind and consequently one feels, as Treasurer—and this applies to all the Ministers of the Government—that one should, within reason, make as much additional finance available as is possible for the health services in the community year by year.

The Education Department is another department where expenditure continues to expand and rise rapidly. From a purely Treasury point of view, there is no worse department than the Education Department because, all the year round, the Treasury keeps pouring money into that department but gets nothing back.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Except the making of good citizens.

The TREASURER: I think the member for Cottesloe will remember that I said that from the purely Treasury point of view, the Education Department is the worst department because it is all one-way traffic. Here again we cannot measure the benefits which the education of our children confers in later years upon the community when those children become adults and commence to give service to the State in some field or other. Expenditure on health, educational and other services has also increased because of the growth in our population. I think it is well known by members of the Committee that we, in Western Australia, were absorbing more migrants per head of population than any other State of Australia.

As a result of that, our school population was increased fairly rapidly and substantially. In addition to which I think the birth rate in Western Australia in recent years has, for most of the time, been round about the second highest in Australia. The honour in that regard belongs to Tasmania which consistently has had the highest birth rate of all the Australian States. I have not been to Tasmania myself—

Mr. Court: You had better not record in Hansard what I said on the side.

The TREASURER: —but there must be something in the Tasmanian air which does not exist in the same quantity, at any rate, in the other States of Australia. Or, it may be that the people of Tasmania indulge more in that Adam and Eve business of eating apples than do the people in the other States.

Hon. D. Brand: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition suggests that it might be the cold weather.

The **TREASURER**: Be that as it may, the fact is that our birth rate has risen quite substantially and that, coupled with the child increase by way of migration, has naturally placed much greater demands on the Education Department and, therefore, that has been another contributing factor to the very solid increase in expenditure from the Consolidated Revenue Fund through that department.

The Minister for Education: We are doing a great job.

The **TREASURER**: Yes, I think it can be fairly said, for that matter, that all the Education Departments in Australia are doing tremendously valuable work in providing education for the children. I resist the temptation to discuss some of my own pet ideas on, not the lack of citizenship training in our schools, but the failure, perhaps, to give greater and more effective citizenship training in the schools. However, that matter is receiving attention from time to time and improvements in the teaching of citizenship are being made as opportunity offers.

I have made available to members some additional information which is usually provided at this stage and I will be pleased to answer any questions I am in a position to answer at a later stage of the debate.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

In Committee of Ways and Means.

The House resolved into Committee of Ways and Means, Mr. Moir in the Chair.

THE TREASURER (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam) [5.26]: I move—

That towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the services of the year ending the 30th June, 1958, a sum not exceeding £15,000,000 be granted from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, £4,000,000 from the General Loan Fund and £2,000,000 from the Public Account.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

Bill Introduced.

In accordance with the foregoing resolutions, Bill introduced and read a first time.

Second Reading.

THE TREASURER (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam) [5.31]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. D. BRAND (Greenough) [5.32]: I want to say a word or two in respect of the comments made by the Treasurer in seeking this Supply. Firstly, I was very

interested to hear his comments concerning the problem of basic wage adjustments and their effect on the cost of living in the over-all.

The Minister for Transport: Cost of living on the basic wage!

HON. D. BRAND: From what the Treasurer has said in reply to an interjection, I gather that he considers the action of the Federal court in suspending the adjustment of the basic wage did have some effect in steadying the inflationary spiral which was flaring up at that time. Most Australians recognise that in a very real way the suspension of quarterly adjustments of the wage has had a desirable effect and that in the long run, irrespective of the fact there was no quarterly adjustment, the worker—in fact all those who receive money—was getting greater and increased value for the money he received.

Mr. Lapham: That is wishful thinking.

HON. D. BRAND: That is not. I would point out that perhaps the original decision of the Federal court to load the basic wage by £1—I have no quarrel with that decision—was in some way responsible for the sudden uplift of the inflationary spiral which took place. I believe that the time has come when, in spite of the failure of previous efforts by the Governments of Australia, they should get together with a view to establishing some uniformity of wages and hours of work in this country. Surely it is not a very satisfactory situation, even though the authority is vested in an independent tribunal, that in Western Australia there is quarterly adjustment of the basic wage but in other States there is not. In the case of the Federal court, in recent times it has decided to make adjustments from time to time, bearing in mind its original decision not to make quarterly adjustments.

Mr. Lapham: Would you prefer them to have quarterly adjustments?

HON. D. BRAND: I certainly would not. The plain fact is that, for the information of the member for North Perth, quarterly adjustments must result in an increase in wages every quarter. Surely such a line will lead ultimately to financial disaster and we will simply price ourselves, through that system, out of the world's markets.

The Minister for Transport: Prices do this. You have hit the nail on the head. That is what has put up the wages.

HON. D. BRAND: I imagine from what the Minister has said that he believes price-fixing or something of that sort would be the solution, something on which he himself could make a decision.

Mr. Lapham: We had price-fixing.

HON. D. BRAND: It was not very successful.

Mr. Lapham: There was a difference in price-fixing at that time.

Hon. D. BRAND: In the Treasurer's own words, he indicated tonight that he was aware of greater stability in this State and the Commonwealth, and that there was a steadying in respect of rising costs. I would ask: Could we attribute this to any price-fixing, because it has not existed in most of the States? We can trace this stability back to a realisation by most people that the time had come for stock-taking in respect of the financial honeymoon which this country had enjoyed.

The Minister for Transport: Credit restrictions were the cause of that.

Hon. D. BRAND: It could have been the credit restrictions or anything of that sort. The Minister for Transport having solved the railway problems, now proceeds to solve the financial position of the State!

The Minister for Transport: You are always trying to bash the workers.

Hon. D. BRAND: That is ridiculous.

Mr. Lapham: You had better get off this topic. You are not doing too well.

Hon. D. BRAND: I am doing all right. I would refer the hon. member to the fact that at the present time, according to the Treasurer, we are enjoying a degree of financial stability. That is all-important.

Mr. Johnson: Is it more important than justice?

Hon. D. BRAND: The hon. member leaves me absolutely amazed.

Mr. Johnson: You cannot answer the question!

Hon. D. BRAND: Regarding the quarterly adjustments I am hopeful that in view of what the Treasurer said tonight, the Government will not bring before Parliament another Bill to enforce upon the State Arbitration Court the decision to make quarterly adjustments. I was interested to read the remarks of the Premier to a deputation from the school teachers. I feel that they were spoken sincerely and that the Premier meant every word he said. He said that because we have had several quarterly adjustments in this State, compared with other States, we face higher costs and that such higher costs were creating an embarrassment for him as Treasurer. He was saying this to the deputation which was seeking an increase in the salaries for school teachers.

I hope that the Treasurer will take the lead at the Federal level, with some other Premiers of this country, to bring about a greater degree of uniformity of wages. In some way the Constitution might be amended to the extent of allowing for an independent tribunal. We should not bring into being political interference or allow the whims of any political party to

be brought to bear on this issue. Some independent tribunal with the required experience and expert advice behind it should be formed to arrive at some degree of uniformity in respect of wages in Australia.

Mr. Johnson: Independent of whom?

Hon. D. BRAND: Independent of the hon. member, whatever else.

Mr. Johnson: There are others besides myself.

Hon. D. BRAND: Throughout last year the Treasurer, from time to time, made it very clear that he was dissatisfied with the financial arrangements between the State and the Commonwealth. As far as I can see, following every effort by the Commonwealth Government to call the Premiers together, they have met at a dead-end because of the upsurge of political interests of the States. As I have said before, until such a conference can be held outside the political atmosphere of both Commonwealth and State, no satisfactory conclusion will be reached.

I would assume that, in view of the obvious need for this State to receive a greater share of the income of the Commonwealth, it is necessary to review the formula under which the distribution of moneys is made. In this regard I have no doubt that the Treasurer will be fighting a lone battle, because his party political colleagues—I do not know for how long in respect of Queensland, but he has quite a few—would not furnish the support which they gave him some two years ago, when, following an appeal to the Commonwealth for assistance brought about by the unemployment problem, some £2,000,000 extra was allotted to this State. It is fundamental that the time has come for the review of this formula, which is the basis on which the present financial arrangements between the States and the Commonwealth are brought about. We as a rapidly expanding State have great problems in respect of unpopulated areas, which we have been expected to shoulder following a very heavy immigration programme. I want to make it clear that I am in favour of the present level of migration continuing even though it might mean sacrifice on our part.

The Minister for Transport: Sacrifice by the workers.

Hon. D. BRAND: It is absolutely vital that we continue the present level of immigration for the over-all and long-range interests.

Mr. Johnson: What is the level in the State at the moment?

Hon. D. BRAND: I cannot say. There should not be any curtailment of the present level of immigration to this country. That is absolutely vital both in the interests of the population and of defence. Because of that, and because we represent

one-third of the area of the Commonwealth the time has come when the Prime Minister together with the Premiers should review the whole problem of financing works in Western Australia which are required to enable the demand for employment, brought about by the natural increase in population and by arrivals under the immigration programme, to be met.

Mr. Lapham: If we do not have the money, do you still say we should have increased migration?

Hon. D. BRAND: We could go on asking about possibilities ad infinitum. The fact remains that we, as a nation, have to face up squarely to the need to fill up the areas of this State and of Australia. We have to bring in people of the kind we want or we will have those whom we do not desire. We cannot have it both ways. Not only should the State be expected to make some sacrifice in this regard, but the Commonwealth, seeing that it holds the purse strings and has the income, should consider the whole issue of development in a vast State such as this.

I do not intend to delay the debate on this Bill. I just wanted to say those few words. I desire to comment on the remark of the Treasurer that the Education Department is one which is most embarrassing to the Treasury. I know that he had in mind the problem of school buses.

The Treasurer: The total problem.

Hon. D. BRAND: The total problem of school buses.

The Treasurer: No, the total problem of the department.

Hon. D. BRAND: An amount of £800,000 is an immense financial burden to carry. There has been criticism of the curtailment of spur lines, and I feel that the Government must face the responsibility of finding ways and means to assist in the transport of children who are living in those far-flung areas. From inquiries I have made, I am of the opinion that we in Western Australia have got ourselves into the position in which the bus contractor takes on the job as his only job. In America, I understand, people engaged in this activity run service stations and other businesses and run school buses as a sideline.

In those circumstances I imagine that the price for which they would contract per mile would be much more competitive, and so cut the total impact on the finances. With our wide spaces and sparsely populated areas, this is a matter of increasing difficulty and one which I recognise could be very real. On the other hand, as in the case of the railways, I do not feel that the problem is likely to be solved merely by ceasing to carry on bus services which country people have enjoyed, and something more must be done about it. I

believe that there should be an effort to make different arrangements for the running of the buses as a part-time rather than a full-time job.

The Minister for Transport: What do you think is a reasonable distance for children to be expected to walk—one mile, two miles, or what?

MR. PERKINS (Roe) [5.47]: I appreciate that the Treasurer has some difficult problems facing him at present, but I believe that some of the policies being pursued by the Government are not making his difficulties any less. There was a period—about the time when the first strike of oil was made in Western Australia, and when there was considerable industrial development taking place as well—during which Western Australia had something of a boom in the agricultural and industrial fields. But it often happens that when there is a quick upsurge then, when things return to what might be regarded as a more normal level, difficulties arise, as happened in that instance.

The downward sweep has gone, I believe, much further than it need have gone, and than it would have done had more prudent policies been followed by the Government. In that period, when conditions were booming, there was a great deal of free spending by the Government and, to some degree, the future was mortgaged during that free spending period. It is inevitable that the difficulties are increased in the following period, when we would like Government expenditure to take up some of the slack till the position levels out again.

Of course, some of these difficulties are not peculiar to Western Australia, but they are somewhat accentuated here. I believe that the finding of sufficient capital to do all the things the Government wants to do, as well as provide for the normal expansion of industry without any extraordinary expansion taking place, is going to be a very difficult problem in Australia for some time. We do hear theories put forward from time to time to the effect that money should not be the limiting factor. However, the fact remains that money is just a convenient token to explain certain much more basic economic principles.

I think that we in Western Australia have to face the fact that if we are going to spend the biggest part of our income on ordinary consumable goods, we cannot have very much left to do the necessary capital works we are so anxious to see carried out. In recent years we have had some capital brought into Australia from outside, but that has been a comparatively small amount compared with the total capital expenditure which is required by Governments and by industry. Hence the difficulties we are facing at present.

It is probable that this difficulty of finding sufficient capital is the limiting factor as to how many migrants can be brought

into this country. Unfortunately, a very great number of migrants who have come to Australia in the period since the war—and this goes for Western Australia as well as the other States—have been people with very little money. I think we have had something of a duty to help those people who suffered from the ravages of war in Europe and were not in a position to help themselves. But we have to recognise that they have made an additional call on the capital resources of Australia at a time when we probably would have had some difficulty in finding capital for the purposes I have referred to.

I have spoken on various aspects of this topic from time to time. Members will recall that in each of the last few sessions of Parliament I have made various speeches in which I have referred to the difficulties which face settlers developing new land in this State. A great deal of Government money has been found for the war service land settlement scheme, and expenditure on that scheme has been fairly lavish. I will be very interested to see the figures, as soon as they can possibly be released by the Government, as to what the actual financial position of the scheme is. I have a very strong suspicion that there is going to be a very considerable write-off, a much greater one than many people have anticipated.

However, I have no official figures to work on. At the moment I would imagine that in some instances there could be a write-off of anything up to one-third of the money spent by the scheme for developmental purposes in new districts. We know that such development is an asset, but we must not lose sight of the cost of providing that asset. If only a portion of the money which is to be written off could have been made available under the agency section of the Rural & Industries Bank to assist some of the other settlers who are very much limited in their rate of development, in the outer agricultural districts in particular, we would have seen very much more development in those areas than we have seen so far.

I know that both the Treasurer and the Minister for Lands are conversant with this problem as I have introduced deputations to each of them. The Premier's reply to one deputation, which requested that loan funds should be made available to the agency section of the R. & I. Bank to enable reasonable assistance to be made available to settlers who have sunk considerable sums of their own money into the development of their properties so far, was that he hoped he would be able to allocate some money to that section of the bank for that purpose and that the settlers would not have to work for other people, away from their own properties, for more than a very small portion of their time, but that they would be able to be kept fully employed on the development of their own holdings.

That has not happened up to date and I see no indication of it yet, so I hope the Treasurer will tell this Chamber just what has been taking place in more recent times. I certainly think this is a point that he should clarify before he embarks upon any additional State enterprises as it is having serious effects in many directions. We had a long debate in this Chamber yesterday on the subject of rail closures and it so happens that some of these suspensions of services have been in certain of the areas to which I have referred.

How can we possibly expect Government rail services to pay when only a portion of the land served by them is developed? That is a question that must be faced. I have no doubt that the State would have been in difficulties years ago had it not been for the fact that capital was available from one source or another for development of this nature. Most of the agricultural areas of Western Australia have been developed by people without large funds of their own, and while I have been twitted in this House as an advocate of socialistic policies in suggesting that a Government agency, in the form of the R. & I. Bank—which is the successor to the old Agricultural Bank—should assist in this direction, I maintain still that by adopting that policy we would only be following what has been the traditional line of development.

The present position is further complicated by the fact that as the result of changes in banking policy in Australia, recommended by the Royal Commission on Banking, of which the late Mr. Chifley was a member, the effect of those changes has been that trading banks have concentrated on the provision of money for industry on a reasonably short-term policy rather than having their funds tied up in overdrafts which, in effect, would be long-term loans. I think it was said at the time when that report was published in the 1930's, that the difficulties which Australia faced in that period were accentuated by the banking policy that had been pursued in the years immediately preceding that difficult time.

The banking policy of Australia, as I understand it, at present provides that advances under overdraft conditions by the trading banks should be kept in a reasonably fluid state. Obviously, if those funds are to be used for long-term development, the money will be tied up for lengthy periods—perhaps anything up to 20 or 30 years, because I think most of us appreciate that in the early stages particularly of the development of any industry, if it is able to pay its way we cannot expect much more than that from it.

It is asking a great deal of those engaged in development of that kind to seek to get them to pay back capital money as well as to pay their way, as I have said, particularly in the early stages. Hence the

need, in my opinion, for the Treasurer of this State to examine these problems closely, because the prosperity of the State as a whole depends largely on a proper solution being found to the difficulties I have been discussing. Unless the tempo of development in the newly developing areas to which I have referred can be maintained, there are other Government departments which will be faced with difficulties.

In recent weeks the Country Party members of this Parliament had a deputation to the Minister for Education asking that the policy of the Government with reference to the alteration in school bus services should be abandoned and that the department should revert to its previous policy. All members who represent rural areas must be aware of the position, but in case other members of this Chamber do not know what is happening, I would point out that last year the Education Department pursued a vigorous policy in the reduction of services by school buses.

Children are being asked to travel much greater distances to catch the buses and almost all spurs, as we call them, to school bus routes, have been abandoned. Members will realise what difficulties have been created in those districts. Obviously, if we find families being forced to leave such areas owing to a reduction of service by any Government department, the position will be worsened and instead of a policy of building up our country districts and expanding their development, we will find a movement in the opposite direction. I can quote numerous instances of great hardship being suffered by parents due to the reduction in school bus services.

Hon. A. F. Watts: Do you remember the example you gave the Minister at the deputation?

Mr. PERKINS: I have in mind one case from the Nyabing area, which I have presented to the Education Department. I have the map in front of me. In this particular family, there are seven children, five of whom are of school age. Previously the bus ran almost adjacent to the property but now the route has been altered to a long terminal route and this family, which is not in a good financial position, is not able to spare the breadwinner sufficient time to take the children to school in the morning and bring them home at night. The ages of the children range from 12 to 2; five of them are of school age and the other two are aged 5 and 2 respectively. This family lives 5 miles from the nearest school and 4½ miles from the present bus route. So members can imagine the difficult position facing these people and if, in addition, they are suffering difficulties in the development of their property, there is not much inducement for them to stay on the land.

The disabilities are greater in the newly developing areas and I can quote numerous instances where great hardships are being suffered. I know that the department makes a special allowance for the difficulties being suffered in these outer districts; but the policy at present is not nearly as liberal as it was 12 months ago. I do not think that the Treasurer of Western Australia can ignore the hardships confronting those who are developing the outer agricultural areas of this State, especially when he is deciding upon the allocation of the funds available to him. I realise that the Treasurer is facing difficulties at present, but they will be very much worse if anything goes wrong with the agricultural production of this State.

It has often been said, and I think most people have been prepared to accept it, that for a number of years Australia has been riding on the sheep's back, and is still continuing to do so. But the position is becoming more dangerous because costs in our secondary industries, not only in Western Australia but also throughout Australia, are increasing rather than decreasing and unfortunately the range of primary products which can compete on the open markets of the world is being narrowed down because of those increased costs. We have now reached the position where practically the only primary products that can successfully compete in free competition are wool and grain. Of course, certain minerals can be sold in free competition because of their particular advantages. I think we all recognise that there are many essential imports which we must have if our primary and secondary industries are to function at all. But it does not seem to me to be likely that we can expect to see any substantial increase in the earning capacity of our secondary industries by their selling in the world markets.

Mr. Potter: What are you advocating?

Mr. PERKINS: I am afraid the member for Subiaco has not been listening to me very carefully—

Mr. Potter: I have.

Mr. PERKINS. —or else he would have realised what I was advocating. I do not know whether I was making a good job of it or whether I was able to convince him or not. However, he says that he does not know what I am advocating and therefore I can only assume that he has not been listening to me or else it is hard to make him understand. I believe that our secondary industries are still not in a position to earn very much on the overseas markets unless their products are heavily subsidised.

I have some authentic information in regard to one industry; it is an undertaking which is generally regarded as efficient in the secondary industry field. But in recent times I was rather startled to learn from a person within the industry who must

know what he is talking about, that the costs of that industry are 30 per cent. out of line with world prices. Yet I cannot think of any secondary industry which is more efficient than that one. Hence my plea that we must continue to look after our primary industries if we are to ensure the economic good health of Australia. It is not only the welfare of the people in the country districts that is involved. If members will consider for a moment they will realise that the prosperity of people all over Australia is at stake and therefore we must maintain a proper development. So I strongly urge the Treasurer to look at some of the aspects which I have mentioned this evening.

HON. A. F. WATTS (Stirling) [6.13]: I do not suppose, bearing in mind the amounts sought by the Supply Bill, that anyone can take serious exception to it; it involves £2,000,000 more than was asked for by the Supply Act (No. 1) of last year. In view of the fact that revenue and expenditure have been increasing rapidly over the last decade, I should suggest that it would last about the same time as the sum of money provided by the Supply Act (No. 1) of last year. On the assumption that the Treasurer succeeds in bringing down his Budget and estimates at the earlier time he prophesied, it is to be hoped that there is no need for a second Supply Bill this year, as has been the case each year for some years past.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: Before the tea suspension I was saying that, as compared with earlier years, or last year in particular, the amount of the Supply Bill does not appear to be excessive and yet the amount of £21,000,000, which is involved in it, is a very substantial sum to be approved without any information as to how it is to be spent. On that aspect we could ignore the revenue side of the matter because the greater part of it, obviously, will be expended in the normal carrying on of governmental functions. Bodies such as the Civil Service and the Education Department will, of course, absorb extremely substantial portions of it. However, when it comes to the fairly large sum of £4,000,000 from the Loan Fund without obtaining any information as to what is proposed to do with it, then, of course, I think it amounts to a very large sum indeed.

I am quite aware that in past times we have been obliged in this House, with any Government—not this one or one like it—to pass Supply Bills in proportion to the amount involved in this one. However, it has always struck me that there ought to be, in the introductory speech of the Treasurer at the very least, some detailed information as to what is proposed to be done with the loan funds which are to be appropriated by the Supply Bill for the services of the State. It is something over

12 months ago I think, that I took up with the Treasurer the question of the proposed expenditure on the enlargement of the Wundowie charcoal iron industry, the figure at that time being referred to as £260,000.

At that time, I asked the hon. gentleman if he thought that that expenditure out of loan funds on that particular project was warranted in the face of the continual delays and, in many cases, rejections, of applications of expenditure from loan moneys on such requirements as schools, hospitals, and other public works. I suggested to him that in view of the restricted funds available to him from loan moneys, it would be more desirable to place what I call first things first, to wit, the things that I have mentioned and other public works such as water supplies and the like which should be taken into consideration out of those restricted loan funds before such projects as the expansion of Wundowie were considered by the hon. gentleman.

The Treasurer did not agree with me. He said that the project he had in mind would increase employment, would provide larger quantities of charcoal iron for export and one or two other aspects of that nature which, for the time being, slip my memory. I reserved the right to disagree with him at that time and I still do. However, that was in reference to the expenditure of £260,000. To increase the output of charcoal iron at Wundowie in those circumstances, might be a desirable project. Even now, if it were necessary to increase the production to cope with the demand for pig iron in Western Australia, I could modify at least my thoughts on the subject, but it is quite obvious, from the information the Treasurer gave us last year and which has been confirmed by that which he has given to the member for Moore in the last few days, that the existing output is more than sufficient for the Western Australian demand and there is now a surplus which is available for export.

It is true, on the figures given to the member for Moore, that that surplus is worth more money per ton than has been obtained from the local consumer, but it is quite obvious that any increased production is most likely to be largely devoted to the export market, supposing that the export market remains in existence to absorb it, which we will, for the time being, assume will be so. But since the discussion I had at the time with the hon. gentleman in this House, a statement has been published in the Press which, so far as I am aware, has not been denied, and had nothing whatever to do with the proposed export of iron ore to Japan, which was quite a different matter and one upon which I will not touch this evening. But it was a Press statement in regard to what was proposed, before the Japanese proposition was announced, for the expenditure upon Wundowie charcoal iron industry up to a total of £800,000.

As I have said, that figure has never been denied and it would be assumed that it is the intention of the Government to spend that sum upon the expansion of Wundowie and, presumably, substantially for the export of the increased production. At the same time, in various places and at various times, in connection with public works which I would suggest are extremely necessary and, in some cases, vital to the development of this State, we are informed that there is not enough money available. To my way of thinking the two things do not run together. If there is only a limited amount of money sufficient to do two things and one requires to do three, one picks out the two that are most useful or essential—that is if one is sensible—to those for whom one is working.

I cannot believe that the proposed expenditure of this sum on the Wundowie charcoal iron industry should be one of the two, because I think the two most essential, as I said, are public works such as education and hospitalisation of which there are very substantial shortages, and much difficulty in providing funds; secondly, the provision of water supply must be considered. So I again make that criticism of this matter because I think it does not place first things first.

There are one or two other matters upon which I would like to touch before I conclude. The first is that I read with some amazement the judgment of the High Court in regard to the licensing of vehicles used by interstate hauliers. If I understood the judgment aright, and if it was correctly reported in the Press, it amounted to this: Because Section 92 of the Australian Constitution says that trade, commerce and intercourse between and among the States shall be absolutely free no vehicle used by an interstate haulier—a person who travels and hauls from State to State—is obliged to pay any licence fee whatever to any State.

If that is the position then, as I have said, I am amazed at the decision of the court. I would suggest to the Government of New South Wales—I think it was that Government that was concerned—that if it is possible, it should take this matter further because, if one considers certain other judgments of the High Court at various times in relation to Section 92 of the Constitution, then it seems to me that this judgment is completely out of plumb.

The quarantine regulations, for example, on the transit of fruit and plants and so forth from one State to another have been upheld by the High Court presumably because they affect the successful or satisfactory carrying on of industry in various States. For example, if some pest which is in the fruit of South Australia should be brought to Western Australia by the transit of fruit from the first State to this one, then the chances are that this State is going to be damaged thereby. The same applies in reverse if the pest happens to

be here; and the High Court has upheld the quarantine or restrictive regulation which has been imposed by the several States one against the other in the main and has never suggested that because the provisions of Section 92 say that trade and commerce and intercourse between the States shall be absolutely free, one is going to be allowed to take a diseased apple to Western Australia or a diseased orange from here to South Australia.

Yet, when it comes to the question of the road haulier using the roads of this State, or any other State, without paying the slightest contribution, in some cases towards their upkeep, then this judgment says it is quite all right. If it is not challenged or altered in some way or another, I do not know where it will ultimately lead us. In the course of the debate last night the Minister for Works, if I remember aright, referred to the axle loading of vehicles, and to the necessity of maintaining a restricted load over certain roads in this State; in fact, I think over all roads.

I suggest that if this judgment is carried to what I think is its logical conclusion, it will be possible for a vehicle carrying 1,000 tons with an axle load of 50 tons per axle if you like, Mr. Speaker, to come from the Eastern States to Western Australia, pay no licence fee and be subject to no restrictions. What the last stage of our road conditions will be if that should happen is, I think, too dreadful to contemplate. We all know what has been done in regard to the Eildon Dam in Victoria. The tremendous vehicles involved were carrying 50 and 60 tons per load especially for that job. But if this judgment is to stand, it seems to me that all restrictions on persons who travel from State to State carrying loads are virtually at an end, and they will be able to do just what they like, how they like and where they like.

As I say, it is a position that is rather too dreadful to contemplate. I do not know whether the Government has given any consideration to this aspect, but I think it should do so as early as possible with the idea of endeavouring to find out just where this business will end; because while some of us may have felt from time to time that the actual restrictions that have been placed upon loading could with-in reason have been slightly relaxed, none of us want to see a completely free-go for any weight at all that is desired to be carried, particularly when it would appear that there will be no compensation by way of licence fees to this State or to any State. It must be appreciated that many of these vehicles are diesel powered. That is quite all right, and I have no objection to it.

This State has tackled the problem by increasing the licence fee payable by diesel-powered vehicles as against those

powered by petrol engines for the reason that the owners of petrol engines are paying petrol tax, which tax is used for the construction and maintenance of roads. But up to date, and there are very considerable reasons why it must always be so, the consumer of diesel power for the diesel oil engine pays no tax and makes no contribution towards road construction and maintenance unless he can be made to pay a licence fee. If this judgment stands, there will be no diesel fuel tax and the vehicle goes where it likes, does what it likes as far as I can see with any weight it likes, and does not pay a penny for the privilege. That was why I thought it desirable at least to mention such views as I have on the subject so that they might perhaps be given some consideration by the Government.

Mr. Evans: How do the quarantine restrictions affect Section 92?

Hon. A. F. WATTS: I do not think it is necessary to get around that section in regard to the quarantine restrictions. The judgment has been on the very same lines as that. It is necessary for the preservation of the State roads that they be subject to reasonable State laws. That would solve the whole problem. But instead of that, it has departed from the principle as I understood it to be applied to quarantine over a long period of years. Section 92 is still in full view and the court has laid down this remarkable majority judgment.

The last thing I want to say was referred to by the member for Roe, that is, the changes which have been made in school bus services and contracts. So far as I am concerned, the hon. member dealt satisfactorily with the aspect as it affects the parents of the children who have to be carried to school. In regard to what he said, I heartily agree with him. I headed the deputation to which he referred. We submitted the case exactly as we saw it. The example given by the member for Roe is a fair and reasonable sample of others that were presented, but Cabinet decided—and the decision was conveyed to me subsequently—to make no changes in the matter. There the matter must rest for the moment.

There is another aspect, and that is the bus conductor. In many cases he has found his route considerably reduced. In consequence, his revenue is considerably reduced, and his ability to maintain and amortise the cost of a bus is also considerably reduced. His position in a number of cases, not in all, is an extremely difficult one. It has been suggested to me that there have not been any reductions in mileage below the original contracts entered into by the conductors. In consequence, while in the interim between the time they signed the contract and the present day, they have, in some cases,

been earning more, because of these extra mileages which are cut out, they are expected to take no exception to that as their original contract was for a lesser mileage, below which they have not been reduced. I have clear evidence in more cases than one that this is not the position in all instances, and, in addition, I very much doubt the authority of the Minister, in the cases to which I referred, to reduce the amount below that which has been stipulated in the contract.

There are, so far as I can ascertain, three types of contracts. The one in which I am most interested, as I believe it exists in all of the cases that I have in mind, allows the Minister to alter the route if it is for the convenience of the children to be served; then it goes on to say that he shall pay additional mileage. As it says that the Minister has to pay additional mileage and as it makes no reference to lesser sums for lesser mileage, it is quite clear that that agreement did not empower him to reduce the figure below the one originally stipulated in the contract.

Yet that has been done. I suggest that is going to create, and is in fact creating, dissatisfaction among the bus conductors in more cases than those affected under that type of contract. I venture to suggest to the Minister, as I did some two years ago, that if this is the kind of business that is going to be resorted to, the difficulty of obtaining persons to conduct these vehicles at all, and the difficulty of those persons to obtain vehicles in which to carry the children will become greater and greater as time goes on.

I do not want to accuse the Government of being anti-rural. I think it has not given proper consideration to what it is doing in the matter. I suggest to the Government that it take another good look at this proposition and sees where it is going, and whether, in fact, it is not penalising the bus conductors in many cases, but more particularly the children and the parents concerned. In regard to some children and parents, the changes amount to a breach of contract because there are one or two instances known to me—if that is so, there are probably others elsewhere—where small schools were closed distinctly on the understanding that a certain bus route would be in operation for children to be conveyed to a central school.

It was always understood, and I believe this is still the case, that where small schools are to be closed, they were not to be closed without the consent of a majority of parents. That consent is usually given after a visit by the superintendent and an arrangement is made as to what bus service is likely to be instituted. In those circumstances, the parents agreed to the closing of the small schools on the basis that they were to have a certain service. In some cases they are not getting it.

I appeal to the Government to have another look at this matter, otherwise it might be in serious trouble with the whole bus contract system, because one cannot easily go back if one wants to—and Heaven forbid that!—to the small school. If that is done there is considerable cost involved, not to mention the considerable friction and inconvenience to one kind of people and another, and to the department itself. I leave this matter at that for the time being.

Lastly, I heard over the A.B.C. radio tonight that the nomenclature committee of the Lands Department is considering a name for the new bridge over the Swan River. Might I suggest to the Minister, to the Government and to the nomenclature committee that they call it the Narrows Bridge? It has been known as the Narrows for a century and by Heavens, it is the Narrows now!

MR. CROMMELIN (Claremont) [8.00]: I would like to take this opportunity of bringing before the House a question of health which, before the tea suspension the Treasurer was informing us was costing a lot of money. The matter I wish to bring forward has, for some months now, affected the Claremont Municipal Council quite considerably. I refer to a health order served on a house in Graylands some months ago. If the Treasurer, in his capacity as Premier, would care to look at some of the photographs that the council has had taken, I would perhaps get a little more satisfaction.

May I say at the outset that the council, so far as I am concerned—and I have been told so by the town clerk, Mr. Tom Brown—has had the greatest possible help from Ministers and the Government. We have, on numerous occasions, approached Hon. G. Fraser for help and decisions, and I can honestly say that he has always been most obliging. The Minister for Transport even went to the trouble of going down to help solve some parking problems.

With regard to the matter I am raising, I am of the opinion that such a state of affairs should never have caused any trouble or embarrassment to the Minister for Health, for whom I and the members of the council have the greatest respect. However, I feel that this matter, which has been forced on the council, has been brought about, to a large extent, by an inspector of a department, possibly through frustration or pique.

This particular house was owned by an old-age pensioner. Members will appreciate that in the case of old-age pensioners in a municipality, it is the usual practice to allow them the right of not having to pay any rates and taxes, and also to defer forcing them to connect to the sewer. However, in other cases, where sewerage

has been provided by the Government, it is the usual practice to ask, and if necessary, endeavour to enforce it.

Therefore, in the course of the health inspector's duty, he called on the owner of this house in 1954 and discovered that the lady living in the house was an old-age pensioner. Such being the case, the enforcement was allowed to lapse. Subsequently, in August of 1956, the inspector, in the course of his duties, followed up this case and learned that the old-age pensioner was no longer in possession of the house and that it was in the hands of the Public Trustee. He reported this position to the council and the Public Trustee, who was in charge of the property, was advised to that effect.

In January of this year the town clerk received from the Public Trustee an acknowledgment of the council's request that the place be connected to the sewer. The Public Trustee informed the town clerk that—

at the moment, there are no funds in this estate and the prospects of an immediate loan from the sewerage department to effect this work is unlikely but, as money may become available for that purpose in two years, some action may be able to be commenced. Would you please advise if this proposal meets with your board's approval.

A fortnight later, at the meeting of the council, the letter from the Public Trustee was brought up and the trustee was advised by return as follows:—

In reply to the above I am directed to advise my council wishes this property to be connected to the sewer without delay.

Three weeks later the tenant of the house attended the council and left a written complaint in the day book and following on this complaint the health inspector once more went over to the property to inspect it, bearing in mind that this was in the middle of summer. He advised the tenant that if he took the course considered necessary, she would, in all probability, have to accept the fact that she would have to leave the house as a tenant until such time as repairs were properly carried out. She informed the "Weekend Mail" on the 18th May as follows:—

The Treasurer: What was his name?

Mr. CROMMELIN: I am now quoting—
We got this house for £3 per week, not a bad rent, but the house turned out to be terribly unhealthy and depressing, and we had such a lovely house in England. Now I have to do the washing in the old tin bath because the troughs are broken. We cannot take a bath ourselves because

of the jagged tin and there is no sewer. I had never seen one of those open type toilets till I came here. It is awful.

Having received the health inspector's report, the council acted on his advice and served a condemnation order on the house and this, of course, was received by the Public Trust Office. A fortnight after receiving the order, the council had a communication from that office stating it had received the condemnation order and considered one month's notice was insufficient time to effect repairs. The authorities further stated that they had no official order in regard to sewerage, but in this respect I must point out that they were in control of the property in 1954. They also asked for details as to why the house had been condemned, and asked the council if it was prepared to give them an extension of six months to carry out the work.

That was on the 21st March. On the 25th March the council at its meeting informed the Public Trustee that it would give an extension of six months but it expected the house to be vacated as it was considered by the health officer that it was not a fit place to live in. On the morning of the same day, the 25th March, we find from an extract of the council minutes—

The Town Clerk referred to a visit, on the morning of the meeting, from Inspector Bengafield of the Department of Public Health, who had rung the Council's health inspector at 9 a.m., stating that the Public Trust Office had appealed to the Commissioner against the council's condemnation order, and that the commissioner had directed him (Mr. Bengafield) to visit the council chambers and sight the council file on the subject. Mr. Bengafield had come to the office and had requested copies of all correspondence and matters on the council file. The Town Clerk had advised him that, as the council had received no official notice of any such appeal, he did not consider it advisable to make available any council documents without council authority, and also requested Mr. Bengafield to show his form of authority from the commissioner, indicating specifically that he had been delegated to obtain this information. Mr. Bengafield had returned to the Department of Public Health and nothing further had been heard of the matter during that day.

The following day the town clerk, as requested, informed the Public Trustee of the repairs that were necessary to the house, and he also pointed out that a sewer order had been out since 1954. But even before the Public Trustee could have received that communication from the

council, the town clerk received notification from the Minister for Health stating that as the reasons for serving the condemnation order were not clear, the order was to be held in abeyance until such information was supplied to him.

Immediately on receipt of the Minister's communication, the council requested an inspection of the property by the Claremont health officer, Dr. Mayrhofer, who gave a full report to the council as to the condition of the house. I could quote the whole of Dr. Mayrhofer's report but I think members would not appreciate some of the terms in it. All I can say is that if they cared to look at some of the pictures—

Mr. Court: Quote the report.

Mr. CROMMELIN: All right! Perhaps I had better quote the whole report and then everyone will know it. This is a report to the Mayor of Claremont from the medical officer, Dr. G. Mayrhofer—

Exterior Inspection.

Front Verandah.—Erosion of the guttering is present on both front and sides of the verandah roof. There are two downpipes, one badly eroded and one broken across. The result has been that water escaping from the roof has been flowing over the timbers of the verandah floor with rotting of the foundation posts and timbers. The floor boards of the verandah are partly loose, broken and uneven. There is a commencing list in an eastward direction of the verandah roof owing to the giving away of its supports.

East Wall.—A lush growth of grass close up against the east wall of the house contrasted with the bareness and dryness of the rest of the property suggests defective drainage with escape of waste waters under this wall.

South Wall.—On south side of house just under the back verandah there is evidence of a surface discharge of soapy water. The roof guttering on the south side is in bad repair with a faulty down drain pipe discharging water on to the ground beside a partly rotten foundation post.

West Wall.—On this side is an open shallow trench carrying a piece of defective guttering draining waste from the kitchen sink into an open hole fully exposed to the sun and flies and malodorous in addition.

W.C.—This is a pan closet situated in an area, it is to be noted, where I am given to understand complete installations for sewerage are available. It is situated 14-15 yards from the house, built of weatherboard and in poor repair. The door will not close

without being forced, and the roof, back and side walls contain holes. The seat is of wood with a faulty hole covering, not complete to the ground, allowing ingress and egress of flies freely. The rear service door is represented by a pair of rusty hinges and a partly rotten frame. The scope that this state of affairs affords for the dissemination by flies of pathogenic bacteria and viruses that have their habitat in the human intestine needs no comment.

Interior Inspection.

Back fly-wire door badly broken. Flies can enter freely. Defective closure of rear door.

This is a good one—

There is a combined wash-house and bathroom with a wooden floor and no lining. There is a defect of the outlet pipe from the bath permitting the escape of water.

The wash troughs are devoid of outlet pipes so that waste water discharges on to the floor. Owing to the condition of the troughs the greater part of the washing has to be done in the bath tub. The window is in bad repair.

On the credit side there is a wood copper recently repaired and water is laid on to the fixtures.

A back sleepout is used as a wood shed on account of complete lack of outbuildings.

Front Room (1) North-west.—A plasterboard panel has broken away here.

(2) North-east.—Plasterboards beginning to break on all walls.

Kitchen.—The sink is emptied by a straight downpipe devoid of any trap. It is from here the water drains away to the trench and hole previously mentioned.

The sides and bottom of the wood stove are defective. A small electric stove has been installed (I understand by the tenants). The framework of the west window of the kitchen is partly broken away and is not weatherproof. The flooring in the south-western corner is insecure. A back window from the kitchen opens on to an enclosed sleepout.

The back bedroom is at the south-east corner of the house. Here renovations have been attempted but the plasterboard joints are in the process of opening.

Two neighbouring householders, Mr. F. Barker of 38 Second Avenue, and Mrs. A. H. Leonard and Miss Briggs of 42 Second Avenue, have complained of occasional smells and of flies in vexatiously large numbers.

That report was sent to the Minister for Health, as requested, on the 9th April, and on the 3rd May the council received a reply from the Minister informing it that he had received its letter and Dr. Mayrhofer's report, but that acting on this information he was not able to make a decision. He therefore informed the council that he would send Inspector A. V. Benjafield to make inquiries into the matter. This was the same inspector who had previously come to the council without an authority and had been refused access to the minutes until such time as he had the authority.

Shortly after that, there appears to have been some Press publicity, some of which was probably not important, but the Minister told the "Weekend Mail" on the 18th May—

My concern is for the owner of the building who is at present having medical treatment. The Public Trustee is administering her estate during her illness.

I should imagine that the Minister knows very well that the Public Trustee would not be administering the estate if the owner were ill. As a matter of fact, she was in the Claremont mental home. He continued—

I feel compelled to make certain that the Claremont Municipal Council does not for any reason pull down a house which could be repaired and maintained for many years to come.

I would also like to point out that the health order served on the Public Trustee was not at any stage to pull down the building but simply to do repairs.

On the same day the Minister repeated that after the council had condemned the house the State Health Department received a letter asking for an investigation and the State health inspector asked the Claremont council for some information concerning the case but the Claremont Municipal Council refused to give it to him. I should imagine that had the town clerk of Claremont given that information to the inspector without authority, he would not long have remained town clerk of Claremont. The Minister continued—

The matter was then referred to me and in the circumstances I ordered an investigation and I asked the Claremont Municipal Council to withhold the condemnation order for the time being.

That was on the 18th May.

Mr. Lawrence: Do you mean that you asked for an investigation?

Mr. CROMMELIN: If the hon. member had listened, he would know that it was the Minister who ordered the investigation. A week after that edition of the "Weekend Mail," Inspector Benjafield appeared at the council office armed with the correct

authority and he was given access to anything he required, but the town clerk expressed some surprise at the fact that the inspector, as well as investigating this condemnation order, was going back through the minutes of the council for a great number of years, investigating all other condemnation orders. That was within his province, but the council felt that even if there had been a variation in the time allowed to certain people to connect up with the sewer, and so on, that was normal council policy as there are usually three or four new councillors each year and some of them might be prepared to give certain people a longer time in which to do such work than others.

Following on that visit by the inspector, I approached the Mayor of Claremont and suggested the matter had gone far enough and that the most sensible thing to do would be to ask the Minister to see us without any publicity, which he very kindly did. We showed him the file and the pictures and the Minister informed me that, as far as he was concerned, the inspector had definitely done wrong by approaching the council and asking for information without authority. He also advised us, having seen the pictures, that he thought it a terrible looking place and he thought we would certainly get our condemnation order. We thanked him and thought it was all over.

On the 17th June, after all this, we received a letter from the Minister telling the council that the condemnation order was to be withdrawn and that the Public Trustee was to be granted an extension of six months in which to arrange the sewerage connection, although by this time he had had a little over 4½ years, and that an order was to be served by the council on the Public Trustee asking him to carry out necessary repairs and that the time of the order in which these repairs should be effected should be established by negotiation with the Public Trustee. On receipt of the Minister's letter the council replied to him as follows:—

In reply to yours of the 17th I convey to you the context of its resolution passed at yesterday's meeting of the Claremont Municipal Council. My council emphasises that in the execution of its powers and duties under the Health Act it has seen fit to condemn the premises at No. 40 Second-av. Claremont, as being unfit for human habitation and therefore resents your intervention in such execution of its clear duties under the provisions of the Act, particularly as it has been endeavouring since 1952 to cure this particular nuisance and violation of the public health. In view of the reports of its medical officer of health and health inspector and other information made available to the investigator appointed by you my council

requests that you supply them with the report which such investigator made to you and from which it is assumed your decision was made that the existing condition did not warrant the service of such an order.

As recently as last Monday, in reply to the council's request, the Commissioner of Public Health did send up a file as to the why's and wherefore's of this particular case, and some of it is worth quoting. He comments, for instance, on the medical officer, Dr. Mayrhofer, and this is what Inspector Benjafield said—

There was no evidence that waste water from the wash troughs had discharged on to the floor of the bathroom.

It said that the medical officer stated definitely in his report that the wash troughs were devoid of outlet pipes so that waste water discharged on to the floor. This is a straight-out contradiction without any foundation.

This should interest a lot of members who may come up against a public health inspector in their own electorates. In reply to a query, "Are the premises unsafe to live in?" he said—

The method of disposal of waste water and the existence of a pan closet are found throughout the State and are not considered injurious or prejudicial to health if properly attended to.

The council feels that this implies that sewerage is not essential in the metropolitan area. The investigator made the amazing statement—

The soakage area caused by waste water spilling on to the ground, only requires periodic turning over of the soil.

The investigator stated later in his report that the ground was sandy and much of the waste water soaks away gradually but not completely, due to the neglect on the part of the tenant to carry out elementary procedure in such cases of periodic turning over of the soil and the changing of the position of the soakage area.

In other words, the inspector suggests that if there is no sewerage in a house in which one has a tenant, he can be supplied with a spade and where the waste water runs out on to the ground it will be quite all right if the tenant turns the soil over periodically. That is beyond my understanding, but perhaps the Minister will explain it. The investigator states that—

maggots found in the lavatory pan only prove that flies have laid their eggs therein—as they do in hundreds of other pans—but does not necessarily mean that flies are actually produced from these eggs because the pans are removed and their contents

suitably disposed of at a sanitary depot before the complete life cycle of the fly has a chance to take place.

The council's observation on that remark is—

Every qualified health inspector knows, as part of his study in this connection, that the maggot does leave the pan, buries itself in the nearby sand or soil and the fly hatches.

As the position now stands, the Claremont Municipal Council, in the execution of its duty as a health authority, refused to lift the condemnation order because it accepted the advice of its health inspector, who has been carrying out these duties for 15 years, and the health officer, Dr. Mayrhofer, who has been in practice for over 25 years. But the condemnation order was lifted by authority of the Commissioner of Public Health, I presume on the advice of his health inspector.

The people concerned will live in that house until such time as the Public Trustee, in agreement with the council, decides that the necessary repairs will be carried out. The council still feels that it is right and that the council and no one else should have the authority to say who shall be the judge of its own health problems in its own municipality. But the people who live in the house, and those who live on either side know that all responsibility from the time of the holding up of the condemnation order rests solely on the Public Health Department. They say, "What is the good of having a medical officer and a health officer to carry out their duties, if they are not getting the support of the Commissioner of Public Health?"

We must remember, too, that most of the health officers are carrying out their duties in an honorary capacity. It would have been better had the Minister, when he received the report, suggested that the health officer and the health inspector discuss the matter with the commissioner and tell them that he disagreed with them on this particular subject and that, in his opinion, the council was wrong and the house was fit to live in. But instead of that there has been all this unnecessary publicity over a matter which could have been settled to the Minister's satisfaction in a much easier way. As the position now stands, the Claremont Council is out on a limb and its members have been told that they do not know how to control their own health laws.

MR. POTTER (Subiaco) [8.36]: Some of the points that have been raised by speakers opposite appear to me to be the result of a lack of finance. I am sure that if the Government had an adequate supply of this rare commodity the complaints regarding school buses and so on would be non-existent.

Mr. Nalder: Do you get similar complaints from the metropolitan area?

Mr. POTTER: Yes, and as a matter of fact we get quite a few more. For instance, a man on the basic wage, with a family, cannot be accused of living in luxury; similarly, the State Government, irrespective of its political complexion, because of the vast area of this State, cannot be accused of living in luxury. Yet we have Federal members from this State, who represent the people of this State, barnstorming the country and writing to the local Press—and they are not members of the same political party as those of this side of the House—stating that this Government has been extravagant in its spending.

I agree with the Leader of the Opposition—and perhaps this is the only occasion when I shall agree with him—when he says that there should be some clarification of the Federal-State financial relationship. I realise that because of its vast area this State has received some special treatment; it has received this treatment because of its population, its strategical importance and also because of the effect its primary industries and secondary industries have on the balance of the Commonwealth economy.

Personally, I think that those matters should be carefully considered in the Commonwealth Parliament. Before I became a member of this House I always felt that whoever filled the role of Treasurer had a most difficult task in presenting our case to the Commonwealth Government for financial grants. In my opinion, too, it does not behove members of any political party to accuse a State Government of extravagance in public spending. We know that there are some extravagant departments, but there again that may amount only to a difference of opinion in regard to the method of spending the money.

The Leader of the Opposition referred to a stabilised economy, but in the last two or three days I have had several people on my door-step who have informed me they were out of work and I have been wondering whether such a state of affairs amounts to economic stability. Unfortunately, however, such a state of affairs does exist, and there is a fair number of unemployed in this State. Nevertheless, I do not want to paint a picture of gloom because I feel that possibly we are on the threshold of an era of prosperity.

The Leader of the Country Party differed from the Treasurer over the expenditure of money on the Wundowie charcoal iron industry. This is a basic industry and we cannot expect our secondary industries to develop unless we have iron. In the past we have not had sufficient supplies of iron available, but now the

Government has entered into this field to make ample supplies available, and the cheaper it is able to be obtained by our secondary industries, the better it will be for the State in general.

One lesson I was always taught was never to put too many eggs in one basket, but unfortunately I have never had too many eggs. I mention this because during the speech by the member for Roe I made an interjection and he replied that it was hard to make me understand. I admit that it is fairly difficult sometimes especially when I do not want to understand. That hon. member spoke on secondary industries and I felt that he was advocating the expenditure of moneys on primary industries rather than on secondary industries but, as I said before, it is essential that we do not put all our eggs into the one basket and it is equally essential that we should balance our internal economy.

This has always been a difficult task, especially prior to the last war. The subject has exercised the minds of experts and I freely admit that I am no expert. It has been asserted that a country that is dependent solely on either a primary or secondary industry is socially backward. If we wish to balance the economy of this State and if we desire to increase our population, we must develop our secondary industries.

Mr. Perkins: How do the Collie miners view the use of charcoal iron in industry instead of Collie coal?

Mr. POTTER: I do not think that aspect enters into the argument because Collie coal will, no doubt, be put to many other uses. The Wundowie charcoal iron has a specific use for manufacturing purposes. It appears to me that the members of the Country Party feel that we on this side of the House are against the development of primary industries, but that is not so. Many of us on this side of the Chamber and some who have been born and bred on a farm have had a great deal to do with primary industry. Nevertheless, when it comes to secondary industry, there are one or two points that must be considered. For instance, we have a ready market in Asia for the products of many of our secondary industries if we are able to develop them to a sufficient level.

It must be realised, however, that in 1912 there were only two highly industrialised countries in the world, but a few years later there were several and they had to resort to socialised methods, regardless of whether those in charge of the country were headed by a Conservative or socialistic Government. These Governments had to adopt all sorts of methods to foster secondary industries, but even so such nations could not live peacefully side by side and we were precipitated into a war. Today, that is something that must

be considered not only in this House but by other legislatures in Australia and also throughout the world as a whole in order that some balance of trade may be maintained.

The farmers of this State would, undoubtedly, perform an excellent service in supplying Asia with cereals and thus raise the standard of living in Asiatic countries. However, if by raising the standard of living in Asia it means a greater population, I must point out that that is not the target we are aiming at. We must also bear in mind that we must not break down our secondary industries by the importation of manufactured goods from Asiatic countries, because that would certainly not be desirable either.

Mr. Perkins: What actual goods have you in mind?

Mr. POTTER: Possibly there are quite a number of goods that could be manufactured in this State as time goes on and no doubt, with the introduction of automation, some of the difficulties that exist at present will be overcome provided that, at all times, the necessary capital is forthcoming. We have a country which is more or less stable industrially, as opposed to conditions that appertain in Asian and African countries, which are not altogether industrially stable. For that reason, I am more or less advocating that we should push, in every manner possible, the European and American people and endeavour to get them to establish secondary industries in this State. This question of primary and secondary industries is a subject that has exercised the minds of many people in many countries for the last two or three decades.

Mr. Perkins: We are essentially a primary producing country.

Mr. POTTER: I realise that, but at the same time we do not want to put all our eggs in the one basket and develop our primary industries to the exclusion of our secondary industries. The amount referred to in the Bill is only slightly above that which was sought last year, and I do not think much discussion is necessary. I support the measure.

MR. COURT (Nedlands) [8.51]: In view of the fact that we are on this Bill, I think it would be a suitable opportunity to make a few brief comments with a view to eliciting from the Government some indication of its intentions in respect of the Esperance region. It was my good fortune in company with the member for Cottesloe and the member for Bunbury to make a fairly extensive visit from Albany through Jerramungup and Ravensthorpe to Esperance, and although we were seeing some of the country at its worst it gave us the impression that the Esperance region development could be an exciting experience for this State. It is apparent

that this will be dependent on a spirit of co-operation or partnership between individual initiative in respect of each of the properties and the provision of general facilities which are essential from both the State Government and the local government authorities in that region.

I, personally, was very conscious of the fact that there is a changed outlook in this region. No longer is Esperance a comparatively small seaside holiday resort; today it has to be regarded as the regional centre, the capital as it were, of what is a large area in actual physical size, and one that could have a great potential. This of course brings with it the need to completely reorient our approach to this region of Esperance.

It is my view that the sooner the Government can help the local authorities there to get the whole of the people in the Esperance region—as distinct from the immediate hinterland of Esperance—to think on a regional basis, the sooner will the full power of that area be harnessed. There are such matters as water, power, transportation, the planning of industries, education, hospitalisation and, above all, the actual town planning of Esperance itself to be considered; and this is a matter of some considerable urgency.

Mr. Lawrence: There is no water problem there.

Mr. COURT: There is quite a problem as it relates to the domestic water services, and supplies for industry if Esperance is to expand—

Mr. Lawrence: There is no problem there at the moment.

Mr. COURT: The Minister for Works will tell the hon. member that it is causing him grave concern. I think it is time the Government made its intentions clear in respect of the Esperance region, in view of the fact that there has been a concentration of the land there to a large extent in the hands of the Chase Syndicate by arrangement with the Government. This brings with it to my mind a greater responsibility on the part of the Government to give a helping hand to the local authorities and any regional committees that are set up to expedite the satisfactory development of this region. It follows that because of the million-and-a-half acres that are under contract to the Chase Syndicate that the pace and the nature of the development of the region will be to a large extent governed by the pace and nature of the development conducted by the Chase Syndicate. This syndicate has a colossal area. Although I thought it was a large area when the contract was before Parliament, I must confess that as I traversed it I was even more amazed at the magnitude of the area made available to this particular syndicate.

It is my view that with all the goodwill in the world we would be asking too much of the Esperance local authority to undertake on its own all the planning and the development that is essential if the Esperance townsite and the immediate environment of Esperance is to be laid out on such a basis that the Government and the local authority will not have to retrace their steps at great cost at a later date. At this point of time it should be comparatively easy and not too expensive to lay out the port area in such a manner that for the next 50 years at least it will be able to grow in a reasonable and sensible manner without a lot of costly resumptions that seem inevitable in the older places that have developed without a proper town planning scheme.

Mr. Lawrence: What about the industrial areas?

Mr. COURT: There did appear to be some indecision among the business people as to what was their future regarding the location of industrial areas and other essential areas that go into a properly designed town plan. I would like to hear from the Premier a statement as to what the Government proposes by way of assistance to local authorities there, and by way of assistance to the whole of the region.

It is my view that in the area between Esperance and the Goldfields there is a great wealth of brainpower and manpower that can be harnessed to build up the necessary regional spirit in this district. If all these people are co-opted to lend their organising ability and thinking ability to work with the various local authorities in the region at this point of time the inevitable result will be a fast and well-planned development in this area. I do not suggest for one moment that the Government should step in with an iron hand and take control of the area. It should be the Government's desire to encourage the local authorities and the regional committees to accept as much responsibility as they possibly can both financially and otherwise. But it would be unreal of us to expect the local authorities and any regional committee to accept full responsibility for the quick development of this particular area.

No doubt during this session there will be considerable discussion on the activities of the Chase Syndicate and of others in the Esperance region, I am not seeking tonight from the Premier a detailed explanation of the Government's plans for Esperance, or its detailed opinion on the activities of the Chase Syndicate, but I think it is fair to ask, in view of the fact that the Budget will not be before us for some considerable time, what is the broad outline of the Government's plan in respect of Esperance. The Premier answered a question today, if I remember correctly, by saying that the Government

is satisfied with the progress made up to date by the Chase Syndicate. He will be aware of the fact that there is considerable discussion—I am not going to say criticism—in the Esperance area as to whether the Chase Syndicate is developing its property along the lines best suited to that piece of country.

I am not going to buy into that argument, firstly, because I have not the technical knowledge, and, secondly, because I do not think the syndicate has progressed far enough for anyone to form a sound opinion as to whether or not it is on the right lines. However, it is reasonable to suppose that somebody in this House will expect during the present session a detailed report from the Government on its plans for the area covering such matters as livestock commitments, superphosphate commitments and some of the longer term industrial projects that are vital if this region is to become a fully fledged area in its own right to complete the development of the southern portion of the State in an unbroken line stretching from the South-West to the Great Southern and Esperance areas.

Before I leave the Esperance project I would also ask the Premier if he could give us an indication of the progress made by the R. & I. Bank in reviewing a number of cases of settlers in the Esperance area who are in desperate need of financial assistance to tide them over a critical period in the development of their properties. They have got to a certain stage of development and I understand they are in grave risk of prejudicing their assets unless they can get emergency assistance fairly quickly to bring their properties up to a stage where they can become productive and self-reliant. I understand there was a survey made by the R. & I. Bank under Government direction. Whilst the number was uncertain, when I was there I understood that some 20 of these people were in need of assistance.

Mr. Nalder: How long have these people been on their properties?

Mr. COURT: For varying periods. The main argument seems to be that they were wrongly advised as to how to spend their initial capital. Some had indulged in too expensive a programme of fencing and so on without properly balanced development in respect of which they could have been guided by experienced persons. They were left with an unbalanced development and left stranded for the time being.

In the course of going across to Esperance it was our privilege to have a fairly good look at the Jerramungup-Gairdner River scheme. We should pay tribute to the work that has been done there. It impressed me. Without claiming any great knowledge of farming techniques, it appeared to me that those engaged on the job were working extremely hard and that this was a major project.

Mr. Ackland: It looks as if those settlers are going to be left like shags on a rock.

Mr. COURT: In what way?

Mr. Ackland: With the closure of the railway line.

Mr. COURT: On this point I do not want to enter into an argument tonight. I had a fair share of it last night. But I would say this: The people in the Jerramungup-Gairdner River scheme were most emphatic—and I pass this on to the Minister for Transport—that they did not want to be tied to a railway line.

The Minister for Transport: I think you should be talking to the member for Moore.

Mr. COURT: This is of great importance to the Minister. They want the shortest possible road route to Albany and want to be free of the Transport Board, otherwise they will be on the back of the Minister for a railway line.

The Minister for Transport: You may rest assured that the right thing will be done here as in other cases.

Mr. COURT: Is that an indication that there will be a road route to Albany and free of the Transport Board?

The Minister for Transport: The right thing will be done.

Mr. Roberts: The right thing in whose opinion?

The Premier: The member for Bunbury wants more socialism.

Mr. COURT: I was personally impressed with what has been done down there. I have no doubt that will become a great scheme. In view of all the glamour publicity that has been accorded to the Esperance scheme I am inclined to think that we have overlooked some of the other important work done in this State. This project has impressed me and it is a major one in any language. It should become a valuable adjunct to the primary production of this State.

The Minister for Health: That will come from the whole area stretching from Esperance to Albany. I venture to say that along this line within a few years 10,000,000 sheep and 1,000,000 cattle will be carried.

Mr. COURT: The significance of the development of the Esperance region is the fact that we will have the South-West, the Great Southern and Esperance in an unbroken line across the southern portion of the State. I would not like to agree or disagree with the Minister's figures, but it is noticeable that when one talks about the area from Esperance to Albany he gets very excited and confident. I admire the way in which he advocated the potentialities of Esperance before it became a glamourised area. It is interesting to us that the Jerramungup people want to orient themselves to the port of Albany. When we went to Ravensthorpe,

the people who had looked to Newdegate as their railhead are now reorienting themselves to Esperance mainly because of the advantages they expect through the export of copper ore from Ravensthorpe.

Mr. Perkins: It applies to copper ore only and not produce.

Mr. COURT: The hon. member would know more about that than I. The farmers to whom we spoke were emphatic that they will look to Esperance when the Esperance region is developed, as the natural port of service rather than Newdegate. That is thinking ahead when the Esperance region, as distinct from the Esperance townsite, is able to service its hinterland, as Albany at the present time is able to serve the Great Southern and Bunbury the South-West.

Mr. Perkins: We will be able to open the port of Hopetoun again.

Mr. COURT: I very much doubt that. We could discuss one of the great attractions of Hopetoun in the corridors rather than in the lines of Hansard.

The Premier: Is there any talk of that down at Hopetoun?

Mr. COURT: I would raise one point of interest which is important to the nomenclature of this State. We should try to get some degree of correctness. It is interesting to see that the old Hassell homestead from which the area gets its name was known by the Hassell family as Jarrahmongup, but the maps in most cases, though not all, show the place as Jerramungup. Maybe there was some reason for the change and perhaps the member for Roe knows the reason. It would be interesting if someone could clear up this point. We do not want to be arguing as to the correct nomenclature in the years ahead.

The Minister for Transport: Officially it is known as Jerramungup.

Mr. COURT: It is significant that the old homestead was known as Jarrahmongup. Jerramungup might be a coined local name. We were impressed when we were told that the name of the homestead was Jarrahmongup.

My main reason for rising to speak briefly on the matter was to obtain some information from the Premier on the general plans of the Esperance area, having regard to the regional needs for town planning for the Esperance townsite and the provision of adequate facilities for the region to develop in a proper and logical manner instead of being allowed to grow like Topsy, like so many others have. We could really start on a sound basis. Before all the discussion that will inevitably arise over this area during the session, I would like to get some brief outline from the Government of what is proposed for this region in co-operation with the local authority and the regional committee.

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe) [9.11]: The Premier, when speaking to-night made reference to certain aspects of education, and I was interested in what he had to say. Naturally, he made play on the fact that the Education Department was in dire need of large sums of money to properly finance the educational requirements of this State. It would appear from the Premier's remarks that the Education Department, so far as the Treasury is concerned, is the least rewarding of all departments, and in that we must concur. There is no direct revenue from the results of the work of the Education Department. At least I cannot think of any at the present time. The results of the work of the Education Department come in later years.

For some time now I have put forward a point of view that education in all its phases, and particularly education in its scientific and technical aspects, plays an increasingly important part in adding to the economic and even defence potential of the Commonwealth of Australia, by virtue of the fact that it gives to the student the wherewithal to properly cope with the technicalities so essential to make this modern age work as it should for the benefit of mankind.

It has been my submission in the past that education does play its part in increasing the economic and defence potential of the country, and that fact gives us a useful weapon to fight for Federal aid for education. Of course we bump up against the constitutional aspect, as there is no doubt that education is a State problem. So it is that there is a constitutional barrier; but I do not believe it is an insurmountable barrier. It is in my knowledge that there are several leaders who believe in Federal aid for education in the States, and I think they feel it could be achieved without really prejudicing the Constitution and the State having to forgo its rights with regard to education.

I have something to read in which I think the Premier will be interested, and of which he may even have some knowledge. I intend to read it at a later stage, and it will give point to the fact that one of the Federal leaders at one time, approved whole-heartedly of Federal aid for the States in regard to educational requirements. Before reading it, I would like to mention how important the technical and technological aspects of education are becoming.

When Professor Baxter, the eminent technologist, spoke at the university last year—I think it was early in September—he emphasised the fact that this present age demanded skilled technicians in increasing numbers, and the need to provide educational facilities for skilled technicians was very great. Subsequently, at an Australian wide conference of directors

and superintendents of technical schools, the same decision, in effect was reached. Mention was made at that conference, which was held here, that very great progress was being made in providing technical facilities overseas, but there was very little here on a comparative basis.

The conference found there would be—and there is now—a need for the provision of refresher and advanced courses in technical education, because of the rapid changes in technology taking place at present. It stated that there was need for greatly extended training for technicians, who form a relatively new group in Australia's industrial structure, and that there should be close co-operation between industry and technical education, so that the right type of technical educational facilities would be provided. Here I make the point that I think it an excellent move that in the Public Library, at the present time, there is a new technological section which is being used increasingly by industry in this State, but not so much that it could not be used a great deal more.

The Treasurer: I think the Commonwealth Government could help financially in connection with technical education.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: That is my principal point. I feel that very strongly. At the conference to which I referred earlier, it was pointed out that Great Britain, in the last five years, spent £100,000,000 in providing technical educational facilities, and industry was prepared to make employees available for daytime studies. I believe that the Commonwealth Government should make financial grants available to the States for specific purposes. In that way we would overcome the constitutional barrier. If the Commonwealth Government made these grants on specific lines or for certain specific phases concerned with technical education, or even provided teacher-training facilities, then I think the way would be open to climb that barrier. In any case, the barrier should not be so difficult to climb when we find a leader in the Federal sphere stating this—

Education is at present, for all practical purposes, a State matter. But the uniform tax laws have meant that the States can no longer regard their direct revenues as flexible while they have no powers of indirect tax at all. Under these circumstances, if the educational needs of our people are to be satisfied, a measure of Commonwealth financial assistance will be required. There is much to be done in the improvement of country educational facilities, in technical and university education, in adult education, in the raising of the qualifications, status and remuneration of the teaching profession.

So, in this statement, mention is made of many aspects of education, as the Premier will notice, and not only technical education. It goes on—

The Liberal Party, if returned to power, will confer with the States with a view of devising ways and means of supplementing the States' financial capacity to make a real attack upon these problems. Indeed we cannot be satisfied that we are beginning to build a post-war world unless we can say that the training of the minds, bodies and characters of boys and girls for useful, intelligent and unselfish citizenship is taking a leading place in our policies and actions.

It is unfortunate that this was said not yesterday or last year, but in 1946; and it was said by the then Leader of the Opposition in the Federal Parliament, Mr. R. G. Menzies.

The Minister for Transport: Another broken promise!

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: It was stated in his policy speech at the Camberwell Town Hall in August of that year. So I submit this to the Premier. I do not know whether he was aware of this statement by the Prime Minister, but I feel that the constitutional barrier to Federal aid can be surmounted if it is tackled in the right way; and, for what it is worth to him, I offer that information and the fact that my support goes with those who feel that the Federal Government should give aid to the States in certain specific instances to help the States give adequate educational facilities to the young of Australia.

MR. BOVELL (Vasse) [9.23]: The Treasurer has brought down a Bill to provide his Government with funds to carry on for an unspecified period. I believe that when a Bill of this nature is introduced, Parliament should be informed as to the approximate period that the funds will cover. Whilst I know it is far too early yet to expect the State Budget, it would be interesting to know at this juncture how the Treasurer is going to estimate his deficit or surplus for the present financial year, when last year, according to reports, the deficit was £1,912,000 with a railway loss of only £4,649,145.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Did you say, "only"?

Mr. BOVELL: I especially used the word only because, in connection with the debate on the censure motion in this Chamber last evening, the Premier had already indicated in writing to the Leader of the Opposition that the estimated deficit of the Railway Department for the current financial year was more than £7,000,000 which is an increase of some £2,500,000 on the loss for last year.

If we are to expect a deficit of nearly £4,500,000 for the coming year, I feel that the finances of the State need a thorough overhaul. But we have been given no indication by the Treasurer as to how long

this sum of £21,000,000, that he has asked for, will cover the financial requirements of the State, or how he proposes to finance the State's affairs with the estimated increased deficit of the Railway Department.

As time goes by, it is rather alarming to find that each year the deficit becomes greater and therefore, I suppose, the debt per head of the State increases. I feel that some special consideration should be given to the finances of the State, as it is to other important functions of the Government. Here I should say—and this has been advocated in this Chamber on many occasions—that some all-party committees could be appointed to inquire into and report to the Government of the day upon the difficulties of one department or another.

The Commonwealth Government has instituted various committees, and I believe they are performing a well-needed function, not only by giving advice to the Government—which, I presume, is not always accepted—but also by giving private members of Parliament an opportunity to learn at first hand something of the functions of the various departments.

Any responsible citizen, I would say, must be alarmed at the continued State deficits year after year. Here again I consider the Commonwealth Government should, from its own huge surplus this year assist the State Governments. By this I do not mean that that Commonwealth Government should write an open cheque. The member for Cottesloe has already referred to one avenue where the Commonwealth Government could assist the State Governments in regard to technical education.

There are, I think, other avenues; and one would be the encouragement and development of our primary industries, inasmuch as we have large areas available for bringing into production. But the State Government does not appear to have the finance to provide the necessary funds to assist individual people, who may desire to engage in primary production, to initiate their efforts. I do not agree that Commonwealth funds, in this regard, should be used for Government land settlement schemes. There are any number of individual people, not only in Western Australia but in other States of Australia, who are anxious to engage in farming activities in Western Australia.

I repeat the statement that I have made on many previous occasions—that in the early days of agricultural development in Western Australia the Industries Assistance Board was an avenue which assisted many settlers in a most practical way. The member for Roe tonight, and on previous occasions, has referred to the fact that the agency section of the R. & I. Bank should be used as an avenue for providing funds for settlers who are developing their properties; and in my

opinion the Commonwealth Government should be approached and asked to provide a fund, either through the Commonwealth Bank, the R. & I. Bank or any of the private banks, to assist individual settlers who are not under Government land settlement schemes, to engage in primary production.

I know the State Government has made representations to the Commonwealth Government for funds to assist in the dairy improvement scheme, but it is the responsibility of the State Government to see that the scheme is implemented. Pilot areas in the Margaret River and Northcliffe regions have been selected; but, despite Press reports that progress is being made, I am unable to ascertain whether there has yet been any real progress under the State Government scheme to assist dairy farmers who have not developed their holdings sufficiently to provide them with a livelihood.

Mr. Perkins: The Commonwealth Bank has absolutely refused to help individual settlers in this State.

Mr. BOVELL: That is most interesting and disappointing. But I hope members representing rural constituencies especially will realise the need to encourage individuals to take up land and develop it, and I therefore think there should be some avenue through which finance could be made available to such people who desire to engage in primary production.

The Treasurer: The private banks could do a lot of it if they did not put so much money into the hire-purchase business.

Mr. BOVELL: That may or may not be so. But under the present banking legislation, as passed by the Commonwealth Parliament, the private banks are controlled to a large extent in regard to their advances; and my understanding of banking is that these institutions have now to spread their overall advances over all sections of the business and farming community. The bank with which I was for many years associated made great and liberal advances in the early 1920's in order to encourage primary production in Western Australia. Had it not been for the activities of the private banks in those days this State would not have been developed to its present stage.

The Minister for Justice: Did they lose very much money?

Mr. BOVELL: During the depression years they had many millions of pounds not earning any interest at all, and I think most of that money was involved in financing primary industry in this State.

The Minister for Justice: But wasn't most of that capital eventually returned to them?

Mr. BOVELL: I understand that as time went on it eventually became profitable again, even though some of the settlers, who were suffering through no fault of their own in those days, did not reap the benefit of the increased prices for wheat and wool during and after the war. We must take a sober and serious view of State finances; and I believe—without kicking the political football—that the Commonwealth must come to the aid of the State in financing especially such expensive departments as the Treasurer mentioned this evening—the Health Department and the Education Department.

I desire now to refer to a question that was mentioned briefly by the Leader of the Opposition this evening, then by the member for Roe, and later by the Leader of the Country Party. I refer to the rather difficult position that has arisen in rural areas owing to the Government's policy of pruning spur school bus services. The pruning knife has gone through willy-nilly, and no account has been taken of special cases.

For some time now, I have been in communication with the Minister for Education with regard to two children in the lower south-west area who are physically incapable of travelling the distance that they are now required to travel to meet the school bus; and who, for the last three months, have therefore been denied the privilege of attending school.

I referred the matter to the Minister; and in a letter addressed to me, under date the 5th of June, he stated that the department had given consideration to the question of allowing spurs for special local conditions, and for compassionate reasons, but that so many applicants had quoted grounds which in their opinion merited special consideration, that efforts to reduce expenditure would be jeopardised if all requests were granted. The inability of these children to travel to the school bus is not only the opinion of the parents but of the family's medical adviser; and I have since forwarded to the Minister for Education a medical certificate to that effect, but have not yet received a reply to my further representations.

However, I feel that instead of members of Parliament having to investigate these individual cases—there has been hardship imposed on a number of families—if a satisfactory report is given by the headmaster of the school concerned the service should be maintained; or, if it has ceased to operate, it should be reinstated.

Mr. Heal: How far have these children to travel?

Mr. BOVELL: They have to travel over two miles, which is a long distance for physically handicapped children. I would point out to the hon. member that especially at this time of the year many people

in that area where in June alone 15 to 17 inches of rain were recorded, are in the position where husband and wife are trying without assistance—which they cannot afford—to conduct their dairy farms; and the times at which they have to milk their cows coincide with the times when the children go to and return from school. Obviously it is not possible for people in those circumstances to cease their activities and take the children to the school bus.

If special circumstances can be shown I feel that where the spur services have been discontinued they should be reinstated. On the 21st March I made representations to the department; and on the 5th April I was advised as follows:—

It is realised that in refusing such requests varying degrees of difficulty, depending on circumstances may be experienced by parents in getting their children to the bus.

A stage has been reached, however, where the department cannot continue to grant the liberal extensions that have been granted in the past. Additional future expenditure must be related to the overall needs of a district and not to the claims of individuals. Where the present services can be altered to cater better for these overall needs the department will give every consideration to adjusting the route accordingly.

It is impossible, however, to run a bus close to every family in the State.

In cases where the parent considers the difficulty in reaching the bus or school is insurmountable, the department provides alternative services, namely, correspondence lessons or boarding allowances subject to certain regulations.

It has been said that we never miss the sunshine until the shadows fall. Having had the sunshine, and the shadows having fallen—the facilities which were provided to enable the children to get to school having been cut off—the difficulties become all the more acute. Before cutting off these services ad lib with a view to saving, as I was told in reply to a question today, a total sum of £50,000 annually, consideration should be given to maintaining the existing services even if the department has to inquire fully into any proposals for extensions.

Turning now to a domestic matter, I am pleased to note, in reply to a question asked today, that the Government proposes to commence the building of a high school at Busselton. In His Excellency's Speech delivered at the opening session of this Parliament almost 12 months ago, it was announced that the high school at Busselton should be commenced in the financial year just ended.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: You will be lucky if you get it that quickly.

Mr. BOVELL: Owing to financial difficulties it has been delayed, but I am pleased to see that the Government still has in mind the need for a high school at Busselton. There are almost 900 children attending the school at Busselton at present; and there are a number of other schools such as at Vasse, Yallingup and Quindalup, so that a high school would be of tremendous advantage to the district. Land was purchased by the Government some years ago for the purpose of building a high school—there are 21 acres altogether, in a convenient position—and I implore the Treasurer to see that funds are made available for the erection of this school.

I am convinced that if a start is not made in the near future the difficulties of the local school will be such that it will be impossible to continue to provide adequate educational facilities in and around Busselton. I have been approached by the parents and citizens' association of the district to draw attention to the inadequate facilities that exist for home science and manual training at the Busselton school, and it is hoped that these facilities will be amongst the first provided when the new high school is built.

MR. W. A. MANNING (Narrogin) [9.46]: There is one aspect I would like to deal with quite briefly. No doubt the Government has plenty of problems in deciding how best to spend the very large sum of money with which it is provided; but I feel that our main objective in this State should be to utilise the funds that are available, in order to ensure that the utmost use is made of our agricultural lands and every encouragement given to our primary industries.

The primary industries of this State are our mainstay at present, and have carried the State for some considerable time. So it would seem to be foolish to cut down expenditure on these industries and restrict primary production in any way. However, I feel that these industries are being restricted to a certain extent because of the curtailment of expenditure on education in country districts.

During his speech, the member for Cottesloe dealt with various avenues of education, but I do not think he included in his remarks anything to do with agricultural education. The Narrogin School of Agriculture is a centre for a large area of the State for agricultural education, but the dormitories there have been allowed to get into such a condition that the number of students at the school has been cut down from 80 to 58.

There is insufficient dormitory accommodation to cater for them for their two-year courses. There are always more applications for admission to the school than

the school can accommodate. So in recent times 22 boys on each intake have been deprived of agricultural education simply because of a lack of suitable dormitories. The matter has been pushed aside for a number of years, and it seems to me that some provision should be made immediately to right this wrong. In these days, when the Agricultural Department is able to advise on the use of our lands and the establishment of good pastures, it is essential that prospective settlers in this State should have the best possible education. To deprive them of it is to use the pruning knife in the wrong place.

Mention has already been made of school bus fares, but we cannot refer to these things too often. It is a serious problem; and the department's answer to it is that if the children have too far to go to a bus, they should take correspondence courses. These courses are good; but on a farm which is being developed, the mother and father cannot find the time to help their children with their correspondence courses. It is difficult when people are battling to establish a property and at the same time are trying to bring up young children. In many instances it just cannot be done. A great number of children have had to be sent away from home in the first two or three years of their schooling simply because it was not possible for them to attend the school which was a few miles from their farms or places of living.

What member of this House would care to have his children sent away from home to attend a boarding school because, if such were not done, they would miss their education by remaining at home? Therefore, something must be done immediately. Where a necessitous case exists, a bus should be provided to pick up children at some reasonable spot. Unfortunately, a hard and fast rule has been laid down and it is very unfair because no discretion whatsoever is exercised. It is essential that some discretion should be shown, and I am sure that if this were done, the extra cost would not be very great.

I mention these matters because they are extremely important and if it is necessary to wield the pruning knife we should not use it on the school bus services or on agricultural colleges, which are training our agricultural students. Those students are the men of the future who will eventually possess the necessary know-how to develop the primary industries of this State and to deprive them of suitable educational facilities means that in the long run we will be depriving the farming community of their valuable services.

THE TREASURER (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam—in reply) [9.52]: I thank members for the manner in which they have received the Supply Bill. To the member for Vasse I would say that the amounts of money to be provided by this

Bill will enable the Government to continue normal operations for a period of approximately three months. Well before that period has expired I hope to have brought the Budget down and to place before members, in detail, the estimates of revenue and expenditure in connection with the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

The Government is well aware of the industries which will develop in the Esperance area following the large-scale operations which are now being undertaken in that part of the State. The local authority has a very good avenue of approach to the Government through the local Legislative Assembly member who happens to be my colleague, the Minister for Justice. So there need be no doubt or fear that the Government will not be on the ball, as it were, in regard to the development, the planning and the provision of the necessities of the Esperance township and district.

I am sure we all rejoice in the fact that this part of Western Australia, after a great many years of hoping, wishing and praying, has now come into its own and has very good prospects for substantial progress and development in the reasonably near future. I was very appreciative indeed of what the member for Cottesloe and the member for Vasse had to say in regard to the justification for greater Commonwealth financial help being made available to the States, particularly to assist in further developing our educational and health systems.

The question of school buses is, of course, a subject of considerable importance. The estimated expenditure upon these services for the current financial year is approximately £1,000,000; somewhat over £1,000,000, I think, to be correct. This is a very great sum of money to pay out to provide a free service. We know that all free services, especially when provided by Governments, are extremely popular. Everybody wants to enjoy at least a fair share of these free governmental services and many people in the community want more than their fair share of them. These free services, when provided by a Government are, of course, a form of socialism. It is interesting, therefore, to say the least of it, to hear such solid support for this form of socialism coming from members on the other side of the House who, quite frequently, at least preach verbally against what they term the great evils of socialism.

Mr. Perkins: It is free educational socialism.

The TREASURER: Clearly, these free forms of service or social services—call them what we will—have to be paid for by the Government.

Mr. I. W. Manning: The taxpayer has to pay for them.

The TREASURER: Of course! The Government, in turn, has to obtain the money from the people of the State and, in addition, obtain as much as possible from the

Commonwealth. My experience as Treasurer last session and in other sessions has been that when taxation measures have been brought down by the Government to help finance these free services, most, if not all, members on the Opposition side have opposed most strongly the efforts made by the Government to obtain increased revenue in order that these free services might be financed.

I suggest that members cannot have it both ways. They cannot keep on demanding more and more of these free services and almost free services and then, when the time comes to foot the bill, deny to the Government the increased revenues which the Government would have to receive to enable it to finance the services. So I hope that members opposite will take a consistent view of these matters and in future, when the Government brings down a measure to obtain increased revenue in order to finance these forms of socialism, will be consistent enough to support the proposal.

Mr. Roberts: When you were in Opposition, did you oppose any efforts by the Government to obtain increased taxation?

The TREASURER: No; I remember, and no doubt the hon. member recalls quite clearly, that I supported the taxation proposals brought down by the present member for Murray when he was Treasurer of the State. Unfortunately, however, when I, as Treasurer, brought down taxation proposals, the member for Murray, who was then the Leader of the Opposition, opposed my proposals most strongly.

Hon. D. Brand: There were no knock-backs.

Mr. Court: What a difference between the two measures, though!

The TREASURER: Yes, but the principle was the same. I have great admiration for the ability of the member for Stirling to argue a logical case and he very seldom disappoints me, but tonight, when dealing with one subject he disappointed me extremely. That subject was the question of making loan funds available for the expansion of the charcoal iron industry at Wundowie. The Leader of the Opposition questioned to some extent the wisdom of doing this; he suggested, if he did not say so straight out, that overseas markets for this commodity might not be safe and sound and secure and permanent. If we applied that sort of argument to wheat and wool, and meat and butter, and to fruit and other primary products, we would adopt a policy of doing nothing in connection with our existing primary industries.

Hon. D. Brand: They all can be re-produced.

The TREASURER: The Wundowie charcoal iron industry is one that is based almost entirely upon local raw materials. So it is as a secondary industry, one of

very great importance and value to the State. The employment that it provides is also valuable. Some members in this debate, I think particularly the Leader of the Opposition, argued quite strongly for a continuation of the migration scheme; they argued that we should continue to take migrants into Western Australia. Well, this industry of which we are speaking, provides considerable employment for quite a number of migrants, some of them very skilful too, and therefore of great value to the industry.

I thought the most illogical of the remarks made by the member for Stirling in connection with this matter had to do with the angle that if we spent some of our loan moneys this financial year on expanding the Wundowie industry, we would have less money to spend on schools, hospitals, water supplies and so on. I take his mind back to the establishment in Western Australia of the oil refinery at Kwinana. This industry was established under an agreement made at the time with the company by the Government of which the hon. member for Stirling was a member. The establishment of that industry cost the Government in loan money at least £5,000,000.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Nothing compared to the amount they brought in.

The TREASURER: Something compared to the amount they brought in. But the use of this £5,000,000 at that time meant that far less of the State's loan money was available for schools, hospitals, and water supplies and the like; and the demand for schools, hospitals and water supplies at that time was even more pressing than it is at present.

Hon. D. Brand: We had to take the opportunity while it existed.

The TREASURER: I am not criticising the move at all. I have always praised the move. I have praised the efforts of the hon. member who at the time was Minister for Works, and I defended his move in the country.

Hon. D. Brand: While it was not necessary to defend the Government, we appreciate the approach. We had to take the opportunity while it was there. But that was not the case with Wundowie.

The TREASURER: It was much more so with Wundowie.

Hon. D. Brand: It is not necessary.

The TREASURER: As I pointed out previously, the Wundowie industry is based entirely on the use of local raw materials, whereas the oil industry at Kwinana is based almost entirely on the use of imported raw materials.

Hon. D. Brand: It is creating employment nevertheless; it is giving us bitumen.

The TREASURER: Of course it is creating employment. I am not arguing about that, although I think, without having checked the matter, that the charcoal iron industry at Wundowie, even in its present restricted form, provides employment for more people in Western Australia than does the oil refinery.

Mr. Lawrence: Quite correct.

Hon. D. Brand: I would like to check on that.

The TREASURER: It could be checked and I think it would be found that what I have said is correct. We know the oil refinery is highly mechanised and I think the number of men employed within the refinery is not very great. But I am not in any way depreciating the value of the industry; I am simply pointing out that if it is wrong for this Government to spend money to further develop Wundowie because to do so would leave less money available for schools and hospitals and water supplies, then the same argument would apply to what was done by the previous Government in connection with Kwinana.

Hon. D. Brand: I would not agree with that.

The TREASURER: That is perhaps inevitable in the scheme of things.

Hon. A. F. Watts: We will just have to agree to differ.

The TREASURER: I think the Leader of the Opposition and I will have to agree to differ, and the member for Stirling and myself will just have to agree to agree! Again, and in conclusion, I would like to thank members for the manner in which they have received this Bill.

Mr. Court: Is your Government going to make a comprehensive statement in regard to Esperance?

The TREASURER: The Minister for Lands will, at the proper time, make a comprehensive statement in relation to Esperance.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

Council's Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying the personnel of sessional committees appointed by that House.

House adjourned at 10.12 p.m.