

However, although there is no provision to meet the case instanced by Mr. Jones, it is thought that assistance could be given to the person carrying out work on soil erosion, if circumstances warranted it. It is thought that grants could be made in necessitous cases. Of course, anybody purchasing a property should take into account the degree of erosion existing on it and assess its value accordingly. It is hardly likely that a person would purchase a seriously-eroded property.

It would be very rare for cases such as that instanced by Mr. Jones to arise, but the point was well worth bringing forward. My advice is that there is no way of asking settlers to contribute to the expense incurred by a neighbour in combating erosion on his property and thereby benefiting such settlers; and that the only assistance that could be given to the man carrying out the work would be by a Government grant made under a clause in this Bill, if circumstances warranted the making of such a grant.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 3 to 11, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 5.5 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 3rd November, 1955.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.

HOUSING.

(a) *Draining of Carey Park, Bunbury and Lockyer, Albany.*

Mr. HILL asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) What is the estimated cost of draining the Carey Park area at Bunbury?

(2) How much of this cost is to be paid by—

(a) Bunbury local authority;

(b) State Housing Commission;

(c) State Government?

(3) Will he give the corresponding information for Lockyer at Albany?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Council estimate—

1. Carey Park—£7,000.

2. Carey Park East—£18,000.

(2) (a) £7,000 for Carey Park—i.e. the council is to meet the full cost of draining this housing area, which has been built out. Drainage is the responsibility of the local authority.

(b) Nil.

(c) Nil.

Note: The commission has requested the local authority to drain an area of vacant land at East Carey Park, which is at present vacant and unsuitable for housing. The commission and the Government will meet the cost of this work, £18,000, the State Housing Commission paying £15,000 and the Government £3,000. The reason for this expenditure is to open up additional vacant land for housing.

(3) The commission has offered an ex-gratia contribution of £3,000 to the Albany Municipal Council towards the cost of drainage which is the local authority's responsibility, but the local authority has declined the offer.

(b) *Funds for War Service Homes.*

Mr. HEARMAN asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) Is he aware that an applicant for a war service home whose plans have been approved was told recently by an officer of the State Housing Commission that about 40 applicants for war service homes had entered into contracts with builders to build homes under this scheme, and were subsequently advised that no further funds were available for the present for this purpose?

(2) Would he be interested to know, in view of his answer to a question last week—

- (a) the name of the applicant concerned;
- (b) the name of the officer of the State Housing Commission concerned;
- (c) the name of the witness to this conversation?

(3) Is he aware that notices have been sent out to applicants for war service homes advising them that no funds will be available for an indefinite period for this purpose?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No.

(2) (a), (b) and (c) If the hon. member feels he has any information to impart, he is welcome to submit it at any time.

(3) Yes.

WATER, SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE. *Collections and Expenditure.*

Mr. NIMMO asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) What was the total collection with respect to—

- (a) water,
- (b) sewerage,
- (c) drainage,

rates for the years—

1952-53;

1953-54;

1954-55;

and the collection estimated for 1955-56?

(2) What was the expenditure with respect to the above-mentioned departments for the same years?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Actual collections as between the three services are not kept. The accrued income figures are therefore given.

| | 1952-53. | 1953-54. | 1954-55. | 1955-56 (Estimated.) |
|--------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-------------------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| (a) Water | 400,683 | 524,971 | 647,008 | 685,000 |
| (b) Sewerage | 312,658 | 438,308 | 488,821 | 569,000 |
| (c) Drainage | 59,016 | 64,676 | 69,661 | 66,500 |
| | 772,357 | 1,027,955 | 1,205,490 | 1,320,500 |

(2)

| | 1952-53. | 1953-54. | 1954-55. | 1955-56 (Estimated.) |
|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Water | 688,745 | 789,444 | 926,423 | 1,010,400 |
| Sewerage | 388,873 | 454,926 | 490,132 | 525,950 |
| Drainage | 45,566 | 44,614 | 45,520 | 48,800 |
| | 1,123,184 | 1,288,984 | 1,462,075 | 1,585,150 |

These figures are inclusive of interest and sinking fund charges.

RABBIT PROOF FENCE.

Sale to Adjoining Landholders.

Mr. PERKINS asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Have some landholders adjoining the No. 2 rabbit proof fence refused to pay the price of £120 per mile fixed by the Government?

(2) Is the Government calling tenders for those sections of the fence not sold at the £120 per mile?

(3) Will the Government accept an offer of £65 per mile from adjoining landholders for sections mentioned in No. (2) rather than sell for a lesser price per mile for removal?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) The price of £120 per mile was determined by two independent valuations other than that of the Department of Agriculture.

Consideration has been given to what action is necessary in the event of farmers adjacent to the fence not being prepared to purchase at this price.

(3) The whole of the proceeds from the sale of the fence is to be utilised in the erection of a new emu-proof fence, which is dependent upon the valuation of £120 per mile being realised. Therefore, the highest offer would require to be accepted.

TOWN PLANNING.

Establishment of Shopping Centre, Mount Claremont.

Hon. C. F. J. NORTH asked the Minister representing the Minister for Town Planning:

(1) Can matters be expedited to enable a shopping centre to be established at Mount Claremont?

(2) What streets are now envisaged in the plan?

(3) Does he know of any opposition to the proposal?

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING replied:

(1) It is expected that this matter will be finalised next week.

(2) Corner Asquith and Strickland-sts.

(3) No, but other applications have been received for shopping sites in the vicinity.

WATER SUPPLIES.

Position at Bridgetown.

Mr. HEARMAN asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) Is it expected that water restrictions will be reimposed in Bridgetown this coming summer?

(2) Will the railways have to haul water to Bridgetown this coming summer?

(3) Is there any truth in the rumour, current in Bridgetown, that pipes delivered to be used in the new Mill Stream scheme, have been, or are to be, removed for use on other projects?

(4) When was it first planned to finish the Mill Stream scheme?

(5) When is it now expected that the Mill Stream scheme will be finished?

(6) What new sources of expenditure of loan funds have arisen to take precedence over the Mill Stream scheme?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes. In connection with the use of mechanical sprinklers only.

(2) Yes.

(3) No.

(4) No definite date or time was planned for finishing of the scheme due to the uncertainty of loan fund provisions generally and the extensive obligations for water supply expenditure in all parts of the State.

(5) No date can be given because of conditions outlined in No. (4). Some relief has already been given and further relief will be provided for the 1956-57 summer.

(6) No schemes to take full precedence, but supplies for Mt. Barker, Tambellup and Cranbrook are being developed concurrently.

ROADS.

Widening of Greenmount Hill Section.

Mr. OWEN asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Now that the widening of the Great Eastern Highway above and below the Greenmount hill section is nearing completion, is it proposed to proceed with the widening of that hill section?

(2) When is it likely that this work will be commenced?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Commencing date is indefinite as investigation into the many problems associated with the project is incomplete.

BILL—FERTILISERS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE
(Hon. E. K. Hoar—Warren) [2.23] In moving the second reading said: Since the Fertilisers Act was passed in 1928 it is only natural that a good deal of knowledge has been gained as a result of the experience of the officers of the department

in implementing the legislation. It is now considered that the Act, regarded as being adequate in 1928, is considerably out of date in these times. Therefore the purpose of the amendments contained in the Bill is to bring the Act up to date without introducing any fundamental changes.

For the most part the measure can be considered as one most suitable for action to be taken in Committee rather than in the second reading stage. There are no principles involved in it, but only minor amendments, many of which are technical to the highest degree and they can be better dealt with in Committee. In view of that I have had a statement prepared which I will traverse when explaining the provisions of the Bill and as this will be recorded in "Hansard," it will acquaint members of what is in the minds of the departmental officers, following which they can make their contributions to the debate and move any amendments they desire when the measure is dealt with in Committee.

The present interpretation of "bone fertiliser" implies that material such as superphosphate, gypsum and other mineral substances may be included in a fertiliser sold as bone fertiliser because they are not specifically precluded. However, this is in contravention with another section of the Act, which states that it is an offence to sell as "bone fertiliser" or "bone manure" any fertiliser which contains "rock or mineral phosphate, superphosphate, gypsum or other mineral substance." By adding the words "superphosphate, gypsum or other mineral substance" to the present definition, the anomaly which now exists will be removed.

It is proposed to substitute the present definition of "fertiliser" with one that is clearer. This will make it plain that materials sold for their minor element content and used for applying to the soil are fertilisers for the purposes of the Act. It is considered also that the Act should clearly control the sale of minor element-containing fertilisers, in view of their established and increasing importance, and the number of such fertilisers now being sold. The new definition is along similar lines to the recently-proclaimed Agricultural Standards Act of Queensland. It is proposed to add to the Act a new definition of "neutralising value." This is considered to be the best method of stating the value of liming materials.

Under the Act at present, the value of liming materials, in the definition of "lime," is expressed in terms of the calcium oxide (CaO) content of the material. The new definition will separate lime and gypsum as they are used agriculturally for different purposes, and this action is considered desirable. The parent Act contains a description of "gypsum" which is hydrated sulphate of calcium, or

any calcium carbonate. The new definition will be the percentage capacity of pure limestone to neutralise acidity.

The term "organic fertiliser" has been newly-defined in the Bill. This has been done so that only fertilisers which are prepared solely from material of animal or other organic origin can be described or sold under names which imply that they are solely of such origin. At present, registration may be refused if it is considered that the name of the fertiliser is likely to mislead the purchaser as to its content.

However, the new definition will make it clear to manufacturers that fertilisers sold under any description or name which implies that the fertiliser is of organic origin must be manufactured solely from materials of such origin. The present definition of "phosphate fertiliser" states that superphosphate is not a phosphate fertiliser. There is no sound reason for this, and, as superphosphate is our main normal phosphate fertiliser, the Bill rectifies the position. At the same time it is made clear that the proposed newly-defined "organic fertilisers" are not "phosphate fertilisers" under the Act.

It is proposed that the section of the Act dealing with exemptions shall be repealed and re-enacted. The new section will permit, without registration or compliance with the Act, the sale of fertilisers prepared especially for an individual client. Fertilisers of this nature must be made up from a prescription in writing supplied by the buyer. This situation is not at present covered by the Act, and manufacturers who have been selling such mixtures have sought information as to how they might comply with the Act without having to register each special mixture sold. It would not be reasonable to enforce separate registration of mixtures such as these. Therefore it is proposed to permit their sale, so long as the seller receives a prescription from the buyer.

The requirement of the Act which deals with the particulars which must be supplied with an application for registration is amended because minor element fertilisers are being brought within the scope of the Act. At present it is necessary to state the minimum percentages of nitrogen, phosphoric acid and potash. It is intended to delete this requirement and make it necessary for a statement to declare the minimum percentages of all ingredients claimed by the applicant to be present in the fertiliser and to be of value to the soil.

As I said earlier, lime and gypsum have been separated under the new definition of the neutralising value of lime. Therefore it has been necessary to amend the Act so that it will show the information required to be supplied by an applicant for registration, both in the case of lime and in the case of gypsum. This is not necessary at present.

At present it is unlawful to sell any fertiliser unless it is in a packet which is conspicuously marked with a copy of the registered brand and the registered name of the fertiliser. The Bill still retains this requirement but the registered brand and name of the fertiliser may be shown on an attached label. However, in cases where the package is of at least 28 lb. in weight, additional information must be shown. Either on the package or on an attached label must be conspicuously shown the name and place of business of the manufacturer or importer, the registered brand and the registered analysis of the fertiliser, showing the minimum percentages of ingredients. As I just said, at present an analysis is not required. It is only necessary to mark conspicuously on a package a copy of the registered brand and the name of the fertiliser.

The Bill contains a provision that dealers must, if required by the Minister, provide an inspector or analyst with samples for analysis. At present a dealer is required, when necessary, to forward samples to the chemist of the Department of Agriculture for analysis. The amendment will conform to what is done now, as in practice inspectors obtain the samples for analysis by the analysts. The Act provides that certain information must be shown on invoices. It requires that the invoice must show—

- (a) the name and place of the business of the vendor and, if manufactured in the State, the name and place of the business of the manufacturer;
- (b) a copy of the registered brand and name of the fertiliser;
- (c) the minimum percentages of nitrogen, phosphoric acid and potash;
- (d) if the fertiliser is lime, or agricultural lime, or gypsum, a statement of the description of the fertiliser and calcium content.

Because, under this Bill, minimum percentages of ingredients will be shown either on the package or label in the case of quantities of at least 28 lb. in weight, it will not be necessary to repeat this information on the invoice. However, the invoice will be an implied warranty that the fertilisers comply with prescribed standards.

It has been found that under the present system of invoicing a large number of vendors of fertilisers understand very little about analysis and are at a loss to know what is actually required of them in this regard. Western Australia is the only State which does not require fertiliser packages to carry a label or brand setting out the information which will be required under this Bill. A similar amendment to the Feeding Stuffs Act was made in 1951 and has proved very satisfactory.

Because of the information now required to be shown on the 28 lb. or over package or the attached label, there is no need for all this information to be repeated on the invoices. It must be remembered that when this information was required to be shown on the invoices it was not necessary on any package, irrespective of weight. It was only necessary to mark conspicuously the registered brand and the name of the fertiliser on the package. We need have no concern for the quality of packages under 28 lb. as the bulk supplies from which these are drawn will have to measure up to the new requirements. Procedure will be simplified for vendors and the position should be just as satisfactory with fertilisers as it is with feeding stuffs.

The Act now makes it an offence to re-use a bag which has been marked or labelled with any fertiliser other than that to which the brands refer. The Bill relaxes this provision so that a bag may be re-used so long as it is completely emptied before re-use and the old brand clearly cancelled. However, the refilled bag will have to be re-marked as to its new contents. This will conform to present practice in relation to super bags.

At present it is an offence to sell fertiliser incorrectly described as "bone manure" or to sell "bone fertiliser" or "bone manure" which contains rock or mineral phosphate, superphosphate, gypsum or any other mineral substance. It is intended to repeal these provisions and substitute them with new ones in order to give the public further protection. If a fertiliser sold is, in fact, inorganic fertiliser, there must be no inference which could lead the purchaser to believe that it contained organic fertiliser.

If the fertiliser being sold is in actual fact either bone fertiliser, bone manure, organic fertiliser or organic manure, there must be no inference to lead the purchaser to believe that any one of them contains inorganic fertiliser. If the fertiliser sold is in actual fact organic fertiliser, there must be no implication to lead the purchaser to believe that it contains inorganic fertiliser. It will not be an offence to mix these fertilisers but the package in which the fertiliser is sold must show clearly exactly what the mixture is.

Accordingly, members will appreciate how necessary it is, in order to obtain a complete picture, to have these details, which are set out in the statement I mentioned at the outset, recorded in "Hansard." That is why I have read it out. Every member will now have an opportunity of understanding and studying it at his leisure. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Perkins, debate adjourned.

BILL—EDUCATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Message.

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

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. W. Hegney—Mt. Hawthorn) [2.39] in moving the second reading said: As members will see, this is a very brief measure, consisting of only two clauses. The second clause is the one that seeks to correct doubts, if any, as to the validity of the action of the Government in enabling efficient private schools to receive a subsidy in relation to teaching aids, with particular reference to projectors and radios, as are granted to Government schools. It also clears up the position in regard to the supply of publications and stationery required by children in the various schools.

Some time ago I received a deputation from a number of the private schools, including Hale School, Perth College, the parents and friends' associations attached to Roman Catholic schools and Christ Church Grammar School. Teaching aids were requested on the same basis as provided to Government schools. Subsequently the Government decided to extend the provision in so far as it relates to projectors and radio equipment. The proposal is that the purchase of projectors will be subsidised to the extent of one-half of the price, and radios up to an amount of £50. In each case it is necessary for the applicant to obtain the approval of the Education Department.

Recently the Government considered the question of the supply of school books to all children free of charge. It has received quite a number of representations from several sources, including the Parents and Citizens' Federation. It was decided that as from the beginning of 1956 pads and certain other school requisites would be made available free of charge. At the present time the department is providing spelling books, school papers and high school magazines, but a small charge is made for them. It costs the department a fair amount to collect the charges, therefore the Government has decided that as from February, 1956, pads, the books which I have mentioned as well as writing cards, will be supplied free to all schools.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: To public as well as State schools?

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: To State schools and to what are known under the Education Act as private and efficient schools, which include Hale School, Christian Brothers' College, Scotch College, St. Hilda's, Kobeelya at Katanning, and any others regarded as efficient. As from the beginning of 1957 it is proposed to extend

free of charge the supply of exercise books, writing books, drawing books and cutting-out books; it was not practicable to introduce this proposal from the beginning of 1956.

For the benefit of members I wish to refer to the question asked by the Leader of the Country Party as to whether it was valid for the Government to supply the school aids. To remove any doubt, this Bill has been introduced. The position now is that children attending private schools are conveyed by buses under Government contract. That seems to be fairly widespread in the country. To tidy up any doubts, it has been decided to introduce a Bill to rectify the position so that there will be no question of the validity of the Government's action.

On motion by Hon. A. F. Watts, debate adjourned.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1955-56.

In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from the 1st November on the Treasurer's Financial Statement and on the Annual Estimates, Mr. Hill in the Chair.

Vote—Legislative Council, £7,453:

MR. ROBERTS (Bunbury) [2.48]: I regret that it was only through the death of a very esteemed friend of us all, the late member for Bunbury, that I am in this Chamber today. I refer to Mr. Frank Guthrie. He was a personal friend of mine and a great stalwart of Bunbury. I would like to take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to the electors of Bunbury for giving me the opportunity of representing that electorate and succeeding Mr. Frank Guthrie. I would also like to take this opportunity of expressing my grateful thanks to the members of this Chamber, and the members of the Legislative Council, for their ready assistance, co-operation and guidance since I came here on Tuesday last. I would like to couple with that expression of thanks my appreciation to the staff of Parliament for their guidance and assistance during the few days I have been amongst them.

As members know, I am here as member for Bunbury; I hope and trust that I shall be able to uphold the dignity of this House whilst I represent that electorate. I hope to make friends of all members of this House and of the Legislative Council. I am here to represent every elector of Bunbury, irrespective of his or her political affiliations. I made that promise and I am going to stick to it. I am going to fight for Bunbury with all my might because Bunbury has to take its rightful place in the progress of this State. By saying that, I shall not be parochial. I am going to fight for Bunbury in particular, the South-West in general, and the State as a whole.

For some time past certain statements have been made in this House in regard to the port of Bunbury. Some of them were to the effect that in 10 years' time the port of Bunbury will cease to exist; that Bunbury was a fifth-rate port; that Bunbury should be abandoned. I can assure members that the Bunbury harbour will not be closed even if I myself have to take a shovel to clear it. The prosperity of the South-West hinges upon the development of the Bunbury harbour, and as to the references to silting, I can assure members that this trouble is being held in check. A certain area of the harbour has been dredged and the Preston and Collie Rivers are not now depositing silt in the harbour, as the plug at the mouth of the estuary now stops its flow into the harbour.

On the day when I received endorsement, it was my privilege and pleasure to come to Perth and visit the university to see the working model of the Bunbury harbour. That model amazed me, as the technical knowledge to be gained from it would have taken years to acquire in the ordinary course of events. I wish to express my congratulations to Professor Cooper and Mr. Sylvester for their great efforts in connection with that model.

The produce raised and the goods required by the people of the South-West should pass through the port of Bunbury. I do not mean that imports from overseas should pass through that port, but there are goods imported from the Eastern States that should definitely be landed at Bunbury. At present, only a very small proportion of the total hinterland trade is passing through that port. I have seen potatoes that come from as far north of Bunbury as Roelands and Burekup and from centres south of Bunbury like Dardanup, Donnybrook, Marybrook and Busselton, hauled into the railway marshalling yards at Bunbury and then taken by rail to Fremantle to be loaded on to an interstate vessel, and that freighter has subsequently called at Bunbury to pick up timber. I have seen potatoes in the Bunbury marshalling yards and later the same potatoes in the hold of a ship calling at Bunbury. That is wrong, and I shall do all in my power to ensure that this sort of thing is not repeated.

I know for a positive fact that, in respect of goods required in the Bunbury port zone, from eastern sea board ports, requests have been made for them to be consigned to Bunbury or to Bunbury, optional discharge Fremantle. The merchants carry out their part by having the bills of lading endorsed accordingly, but the goods are discharged at Fremantle. I am speaking now only of interstate trade. The vessel has then proceeded from Fremantle to Bunbury for timber loading, while the goods have been transported by rail from Fremantle. The excess railage charge is an additional cost to the consumers in

Bunbury and the South-West and it is wrong that they should have to bear this extra expense.

In the last few weeks we have heard a lot about the transit shed. This is an urgent priority for the Bunbury port area in order that goods may be received, sorted and delivered or loaded in an efficient and capable manner. Goods coming forward for export could also be kept under cover pending their shipment.

I feel that the time is ripe to press for the installation of bulk oil facilities at the port of Bunbury. I think I am correct in saying that the differentiation between the price of petrol in Perth and Bunbury is something like 5d. per gallon. The people in the Geraldton and Albany port zones receive their petrol for something like 4d. per gallon less than we do. Vessels coming direct from places such as Christmas Island arrive in Bunbury with a cargo of phosphate and, after discharging it those vessels are keen to return direct to Christmas Island, but they have to call at Fremantle and join the Rottneest queue or wait for a berth in order to receive their requirements of bunker oil. If such facilities were provided at Bunbury, they would prove to be an added advantage to the port.

I should like to mention a vessel of which members have probably heard—the m.v. "Mauritius". This is a brand new ship of 2,000 tons belonging to the Colonial Steamships and has recently started trading direct between Mauritius and Bunbury. Being a motor vessel, it will be necessary for her to replenish her oil bunkers. If bulk facilities were provided at Bunbury, they would be of great convenience to that vessel. It has accommodation for 24 first-class and 20 second-class passengers.

So far only one experimental trip has been made from Mauritius. The first trip was in September last when the vessel lifted 760 loads of sleepers and crossings for the Mauritius railways, 272 loads of building scantling for general building in Mauritius, 400 tons of flour, 150 sheep, plus sundries. On her second trip the vessel is due to arrive on Sunday next and will be taking on board approximately 1,200 loads of scantling, 150 sheep, and a few heifers in calf. If these two trips prove to be successful financially, I am led to believe that this trade between Mauritius and Bunbury will continue, and it is hoped that another trip will eventually be in February next.

Here is a country outside of Australia that is keen to trade with us, and we ought to do all in our power to assist and encourage that type of trade. We cannot afford to lose one penny of export business, and so we ought to assist such a

company which has the gumption to come here and experiment in this way. We ought to do our best to ensure that this new trade is a payable proposition for the owners, otherwise we will lose it.

Another matter that I shall be pressing in the near future is for the replacement of the dredge "Governor" which was recently sunk off Rottneest. The tourist trade is another very important activity which we should do all in our power to encourage, not only for Bunbury, but also for the whole of the South-West. By opening up what is known as the Old Coast-rod, I believe that we shall provide another tourist attraction and will also encourage people to settle on the land there, some of the land being first-class.

The next item I wish to mention is of particular interest to the people of Bunbury and that is the establishment of a technical school at the earliest possible date. The people of Bunbury and the surrounding districts are not asking for a technical school equipped with all the facilities that are provided in Perth, but we do ask that facilities for some technical training be granted to the people in Bunbury and the South-West.

With the completion of the power house—I hope this work is proceeded with and completed at the earliest possible date—secondary industries will definitely come to Bunbury, and the Government will have the opportunity to practise decentralisation by encouraging secondary industries to move away from the metropolitan area. Bunbury has all the attractions required by management for secondary industries. It has population, water and coal, and when we get electricity, we will have power. Once that comes about, a technical school will be an urgent necessity.

We in Bunbury are keen to retain the youth of our town and district. We do not want them to come up to the metropolitan area and get a taste for life here; we want to train them and let them become specialists and then live in the district, because they are our best citizens. We prefer to have as citizens those people who have been born and bred in the district rather than imported persons.

Sewerage and effective drainage are items that need a great deal of attention in Bunbury. I feel that every effort should be made to have a regional or modern hospital erected at Bunbury at the earliest possible date. This matter should be considered an urgent priority because the people of that port and district are as much entitled to specialist treatment as are those who live in the metropolitan area. We must give to the people in the country areas the amenities that will keep them there. I trust that my term in the House will be a long one, and I will do all in my power to serve Bunbury faithfully and the State as truly as I can.

MR. MANNING (Harvey) [3.3]: I wish to draw attention to one or two items. First of all, I propose to deal with the urgent need for drainage in the Boyanup-Capel area, which consists of some 30,000 acres. It could be successfully drained at a small cost, as the cost of drainage schemes goes. We have had a heavy winter this year, but that does not detract from the fact that a drainage scheme is urgently needed in this district. The area of 30,000 acres to which I have referred has already been surveyed, and what is necessary to be done has already been decided on. The urgency, therefore, lies in the fact that the work should be carried out as soon as possible.

During the last winter, considerable damage was done to the roads by water flowing along them. In addition, many hundreds of acres of pasture were covered with water to a depth of four or five inches because there was no drainage system to take the water away. I hope the Government will see its way clear to make money available to have this work carried out as soon as possible—before the next wet season, I hope—because this area could be producing a lot more pasture and many more products if it were properly drained.

Another point I wish to bring to the notice of the Government is the development of the strip of coastal country between Mandurah and Australind along the Old Coast-rd. That road is being developed at the present time by easy stages. A certain amount of money is made available to the local authorities through whose districts the road passes, and with this money they do a certain amount of work each year, but the rate of development, from an agricultural point of view, is not sufficient. The local authorities need greater assistance in order to step up the rate.

There is, too, a need for the officers of the Agricultural Department to take more interest in this strip of country. Experiments have been carried out by the department on what they call the Old Coast-rd. area, but the experiments are not conclusive. The department, therefore, has not been able to give to the farmers in that district any real advice as to what could or should be done in the way of fertilising. We know that certain minerals, when added to superphosphate, are beneficial. But the department cannot tell us at just what rate the superphosphate should be applied per acre. I know of one farmer, Mr. Cedric Patterson, who has established himself on a self-contained farm west of Waroona.

At the moment, he is running some 800 merino sheep, and he has developed his property to the extent that he proposes to carry double that number. His developmental work has been carried out by the process of trial and error. If the Agricultural Department Officers made an inspection of this man's property, they could learn from his results which have been

achieved by trial and error methods. They could see how he has cleared the country, and learn the amount of superphosphate he applies per acre and the type of pasture he has established. He has a large acreage of lucerne, which is growing prolifically.

The Minister for Agriculture: What is the name of this man?

Mr. MANNING: Cedric Patterson. I would like to see the department take more interest in him. He has served the district well by establishing himself there, and if the knowledge he has gained could be made available to other farmers who own property along the Old Coast-rd., a good purpose would be served.

Mr. Nalder: Do you know the type of soil on which he grows his lucerne?

Mr. MANNING: It is a strip of peaty country on the shores of Lake Clifton. It runs from yellow sand into a peat swamp.

Mr. Nalder: Is it well drained?

Mr. MANNING: Yes, because it is on the slopes running away from Lake Clifton. I wish also to mention the experimental work being done by the Department of Agriculture at the Wokalup research station. There the department has achieved a great deal. It has a big area under irrigated pasture, and it is carrying out experiments on dairy and beef cattle. Recently it has established an artificial insemination centre there. I think the rate at which the experimental work is being carried out could be stepped up. There was some tie-up between the experimental work at Wokalup and that which was carried out on the light lands in the Old Coast-rd. area, but that tie-up does not now exist. That is a point I would like to see attended to for the future.

Another matter with which I would like the Minister to deal when replying is loans to dairy farmers. A suggestion has been made that loans should be made available to farmers who are in the course of developing their properties but who, to date, have not been able to do a great deal in that regard. Considerable assistance could be given to the farmers in that way as these men need money for development and will not be able to farm successfully until their holdings are brought up to a stage of greater development. Inquiries are coming in to us all the time from farmers who could make good use of loans along the lines suggested and I think something should be done in this matter at the earliest possible moment.

A few days ago I asked the Minister for Railways a question regarding two railway cottages that were erected at Warawarup Siding some three miles north of Harvey. The department in recent times established a staff change siding there and the two cottages it has erected are, in my view, substandard and are not suitable accommodation for married men. They are

small cottages built after the style of a shed and partitioned into four small rooms. They have no bath and bathroom and the wash trough and copper are set up on the back verandah. Each has a 1,000 gallon rain water tank as its only water supply and there is no sanitary service in that area.

The front verandahs of these cottages are within six feet of the railway lines and as a train passed by the other day someone tossed an empty bottle out of the train and it went through the window of one of the cottages. The site chosen for these structures is most unsuitable, the country being lowlying and very wet in winter. It is also a long way from the nearest shopping centre.

I would suggest to the Minister that he take these cottages away from Warwarup and erect some far more suitable type of structure, which would conform to more reasonable health and living standards, at the nearest shopping centre, which is Cookernup, where the school buses pass, taking the children to Harvey. In answer to the question I asked, it was indicated that this sort of thing is going on elsewhere and if that is the Minister's policy in this regard, I hope he will quickly change his ideas.

Mr. Lawrence: Are you sure these places have no bathrooms?

Mr. MANNING: They have what appears to be a shower recess.

Mr. Lawrence: I understood you to say they had no bathrooms whatever.

Mr. MANNING: No bath is provided and no part of the structure is set up as a bathroom. There is a small room enclosed on the end of the verandah, but it is not large enough for a bath to be fitted. If it were to be used as a bathroom, the occupants would have to use the old fashioned type of bath tub and so I think it is reasonable to say that no bathroom is provided.

Another essential policy is to encourage people to go out from established centres, and that can be achieved only by building better roads to outback areas, supplying power, and so on. The building of the Old Coast-rd. is an instance and I repeat that there should be a policy to encourage people to develop the outback areas. I have already mentioned Mr. Cedric Patterson, who has established himself in an out of the way spot. If a good road were provided through that country, many other people would join him and farm the land.

In the suburb of Bunbury known as Eaton there has for some time been a request for power to be made available to the residents. The State Electricity Commission has indicated that there are not enough people there to justify the power being provided, but I say, without

hesitation, that if power were made available many more people would build in that area. A large number of blocks have been taken up and the owners are waiting to build homes there, but are deterred by the lack of the necessary services and amenities. If the State Electricity Commission could be persuaded to supply power to that area many more people would be encouraged to live there and develop their blocks.

MR. COURT (Nedlands) [3.18]: I was interested in the comments of the member for Leederville the other evening when he made certain statements and produced several analyses of State finances. I have to agree with him regarding his claim that there is great difficulty in objectively examining the finances of the State from the statements presented to the Chamber. I set out to make a careful analysis, with a view to speaking at some length on the State's overall financial position, but I must confess that, while not completely defeated, I was partly defeated by the lack of certain information which is not readily available to one trying to study these accounts.

State Budgets generally, as we find them today, are a rather colourless recital of projected revenue and expenditure. Since the inception of uniform taxation it has been accepted that the income tax will be collected by the Commonwealth under that scheme and so State Treasurers have been relieved of the delicate and onerous task of explaining to Parliament the income taxes they propose to impose and the methods by which they intend to achieve their objective.

In the days when they had to demonstrate the tax they proposed to raise, that did introduce a great degree of responsibility in giving a lead to the community on the measures that were being taken or should be taken to achieve economic stability and maintain the standard of prosperity. A severe burden fell upon the State Treasurers to justify their actions, and through their actions to influence or encourage support of industry and commerce, and the people generally to achieve the State Government's objectives.

Today we are inclined to assume, wrongly I think, that the responsibility for economic stability is solely the function of the Commonwealth Government. Nothing could be further from the truth. The nature of our Commonwealth is such that the States are integral parts of the whole and it is only by a collective effort on the part of the States, working in harmony and in complete co-operation with the Commonwealth, that a satisfactory economic condition can be maintained in Australia. If the States had the responsibility to raise the major part of their income for their own use, I

feel that their attitude towards the Commonwealth Government generally would be very much changed.

Personally, I do not accept the proposition that it is impracticable to return to a system of taxation by the States. I think that there is sufficient ingenuity among the financial people of Australia to conceive a scheme whereby the States would have the direct responsibility for arriving at their own income tax; but at the same time not introducing a cumbersome system such as we had prewar, whereby taxpayers were subjected to great inconvenience and uncertainty in the preparation of their taxation information and in the checking of their assessments. For the life of me, I cannot understand why there should not be a central collecting authority which would be able to give a clear definition to the taxpayers of the amounts being raised by the State and Commonwealth.

It is only natural that some of the States, such as Victoria and New South Wales, feel rather poorly about the present situation. In my opinion, the Grants Commission has demonstrated that, given goodwill and competent people, with a high degree of responsibility, sound balance can be achieved between the States on an overall level. It could be, of course, that the degree of dependence of the several States will vary with the times. For instance, if we in this State were fortunate enough to find oil in commercial quantities we might be able to afford to be completely independent and it might be our lot to complain about raising income for the benefit of other States. At the moment Victoria complains that a large part of its contribution to the tax revenue finds its way into other States.

I listened to the observations of the member for Leederville in connection with the accounts. I have found, as a backbencher, that it was almost impossible to make a critical and constructive approach to an examination of them. While we are exhorting private companies and industry, in the publication of their accounts, to give more and more information to the public in a better and more readable form, Government accounting generally has not followed the same lines. Mention was made of the statement of the Institute of Chartered Accountants to the Commonwealth committee, wherein they advocated a revision of the form of presentation of Government accounts.

The people who made the statement were conscious of the fact that it is not as easy as one might think to present Government accounts in a more readable form; but that does not mean to say that they cannot be improved. For many years there has been a conflict of opinion regarding the accounts of local governing authorities. Those that follow the Act to the letter present a colourless statement

which, in many cases, does not clearly represent the position, having regard for normal accounting practice. A number of these authorities have to be, or should be, regarded as having many of the requirements of trading ventures so that one can more accurately appraise the true performance.

I defy anyone to interpret from the Government accounts today, presented in their traditional form, what is the true achievement and true effectiveness of the expenditure. For instance, there is no demonstration by the Government of the day, whether it be this Government or its predecessors, that any real attempt has been made at cost absorption and increased effectiveness and efficiency. It is rank hypocrisy for any of us to say that industry should absorb more costs—and that is a popular cry—when Government accounts and Governments themselves do not give a lead and demonstrate that they themselves are absorbing costs through greater efficiency and effectiveness.

If one looks at the statement presented to us one finds that the increase in estimated expenditure for this year will be £3,896,870. Against this, the estimated increase in revenue is expected to be £3,962,803. There have been some decreases in expenditure which total £354,834 and it indicates, if one accepts the figures superficially, that Governments are not demonstrating to the public that they are encouraging any policy of cost absorption through greater efficiency and effectiveness. I feel that we are entitled to a presentation of the facts in a form which will give us a true indication of the real achievements. There is too much tendency to value achievements in terms of money. We might have spent an extra £1,000,000 and achieved 10 per cent. less than we did the year before.

I feel that just as we are demanding of industry today that there shall be cost absorption through greater efficiency, so Governments should demonstrate that they are giving a lead. I have yet to find any Government in Australia, State or Commonwealth, which, in my opinion, has demonstrated to the people that through Government works and Government administration it is following a policy of cost absorption through greater efficiency. There seems to be a never-ending political pressure for Governments to demonstrate their achievements through money spent. It would be much more satisfactory, and I am sure much more effective, if only we could educate people to demand information on the effectiveness of the expenditure rather than the actual amount spent. It is a well-known fact that some people can spend £1,000,000 and achieve certain ends while others could not achieve the same result even if they spent £1,500,000 or £2,000,000.

Next I would like to pass on to the matter of parking, which has been such a vexed question in recent months and which is still the subject of much controversy, and doubtless will continue to be so for many years. I cannot quarrel with the proposition put forward by the Perth City Council and which, apparently, has been accepted in principle by the Government, because it does appear that the problem will have to be attacked on a broad front and the Perth City Council needs certain statutory authority to achieve its objectives.

But I feel that private industry has not done enough to achieve a quicker and satisfactory solution to the problem. I think it has to be a co-operative move; some effort by private industry and some by local authorities, as the case may be. If private industry looks at the problem from purely selfish motives and decides to do something about parking facilities, it can first select and determine where the facilities shall go—a very vital factor. Secondly, it can dictate the type of parking facility that will be provided; and, thirdly, it can control that parking facility, both as to the standard of service rendered and the charge that is made. They are some of the more selfish reasons which could induce private industry to give a more vigorous and positive effort on the question of off-street parking.

Some of the other advantages which would be of benefit to Government—both State and local—are, firstly, that if private industry does something about off-street parking it will avoid political and other pressures which would otherwise be inevitable as to location, the charges to be made and the type of service to be given. Secondly, if these places are provided by private industry we will not have large areas set aside which will immediately lose their rating capacity. It follows that when a local authority sets up an area for general public use, it ceases to be a rate contributing area and becomes a further burden on that particular local authority.

In particular, I have in mind the city block. I know people will say that to provide an area or a number of areas sufficiently large for off-street parking would be prohibitive because of the great cost. I do not agree. I consider that it is part and parcel of the equipment of a good trading centre to have adequate off-street parking placed where it will best serve that particular area. If the local authority is to decide where these parking areas are to go, there are considerations which will influence the decision, other than those of the needs of particular stores.

For instance, say a group of stores such as Boans, Bairds, Moores, Aherns and other traders, situated in the general area around Forrest Place, got together, as

business people have been able to do in the United States and other parts of the world, they could—certainly at considerable cost—provide for off-street parking in the immediate vicinity of their stores. Immediately they decided to do that, they would first of all make sure that the facilities would be placed where they would best serve that group of traders and, secondly, the facilities would be of a type of construction that would best serve their particular interests. I have in mind that areas could be acquired today at a price which would be only a fraction of what they will cost in 20 years' time, and they could be converted into easily accessible multi-storey sites.

My first reaction to multi-storey sites was that they would be unsightly structures. However, when one sees pictures of these places, particularly on the Continent and in the United States, one realises that with today's architectural skill and the type of construction that can be employed, there is no need for them to be unsightly, and in fact, they can be an acquisition. I referred to the need for several large establishments to get together on this problem. It is obvious that every large establishment could not, and should not, provide its own off-street parking facilities as part of its own establishment. There are several reasons for my saying that.

If, for instance, Boans, Moores and Aherns each decided that they would put in the basement, on the ground floor, or somewhere higher, a suitable parking lot, we would have a multiplicity of places where people would have to enter and leave, and that in itself could considerably dislocate the traffic flow. If, however, by co-operative effort between these people, one larger, well-conducted and well-located site was provided, it would naturally follow that the obstruction to the traffic flow would be immediately reduced.

The people I have discussed this with as a suggestion, have indicated several sites which could be suitable for the establishment of multi-storey parking lots, but they have been alarmed at the amount of capital that would be involved. They say that a place of such a size could, initially, involve an expenditure of £500,000 or £750,000 to acquire a desirable site and to construct a place of a suitable and modern type and one that was readily accessible. But what of that? We hear today that to re-model one store is going to cost £350,000.

I would say that to build a modern store in these times of the size of the existing stores already in the city would cost £500,000 by the time a suitable site was acquired and a modern building erected, and this would only meet the minimum requirements. Therefore, if a concerted effort were made, the cost would not be great to each of the major stores affected if they had to contribute the necessary capital, even though it amounted to £750,000

to provide for a large parking establishment of this kind. Each of them could say that their stores had immediately appreciated in value because this facility would ensure a continuity of trade in that particular area.

The experience abroad has been that people are prepared to pay for the use of proper parking facilities. The general experience of private enterprise that has taken the plunge in various parts of the world to provide these establishments, related to a given developed area, has been that a satisfactory return, although low, has been obtained on the investment. Naturally, they cannot expect the same return on that money as one could obtain from the investment in trading capital.

The same thing applies if one is a landlord. A landlord does not expect the same return on a large building investment as he would with the same amount of money invested in trading. But, of course, there are other factors which induce people to invest their money in the lower-return type of investment, as against the greater risk on a higher-return investment. The fact remains that these places have been made to show a profit. They are well located and render a satisfactory service. The revenue, of course is not obtained entirely from the charges made for the use of the parking facilities. There are other fields that can be developed.

It is very handy for a business man, or even a woman shopping during the morning, to leave his or her vehicle at a place where good service is assured. The person parking the vehicle can then pick it up later in the day properly serviced, washed, polished and so on, or purchase any motor accessories without any delay after completing his or her business. So a considerable part of the revenue of these establishments quite naturally would come from that trading which would be entirely distinct from the revenue obtained from the charges made for the use of the parking facilities.

I feel it would not be asking too much of the Government and the Perth City Council to approach groups of these firms with a view to having a conference to ascertain whether they would favourably consider this proposal. I am of the opinion that if some of these people do not show some foresight in regard to this matter they will rue the day because we cannot deny that if a local authority or a Government is to provide these parking facilities, there will be other considerations that will arise which could be to the detriment of existing trading centres. If they put in the facilities themselves they command the location, the type of service and the charges being made. One might ask what political pressures could there be. I would ask: If a local authority is to choose between buying a site, say 600 to 700 yards farther away because it is much cheaper, will it not be influenced by considerations

other than the prime one of who is to be served? It could be that whilst certain people in the central area are paying the heaviest rates to that local authority and their contributions would be partly used for the acquisition and running of these sites, the mere provision of that site 600 or 1,000 yards away would be the means of causing these old established places to languish.

We can take it as axiomatic I think, that vigorous and large shopping areas will naturally grow up around facilities that are available, whether those facilities are in the nature of transport, parking or any other that may be suitable. It will also mean that the question of charges will become the subject of pressures if these facilities are provided by local authorities. We have seen it before. We have seen people campaign on the fact that they will promise not to put certain charges up if they are put in; or they will promise to put them down if they are elected. Accordingly, a vicious battle can be started on this problem, if too much responsibility in relation to parking is vested in the local authorities.

The next point on which I would like to touch is the question of the current practice at the Sunset Home respecting differential charges to the inmates of that home. This is a matter that directly concerns the Minister for Health, and I know several members on the other side of the House have received representations from some of the old gentlemen at Sunset concerning a position which they consider to be an anomaly. There is a standard charge of £2 5s. 6d. per week made to the inmates of Sunset Home. For the purpose of this discussion, I would rather just deal with the Sunset Home, although the circumstances can be translated to relate to Mt. Henry and other similar places.

If a man has other income he is charged an amount additional to the £2 5s. 6d. per week. There are some gentlemen down there who are in receipt of war pensions as distinct from service pensions. There are some gentlemen at Sunset who receive superannuation as a result of contributions during their working life. There are other men down there who receive an income from other sources, and some of them have accumulated small balances in the trust account at the home as a result of their thrift, and for other reasons, over a period of years. It is current practice to charge these gentlemen something extra on a graduated scale up to a maximum of £3 10s. per week.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.8 p.m.

Mr. COURT: These gentlemen at Sunset are paying amounts in excess of the standard charge of £2 5s. 6d. from money taken from various sources, some being war service pensions, some superannuation amounts and in some cases from capital sums standing to their credit at the home.

The bone of contention among the old gentlemen is that there is discrimination within the four walls of the institution. The fact is that they all have the same facilities, food, bedding arrangements and general amenities, but against that some of them sleeping side by side in the various wards are charged differential figures up to a maximum of £3 10s., which was previously a maximum of £4 4s. per week.

Mr. McCulloch: It does not apply to casuals.

Mr. COURT: I do not know. With the actual conduct of the home, I have no quarrel. It is very well run; the staff do a very good job and the inmates have no fault to find with the staff or with the way the home is run. In the main they are very appreciative of what is made available to them by the Government, as they realise that they could not get similar accommodation, food or amenities for anything like the price they are paying if they had to go outside the home.

But it is irksome to find that for identical facilities and amenities they are charged something extra. It has always been my understanding that a war pension, as distinct from an age pension, is something that is sacrosanct and that Governments and other people just do not touch it. But the fact is that these people are paying out of their war pensions. A war pension is given to a man because of some war-caused disability or injury, and it is distinct altogether from an age pension. For taxation and other purposes it is always regarded as something apart. The fact remains, however, that these men are actually paying money out of their war pensions.

Another case about which I have received a letter, written by the daughter of an inmate, concerns a man who contributed, during his working life, to a superannuation scheme. The money he receives does not come from an employer's contribution, but from a contributing scheme into which he put his own money. This man has paid in his money and met his obligations, yet he is now paying the maximum amount of £3 10s. a week compared with £2 5s. 6d. that other people pay who have no source of income other than their age pension. I had the file tabled, and several members on both sides of the House were interested in examining it.

The facts contained in it clearly demonstrate that there is differential treatment between the inmates of the home. The amount of revenue that the Government receives by having this differential charge at Sunset, Mt. Henry and other places, is not, over a year, considerable, but it does mean a lot to the people concerned. I know that one of the arguments put up by the department is this: Many of these old gentlemen go into the home, and from the moment they walk in the front door their relatives just say, "That is fixed,"

and give them little or no further attention. Unhappily that is true in many cases.

Many of the inmates receive visits only from various organisations, women's auxiliaries and trade unions, which have a system of visiting there, and this is much appreciated. These old gentlemen need human kindness, friendship and association with people more than anything else in life. To be living in the close confines of a place such as that, with the same people day in and day out, is an unusual existence. The old gentlemen are the first to say that what they appreciate most is going out to visit friends or relatives, or to have conversations with the friendly people who visit the home.

I am quite aware that some of these people are not properly treated by their relatives, who should be responsible for them, and who should at least be responsible for giving them companionship. But that, to my mind, is not the guiding principle. It has been suggested to me by the department that if some of these men did not pay the extra, all they would do would be to save it, and when they died their relatives, who now neglect them, would get it. Again, I do not consider that should be the guiding principle, but unhappily that is also true, and some relatives who have been neglectful get the money. But I still feel it is the right of these old people to do what they like with that money.

One case, which the Minister knows of, is where a man receives only the age pension but is paying the maximum of £3 10s. because he happens to have a considerable balance at the home. These balances accumulate there for various reasons. Some men are naturally thrifty, and even in their declining years they still save. They feel they might leave a few pounds to their children or grandchildren, and that is their right. On the other hand, some men have the idea that their money is there to be spent, and they spend every bob they can on entertainment of one sort or another; and again that is their right.

I ask the Minister to give this matter further consideration. I know he has been sympathetic and has agreed to reduce the amount from £4 4s. to £3 10s. but I feel it is not right that there should be this differential treatment within the various institutions. If the Minister and the Government would agree to do this, I can assure them that it will be appreciated by the inmates. Many of these gentlemen, who are ex-servicemen, regularly attend the Nedlands R.S.L. sub-branch, and I know that the sub-branch is very concerned about the position.

These gentlemen from the home never cease to voice their complaint about the treatment they receive. I make this last comment for the Minister's information because I understand his officers have told him that the men are satisfied with the

present position. If the Minister goes to the home and has a talk with some of these fellows, particularly the war pensioners, he will find they are anything but satisfied.

The Treasurer: Would the hon. member tell us the cost of food per week per inmate?

Mr. COURT: According to the file, the total cost to keep a man for a week at Sunset is £5. The amount is much higher at Mt. Henry. There could never, however, be the situation where we would get a full recovery.

The Treasurer: No. I was thinking that the inmate who could reasonably afford to pay for his food, in full, would probably wish to do so.

Mr. COURT: I see the point.

The Treasurer: He would have to be fed wherever he was.

Mr. COURT: I want to make this point, that once they are admitted after a proper examination as to their means and available accommodation, it is sound practice that they should all be on the same basis. It is easy for men and women when living together in a confined space to experience irritation even though the members of the staff are doing their best to maintain a happy atmosphere. There is no comparison between these places today and what they were 35 years ago. I remember Sunset when I was a small boy. It was a fairly dismal place. Today it is vastly improved and it reflects credit on the people concerned. There are flowers, gardens and lawns, and the atmosphere of the place is much better.

I am grateful for a letter I received yesterday from the Minister for Works saying that money is to be spent on renovating the place and bringing it into proper condition.

A further point I wish to comment on is the question of the wheat surplus, which has been touched on by members who have a much greater knowledge than I will ever have of primary production and all that goes with it. I would like to know that at some stage the Minister for Agriculture will give members a clear statement of his understanding of the world wheat situation. No matter how hard one tries to analyse the published statements from time to time in an endeavour to ascertain the true position and its effects on our economy, it seems almost impossible to do so.

By interjection I have on occasions during this session asked whether any information is available as to the potential market, assuming that finance was not a consideration, in some of the Asian parts of the world. No figures have been available. The figures quoted as the world surplus are prodigious and frightening, to say the least. It is quite apparent that

unless concerted action is taken by all the major countries with a wheat surplus, a satisfactory solution will not be found.

Obviously if we went alone and tried to adopt some spectacular and drastic method of getting rid of our surplus, those countries with greater surpluses would be anxious and, I imagine, entitled to retaliate. I wonder whether the Minister could inform the Committee on the wheat-consuming potential of the Asian countries. We hear much about the starving millions and the great need for food in various parts of the world. We are aware of the traditional rice-eating habits of some of those countries but we know that through force of circumstances, many of them have consumed considerable quantities of wheat.

I felt that when the Indonesians began to use increased quantities of Australian flour we should have adopted every possible means to aid them through their difficult financial times in order to make certain that they did not lose the habit and that we retained this valuable market. A query occurs to me as to whether these Asian people would want more wheat, even if we gave it to them. If they are not able to consume more wheat, either because they are prejudiced against it as compared with rice, or because they are already fairly well supplied with rice and other cereals, it is time that the nations which have a wheat surplus faced up to the realities of the situation, because wheat in storage must of necessity deteriorate and it costs a considerable sum of money to hold it.

When a final decision is made and action is taken to reduce this surplus, which seems to be only sound business practice, I feel that the loss should not be borne by the primary producers. The wheat growers of this country have made a colossal contribution over the last 15 or 16 years, under the system of marketing that has been adopted, and now when the world, through no fault of the producers, is suffering the effects of a great surplus of wheat, they should not be the ones to suffer. I would like to know that some bold action will be taken in that regard.

If one were running a store and was confronted with surplus stocks that had started to deteriorate because they were out-moded or were being attacked by vermin or disease, the first thing one would do would be to get rid of them at any cost. That would be only sound merchandising and although the problem of our surplus wheat is one of much greater magnitude, I feel that the principle is the same and I believe that until someone is bold enough—on a world basis—to face up to the realities, we will continue increasing the burden on the country and the danger to the primary producer. When the Minister replies—if he does so—I hope he will give his personal views on this question because the statements published to date,

whether from the Wheat Board or private members, have not given any clear indication of from where the light will eventually dawn on this problem.

In conclusion, I hope that when the Treasurer replies to the debate—if he does so—he will give some further information on the figures published in the last few days in regard to the State deficit. Those figures disclose an alarming position, unless there is something which is not apparent from them. The heading states that the State's deficit has increased to £2,315,634. The State's financial figures for October showed a deficit of £773,526 as compared with £397,154 for October last year. The accumulated deficit for the expired four months of the financial year now stands at £2,315,634, which in round figures is roughly £1,500,000 worse than for the July-October period last year.

In the statement there is some explanation that the railway loss since the 1st July has been £905,929 as compared with £663,106 for the corresponding four months of last year. There is a further qualification that there was due approximately £750,000 now in arrears in Commonwealth grant payments. I presume that that sum has fallen out of date as compared with the same period last year. If we take off the £750,000 in our calculations it still shows that the situation for this four months, as compared with the corresponding four months of last year, has worsened to the tune of approximately £830,000.

I hope that during the debate the Treasurer will indicate why the position has worsened to that extent in view of the fact that the Budget and Estimates which we have before us, do not indicate that there should be a deterioration of anything like the extent indicated in the Press statements made on the 27th October.

MR. OLDFIELD (Maylands) [4.27]: I desire, at this stage, to pass some comment on coal and coal production. What we read in the Press and what is brought to our notice in this Chamber from time to time indicate that those in the coal industry are concerned about the future of coal production and the township of Collie, which depends upon that production.

We all realise that as the industrial world progresses and work in scientific spheres advances, the older fuels, such as coal, must make way for newer sources of power. It is unfortunate that townships which depend entirely on one product for their existence must suffer in the process, and so I feel that it behoves every person in a responsible position to give thought to what can be done to ease the situation and make any tapering off a progressive process and not a sudden ending. We realise that there will always

be a place for coal in our community but whether the quantities required in the past will be consumed in the future is something which only time can tell.

Possibly science today could give some indication of what the position will be. If we accept the proposition that coal as a fuel is on the way out, we must look for some other use for coal, which is a mineral native to this State and something that can be produced here by the labour of our own people. It is economically wasteful to produce coal if we have no use for it and I suggest that the Government give thought to investigating the possibility of establishing a plastics industry at Collie. I understand coal is the raw material from which plastics are derived. We could possibly be entering a plastic era in view of the fact that practically everything we buy today, such as garden hoses, picnic sets, fountain pens, etc., are made of plastic. If we were able to establish a plastic industry in Collie and more coal was used as a result, it would go a long way towards restoring the prosperity and stability of Collie and would assist the State to balance its budget because it would mean we would not have to import plastic goods from the Eastern States or overseas.

I strongly suggest to the Government, therefore, that it investigate this matter with a view to ascertaining if something along the lines I have suggested cannot be put in train. I have no concrete proposal to put forward because I do not possess the necessary technical education or knowledge to do so. However, the Government can have made available to it any technical advice or data required. I am sure there are officers in Government departments who possess the necessary technical qualifications to investigate this matter or, alternatively, they have the wherewithal to make inquiries outside the State if that is considered necessary.

Next I will put forward another suggestion, namely, the establishment of a research station in the vicinity of Wiluna. From time to time we read and have been told by people who reside in the area that the soil around Wiluna is very rich. From those people who know the soil and the elements it contains, I have learned that the soil in the Wiluna district is the best in Western Australia and is almost equal to any in Australia as far as its growing properties are concerned. I am led to believe that very little, if any, artificial fertiliser is necessary to produce excellent crops.

One adverse factor is the unstable and very light rainfall. However, there is another factor which could be put to good use, namely, the vast underground water resources in that area, of which we are all well aware. When the Wiluna gold mine was operating, water rates were practically unknown by the residents of that centre. Everyone was able to have

gardens equal to the best in the metropolitan area. Three 6-inch centrifugal pumps were kept going continuously to supply water not only to the mine but also to the whole of the township. I also understand that the water table of the source from which they were drawing the water showed no sign of lowering.

I have been told that the source of this water is part of the great artesian basin running through the centre of Australia. It is considered that the origin of this water is in the Himalayas, that it travels undersea, is kept going by the melting snows in the Himalayas, and that it comes to the surface in the vicinity of Wiluna. The water has been traced to be running north and south and it has been found that it is very suitable drinking water, apart from its use for industrial purposes. I am of the opinion that it could be used for irrigation in the Wiluna district, but I do not know whether the cost of pumping it into reservoirs for this purpose would be much greater than the cost of pumping water in those areas where there is a large rainfall, such as in the South-West. I suggest that possibly the cost would be greater. However, if we take into consideration that this extra cost might be offset by the greater growing potential of the soil, I think that the extra cost of establishing an irrigation scheme would be well worth while.

Mr. O'Brien: Have you ever been to Wiluna?

Mr. OLDFIELD: No, but I have a great deal of information on this question. I understand that people in the district are having great success with the production of lucerne. I believe that the production is 10 tons per acre per annum. With lucerne at its present price, it would be an economic proposition to freight it to those areas where it is badly needed. At the moment, a great quantity of baled lucerne chaff is imported from the Eastern States and it is a fairly pricey product for those who require it. Therefore, I would like to see a research station established to ascertain what could be done in the area with a view to closer settlement. I am the first to admit that the distance from the market is great. This is a factor that must be considered.

Hon. D. Brand: Did you get your information about the Himalayas being the source of the water from a geologist's report?

Mr. OLDFIELD: No, that was suggested by one of the people present, who obtained the information from a report which he read following inquiries into where the water originated. I do not know where the information came from. Nevertheless, that was one of the suggestions put to me, and no doubt the Minister would be able to have that information checked. However, whether the statement is correct or not does not matter. The fact remains

that there is an abundance of water and it is a question of whether it can be used economically for irrigation purposes. I am not qualified to make a decision, but if a closer settlement scheme was inaugurated in this area, it is possible that we could build Wiluna into a township approximately the size of Northam because the acreage cultivated for production would not be as great as that in other parts of the State on account of the quality of the soil and also irrigation would prove to be of material benefit. It has been proved that lucerne grows prolifically in the Wiluna area.

Further, I understand an experiment has been made with the growing of peanuts, but unfortunately it failed because of the prevalence of foxes in the district. I have also been informed that experiments were made in the Eastern States with the hand-feeding of sheep with lucerne. One man in New South Wales kept 1,000 sheep for 12 months on ten acres as a result of hand-feeding them with lucerne. However, I do not know whether that type of feeding could be maintained indefinitely. Some people say that sheep must have a change of diet after a certain time, and possibly 12 months is the maximum period over which one could feed sheep with lucerne.

The Minister for Health: There is plenty of land available to supply roughage for stock.

Mr. OLDFIELD: That was purely an experiment on ten acres of land on which 1,000 sheep were kept for twelve months. This was proved to be possible, but whether it is advisable to keep sheep under such conditions is another matter. There is no reason why, say, 500 sheep should not be kept on ten acres of similar land. I shall not go into detail about the possibility of 500 sheep being kept on ten acres. Suffice it to say that it has been done. Those with experience of sheep rearing will know how and why it was done.

The Minister for Health: I have eaten some very nice dates which were grown up there.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I am not attempting to suggest what could or should be done in the way of closer settlement. I urge strongly that a research station be established, in a small way for a start, to test the possibilities of the district. All the requirements—soil, water, sunshine—are available. The two factors which militate against the area are that the water is underground. I understand it is from 15 to 40 ft. below the surface according to the locality. The other factor is the non-availability of markets close by. The lucerne which is now being grown has a ready market in the surrounding stations. I would ask that consideration be given to those matters in the near future so that a closer settlement scheme could be put into operation.

Mr. O'Brien: The Government has already informed the member for Murchison that it is prepared to do that.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I know that the member for Murchison has been urging that this be done and that he has asked for the establishment of a research station, but he did not go on with what could be done in that district. It has great possibilities, depending on two factors, firstly the cost of supplying water for irrigation purposes and, secondly, the availability of markets. Whether the freight on products to markets is too great is something to be considered. That point is worth investigating. It is possibly worth while subsidising production for a few years until the markets get closer.

The Minister for Health: I do not think that isolation is a great drawback in these days of modern transport. The question is the ability to produce.

Mr. OLDFIELD: The difficulty is small with modern air-freighting of products. Many business houses air-freight goods to and from the Eastern States at a cost of 2s. 2d. per lb. to Melbourne. That does not seem to be too great for many classes of goods. In some cases a handsome profit is made by air-freighting goods compared with other means of transport.

Mr. Ackland: That will make the cost of feed too high.

Mr. OLDFIELD: We have the air-beef scheme. From further north than Wiluna, beef is air-freighted and the scheme was commenced during the term of the previous Government, and it was subsidised. The member for Moore supported that scheme. Today we are living in the age of science, and none of us knows how cheap air-freight may become in ten years' time with new and improved motors and fuels.

The Minister for Health: And also greater use of diesel transport.

Mr. OLDFIELD: We could have fast diesel rail services to and from that area.

Hon. D. Brand: And possibly using oil found in this State.

Mr. OLDFIELD: Anything can happen. The possibilities are there. All that is needed is someone to start the research going, so that when modern facilities are available we will know what the area is capable of producing, and people can be moved in on a big scale, under similar conditions as apply to land settlement schemes. In an area such as this 30 to 40 acres per settler would be sufficient to make a living. With the huge amount of land available, just imagine how many settlers could be placed in that area.

I now turn to one of my pet subjects, which I have discussed on many occasions and which I mentioned during the Address-in-reply; that is, traffic control. I mentioned the trams in Barrack-st. In the

last three months the position has become far more serious than it was during the time I spoke on the Address-in-reply. Motor traffic in the city is increasing daily, and trams with augmented timetables are aggravating the situation in Barrack-st. more and more as each week passes. At peak periods motorists would be well advised to steer clear of Barrack-st.

During peak periods the traffic in Barrack-st. has at times straddled intersections. Often traffic is not able to proceed despite being given the right-of-way by the pointsman on duty, because vehicles at the next intersection are held up, and this leads to traffic straddling the intersection. The only solution is to get rid of the trams in Barrack-st. as quickly as possible. I may be in trouble with many of my electors in Beaufort-st. when I press for the removal of the tram service in that thoroughfare because many of the electors use them. But we have to deal with the problem as it faces everyone.

If the Tramway Department can be prevailed upon to carry out its promise to the residents of Inglewood district, made five years ago, that within two years diesel buses would replace the trams, the present position would be alleviated. The promise was not made during the term of office of the present Minister; it was made during the Maylands by-election in 1951. That promise has not been kept. If the department can be persuaded to replace the trams with buses in Barrack-st., more than 60 per cent. of the traffic problem would be solved.

Mr. Heal: The same position applies to Hay-st.

Mr. OLDFIELD: Yes, except that Hay-st. is a one-way street and the position is not so acute. If the trams could be removed from Barrack-st., consideration could be given to a system of one-way traffic, such as prevails in Sydney today. With only two outlets from the city and with no provision for any further outlets, it is worth while considering making Barrack-st. a one-way street, and William-st. a one-way street in the opposite direction so that motorists entering the city from the north would be able to come over one bridge, and those leaving the city could go over the other, thus ensuring a smooth flow of traffic.

If we had this system of one-way traffic it would permit of the elimination of the "no-right-hand" turn. That rule at peak periods has begun to boomerang, or perhaps I should say it has begun to have the reverse effect of what was intended originally. Vehicles entering the city by way of the Beaufort-st. bridge have to travel right through the town because they are not permitted to turn right, or alternatively, they have to turn left in Wellington-st. and make a full turn there, or go on to

Hay-st. The traffic could be cleared much more expeditiously if drivers were permitted to make the right hand turn.

Other instances could be quoted. Drivers at times find it necessary to go right around the city block before they can make a right hand turn, but as I have pointed out, the system of one-way streets could eliminate the trouble. In offering these suggestions I appreciate that they are dependent upon having the trams taken out of Barrack-st. The mere removal of the trams from that street would relieve much of the congestion that is now occurring there. This would not be a revolutionary step for the department to take because I was promised in February, 1951, by the then Minister for Railways that within two years the trams would be replaced by diesel buses.

I do not wish to prolong the debate on this matter. It may be contended that to make William-st. a one-way thoroughfare would be difficult, but we have no trolley-buses or other transport service in that street which is on a fixed route. On the other hand, the trams in Barrack-st. have a fixed route, and that is the cause of much of the trouble. I trust that my suggestions will receive the favourable consideration of the Government.

MR. NALDER (Katanning) [4.52]: There are a few matters that I should like to mention. Never before in the history of the State has there been such a lush growth of feed as is today to be found from Albany in the south to areas further north than Geraldton and from Esperance to the west coast, and thought should be given to the conservation of that fodder for use in the autumn period of the year.

This matter has been taken up by farmers throughout the agricultural areas on a scale never before attempted here, and since my attention has been drawn to it, I feel sure that it could be availed of to a much greater extent in future than it has been in the past. Quite recently I learnt that this idea of conserving fodder has been followed in England, while in various parts of the State a few farmers have been experimenting. I am bringing the matter to the notice of the House in the hope that the Department of Agriculture will consider it and that every effort will be made to give effect to it. If this were done, I am convinced that the stock carrying capacity of the agricultural areas would be greatly improved.

Where stock has not been put into the paddocks for some time and the pasture shows a lush growth, it has been proved that if the fodder is cut and put into windrows, the pasture cures and retains good condition for many months of the year without the need for baling it. The procedure in the past has been to cut the

pasture, windrow it and then bale it, and there has been the extra cost of handling to have the bales carted and stacked or put into sheds. Some farmers are using not only the pasture paddocks but also areas where wheat, oats or barley have been sown.

This scheme has shown that it is possible to obviate very much of the labour that otherwise would have to be employed to conserve the fodder. I have spoken recently with two farmers in different parts of the State who have tried this method and found it very successful. One farmer at Kukerin told me that last year he had mowed 50 acres of a paddock of 100 acres of barley grass. He raked it, and baled it, and when the time came to cart the bales to the stack, he found that the grass was so prickly that after carting one lot he gave the job away as hopeless. When stock was turned into the paddock, he observed that the stock preferred the mown strip because there was a tender regrowth which was much more palatable than the dry grass, and the dry area went untouched. It was not long after when the stock went to the baled stack and after a few months very little was left except the string to show that any baling had been done.

Another farmer told me of an experiment carried out by a neighbour in the Katanning district. The grass had been mowed and put into windrows. During the latter part of the autumn—in April—one could go into the paddock and find where the stock had eaten off every bit of the strip that had been mown.

I have discussed this matter with other farmers and they are greatly taken with the idea, and I feel sure that if farmers in different parts of the State adopted it, and the Department of Agriculture gave attention to it, together with a bit of advertising, it is possible that many others would experiment along similar lines. Instead of allowing the pasture to dry off, the grass could be conserved and utilised, and many more head of sheep and cattle could be carried in our country districts, thus leading to an increase in the numbers that will produce our wool and meat in the future.

Mr. Hearman: What is the effect of the rainfall?

MR. NALDER: I asked that question of the farmer concerned and he said that the rain—up to 2 ins.—deteriorated the value of the pasture very little. Of course, it would be folly for farmers not to bale and store some of their hay out of reach of the weather, in case of emergency. Farmers in districts where they can grow sufficient oats, harvest and store the oats in bins or bags for use during the periods of the year when the pasture will not carry the stock, which can then be fed

by hand or by means of feeders, thus carrying them on until the winter rains bring the pastures once again.

The member for Harvey mentioned the experiments carried out by farmers in his area and it is my belief that in future lucerne will be grown in this State to an extent even greater than in the past. Twenty or 25 years ago lucerne was widely grown in many districts of Western Australia, but when the lucerne flea and the red mite became prevalent, many farmers stopped growing lucerne as they could not control those pests. However, I believe, as the result of the experiments that are being carried out, that the growing of lucerne will once again be proved well worth while because it is a type of pasture that is of great value at certain periods of the year.

I am glad the Minister for Transport is present because I feel sure that if we again experience such a wet winter as that just past many of our main roads—if action is not taken—will be rendered unfit for traffic. I do not know whether the Minister has been over the Perth-Albany rd. lately, but it is in a disgraceful condition. That highway has been badly knocked about by the haulage of logs on heavy trucks by contractors carting the timber from the forest areas—up to 50 miles away—to the city.

So much damage has been done, in fact, that I am convinced some of the roads will have to be remade. To travel over those roads at any speed is now a hazardous process, in view of the damage that has been done in the last few months. If Ministers have been over that road lately, they must be alarmed at the degree of deterioration that has taken place.

The Treasurer: Road haulage is much more costly than many people think.

Mr. NALDER: That is so. Had some restriction been placed on the tonnage that these trucks were allowed to carry or if, during the very wet period, they had been banned from the roads for a time, the degree of damage done would have been kept to a minimum.

The Minister for Works: There is a restriction, but no one observes it.

Mr. NALDER: Whose responsibility is that?

The Minister for Works: They have to be caught. It is just like people exceeding the speed limit.

Mr. NALDER: The Minister could go on that road any day of the week—

The Minister for Works: I have not the time.

Mr. NALDER: The Minister has inspectors to do the job.

The Minister for Works: We take a number of cases of overloading, before the courts, but we cannot keep up with them. That sort of thing is going on all over the place because people will not observe the regulations.

Mr. NALDER: I am sure that on my way home tonight I will see trucks carrying anything up to 15 or 20 tons of logs and travelling at anything up to 50 miles an hour. No matter how a road is constructed it cannot stand up to that when the surface and the edge of the road are damp. Although I have no experience in road construction, I am convinced that hauling heavy loads at excessive speeds is the quickest way to render any road impassable to ordinary traffic.

We, in this State, have taken great pride in our roads and visitors from other States have said they have seen nothing to compare with the long distance roads of Western Australia. There are many reasons for that and they are familiar to members but, having such good roads, we must not allow them to be abused. The Minister says we have regulations in this regard and I think we should see they are policed. I have not travelled on many other roads lately, but I know the present condition of this highway and I believe that every effort should be made to ensure that roads put down for the convenience of traffic generally are not spoiled by the action of a few people in overloading. We know that many mills in country areas were unworkable because in the past they could not be manned, and that timber must be brought to the metropolitan area to be sawn; but that is no reason why every effort should not be made to prevent overloading, especially under very wet conditions.

I come now to the changing conditions in this and the other States, in regard to the sheep raising industry. The endeavour in the past has been to breed a big, strong animal, able to grow as much wool as possible, with the greatest weight of fleece per head. That has been the ambition of all sheep breeders and when the time came for such animals to be slaughtered they brought good prices at all sales where butchers operated. The position, however, is changing rapidly and the demand for the big joint has disappeared. There are a number of reasons for that. Costs have increased and the average housewife does not now wish to have a very big joint for the week-end.

There is a demand for the smaller animal for both beef and mutton. I feel sure that some further investigation into these changing conditions should be carried out. What is the position to be? Are we to continue to allow the position to exist where the big animal is produced and when it comes to selling it, the producer has to take a lower price than

if he were selling a smaller animal? Proof of what I am saying can be found in any of the market results, or if one attends any of the sales. The smaller animals bring much higher prices than the larger ones. If it is to be an economical proposition to breed a smaller animal some investigation should be carried out by the Department of Agriculture. Those are a few points which I wished to bring before members, but when we discuss the individual items I shall have something further to say.

HON. J. B. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [5.12]: I did not speak to the Address-in-reply and I did not intend to say anything on the Estimates. However, we have heard so much hypocrisy, grizzling and belly-aching from the other side that I think I ought to have something to say.

Hon. L. Thorn: Do not make it any worse.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I speak particularly of the member for Moore and, of course, the member for Toodyay, as he has poked his nose in. The other evening he was grizzling about the communists and said how the Labour Party was connected with the Communist Party. He did not tell us that it was the commos in the Upper Swan who elected him to Parliament. They used to say, "Mr. Lin, he very nice man; we will put Mr. Lin in." Mr. Lin was put here in the first place by the commos in Middle Swan. Yet he gets up in this Chamber and grizzles about them.

Hon. L. Thorn: I am glad you did not leave me out. I wanted to be in the picture.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: On Tuesday night the member for Albany said that no one ever replied to his statements. But the other evening he said that the Fremantle harbour was not what it ought to be. I agree with him. He also said that during the war the Yanks flew out of the harbour as soon as there was an alarm. I agree with him. That was the best thing they could do because if they had not left the harbour their ships might have been bottled up. Even in peacetime ships can be bottled up in the harbour. Not long ago a ship struck a bank in the fairway and the ships inside the harbour could not get out and those outside could not get in. Luckily, it was not a big ship and they were able to tow her off the bank.

But I would say to the member for Albany that if he thinks the Fremantle harbour is such an awful place, why does he want to push more ships up the river? He supports the idea of extending the harbour upriver to enable more ships to be taken in. I have an idea that he wants to pile more ships in the harbour in the hope that they will all be bottled up, the

harbour will become useless, and Albany will come into its own. He also tells us that Fremantle harbour is dangerous; yet he wants to bottle up the ships. His idea is that the ships will have to go to Albany; but I would remind him that they will not go past Bunbury because it would be too far to go to Albany.

Mr. Hill: You are putting up a great argument for the use of Albany.

Hon. L. Thorn: They could not be bottled up in Albany.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I was surprised at the Leader of the Opposition. At the start of the session he mentioned loan funds and said that some of those funds had been used for other purposes. Of course, the Treasurer flattened him with the answer that some of the money had been borrowed in order to build houses. The Leader of the Opposition should be the last to talk about using loan funds for other purposes. You, Mr. Chairman, will remember that I had to go to the Governor to protest about the use of loan funds. Had the Governor been Sir Philip Gibbs he would have said, "Look here, Sir Ross, you do something or else." But the Governor would not do that.

This Government had to do something to validate the actions of its predecessor. Sir Ross refused to do anything at all and as a result this Government had to validate his actions. So do not let the Leader of the Opposition grizzle about loan funds being used for other purposes. He should be the last to complain about it.

Hon. D. Brand: Are not you talking about trust funds? It was because the Treasurer had made some comment about the criminal action.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I was disappointed with the present Government—

Hon. D. Brand: That is an under-statement.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: —for not doing something to alter the system under which the previous Government was able to give the Black Diamond leases to its friends. I was hoping that this Government would rectify the position and make available a mine to the State Electricity Commission so that it could produce its own coal. If the S.E.C. could produce its own coal, from its own mines, it would be able to supply cheaper current than it is doing now. Members will recall the protest made by the State Electricity Commission when the McLarty-Watts Government gave the Black Diamond leases to its friends. Notwithstanding those protests, the leases were handed over to those private companies, and I hope that it is not too late to do something about providing the State Electricity Commission with a mine of its own.

Hon. D. Brand: Did the commission protest?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Yes, and I will tell the hon. member what it said.

Hon. D. Brand: I will be interested to hear it.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: It is set out on a page of the book from which I am reading.

Hon. D. Brand: What book is it?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: This extract reads—

The commission again recorded their regret at the commission having been compelled by Government direction to enter into an arrangement for the purchase of coal which was entirely devoid of business principles.

The hon. member and his friends compelled the S.E.C. to enter into an agreement for the purchase of coal and that action was entirely devoid of business principles.

Mr. Ackland: What is the title of the book?

The Treasurer: That is an extract from the official record—the State Electricity Commission's own files.

Hon. D. Brand: But what is the book?

The Treasurer: It is a book containing a speech made by the then Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: There is a further extract which reads—and I am quoting from the minutes of a meeting of the commission held on the 19th August, 1948—

The commission desires it to be placed on record that it was never consulted regarding the method of working the Black Diamond open-cut.

Hon. D. Brand: The commission would be surprised if it read that.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: The hon. member's Government also gave money to its friends to help in the payment of road transport. It also practically robbed the State Electricity Commission.

Hon. D. Brand: The hon. member—

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: You can get up and have your say later on! Why does not the hon. member get up like a little man and tell us what he thinks of the actions of his Government in giving away the coalmining leases; and what he thinks of his Leader giving away loan funds? I would be pleased to listen to him then. But do not let him interrupt me when I am trying to tell him something.

Hon. D. Brand: All right. I have heard you before.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I will now deal with the member for Moore. He has done nothing but grizzle, moan and groan, ever since he came back from his famous trip. He has always had a great set on the waterside workers. He never misses a chance to complain about

them. The other night he said that in Cape Town they loaded twice as many apples as they do in Fremantle, and that in Great Britain they loaded three times as many apples as they do in Fremantle. However, he did not tell us about how they load the apples at Albany.

Mr. Ackland: They load them more quickly at Albany than they do at Fremantle.

The Treasurer: Adam was the first apple-loader.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Adam? That reminds me of something I heard the other day. When Adam was going past the Garden of Eden with Cain and Abel, and they looked in, he said, "That is where your mother ate us out of house and home."

Now we will have some more about the member for Moore and his statement about workers in other countries loading three cases of apples, compared with one loaded by the workers at Fremantle. In reply to that, I say that the waterside workers at Fremantle compare favourably with their fellows in any part of the world. Captains of ships have told me that they obtain a good clearance from Fremantle harbour and that they like berthing there. The member for Moore should practice the axiom that charity begins at home.

He should tell the farmers, "Now look here, boys, you should work harder than you are doing! The country is not getting a fair deal. You should put in two acres of crop instead of one." But, of course, the member for Moore will laugh at that and say, "They have too much under crop now." Of course they have. The millions of starving people within a few miles of our coast want our wheat, but they cannot afford to pay for it. If the hon. member could induce his farmer colleagues to double their production of wheat, they could sell the wheat at half the price. These starving people are dangerous, living as they do so close to our coastline. The member for Moore, of course, would send soldiers to those countries to shoot the people down because they are starving and cannot get food. So I advise him to tell his farming friends to put in two acres of wheat instead of one. It is because of the member for Moore and men like him that the production of this country has been reduced. He goes around saying, "Put in less wheat and do not work so hard."

In 1931, when we produced 31,000,000 bushels of wheat, there were 3,555,000 acres under crop. However, through the action of the member for Moore, it has now been reduced to 2,900,000 acres. If he thought anything of the starving people who are living in close proximity to our shores, he would tell the farmers to grow more wheat. Previous speakers have told us that they are considering the

growing of larger sheep so that they can produce more wool; but the member for Moore will soon be saying, "Grow smaller sheep, and we will produce less wool. These people who intend to produce larger sheep will spoil the price." I hope the member for Moore will not grizzle so much about the waterside workers in the future.

I was interested to read a small cutting about one of these poor, suffering farmers. It was a Press article relating to Mr. Gullett, who is the Government Whip in the Commonwealth Parliament and it was as follows:—

In Melbourne tonight Mr. Gullett said he was not leaving politics because he was dissatisfied with the Menzies Government.

But he is dissatisfied with the contribution he is making to national politics.

Mr. Gullett said that he was not satisfied with the contribution he has made to politics in 10 years of public life.

"Politics demand a complete devotion of interest, time and imagination, and recently that has not been true in my case."

If farming is such a poor paying proposition, and farmers are supposed to be starving, is it logical that Mr. Gullett would be retiring from politics in order to look after his little farm?

The Treasurer: It is hard to swallow.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I now want to say a word or two about one of our newly-established industries. The Treasurer, when introducing the Estimates the other evening, stated that the Fremantle Harbour Trust was losing £150,000 a year, mainly due to the fact that the crude oil being brought into Kwinana was free of all charges by the Harbour Trust. I suppose that is all right because of the promise that was made to the company by the Government. Nevertheless, that company is treated better here than other companies are elsewhere.

Let us see what they do in the Eastern States to these poor old oil companies. I have here a cutting which reports that Mr. Playford, the Premier of South Australia, when addressing a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce in Adelaide, stated that in the following week New South Wales coal, in competition with Western Australian oil was to be reduced by 6s. per ton, and that South Australia was getting Western Australian oil £2 per ton cheaper than Western Australia.

We agreed that the Anglo-Iranian Oil Co. would not have to pay any charges on crude oil coming into Kwinana. However, it seems to me that it is never satisfied, because it is now bringing into Kwin-

ana cargoes of refined oil on which charges should be made. The company should be paying roughly £22,000 to the Fremantle Harbour Trust for these cargoes, but it seems to be so miserable that it has refused to pay. The Fremantle Harbour Trust, because it had lost £150,000 in one year and did not want to lose any more, referred the matter to the Crown Law Department, which ruled that it was never intended that cargoes of refined oil should be free of harbour dues; and this recommendation was sent to the Government.

Following a question I asked of the Minister for Works on the matter, he replied that it was not practicable to charge the company for these cargoes because of the provisions of the legislation relating to its operations. That is too bad! The company is getting all it can, and it is getting away with the bringing in of refined oil into the State without paying any charges. It is doing that to this State which has done so much for the company; and yet oil is being sold in the Eastern States at £2 a ton cheaper than in Western Australia. Can anyone imagine an oil company of that size doing that? That is the gratitude it shows to the State which has practically given everything to the company free of charge.

The Treasurer. I think the Premier of South Australia was under a misapprehension when he made that statement.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: The newspaper report was very definite. It read—

The recent competition between N.S.W. and W.A. for S.A.'s custom meant a cut of 6s. a ton next week in the price of Newcastle coal.

Kwinana oil was being sold here £2 a ton cheaper than in W.A.

The Treasurer: It is not true in fact, though.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: It is very peculiar that a man holding the position that Mr. Playford does should make a statement such as that without there being some truth in it. I hope it is not true; but at the same time it is up to the oil company to play the game. Owing to a strike at the Geelong works, charges amounting to £6,000 were payable by the oil company to the Geelong Harbour Trust for the shipments of crude ore taken there. If the oil company continues in the way it is, I will begin to think that Mossadeq was right, and that was why he told the company to get out of Abadan. The company should give us a fair deal and not rob us as it is doing at present.

I would now like to have a word to say about the member for Subiaco. During this session she has never stopped talking about the betting shops. But I would point out to the hon. member that for six years she

was a Minister and she did nothing about closing the shops. When she was in Opposition some years ago she said that it would be quite easy to close them, but that the Government was getting money out of the shops and that was why they were kept open. She said that if it were not for the money, the Government would close the shops.

Hon. Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver: I did not say the Government was getting a lot of money.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: The hon. member did not say what?

Hon. Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver: I am not going to tell you.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Why does not the hon. member speak up like a little woman! She said that the Government could close those shops, but that it would not do so because of the money it was getting. When she became Minister, however, we asked her about closing them and she wrote a letter to the ministers' fraternal saying that the only way they could be closed was by prayer. The hon. member, when she was a Minister, said that the only way they could be closed was by prayer; but when she is in Opposition she states that the Government is keeping them going because of the money it is receiving. The hon. member did nothing about it at all.

Hon. Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver: How do you know? You have never seen me pray.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: When the late Mr. Marshall was in this House, the member for Subiaco said to him, "If you do not believe in what Cabinet agrees on, you should get out of the Cabinet." The same thing applies to the member for Subiaco. If she places the blame on the rest of the Cabinet, she should be outside and not inside the Cabinet. I hope, therefore, that she will not talk too much about betting shops in the future. When she had a chance she did nothing for six long years.

Hon. Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver: What did you do?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I did nothing; but I did not discuss the shops as the hon. member did, and say that the Government could close them, and that it did not do so because of the money it received.

Mr. Bovell: Did the member for Fremantle pray about them?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: The other evening the member for Suby—

Hon. Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver: Subiaco, please! Would the hon. member kindly not abbreviate the name of my constituency.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I cannot hear what the hon. member is saying. As I was about to say, the other evening the member for Subiaco said something about

houses in Roe-st.; but as Minister for Health, did she do anything with a view to getting these people examined in order to stop venereal disease being spread throughout the country? Of course not!

Hon. Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver: Of course I did!

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: But when the hon. member is in opposition to the Government, she says these houses in Roe-st. should be closed down. I do not know very much about the houses in Roe-st., but I do know that the ladies there practise what is called the oldest profession in the world. Did the member for Subiaco go out there and try and uplift these unfortunate people and show them the error of their ways? When I was a young fellow there was a song they used to sing which went as follows:—

Not a hand outstretched to save her,
Not a friend that she might call,
She has fallen by the wayside,
She has gone beyond recall.

Hon. Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver: I am not sitting here to hear such rubbish.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: They have not gone beyond recall. I know of such a woman on the Goldfields who married a man in a very good position and she made him a good wife. I remember that on one occasion evidence was taken by a select committee dealing with Roe-st. matters and I believe the present Minister for Works was on the inquiry. Evidence was adduced there that two girls from Roe-st. had married men with very good positions in the metropolitan area and had settled down with their husbands. I would like to stress to the member for Subiaco that she had an opportunity of doing something for the health of the community, but she did not take advantage of it.

I would now like to say a few words about Fremantle. I am getting sick and tired of the knock-backs we are receiving in connection with the Fremantle hospital and the Rottnest school. A short time ago I was promised a school at Rottnest; but now I am told there is no money for this purpose. Apparently Rottnest is considered a small place, and the feeling seems to be that no notice should be taken of it. I would like to know when something is going to be done about the Rottnest school. Because only a few children attend that school, it does not mean that nothing should be done about it. The children at Rottnest are just as important as the children in the larger centres.

The same difficulty has been experienced with the Fremantle hospital. It does not look as though any action is going to be taken in that matter. When one visits the hospital one finds that the main concern of the authorities appears to be to discharge their patients as soon

as possible in order to make room for worse cases. They rush patients out instead of keeping them there for a reasonable time. I hope something will be done for the hospital.

I would also like to touch on the question of the Fremantle gaol. First we were told that it was going to be shifted to Bull's Creek. Later we were informed that it was to be placed in the hills, and now it appears that it is to be placed at Coogee. I understand the people at Coogee are not too pleased about it; but it must go somewhere. Some action should be taken in this matter without delay. It is ridiculous to have a State gaol in the centre of the country's largest port. Something should be done, and a start should be made to remove it from the built-up area of Fremantle.

MR. JAMIESON (Canning) [5.38]: The few words I have to add to the debate on the Estimates concern the selling of more of the produce from this State, on the seaboard of the Indian Ocean. It was rather interesting to hear the new member for Bunbury state that a shipping firm had started a direct shipping channel to serve Mauritius. Investigation should be made along the lines I have previously suggested—namely, the supplying of trade commissioners from this State. It is all very well to say we have the advice of the Commonwealth trade commissioners in the various centres; but they are not going to help this State very much. We receive a small part of any bargain they make in relation to trading with other countries.

The Minister was good enough to make inquiries from the trade commissioners in Hong Kong and Japan, and they supplied certain information about what fruit could not be imported and what type of trade there was likely to be. But that did not give us very much help in this State. Until we stand on our own feet and endeavour to sell our own products to the countries that are close to us, markets will not be readily available to us.

I understand that New Zealand has quite a market with many of these big populated cities around the Indian Ocean seaboard, only because she chooses the markets. Anybody giving reasonable thought to the matter must appreciate the fact that in this State we should be able to produce and transport produce to all these places at a far cheaper rate than does New Zealand, which is at least three times further away.

It appears to me that we, as members of the Parliament of this State, should see that the primary products grown here find markets overseas. If it is true, as has been suggested several times during the

debate on the Estimates, that hoarding of primary products like wheat is occurring, then markets should be found. I am told that there are unexplored markets on the Indian Ocean seaboard in places like Aden, Kenya, Mauritius, the teeming cities of India and Pakistan, Singapore and Malaya, Indo-China, the Philippines and similar countries. I am sure that the markets are only waiting to be opened.

It is a matter of our having enough "go" to send trade commissioners to those countries. This should be done even if it means the imposition of a small charge, in the form of a commission on firms getting overseas contracts, to pay for the services of the commissioners under the auspices of the State Government. I know that the few big structural steel firms operating in Welshpool have on occasions tendered for contracts to supply Pakistan with rollingstock and other essentials for its railways. Mostly, they have been able to tender competitively on the world standard of prices; but generally they have been outbid by European countries like the Netherlands, which are prepared to pay a subsidy to the contracting firm as a means of avoiding unemployment in the country. The actual production of the article is comparable with that produced in the workshops here. It becomes only a matter of direct negotiation with importing countries.

We should be able to outbid other countries, despite the subsidy given by their governments, and enable production in the secondary industries in this State to be maintained at more than its present level. To my mind, there is no reason why we should not take the bit between our teeth and investigate the possibilities, and not merely write a letter to some Commonwealth department and ask if a market is available. We should go to countries overseas and find out where we can get rid of our surplus products. This has been a pet theory of mine for some time, and I have always pressed for something to be done in this regard to assist the State. It is no use growing more primary products if we have to continue storing them in huge sheds, so that in the end we will be drowned with the surplus products.

To touch on another matter, which concerns many electors in my district over the years—the drainage and associated flooding that has occurred over the past few months—people have been told repeatedly that insufficient loan funds were available to enable us to start, complete or do anything about a comprehensive drainage scheme. Since the war, the city has grown at a terrific pace, as we are all aware, and the time has arrived when something must be done. It is all very well for the Commonwealth to say that loan expenditure should be kept down to a certain figure, and at the same time expect the State to extend its water supplies

and other essential services beyond certain districts which, with the aid of a comprehensive scheme, could conceivably be subdivided into building blocks. This would make it a much more economical proposition for the departments to supply the essential services.

Some action should be taken to convince the Commonwealth Government that we are not getting sufficient funds to meet requirements. Other States with expanding cities are perhaps more fortunately situated. Probably they have not various districts around the city which have an unfortunate habit during abnormal, and even normal, winters of showing a rise in the water table, with no chance of its escaping, and thus affecting many properties. Some means must be found to relieve such a situation.

Until some scheme is inaugurated to take away the excess water that comes down from the hills in huge volumes, as occurred during the winter just experienced, we will not be able effectively and economically to settle the land on the outskirts of the city. Many districts which would not make good housing sites could very well be used for industrial purposes, for market gardening, and for other ventures. Under the present circumstances, it is not much use concerning ourselves with such a suggestion, because the land cannot be used for three or four months of the year, due to inundation with water. It is not safe for anyone to cultivate land which cannot be used for a good portion of the year.

In passing, I would like to mention another aspect of governmental activity which, in my opinion, should receive some immediate consideration. Recently, because of an accident I had with a motor vehicle, I found it necessary to go to the James-st. Traffic Office to make a report. I was indeed amazed that the officers were able to work in the conditions which prevailed. They are accommodated in old homes, not well converted at that. The back verandahs have disappeared completely. I do not know whether the floor boards have been used as firewood, but the floor joists and bearers could be seen, and over these the officers and other people are obliged to walk during the course of their work.

The Commonwealth has ample funds and when it wants to provide housing for its civil servants, it goes ahead and erects palatial buildings, and even some of the temporary structures built from time to time afford first class accommodation. Our civil servants, whether those in the Police Department or any other department, are working under conditions that are not calculated to give the best results. We have an old rabbit warren just east of this Chamber where hundreds of civil servants are working under anything but

the best conditions. It was formerly a military barracks and probably it should have been retained for that purpose until it could have been got rid of.

We should make an effort very shortly to provide better accommodation for our civil servants so that they may be able to work under more fitting conditions in serving the public. They deserve nothing but the best, and we should be prepared to provide the best. Private enterprise can say that the conditions it provides are much better than those made available by the Government for its employees. One does not need to be very observant to realise what a great improvement has been made in general office accommodation in both city and suburbs during the past few years, whether by banks, insurance companies or a half dozen other types of industry that could be mentioned. Not only is the accommodation provided by private enterprise good, but the conditions have been scientifically thought out so that the best results may be obtained from the employees. I hope that before long the Government will start on the building of offices for its employees.

There is one old building in St. George's Terrace that we could well be rid of and that is the Treasury Building. This would be an ideal location for a departmental store to set up a gigantic service. It is centrally situated and is too valuable a site to be used for office accommodation. With the transport facilities available nowadays, I do not think there is any disadvantage in spreading Government departments out. If there is a suitable site where accommodation can be provided for offices, the employees could be housed in the one building.

Although Perth did not receive the initial planning that the national capital has had, Canberra could be used as a guide in the matter of spreading our departments out a little more. The sooner a move is made to provide adequate office accommodation for civil servants the better it will be.

I wish to refer to a few aspects of the Stephenson regional plan. This has caused much comment in various circles and has affected some people more than others. As one who has made a study of it, I hope that the implementation of the report, although it might have to be slightly modified will be persevered with until such time as we have a workable plan in operation.

One of the best features as affecting us is the recommendation for the completion of the Houses of Parliament. That is an end to which we ought to work. Surely 50 years is long enough for a building of this nature to remain in an incomplete state as it has done! Apart from the two Chambers, very few amenities are provided for members. Probably the

Chambers are the equal of legislative Houses elsewhere and are as good as, if not better, than most in Australia. They are probably better than those I have seen.

However, there are practically no rooms available to members in which to interview their constituents. We have to meet such people in the strangers' room, and if someone is there before us, we have to go into a side lobby and have a talk there. That is not satisfactory from the point of view of the visitor, either, who should be able to expect a certain amount of privacy when talking to his member. Visitors do not want to be interviewed in a place where Press representatives or other people are passing and by whom the conversation might be overheard. The sooner adequate facilities are provided to meet this want, the better it will be for all concerned.

In recent years the conditions in the South Australian building have been improved. As members are probably aware, the rooms for Federal members were in that building, but since they have gone to another place, the local members are particularly well catered for. They have desks and typewriters available to them, and although there may be three members to a room, they are well separated and the accommodation is everything that could be desired for doing their work.

If we want to get away to do some work for a constituent or write a letter, it is not unusual to find someone poked away in every little corner that is available. That is not in the best interests of the State. Whether people would think it unwise to spend money on improving the conditions here when so many other public works need attention, I do not know. Probably that is what they would think; but if they understood the conditions in which members are compelled to work here, I doubt whether there would be any objection.

Last year I raised the question of the possibility of starting an experimental plot for tropical forestation in the Kimberley area. This is merely a speculative idea. Some areas have more water than is provided in an irrigation area, and we have heard from members of the survey party that went out last year that some parts are very wet. If a tropical forest could be established there, it would be a good thing for the country, in that it would be a source of timber supplies in the future; and if the experimental plot proved successful, other areas could be planted. It would not involve the Government in any great amount.

The spending of money on these various projects, whether they be to grow rice in the Kimberleys or anything else of that nature, is quite warranted so long as the step is a forward one, and so long as there is some finance available for the

purpose. I again ask the Minister for Forests to bear this in mind, and even if no action is taken directly in establishing forests in the far North, he might make inquiries as to the types of trees that could be planted there.

As most members are aware, the housing position has greatly improved during the past few years, but it has still a long way to go before it reaches the standard that we desire. Any person requiring a house should be able to go to the Housing Commission and get whatever advice he needs as to obtaining finance. The housing position is a credit to the present Minister and his department, and I hope it will continue to improve for a long time yet. I have seen various settlements mushroom; and, while I am not altogether in accord with the style of building that the Housing Commission is erecting, I feel it is doing the best it can with the funds available.

After all, the Government is here to provide only satisfactory accommodation and not palatial homes for the people. Any attempt along such lines must surely end in the Government having its funds used up to a greater extent than is necessary. I would sooner see accommodation similar to that provided by the South Australian Housing Trust than allow separate dwellings to meet with the individual's taste, as this would encourage more people to go to the Housing Commission than is necessary. If a person can possibly build his own home—perhaps with the assistance of workers' homes finance—he should do so.

If the State Housing Commission produced homes that would not be out of place in Nedlands or Salter's Point, it would receive considerably more applications than are necessary. I do not say this has happened; but to my mind there is some indication that the houses that have been built by the commission are a little fancier than is necessary. That is all I have to say. I will deal with other matters as the various departmental Estimates come forward for consideration.

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe) [6.5]: I would like to entertain the Treasurer in his capacity as Premier for five or ten minutes. It is always pleasant to see him smile and he might smile when he hears the few remarks I have to make. On the 27th October last I asked certain questions and received answers which have left me in a rather bemused state. The answers were given by the Premier, and I wondered whether he might, at a later stage, interpret them for me, because I find I cannot make a reasonable interpretation of them. I asked the Premier these questions:—

(1) In the Public Service, what is the rule regarding the taking of accrued long service leave, at or about the retiring age of 65?

(2) Is it a fact that under certain conditions, pertaining solely to long service leave, there is a lack of uniformity with regard to dates of retirement which has given rise to some dissatisfaction in the service?

The answers are—

(1) The rule in the Public Service regarding the taking of accrued long service leave at or about the retiring age of 65 is that an officer shall retire on a date prior to his 65th birthday in order that the period of all accrued leave shall expire on the day he attains the age of 65 years.

Exceptions to this rule are made only where special circumstances obtain in respect of senior officers and then only with the approval of Cabinet.

(2) See answer to No. (1).

I am quite satisfied with those answers, but the next questions and answers put a different complexion on the position. I asked—

(1) Under what conditions can Executive Council approval be obtained for an officer of the Public Service to continue his duties up to date of his 65th birthday?

(2) Can any officer gain this approval?

The replies from the Premier are as follows:—

(1) Executive Council approval is not necessary for an officer of the Public Service to continue his duties up to the date of his 65th birthday as the authority is contained in Section 59 of the Public Service Act, 1904-54.

(2) Answered by No. (1).

I think the Premier will realise that, to anyone who listened to them, the answers given were of a somewhat contradictory nature. In fact, answers given to members on both sides of the House are frequently not at all satisfactory. I am not the only member in this House to speak along those lines, and I have heard criticisms from members who are now Cabinet Ministers, in regard to questions asked by them as private members. There is a degree of legitimacy about some evasive quality in an answer given by a Minister, but not about an answer which contains definitely contradictory statements. I think the answers given to my questions, to which I have referred, would leave anyone in as bemused a state as I now find myself in. I hope that at some time in the future the Premier will satisfy me in regard to the interpretation of those answers.

Progress reported.

BILL—UNIVERSITY MEDICAL SCHOOL.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

House adjourned at 6.10 p.m.

Legislative Council

Tuesday, 8th November, 1955.

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

QUESTIONS.

ALEXANDRA HOME.

Finance and Method of Construction.

Hon. J. McI. THOMSON asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) What is the amount of money the Government has undertaken to provide for the building of the Alexandra Home for unmarried mothers?

(2) When did the Government undertake to provide this money?

(3) From what source is this money being obtained?

(4) Is it intended to have the work done by contract or by P.W.D. day labour?

(5) If the work is to be done by private contract, is it to be undertaken on the deferred payment system?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) and (2) The purpose of the home is as stated by the hon. member; but it is proposed, in addition, that its services shall be used by the Health Department for the training of infant health nurses in the care of the health of the pre-school child. The intention is to set aside £50,000 during 1956-57 and a further £50,000 during 1957-58.

(3) Loan funds.

(4) This is a matter for consideration by the home when in a position to proceed.

(5) Answered by No. (4).