

Scotland are duly qualified lawyers, and I believe that there they may call themselves solicitors. Law agents of Scotland are admitted in most of the other States of Australia and most other parts of the Empire.

The other amendment is to permit the holder of a degree in law or jurisprudence of a university to become a practitioner in Western Australia. This proposal has been put forward at the request of the Professor of Law at our University, who points out that Rhodes scholars who go to Oxford and take law, get their degree of Bachelor of Civil Laws, which is a very high one. In order to be permitted to practise in Western Australia they would have to go further and qualify through one of the inns of court, and that means further fees. I gather it does not involve any further examination because I understand that the inns of court accept that degree. Anyway a Bachelor of Civil Law is a higher degree than that of Barrister-at-Law of one of the inns of court of London. It is, therefore, thought that they should be admitted, and the request of Professor Beazley is reasonable. The matter was submitted to the Solicitor General who is a Barrister-at-Law of one of the inns. He also thinks that this is quite reasonable. It is really for the purpose of assisting, rightly, any person who goes to Oxford and takes a high degree in law, so that he may be called to the Bar in Western Australia without having to go to some needless expense and extra time in passing through one of the inns. I have pleasure in submitting this measure for the favourable consideration of members. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.32 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 14th November, 1945.

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

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

- 1, War Service Land Settlement Agreement.
 - 2, War Service Land Settlement Agreement (Land Act Application).
- Introduced by the Minister for Lands.

BILL—SUPREME COURT ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Read a third time and returned to the Council with amendments.

BILL—STATE TRANSPORT CO-ORDINATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. WATTS (Katanning) [4.37]: This Bill seeks to amend the State Transport Co-ordination Act mainly in the direction of enabling the Transport Board to operate north of the 26th parallel of south latitude. When the original Act was passed in 1933, it was apparently not considered likely that the operations of the board would need to extend into the northern areas. In consequence, presumably, provision was made in the Act to the effect I have just mentioned. Times and the needs of the North-West have changed, and the fact that motor and air transport have become vastly more popular and serviceable in the intervening years has rendered it necessary for some alteration to be made in the law. The Minister for Transport in addressing the House yesterday indicated

that this Bill was necessary to meet the conditions and amenities available to the people of the North. To the extent that it will enable the Transport Board to assist in bringing about better transport services in that area that will be so. It will enable that board to subsidise services so as to make the cost of transport to the people who have to use it less than if the transporter had to make a profit without that subsidy.

I have had some experience in the southern areas of the State of transport services that are subsidised for that very purpose and, within limits, they have conferred upon the people concerned a very considerable benefit. They have, in many cases, where no railways operate resulted in road transport being available at transport rates which compare reasonably favourably with with the ruling railway rates, over the same distances and in respect of the same type of goods that have to be carried. For instance, superphosphate, which has a very low freight rate on the railways—and quite rightly so—is carried by these transport carriers at a rate reasonably comparable with that which would be charged by the railways over the same distance. The transport carrier makes up the difference by a subsidy from the Transport Board. But the revenue of the Transport Board is distinctly limited. I remember well that when the proposal for subsidising services such as I have just mentioned came before us, it was first of all by way of a special grant to be made by the Treasury for the purpose of enabling the board to pay those subsidies. Later the Transport Board sought an amendment to the Act to enable it to use the revenues it received from bus license fees and suchlike for this particular purpose, and that privilege was given to it by Parliament.

As far as I know that privilege has been exercised in an extremely sensible way over the intervening years. But now we are going into an area of very great distances where the problems of transport are far more involved than in the areas I have in mind, not excluding the rather larger transport service on a subsidised basis, which is run to what is known as the Lakes district to the east of the Great Southern areas. It seems to me that the revenue of the Transport Board, as at present provided, will not be anything like substantial

enough to enable it to effect a great deal of improvement in the areas to which the Minister referred. Of course I support the Bill because even if the Transport Board cannot do as much as perhaps we would think it ought to do, we can be quite satisfied if the measure will enable the board to make some contribution to the betterment of the conditions obtaining in those areas. At the same time I trust that this is not the only contribution to the betterment of the conditions in the North-West areas of the State that the Government proposes.

I hope there is in sight some definite policy of rehabilitation for that part of Western Australia, so far as it can be rehabilitated, and that the provision of a greater measure of contentment can be developed in the very difficult circumstances in which the people concerned find themselves. We have heard little or nothing about any such intentions on the part of the Government. I am prepared at the moment to presume there is in sight or under consideration some policy, details of which will be made public in the near future.

The Minister for Works: Your presumption is very wise.

Mr. WATTS: If that is not so, then indeed the Bill will be a very poor contribution to the solution of the problem. I can only hope that we shall be told in the near future what is intended so that we can give consideration to matters of far greater moment than this now involves. To the extent that the Bill goes, I welcome it and support the second reading without reservation.

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands) [4.46]: The Bill proposes to repeal the section of the State Transport Co-ordination Act, which excludes from its operations all that portion of Western Australia north of the 26th parallel of south latitude. The reason advanced for excluding that portion of the State from the operations of that part of the Act to which I allude, is that it is now intended to assist the development of the North by the institution of new routes and by supporting them by some grant from the Transport Board, if such grant should be necessary. That is a very praiseworthy object—if the money is available.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Yes, if!

Hon. N. KEENAN: It should produce beneficial results, but it appears to me, and also to the Leader of the Opposition, that there is grave doubt as to the necessary money being available. The board has very limited funds and it has undertaken burdens in connection with some services already rendered in parts of the State south of the degree of latitude I have mentioned. To what extent this measure is more than an expression of pious opinion appears very doubtful. The Leader of the Opposition is prepared to support it even though it should be merely nothing but a pious opinion. Such an attitude has perhaps some reason behind it, although it does not appeal very much to me. I have no doubt that when the Minister is explaining the position to the House he will assure members that he has good grounds for saying that the Treasurer is prepared to make funds available to the board. If that is the position it naturally establishes the whole matter on a basis that enables it to be regarded from a different point of view. It will not then be merely a matter of pious opinion but a proposal to which effect can be given, dealing with what we all agree is an estimable object.

The Minister for Works: I would not advise you to stir up the Minister too much.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I do not know which Minister to believe. I do not know whether one Minister has explained the position with complete truth, and whether another Minister does not hold the same opinions.

The Minister for Lands: It is not difficult to determine.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Apparently there is some difference of opinion between Ministers.

The Minister for Lands: We are a very united body.

Hon. N. KEENAN: The Bill also proposes to repeal Section 45 of the principal Act with a view to inserting a new section to provide that no aircraft shall operate from one part of the State to another unless it is licensed in accordance with the measure. I cannot quite grasp why the amendment is asked for because, as I remember the position when Section 45 was included in the Act, it was considered at that time not desirable to apply this particular part of the Act to any service operated by air from any portion of the State to another part north of the 26th parallel of south latitude. I

do not know why the position has changed. Is there any reason for it? Are there new companies applying for licenses, that will be in conflict with existing companies? Is there any need for the alteration, or is it advanced purely from a desire to have a change?

When the Minister replies, I would like to know the particular reasons for making, at this stage, all cartage by air from any one part of the State to another subject to this legislation as set out in the Bill. On the whole, the measure will commend itself to the House but, if we have a law that apparently seems reasonable, that law should apply universally. For some reason which no doubt the member for Geraldton will be able to give to the House—

Hon. J. C. Willcock: I introduced the Bill—

Hon. N. KEENAN:—this proposal embodied in the measure has been placed before us. If there was good reason for the inclusion of the section in the principal Act, has that reason ceased to exist?

Mr. Rodoreda: The legislation contained many provisions that were impossible of application up north.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I would like to know why this particular matter has been reviewed in such a light—not that I object to it because, as I mentioned previously, it seems to me that a law should apply universally unless there is some strong reason to the contrary, but, if there is any strong reason to the contrary, it should remain and be given effect to. Those are the only points to which I desire to draw attention.

On motion by Mr. W. Hegney, debate adjourned.

BILL—RAILWAYS CLASSIFICATION BOARD ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. THORN (Toodyay) [4.50]: I think there is no objection to this Bill. There is something to be said in favour of industrial unions of workers being registered under the Industrial Arbitration Act. For many years the Railway Officers' Union has held a privileged position under the Railways Classification Board Act; and, as the Bill aims at clarifying the legal position, I see no objection to this action being taken. Re-

garding the provision for recovery of subscriptions and levies owing, as these are just debts owing to the union they should be recoverable through the courts. The party to which I belong believes in that policy, too. After all, they are just debts. I can see no reason why the Railway Officers' Union should be treated differently from any other union in the matter of the recovery of debts owing to it. I support the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

**BILL—AIR NAVIGATION ACT
AMENDMENT.**

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. ABBOTT (North Perth) [4.56]: The Air Navigation Act, 1937, provides that Commonwealth regulations in force, applicable and in relation to air navigation within the territories under the authority of the Commonwealth, shall apply to and be in force in Western Australia. Those regulations deal particularly with the licensing of pilots, provisions relating to the airworthiness of aircraft, rules of the air, etc. In addition, aircraft operating within the State require a license under the State Transport Co-ordination Act. It has been suggested that the power given under the State Air Navigation Act might imply that the provisions relating to air transport imposed by the State Transport Co-ordination Act might therefore not apply. This was not intended either by the Commonwealth or by the State, and this Bill will put the matter beyond all doubt. The fact is that the State Act applies in conjunction with the Commonwealth regulations. This Bill is therefore useful in clearing up any possible doubt in this respect and there can be, in my opinion, no objection to it. I support the second reading.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [4.58]: I desire to support the Bill. I was glad to learn recently by an answer to a question that there are applications from air firms in Western Australia to provide transport

planes to the southern ports and country towns. This is a new development and will have a big effect, perhaps, on the railway system. I asked the Minister whether he thought it would and he replied that it was being considered. The introduction of air transport on these routes will not necessarily mean the taking over of all the traffic operating. It may be found that the air transport will cater only for a small section of the travelling public who wish to travel at a high rate of speed and who presumably will pay higher fares than are charged by the Railway Department. However, it may be found in the future that if increased accommodation is provided in planes and fares are lowered, people will be travelling to Albany, Bunbury and country towns almost entirely by plane. In the meantime I hope that the Minister for Railways will not overlook the practical proposition, which is that 75 per cent. of the passengers will at the start still be using the railways, and that from his point of view he will not overlook improving the railway service in every way possible.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

**RESOLUTION—GAOL SITE AND
MODERN PRISON REQUIREMENTS.**

To Inquire by Joint Committee.

Debate resumed from the 6th November on the following resolution (as amended) received from the Council:—

That a Committee of three members of each House of Parliament be appointed to inquire into:—

- (a) The requirements for a modern gaol.
- (b) Whether the site selected by the Government, known as the Claremont site, should be used for this purpose;
- (c) If not, to report on and recommend an alternative site;
- (d) In view of the types of prisoners who have recently been kept at Pardelup Prison Farm and the number of escapes therefrom, whether such prisoners should not be closed and all prisoners kept in the modern gaol to be erected at Pardelup used for some other public purpose.

That the Committee may adjourn from time to time, and from place to place; may sit on those days over which the Houses stand adjourned; have power to call for persons, papers, and records; and shall report to His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is—

That the resolution, as amended, be agreed to.

MR. GRAHAM (East Perth) [5.0]: I followed the discussion on this matter with considerable interest, and about the only two points worthy of mention that I have been able to discern in the debate were first of all that a site for a new gaol would meet with opposition, no matter where it was; and secondly, that members of this House or of the Legislative Council are not competent to determine where such a gaol should be established. I have quite a number of observations I desire to make on the whole proposition. I have followed with interest not only the deliberations in Parliament, but also the actions, discussions and meetings that occurred prior to those deliberations. At the outset, I want to say that I am surprised, disappointed, and somewhat disgusted that the Government should have taken the step it has of submitting the matter to Parliament and proposing that it should be inquired into by a Joint Committee.

Mr. Thorn: You think it should be submitted to Trades Hall, do you?

Mr. GRAHAM: Some of the interjections from the Opposition indicate to me clearly why members on that side of the House remain in opposition. If they would endeavour to pay heed to the points being adduced, they might be a little more enlightened than their interjections give evidence of their being.

Mr. Thorn: Go up one!

Mr. GRAHAM: I was going to say that this move on the part of the Government might give a certain amount of satisfaction to members of the Opposition—and apparently it has—and more particularly to members of the Legislative Council, owing to the fact that they are being given an opportunity to determine what to my mind is purely an administrative matter. It would appear on the surface that the Government is exhibiting a certain lack of courage in dealing with this matter. After all, what one might well term a storm in a teacup has

been generated by certain local governing bodies, not the least of which is the Perth City Council.

Mr. Thorn: They will be on the right track when they get you in the Government; there will be no trouble then.

Mr. GRAHAM: These protests have been generated by local governing bodies, and I for one am by no means prepared to bow to the will of or pressure applied by quasi-governmental institutions which are not representative of the people generally. My attitude towards another place is sufficiently well-known; but local governing bodies are not even as representative of the people as is the Legislative Council. Therefore, as one who represents the majority of adults in his electorate, I do not see why I should be stamped into lending any assistance to a move which is pandering to the views of those who occupy places of privilege and have been elected on an extremely restricted franchise.

Unfortunately, very many of the local governing bodies who, I think, are at the bottom of this business are anti-Government and anti-Parliament. I have had many instances of where those authorities and the individual members of them have shown an extreme bias in that direction. I submit—and I have stated this previously—that a Government, as the term implies, is elected to that responsible position for the purpose of governing. There are certain administration matters which are peculiarly and properly the province of a Government. I call to mind a statement made by a senior Cabinet Minister not so very long ago with regard to this very same principle. He stated—

The Government is elected for the purpose of initiating and carrying into effect public works for the purpose of developing the State in regard to its production and for the further purpose of providing services of different kinds.

He went on to say—

If the Government fails in this phase of its activities, then it is answerable in the first place to Parliament for its failure and in the second place to the people as a whole when the general election takes place. The Government will be held responsible and properly so by the people of the State.

So with regard to this particular matter, irrespective of what decision is ultimately reached, the Government will have to shoulder the burden of responsibility, and I see

no reason why the Government should not be prepared to do that. I would have thought, too, that in the light of the experience the Government had in connection with its endeavour to secure a portion of Government House grounds for the purpose of erecting Government offices, and the opposition generated on that occasion; and in view of the fact that ultimately, when a Joint Select Committee was appointed, there was unanimous approval of the choice made; I say that in view of those circumstances, I would have thought the Government would not be prepared to repeat such a performance. The Government, of course, is in the position of having available to it expert and technical advice; and I presume that before any step is taken such as that contemplated in connection with the gaol site, all inquiries necessary would first of all be made.

It is interesting to record the persons whose views were taken into consideration in regard to the gaol site. There was the Director of Works, the Under Treasurer, the Public Service Commissioner, the Under Secretary for Works, the Principal Architect, the Town Planning Commissioner, the Deputy Controller of Prisons, and the Land Resumption Officer. In addition, the services of Mr. Akeroyd from the Eastern States, who is recognised as an outstanding authority on criminology and penology in Australia, were called upon.

All those gentlemen, with specialised knowledge, thoroughly investigated the position, and reported to the Government; and the Government accepted their recommendation. Now it appears that because of pressure from certain quarters, the Government shows a tendency to run away from the proposition. If this Joint Committee is appointed in the terms of the motion which is before us, I can visualise that it will have to approach those same persons, or many of them, to secure evidence from them in order to enable it to bring down a report. I feel, therefore, that it is merely a waste of time to follow or even contemplate such a course. In addition to that, the members will probably have to go to the same places and inspect the same sites.

While I do not intend this as any reflection on members, I suggest that none of us is so competent to assess the requirements and conditions generally, bearing in mind all

the other features associated with such project, as are the people I have mentioned who are specialists for the purpose of undertaking not specifically this task but duties associated with it, and problems affecting the State generally. I mentioned the Perth City Council. I want to say there is a suggestion, as far as I am aware, of a veto between the Perth City Council and myself. That body wrote to me on the 22nd January of this year asking my support against its objections to the proposed new gaol site. On the 7th February, less than a fortnight later, I replied, asking the council to supply me with reasons for its objection. There was then a lapse of more than two months at the expiration of which the Perth City Council wrote to me and stated that it was appointing a committee for the purpose of investigating the position, with a view to ascertaining reasons for its objection. This shows, therefore, as I suspected at the outset, that all this storm in a teacup, all this trouble, was being raised by local governing bodies without their having examined the proposition. Strangely, and more significantly, I ascertained that certain responsible officers of the council had been allotted the task of drawing up reasons for the Council's objection.

Mr. Read: Every Minister does that before.

Mr. GRAHAM: Strangely enough, certain of those departmental heads brought down recommendations in favour of the proposed new site which, of course, gives added weight to one of my opening statements: that at least a number of local governing bodies are definitely anti-Government and anti-Parliament in outlook. Here we have a concrete instance of a local governing body having protested without first investigating the question. I have that in black and white from the council. Then afterwards, when a departmental officer—that is, the head of one of its departments—had made an investigation, he favoured the site contemplated by the Government. Again, there was the matter of the petition signed by so many thousands of ratepayers.

Mr. Read: There were 16,000.

Mr. GRAHAM: Yes. These people signed because of the frightful effect the establishment of a gaol on that site would apparently have upon their little holdings, their homes, their land values, and so on; but I think it is generally recognised that it is possible to get just about anyone to sign

ist about any petition with regard to just about anything! I am aware of where persons have signed petitions both for and against certain proposals. Therefore, I suggest that the presentation of petitions is merely a waste of time, and I refuse to be influenced by them. In any event—and this point was taken up by the Chief Secretary when a deputation waited upon him—the plan that accompanied the sheet on which the signatures were affixed, was definitely misleading.

I have a copy of the plan, which was supplied to me by the courtesy of the City Council. Unless one were particularly careful in noting the key on the side of the plan, one would be led to believe that the site proposed would occupy at least 1,000 acres, whereas it is known that the site selected covers only 225 acres, and that the actual gaol area will not exceed 10 acres in all, while erected on that site would be a modern and model institution to house the unhappy inmates. Accordingly there would be nothing offensive to the eye about that structure. A fertile imagination might visualise all sorts of terrible things, and if we allowed our minds to wander we could speculate on the terrible circumstances that might exist in that institution, but if we are to be influenced by such aberrations of people's minds I think very little action of any sort will be taken.

On the 3rd June of this year the "Sunday Times" gave prominence to this matter. It published an article under a full picture plan showing the gaol site and the surrounding territory occupying in all about half a page. Every argument that could possibly be adduced in favour of the site was submitted by the "Sunday Times." I do not know the circulation of that paper, but I would think it has not less than a reading public of 150,000 or 200,000, yet, strangely enough, in view of the fact that 16,000 people signed the petition that I have mentioned, there was not one single letter or word or 'phone call of criticism adverse to the proposal as outlined in that paper. I therefore suggest that the fulminations of many of the civic fathers, and the trouble they have attempted to create, are so much hot-air, because if ever there was a definite proposition presented it was presented in that paper.

If there was any real opposition that article would have provoked it, yet not one

single protest was lodged with that paper. The heading of the article, which embraced the picture, was "The Government has made the right choice in the site for a new gaol. It will be here," and there was a finger pointing to the plan, which has appeared in other publications as well. Included in the 150,000 odd readers would be many thousands of persons who, because of the false plan supplied by the Perth City Council, would believe that they were directly affected, yet they were unmoved by it. Possibly that was because of the overwhelming nature of the arguments presented by that paper. I am personally unable to say yea or nay to the question whether that area is a suitable site or not.

Mr. Abbott: Do you not think members should have an opportunity to say yea or nay?

Mr. GRAHAM: As I have said, I think the Government is elected to govern. It has the advantage of trained technical advisers. On this occasion the Government went beyond that and got expert advice from another part of Australia. Bearing those facts in mind and being appreciative of possible repercussions, the Government came to a decision on the matter. It has been stated that no decision was made by the Government, but I will quote from the reply given by the Chief Secretary to the deputation, as published in "The West Australian" of the 21st May this year. The Chief Secretary's opening words were:—

The decision of the Government to acquire some 225 acres adjoining the Claremont Mental Hospital as a site for future gaol requirements was not arrived at without considerable thought and investigation.

That indicated that the Government at that time had made a decision in favour of that particular site but, as I have said, the Government has in its employ certain well-paid officers for the purpose of advising it. That advice was submitted and the Government accepted it. My chief purpose in speaking on this measure is that bodies outside the Government, not nearly as representative of the people, have generated this storm. I take the strongest exception to the Legislative Council playing a part in determining a matter which, to my mind, is solely the prerogative of the Government—

Mr. Abbott: Not "solely" at all.

Mr. GRAHAM: —because this is purely an administrative matter and it is quite with-

in the province of members at any time, when a definite pronouncement has been made by the Government, to move a motion for the purpose of having the Government alter its plans. It is the Government's place to govern and not give way to pressure from outside groups. If it were pressure from the public generally it would be an altogether different matter.

Mr. North: It takes a strong man to admit a mistake.

Mr. GRAHAM: I do not know that the Government has made any mistake in this matter.

Mr. North: That is the point; the member for East Perth does not know anything about it.

Mr. GRAHAM: The Government has submitted to pressure from certain quarters.

The Premier: There is a lot that the member for East Perth does not know.

Mr. GRAHAM: The Premier will have an opportunity to demonstrate what he knows about the matter, his knowledge being far greater than mine. He will have an opportunity to demonstrate in what directions my statement is in error. If the Premier has already spoken on this matter he has his deputies to call upon. As to the suggestion that the whole area in close proximity to the proposed site should be cleared, my view is to the contrary. I believe the area in question has to some extent zoned itself, largely as an institutional area. There is a number of other considerations such as, for instance, the matter of a sewerage treatment works which, while not highly offensive—notwithstanding a popular belief to the contrary—it is not desirable to have in close proximity to institutions or homes. That area has zoned itself to some extent, and I feel that those institutions should be within reasonable distance of the centre of the City of Perth.

I cannot see why those mentally afflicted or those who have breached the law and who are therefore, in some respects at least, mentally diseased, should be placed on the other side of the hills from whence, if that course was resorted to, I suppose there would also be objections. Why should there be the suggestion that we should embark on a policy of placing these people out of sight, where they would be out of mind? I see nothing obnoxious about these unfortunates and I think our whole attitude

and outlook should have a basis of sympathy towards them, and an endeavour should be made to help cure them of the maladies from which they suffer, making them feel that they are not exiles but a part and parcel of a sympathetic community that is determined to assist them and rehabilitate them. If they are sent to some place miles away it will have a psychological effect on them. As I have said there is nothing offensive to the visitor about these institutions.

I have stood on Reabold Hill overlooking the Claremont Mental Asylum and have looked down on the handsome buildings that are being used for a public purpose. In the same way one would look at a modern gaol, which would be quite a pleasant looking structure. Perhaps one would see certain inmates moving about the grounds, which would be reasonably confined, but there would be no dwelling within a considerable distance. I believe our attitude towards the inmates should change and, instead of despising them, our attitude should be one of sympathy. It is because of a negative state of mind that this desire exists to transport these people away from civilisation so that we can conveniently forget them. Some consideration is due also to the relatives of these unfortunates and to others who may care to visit them. Visitors are naturally a considerable help in restoring to a balanced state of mind the inmates of both mental and penal institutions. They help bring those unfortunates back to a normal mental state such as we desire to see.

Consideration must also be given to the welfare of the staffs of such institutions. Though they are not in considerable numbers it is a specialised type of individual that should be employed in such institutions and some selection should be made in their appointment. Such persons should receive a psychological training for the somewhat unpleasant task they have to fulfil. If such institutions are placed many miles from Perth and away from reasonable facilities and amenities, the best type of individual will not be attracted to this very important work. That is a factor that should be taken into consideration. All of us have been, either directly or indirectly, contributors to the position of the unfortunate people to whom I have referred. There have been, in recent years, wars, depre-

ions and inequalities in our economic make-up. Many such people are the victims of those circumstances and the maladies from which they suffer manifest themselves in many ways. Some become mentally unbalanced; others are affected by the environment and type of home, a state of affairs, unfortunately, over which parents have little control because of the conditions of the times. Many boys and girls have drifted into a life of lawlessness and irresponsibility on this account and in later years have found themselves incarcerated.

Surely we should give some consideration to the question of treating these offenders sympathetically and not as pariahs; We should not seek to transport them to distant places for the purpose of having them out of sight and, accordingly, out of mind. I conclude on the note that the decision of the Government to submit this resolution for the appointment of a Joint Committee is a direct contradiction of its attitude to the proposal to appoint a Parliamentary committee on another matter, one which is purely a matter of administration. I submit that the Government should make up its mind and in no circumstances should permit the Legislative Council, which is representative of only a fraction of the people, to influence its decisions one way or the other.

MR. CROSS (Canning) [5.32]: I have not been influenced in my views by local authorities because not one has approached me by letter or in any other way. I consider that a principle is involved in the Council's resolution. Institutions of this sort should not be located in the metropolitan area, or even in the greater metropolitan area. I visualise what is done in other countries. I call to mind Dartmoor. If one could find a more drab place than Dartmoor or even Wormwood Scrubs, I should like to know where it is.

Hon. N. Keenan: Have you seen it?

Mr. CROSS: Yes, but I have not been inside it. Dartmoor is located on low-lying country and in winter-time is usually enveloped in heavy fog during a great part of the day. We do not send people to gaol in order to provide them with amenities. They are sent to prison by way of punishment, and the main part of their punishment lies in being removed from the amenities and the bright lights of the cities from

which most of them emanate. The attitude adopted by the Government to another matter a week ago, a matter that affected the health of the community, was vastly different.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not in order in discussing a question that has already been disposed of by the House.

Mr. CROSS: I repeat that in my opinion institutions like gaols should not be located in the greater metropolitan area. The Government has received plenty of advice on the question of the site for a new gaol. It has had advice from its experts. I shall not support this motion for the appointment of another committee of inquiry, but shall indicate what I consider ought to be done. A few years ago when transport was slow, it could have been said that accused persons held pending trial should be kept near the city so that their lawyers could have easy access to them. When the gaol was at Fremantle, if a man was remanded for a week, his lawyer did not have to go to Fremantle to interview him. The man was kept at the City lock-up and the lawyer was able to contact his client without having to travel to Fremantle. When a man is brought up for trial, the fact of his being held 20 or 30 miles away from the city would present no great difficulty in these days of fast transport when the average speed in the country, even for trucks, is over 30 miles an hour.

The best place to put the new gaol—in fact, there are two places where it might be put—is within easy reach of the city. I see no reason why a portion of Rottnest Island should not be reserved for a gaol site. If that were done, prisoners would not be able to escape so easily.

Mr. Thorn: There used to be a gaol at Rottnest.

Mr. CROSS: Alternatively, a site could be selected in the hills within 30 miles of the city.

Mr. Thorn: Stick to Rottnest.

Mr. CROSS: A gaol could well be located in the hills 20 or 30 miles away, and amenities could be provided for the staff. Buses could be run at suitable times, not only for the convenience of the staff but also to cater for visitors to the gaol. I certainly do not think that, in these modern times when Perth is extending so rapidly, a gaol should be

built in the greater metropolitan area. I believe that the Government has all the requisite information at its disposal and that to hold an inquiry would be merely a waste of money. The Government has had advice from experts, even from outside the State. I would have the gaol located out of the city, just as I would the sanitary site. These nuisances should not be located in the centres of population. A site in the hills could be selected from which it would not be easy for prisoners to escape. Suitable land could be obtained so that produce required for the consumption of the inmates could be grown. If a site at Rottnest were adopted, the prisoners would not have to be confined so much within the four walls of the gaol. They would be able to cultivate the land and make the gaol almost self-supporting. I shall oppose the motion.

MR. McLARTY (Murray-Wellington) [5.39]: I shall not support the motion because I consider this is not a matter for inquiry by a Joint Committee. The two preceding speakers have stressed the fact that the Government has already received expert advice, and I fail to see what other advice of benefit could be obtained by a committee. It has been said, and rightly so, that no matter where the site may be, opposition to it will be aroused.

During the debate, mention has been made of opposition from vested interests. That is probably correct, but other than vested interests are concerned in this matter. There are political interests as well, and when I say that, I do not mean party political interests. I venture to say that the members of a committee of inquiry would take care that the gaol was not located in their electorates, and so I do not think we would be likely to get a helpful decision from a committee. Members representing metropolitan seats are unanimously of opinion that the gaol should not be located in the metropolitan area. We know that, on account of the density of population in the metropolitan area, most of the crime is committed there, and so we should have a gaol somewhere in fairly close proximity to it.

Mr. Seward: So that prisoners may get in and out quickly?

Mr. McLARTY: A fairly extensive area is required for a gaol site so that prisoners may be given work to do.

Mr. W. Hegney: What is wrong with Jarra?

Mr. McLARTY: We read about sentences to hard labour being imposed, but I am afraid that often there is not much hard labour about them. When a man is imprisoned, I think he should do something towards providing for his own keep. If we were placed on an area where he could be given farm work or be required to help growing vegetables, cutting firewood or doing other essential work, for instance, he should be compelled to do it. There is far too much talk about giving prisoners special treatment and not regarding them as criminals. Some people advocate that they should be fettered or led to believe that they are criminals.

Mr. Kelly: Have you never strayed from the strait and narrow path?

Mr. McLARTY: Yes; but these prisoners have committed crimes, and should be punished according to law. The member for East Perth referred to petitions being presented and I think he was right in the view he expressed. I hope the Government has not been influenced by the petitions lodged, even though they might have been extensively signed. I do not intend to say anything about the proposed gaol site, but the member for East Perth was right in the statement that people will sign any petition; in fact, many people sign petitions without even reading them. We have had instances of candidates having been invited by extensively signed petitions to stand for Parliament and, when they have done so, they have lost their deposits. I think the Government should adhere to the expert advice. I feel that an inquiry by a Joint Committee will not further the interests of the Government in the least degree. If further advice is required, let other experts be called in and let them examine the site that has been recommended. By adopting this course, I believe that far more good will result than appointing a Joint Committee.

MRS. CARDELL-OLIVER (Subiaco) [5.45]: I had no intention of speaking on this subject, but after hearing the remarks of members this afternoon I feel I have more right to address myself to the House than have many other members, because this question directly affects my electorate. I think that only those members should have a vote who are directly concerned

the question. It is very easy for the member for Murray-Wellington and the member for East Perth to talk. The member for East Perth knows quite well there would not be sufficient land for a gaol in his electorate, and the member for Murray-Wellington knows that the Government has no intention of establishing one in his district, and he can therefore speak quite freely against the motion! I feel that in 25 years from now, when the gaol is put where it is intended to be put, some change will have to be made.

This land is specially suitable for the erection of homes. I feel there is danger in dividing Fremantle from Perth. We want to get away from that sort of thing. It was bad enough when the cemetery was established at Karrakatta, and, I think the day will come when that cemetery will be relocated somewhere else. The member for East Perth spoke about the mental hospital and the sewerage undertaking. The day will come when those also will have to be removed. If we only looked ahead for 30, 40 or 50 years I am sure no-one would dream of establishing a gaol in our midst. I do not know how many members have stood on Reabold Hill, but I daresay many have. If one stood there with a pair of binoculars one could possibly see everything going on in the new gaol yards, and that would not be a pleasant sight. The establishment might encourage a few tourists to visit the area, or they could stand on Reabold Hill and gaze at the wonderful institution depicted by the member for East Perth. It would be a great mistake to put the gaol there.

The electors of Subiaco are definitely opposed to a gaol being established in their area, although the site chosen would only be on the outside portions of Subiaco. We have had someone from the Eastern States to look into the matter, and I think that was a mistake. I fail to see how a man from another State could know as much about Western Australia as we do. Although I do not believe very much in petitions I am sure that if a petition were sent through the municipal councils of the surrounding areas everyone would vote against the gaol being erected on the proposed site. The municipal councils do represent the people, and a petition coming from each of them would be an indication that the people of the areas concerned do not want a gaol erected on that site. I shall vote for the motion.

THE PREMIER (Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gascoyne) [5.50]: This is a question in connection with which the Government at least must view the realities of the position. It has been brought out in the course of the debate on the resolution that a new gaol is an urgent necessity, and a decision as to where it shall go is a very vital one. It is only stressing the obvious to say that a new gaol must go somewhere. Generally the objections not only to the motion but to the site which have emerged from the debate have been based on parochial ideas. It has been stressed in the course of the debate by one speaker—it may be more than one—that the Government has negative ideas in connection with the matter. The negative proposals which have been put before this Chamber against the motion certainly have not contributed substantially to the debate. Had there been no war we still would have reached the position at this stage when the unsuitability of Fremantle as the location for a gaol would have necessitated action very shortly.

Early in 1941 when extraordinary precautionary measures had to be taken because of war circumstances, not only for the people but for the inmates of institutions and for all civilians, all the Governments of the Commonwealth were in communication in connection with the evacuation of civilians and also particularly in reference to the inmates of institutions. All of these things have to be done because of the anticipated enemy action of that time. Plans for the hurried evacuation of civilians were under consideration. They were mentioned in this House. I may recall the member for Nedlands pleading for early action and early consideration of all contingencies. The Government was constantly conferring with the military authorities. I repeat that the Governments of the various States were in communication in respect of the different difficulties and means to combat them.

The member for Mt. Hawthorn, who was then Minister for Works, will clearly recall all of the difficulties associated with the shifting of any portion of the civilian population, and the preparations for water supplies and all other conveniences necessary had there been a general exodus demanded by the military authorities in connection with this city and the City of Fremantle. Early in 1942 the hon. member, in his capacity of Minister for Works, went to Canberra with

the then Leader of the Opposition especially to plead for more defence for this State, and to place before the Commonwealth Government certain particular features regarding our lack of defence and certain particular features associated with the life of this State. Such institutions as prisons were sources of great concern, and it was in January, 1942, that the evacuation of Fremantle gaol was decided upon.

It was not a matter of policy, not anything to do with policy, to put the gaol out into the country. Anywhere in the suburbs or anywhere else which was away from the port of Fremantle would have been accepted had there been facilities for such a gaol. When Barton's Mill was decided upon there was no modern idea that gaols should be removed to the country. This was simply a matter of necessity and of expediency. I repeat there was no question of policy attached to it. Barton's Mill proved to be an acceptable expedient after a very complete examination of alternative sites to meet the needs of the moment at that stage. Barton's Mill, where there were certain cottages, a sort of water supply and other facilities suitable, was very quickly organised for the transference of prisoners from Fremantle. After very many weeks of preparation this site of expediency was prepared, and the prisoners were transferred, and the evacuation from Fremantle was undertaken with considerable military help.

It never has been contended that the Barton's Mill site was decided upon as a matter of policy. There was no suggestion as to whether the gaol should be in the country or in the city which led to that decision. Today we are in the course of a debate on this resolution and discussing all those aspects which then and now afforded the Government a lead insofar as future policy is concerned. I will deal with that aspect a little more fully at a later stage. When Barton's Mill was decided upon the Government had what is known as a Buildings Reference Committee, and still has, the chairman of which is the Director of Works, the principal officer of the Minister for Works. Two other members of that committee are Public Works officials. At that stage, as now, the Director of Works was the principal officer of the Minister for Works.

That committee decided in 1943 (a) that Fremantle was not suitable as a site for a

permanent prison, and (b) that Barton's Mill was not suitable as a site for a permanent prison. The committee gave what was considered by the then Minister for Works the member for Mt. Hawthorn, reasons which were considered adequate why these sites were unsuitable. This is a committee consisting of principal officers of different divisions of the Public Service. In all cases where matters associated with buildings are concerned that committee is added to by an officer of the appropriate department. In that case, when the Buildings Reference Committee very quickly had taken certain steps and made a recommendation to the Government in regard to a temporary site, it was then asked to go further in regard to the general question of gaol sites. Later on the subject generally was referred by the then Minister for Works, the member for Mt. Hawthorn, to Cabinet. The reference was contained in the report of this committee, in connection with which action was decided upon.

The report recommended that an expert be asked to advise on the requirements for a modern gaol to meet the position in Western Australia, to select the most suitable site, and to recommend the method by which the transition from the Fremantle gaol to Barton's Mill could be effected. I have said, these recommendations were made to Cabinet by the then Minister for Works, the member for Mt. Hawthorn. The requirements of a modern gaol were very closely gone into. They involved many requisites. They involved the availability of lighting, heating and power facilities, sewerage and drainage facilities, proximity to courts and police centres with speedy and speedy transport, ample ground for various requirements of such institutions, seclusion from the sight, if possible, a sound of the general public, and last but not least amenities for the staff where husbands and wives and families could enjoy reasonable social intercourse with other citizens, and also where their children could attend schools and perhaps obtain positions when leaving their home.

All these prerequisites were the subject of an investigation. The Government enlisted the services of the superintendent of Prisons of Victoria—official title is Inspector General of Prisons—due to the courtesy of the Premier of Victoria.

ria. What happened after that is somewhat recent history. I have not endeavoured at any stage of this debate to weigh the pros and cons of the desirableness of it at or any other site. But, following the report made by that authority, the decisions of the Government in connection with this matter were made public. Then there began hue and cry from all quarters! The road boards called in members of Parliament, the City Council enlisted the services of the members within its area, meetings were held and members of Parliament attended those meetings—in fact I think they assisted in drawing up the resolutions that were carried—petitions were drawn up and such petitions were presented to customers in shops of all sorts in districts between Victoria Park and Fremantle.

Thousands of people signed those petitions and, as the member for East Perth said, without knowing what they were signing. I could say definitely that they were signed by hundreds of persons who had no idea where the site was, and had not even been assisted by certain plans exhibited by the Perth City Council. These people were incited to sign these petitions after being presented with a very misleading plan issued and published by the Perth City Council. As a matter of fact, I understand that the original of the plan is available and can be seen by members. The public of this community was deliberately provoked to sign petitions by reason of a purposely misleading plan. If the people were in Nedlands the site was said to be adjoining the Nedlands Road Board area. If a person was at the town hall then the site was in the midst of the city's acres. No matter where one was, the misrepresentation was very obvious.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Was that officially issued by the Perth City Council?

The PREMIER: Definitely!

Mr. Read: That is right, is it not? It is adjacent to all those places.

The PREMIER: It was a deliberate misrepresentation of the position, and I am prepared to have a replica of that plan exhibited in this Chamber to show members the extent of the misrepresentation. At that stage the Government was approached by members of both sides of the House. It was abused by the City Council and even

by some of its own members. That was all mainly due to a lack of understanding, and, definitely, to parochial considerations. The Government therefore considered whether Parliament should have an opportunity to know the facts.

Mr. Read: It should be considered from the point of view of State development.

The PREMIER: The Government considered the matter from that point of view in connection with the whole proposal, but the Government had to consider that at some stage Parliament will be forced to make a decision on this matter. The decision of the Willcock Government, many months ago, was to take the course now being adopted.

Mr. Abbott: That was a very wise course, too.

The PREMIER: It might have been a wise decision of the Willcock Government. That is when the decision was made to follow this course. I will make reference shortly to the slurs cast in the course of one speech made in this Chamber on the new attitude of the present Government. Parliament has always been anxious to be consulted. Parliament is the highest court in the land and, so far as I know, has never been taken-in by views of experts on any particular subject. No matter how authoritatively a subject may be reviewed, when it comes to Parliament, members exercise their right to say whether they find the views of experts acceptable in matters that are legislative. It is not a question of laymen examining and deciding matters that are expert issues, but one of Parliament doing its job at the right moment.

One member—the member for Perth—opposed vigorously the suggestion that this problem should be referred to a committee of both Houses. But I recall the same member a fortnight ago supporting, equally as vigorously, a proposal to form a standing committee to inquire into all expenditure over £50,000 on public buildings, that the Government might be associated with. Such lack of consistency does not carry very much weight in this discussion. I strongly contend that unless Parliament takes some responsibility in knowing the facts of a case such as this, the plans can never be approved by this Parliament, and

decisions will be based on the guidance that parochial considerations give. I present the point that there is nothing new in the action brought about by this decision of the Government. It has an almost exact parallel in the matter of the public buildings inquiry of some years ago.

The question raised by the member for East Perth shows how illogical was his contribution in that particular. He raised the point that the very fact that the Government succeeded with its desires in connection with the Government domain is the reason why it should go on with this proposition. That shows just how much thought he had given to this proposal. Let me recount the history of the site for public buildings. Some 13 sites had been considered at the time that the Government presented to this House a request to excise portion of the Government domain. There had been extra committees through the years trying to solve that problem. The Government had, on four occasions, attempted to have that matter decided by Parliament. In spite of expert committees, in spite of Ministers forcibly stating the case as to the best site, Parliament continued to turn down the proposal. That is the reason why Parliament should accept now the responsibility of understanding the facts relative to this proposal.

For four years, from 1937 to 1940, we tried to solve the vexed problem of the public buildings but Parliament, in both Chambers, turned down the proposition from time to time. It fell to my responsibility to move on behalf of the Government then, as the Chief Secretary has on this occasion, for an appropriate committee to enable Parliament to get an understanding of the problem. In 1938 and 1939 the Government put forward, in this Chamber, proposals to excise a certain portion of the Government domain. At that stage, to use the words of the member for East Perth in relation to this proposal, the Government's decisions were not arrived at without considerable thought and investigation. But what was the result? It was that each time the matter was defeated by Parliament because members had had no opportunity, other than listening to the Ministers when introducing the proposals, of deciding whether the considerations on which the proposals were based

were sound, and in spite, too, at that time of the move made in the other Chamber to defeat the Government's proposals. We all know too well the result.

When the motion regarding the public buildings left this Chamber it was for a Select Committee of three members of each House to report upon and recommend a particular site. The Government at that stage, too, had all the expert evidence it required. What was the fate of the motion when it reached the other House? That place first nearly defeated the proposal, and secondly moved that there should be four members from each Chamber. It was not satisfied with that, but placed the stricture on the committee's operations that six members out of the eight had to sign in favour of the report or else it would not be carried. It then proceeded, and we welcomed this, to place on that committee the people most hostile to the Governments' suggestions. I would like members to examine the personnel of that committee. The Council took up no challenge to appoint persons hostile to the Government's proposals, and I would like to see the same thing happen this time.

What was the result then? It was a unanimous report not to take just the portion of the Government domain that the Government wished, but to take an additional area. That decision was reached by means unfairly hostile, even to the extent of one of them saying at the initial meeting, "You can do what you like and bring forward whatever evidence you like but I will never agree to the area the Government wants. But he did; he signed the report! These records are here to be seen and they were circulated. So when the Government forced the issue—and these records in connection with the domain and the public buildings are here to be seen and they were circulated—a unanimous decision was reached in spite of the fact that Parliament had turned down the proposition in successive years.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The PREMIER: I had reached the stage of commenting on the result of the inquiry by a Select Committee of both Houses into the Government's proposals for the erection of public buildings on a selected site. I repeat that although every obstacle was placed

in the way of getting a really impartial decision in the matter, the committee ultimately reported upon and strongly supported not only the area proposed but an additional area on the same site. That is where we get to in such a connection. That is where we get in this connection, for we reach exactly the same position again. So that when Parliament considers a Bill relating to a specific proposal such as this, the desire is that Parliament should be well informed and able to make that decision. Parliament is to be asked to satisfy itself and to fortify itself so that no careless decision and no misleading information will, at the appropriate and vital stage, defeat a measure introduced into this Parliament. I stress the point that this matter must come before Parliament at some stage. Is it wise to allow such a matter to be brought before this House, without Parliament understanding what is involved?

Mr. Abbott: Or too late to make a decision?

The PREMIER: Is it wise, after all plans have been prepared in connection with the site recommended by experts, when the works programme and the employment programme of the Government rest on the proposals presented to Parliament in the Loan programme, for the Government not to have an opportunity to proceed with a proposal about which it has satisfied itself? To avoid reaching such an impossible position as that, and since the matter must at some stage be considered by Parliament, the Government is anxious to afford that opportunity. I repeat that it is not a question of laymen examining the proposals and recommendations of experts. It is for this authority—the highest court in the land—to make the decision now, and to assist. It is not for it to assume an attitude of irresponsibility, but for it to assume responsibility itself. I mentioned earlier that I would be prepared to give the strongest objectors to this particular proposal an opportunity to serve on the committee so that they would be forced into the position not of excusing themselves by a negative attitude, but to take a positive attitude themselves. There would be no prospect then of presenting an attitude that did not fully represent the position.

To refer specifically to some of the opinions expressed, I was disappointed in the obvious endeavour of the member for Mt. Hawthorn to cast a slur on the new

Government. He referred to the new idea and the new attitude towards Select Committees. He stated that the former attitude of Governments towards Select Committees was, unless a case was made out, strenuously to oppose such a proposal. The member for Mt. Hawthorn knew full well that this was a Government proposal, very much akin to the one sponsored by the Government previously in connection with the public buildings site. I also state that this year—even if there be a new Government, which it is not, as there is only one difference in the personnel of it—there have been fewer Select Committees than is usual, and only on two occasions in the last ten years have there been fewer Select Committees than have been appointed this year.

It is quite wrong to adopt a misleading attitude in this regard. The present Government consists of the same old mates of the member for Mt. Hawthorn, and he, himself, knows just what sort of mates they can be. I think it was inappropriate and unnecessary on his part repeatedly, as he did throughout his speech, to endeavour to discredit the Government by suggesting that there were new ideas, new opinions, even somersaulting—that was the word he used—in connection with a matter such as prison reform. It is not so—and the hon. member should know it is not so. He made his comment in these words in connection with the position regarding the site—

I think that Reabold Hill the highest point in the City of Perth, is somewhere in the centre of the proposed site.

Those were his actual words. It is not only not on the site at all but the nearest point to Reabold Hill of any part of the whole of the area is 50 chains from the site.

Point of Explanation.

Hon. H. Millington: Mr. Speaker, I think the time to correct a misstatement is now. That statement did appear in the original report of my speech, but I corrected it. What I said was, that it was near the centre of the proposed park.

Mr. Speaker: Order! That is not a point of order.

Hon. H. Millington: I am accused of saying that this was in the middle of the site, whereas even a schoolboy would know it is not.

Mr. Speaker: Order! The hon. member has not raised a point of order.

Hon. H. Millington: I have! I am taking exception to a misstatement.

Mr. Speaker: The Premier will proceed.

Debate Resumed.

The PREMIER: The words I have quoted are, I say, the exact words the hon. member used, without any variation whatsoever. They are the words that appear in the original typed script of the hon. member's speech, which I asked for.

Hon. H. Millington: Oh well, you are wrong!

The PREMIER: I am not in the habit of making misstatements.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Why worry? Go on!

The PREMIER: I am not in the habit of misleading the House. I intend to see that the original script from which I took those words is laid on the Table of the House. Then members will see who is misleading the House in this connection. I have quoted the words that the hon. member was reported as stating and they appear in the original pull I obtained from "Hansard." That was taken from the original script.

Hon. H. Millington: I am telling you that what I said was that it was in the middle of the park—a 1,000 acre reserve.

The PREMIER: The report contains no such thing as a reference to a 1,000 acre reserve. If the member for Mt. Hawthorn is right and "Hansard" is wrong, then if "Hansard" is wrong I can only say it is unusual.

The Minister for Works: Most unusual!

The PREMIER: I am not in any way deliberately misrepresenting the position. It is not only not on the site but I have a map—not a misleading one either, but an accurate one—which will clearly show, in its proper perspective, the whole of the proposal. It will be very clearly seen, if the map be examined, just how much credence can be placed in the statement of some who would have members believe that the site is adjacent to this or that point in an immediate road board area or anywhere else. There has been so much loose talk in connection with this matter that the Government considers it very necessary that all these misunderstandings should be cleared up. There

has been a certain amount of misrepresentation and the purpose of the inquiry suggested by the Government is to satisfy the House.

Since the House must be satisfied at so stage, I repeat that it is very necessary in the opinion of the expert authorities to actually examine the sites. The Government adopts no negative attitude on this question. The Government wishes to be positive that not only should the requirements of a gaol be provided for as reasonably and quickly as possible, but that the site should be provided on the site selected. As far as I am concerned, it is not a question of sites at all. In supporting the motion I wish to make it clear that the Government is not tied down with regard to this particular site, but is very strong on the point that, although its advice is to the effect that this is the appropriate site and it is quite prepared to proceed with it on that basis, it does not wish to have unfortunate circumstances arise that will have the effect of thwarting its plans so that it might have to go back on those plans, the preparation of materials and the availability of manpower.

There have been many other comments in connection with this motion. I regret that I did not have an opportunity to study the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition. Without any reflection upon the Chair, I think that amendment was not relative to the first part of the motion at all and that had we had an opportunity of giving it close examination the amendment would not have been added to the motion. I hope that it will yet be deleted.

Mr. North: You mean that it had no material relevancy?

The PREMIER: It is specific to another point that is not relevant to the original intention of the motion. The hon. member had an opportunity to ventilate his grievance—and I think he has a real grievance. On the other hand, I am hoping that it will not cloud the issue which was the original intention of the motion. The member for Victoria Park made the statement that there were dozens of other sites within easy access of the city, with electric light and other facilities available. I should hope that the hon. member would give the Government the opportunity to visit such sites so that the Government may know their location; and if there are dozens

of them within easy access of the city, let us investigate all of them. I should hope that the hon. member would become a member of the committee, and that, emerging from those dozens of sites, there might be one wholly appropriate and satisfying everybody.

Mr. Read: I will.

The PREMIER: The member for East Perth said that he was surprised, disappointed and disgusted that the Government should refer this matter to a Joint Committee of both Houses, but the hon. member, in his most illogical speech, failed to notice that the Minister in charge of gaols and of the department associated with them, is in the Legislative Council, and that it was not only his responsibility—if such a matter were launched by the Government—to attend to it in his office as Chief Secretary, but also to attend to it and initiate it in another Chamber. The hon. member perhaps did not know that that was the case; but I think it would have been very timely for him to acquaint himself with the requirements and the usual practice and procedure before using such extravagant language.

Mr. Thorn: He has a lot to learn yet.

The PREMIER: It is not at all a question of the Council influencing the Government in this matter; it is a question of the Government desiring to influence the Council. That is the position, and it is the position which the Government wishes to face at this stage, not at a stage when it would be futile to influence or affect a decision of another place. Since the lack of knowledge of the Government domain is exactly a parallel in connection with this matter, I am hoping that there will emerge not only a complete inquiry, but some responsibility attaching to Parliament, with all its authority and with all its desires to be consulted in this matter. I hope there will emerge a proposition not only to meet all the needs of gaol requirements, but one which can be very quickly proceeded with.

The Government is prepared to accept responsibility for the site. That is quite beside his question; but it would be quite futile, unless we can once more come to the conclusion that the Willcock Government was forced to, which is that the matter should be approached in this manner. We know that Fremantle is not suitable; we know all of its defects. We know that Barton's Mill is

not suitable. Although the proposed site, according to the authorities, may be suitable in all respects, it may not be the only suitable site. Let us not approach the matter with a sense of irresponsibility; let us approach it with the responsibility of Parliamentary authority at this stage, as that is most necessary before the project proceeds. I am not putting up a case for the proposed site or any other site. Let any one of the dozen sites referred to by the member for Victoria Park be looked at—all of the dozen. Let us see how appropriately they may fit the need.

In submitting my remarks as a contribution to this debate, it is not a case of stressing a particular site. The merits of this site are well known to the Government from the reports of the experts, after having looked at many others; but I have heard that some members have their own ideas in this regard. There are certain requirements and there are certain limitations, but let us not, through any desire to be local in our view or to misrepresent the position, base a decision on false premises. I hope that not only will this House agree to the resolution, but that the last paragraph added to it will later be deleted. I hope the result will be a decision which will enable the work to proceed irrespective of any local interest or local ideas, but in the best interests of the community.

Question put and passed; the resolution, as amended, agreed to.

Appointment of Assembly Members.

On motion by the Minister for Justice, Mr. Fox, Mr. Thorn and Mr. North were appointed as the Assembly members of the Joint Committee, and a message was accordingly returned to the Council.

BILL—GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES (PROMOTIONS APPEAL BOARD).

Council's Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it did not insist on its amendments Nos. 2 and 5, and had agreed to the further amendments made by the Assembly to the Council's amendments Nos. 1 and 4, but had insisted on its amendments Nos. 3 and 6.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1945-46.*In Committee of Supply.*

Resumed from the previous day; Mr. Rodoreda in the Chair.

Vote—Education, £915,350 (partly considered):

MR. PERKINS (York) [8.8]: I listened with great interest indeed to the Minister's introduction of these Estimates last night. Most members will agree that since the present Minister has taken over the department there does seem to be new hope for it. Both he and the department do seem to have a definite policy which they are endeavouring to put into effect. There may be some items of that policy with which we do not agree, but it certainly is a benefit that the department should have some definite goal at which to aim. The Minister said that the general objective of the department is the equality of opportunity for education of every child in the State. That is an objective which all members of this Chamber will wholeheartedly support; but it is something which definitely does not exist at the present time.

Many complaints have been made by members on both sides of the Chamber about the present position; and I am very much afraid that, even though the department carries out the policy which has been enunciated more or less in detail by the Minister when replying to various deputations and also when discussing the position in this Chamber, there still will not be equality of opportunity for education for the children of the State. I refer to the opportunities as they exist in the more sparsely settled areas. It will be next door to impossible for the Minister to secure that objective absolutely; I am afraid that he will not approximately approach it. As one living fairly well back in the agricultural areas I think the position, from the point of view of providing satisfactory educational services in the country districts, is likely to become more difficult rather than easy in future years. Owing to the mechanisation of agriculture there seems to be a lessening of population per square mile in the agricultural districts, outside country towns, as compared with the position prevailing before the war.

I am very much afraid it is unlikely that the previous density of population in country areas, outside of country towns, will increase to any great extent in the future. That, of course, will mean difficulties for the Minister in providing the equality of opportunity of which he speaks. It is undoubtedly going to require a great deal more expenditure per head of population in the rural areas than is contemplated by the department at present, so far as I am able to judge. It is, however, necessary to provide those educational opportunities, otherwise very serious repercussions on the economic life of the State will undoubtedly result. It has become evident to anyone who is at all intimate with country areas that people will refuse to bring up families there unless the children can have a reasonable opportunity to secure proper education to place them on somewhere near a level of equality with children brought up in other parts of the State. If families are going to drift from those agricultural areas it is plain that the drift will have very serious effects on the economic life of the State. It will be impossible to build up a large population which we hope to see in those inland areas if this continual drift of people from them, in order to secure satisfactory educational opportunities for their children, continues. It will be impossible, for instance, to build up our country towns unless children can obtain satisfactory secondary education in them. In this regard it seems that the policy of the department is likely to be much improved.

In discussions I have had with the Minister and on deputations which I have introduced to him, it has been indicated that the policy of the department is to extend what the Minister referred to as the junior high school system. I take it that that system will provide for the children to be carried on to at least the junior standard in those schools. That undoubtedly will be a very big improvement on the present position.

But before dealing with the question of secondary education, I would like to say, in reference to the primary education of children, that although the hostel system such as the Minister outlined, will be of great benefit, it will be with some reluctance that many parents will take advantage of the h

els for children of more tender years. In such circumstances, it seems that a proportion of smaller schools will have to be carried on; and where bus services can be started they will be a help, provided the runs are not too long. The system of education by correspondence has also been of some assistance, but further help from the department is necessary if it is to be entirely satisfactory. Some members will have noticed recent letters in the Press from mothers, complaining of the impossibility of handling correspondence lessons for children as well as doing their ordinary household duties; and I have had many complaints from parents, who have had to rely on correspondence lessons for the education of the younger children, pointing out how impossible it is for them to carry on such work single-handed.

In my experience, departmental officers have been reasonably helpful and in individual instances have even made correspondence lessons available through the assisted-teacher schools. So I have no complaint to make about the general attitude of the departmental officers; their approach has been quite reasonable. But I would like to stress that, in the rural areas, it is absolutely inevitable that the cost of education per child to provide a suitable service must be materially higher than the cost in the more densely-populated parts. If the department is prepared to accept that point and work on that basis, I do not think many of us can have much complaint. The Minister will meet with a great variety of circumstances from time to time, but if the department continues its present policy of meeting those circumstances as they arise and treating them reasonably sympathetically, I do not think there will be any serious complaints. But I am much opposed to trying to bring all the variety of cases one meets with in the agricultural districts within narrow confines.

Many difficulties will undoubtedly arise as the department tries to give effect to its policy of consolidation of schools. It is the general policy, with which I think most members will agree, and with which I personally am fully in accord. But it is no good blinking one's eyes to the individual difficulties that will arise. The Minister will be very ill-advised to use compulsion, except as an absolutely last resort. It would be much sounder for the department to get some of those consolidated schools operating in

districts where the vast majority of the parents fully approve the idea, and there are any number of such districts which could be picked out. The example of those districts could speak for itself. I have no doubt that the Minister's anticipations will be fully realised, and that it will be possible for the department to give an improved type of education in those consolidated schools. If that is so and schools can be established in some of the districts where parents are already favourable and success is achieved, it will not be long before parents in the other districts that are not quite so favourably disposed at present will see what is taking place, and when they witness the success being achieved, the Minister's difficulties will be lessened in the districts where the consolidated schools have not been established, and eventually the policy will be accepted over most of the agricultural areas. But the essential thing is to get several of those schools operating and carrying out the improved type of education. I think that possibly more could be done by the department in this regard than is being done at present.

There are several centres of which I can think where it should be possible to get language and science teachers installed who could take the children up to the full junior standard. For instance, in York at present there are two bus services operating and another is likely to operate in the near future. Although the accommodation problem is rather acute there at the moment, I think perhaps an effort could be made by the department to have language and science teachers appointed there to enable all children so desiring to reach full junior standard. Through the lack of such facilities in some centres—and York is a good example—the high school facilities in other places are being seriously overtaxed. For instance, I understand that Northam High School is woefully over-crowded. The department is making use of all the rooms available and is even taking some outside accommodation, and many complaints are being made about the overcrowding at that school.

If junior high school facilities could be provided in such a centre as York, it would not only enable children now going from there to Northam for junior subjects to be educated in their own home town, but it might be possible for some other children who are travelling much longer distances from outlying areas to Northam to be

diverted to York, where possibly accommodation for them would be easier to get than it is at Northam. The Minister has indicated to the York people that the department hopes to build up the local school and there is a suggestion, to which I think the department is favourably inclined, to build a new one to provide secondary school facilities at York in addition to the primary school, which is a very good building and which I am pleased to say the department has made a good job of renovating just recently. I hope the Minister will give serious consideration to the provision of language and science teachers at York as soon as possible to enable the junior standard at least to be reached and some of the overcrowding at the Northam High School to be relieved.

There are one or two other features the Minister mentioned in introducing his Estimates. He spoke of the policy of the department in extending visual aids to education. That is a development about which I have read quite a lot and which I have discussed with the director, and there are undoubtedly great possibilities in that direction. I would like the Minister, when he is making provision for the extension of visual education in the country districts, to consider making such facilities available for adult education as well as for primary and secondary school education. I understand that much discussion is taking place amongst authorities charged with the responsibility of adult education with a view to making use of visual aids, if we may so term them, in regard to adult education as well as primary and secondary education. Undoubtedly, adult education is equally important with education received by the children at school. I think most members will agree that the major portion of any person's education—taking the word in its larger sense—is obtained after that person leaves school; and it seems particularly stupid that we should not make the best use of all modern developments for the furtherance of adult education.

I am afraid that in the past adult education has not been handled with as much imagination as it might have been. The organised part of it was usually covered by rather dry lectures, if I may use the term, at which only a small percentage of the population attended. As far as the vast amount of adult education that was obtained was concerned, it came from the ordinary reading of people interested enough to pur-

sue that method of acquiring information. If the visual system of education were developed as an adjunct to education, a very much wider section of the population could be interested than ever was touched by adult education in the past, and that undoubtedly could be a very important means of widening the knowledge of the population of Australia and also of bringing the people to a better appreciation of all the problems not only of our own country but also in international affairs, with which they should be conversant. I believe it is only by the extension of all types of education that we are ever going to improve this world materially. It is the only way to improve international relations and it is the only way of handling all the difficulties that are becoming so evident since the conclusion of the recent devastating war.

If people are well-informed on any problem there is little doubt but that they will take the right action to solve it, whereas if they are only partly informed or entirely ignorant they are an easy prey to any interested party that desires to get them to follow a particular course. Apart altogether from merely fitting people to earn a living in this world the whole question of education is important from the point of view of enabling the national policies pursued by individual countries to be carried along on enlightened lines. If the Education Department can co-ordinate the work of its primary and secondary schools with the large question of adult education, which strictly speaking, does not come under the Vote of the Education Department, it will fill a great need.

I was pleased to hear the Minister congratulate the Parents and Citizens' Associations, because I believe they are doing valuable and public spirited work for which they receive no direct reward other than the knowledge that they are helping to secure proper educational facilities for the children. Many of the members of that body are going beyond what one would expect from an immediate benefit that they can get for their own children. They are actuated by the highest motives, and I hope that while he is in control of the department the Minister will continue to co-operate with them, because no one can have more interest in securing a proper system of education and facilities in our schools than have the parents.

of the children and the other citizens who desire to see education placed on a proper basis.

MR. DONEY (Williams-Narrogin [8.20]: The Minister's introduction to his Estimates last night was a clear and interesting explanation of the position. I do not know what was its effect on other members, but it encouraged me to anticipate a forward move in education in this State. I believe in the Minister's bona fides—as I think we all do. He is not afraid to break new ground and, generally speaking, I approve of his plans and principles.

The Minister for Education: The Treasurer says there is a danger that I might break him.

Mr. DONEY: I anticipate that a little later, perhaps six months from now, there might easily be a difference of opinion as to what the Minister should or should not have done. Later I will deal with the amount allowed to the Minister in the Estimates, and will draw his attention to a remark of his that last year his Estimates were exceeded by a considerable amount. Members expect the Estimates to be a reflection of the Minister's plans for the ensuing 12 months, but they are not, and to me they are a disappointment in that they give no indication of any intention on the part of the Government to recognise any new order in teaching. That is a pity. With minor exceptions the Education Estimates are much the same as those of last year, as last year's were the same as those of the year before. The Minister's personal attitude—apart from his Estimates—towards his responsibilities is inspiring in the extreme. Having regard to that I think that his Estimates, when he first saw what had been done to them, must have given him a jolt. I have heard him say more than once, in this Chamber and outside, when discussing building projects, that money must not be regarded as being any obstacle at all.

Mr. Cross: Does the member for Williams-Narrogin think there is a nigger in the wood pile?

Mr. DONEY: I am not saying that. The member for Canning will have an opportunity to say that for himself, later on, if that is how he feels. As to money being no

obstacle at all, I do not know whether there is any evidence of that. There is certainly no evidence of it in the Estimates. Of course we do not expect to find any mention of building projects in the revenue Estimates, but we do expect to see them reflected there in the form of provision for additional teaching staff to man additional schools as they are built. Of course that reflection was not there, nor was there any provision—as far as I could see—for returning Service personnel as additions to the teaching staff. The Minister's speech—I refer to an opening remark—indicated that he anticipated the Estimates being heavily exceeded, and he said that last year they were exceeded by no less than £31,000. When such anticipations exist surely it is customary to forecast them by a swelling of the Estimates, and so the Estimates, as they appear on the set-up of the Minister's anticipations, should show what he actually anticipates expending during the year. He should not already have to come to the Committee and say that he expects to exceed them to a considerable degree.

I do not see how the Committee is ever to know what the future activities of the department are to be, unless the Estimates set out those activities with some degree of accuracy. There is an entry that is new—to me, at all events—appearing under the Director of Educational Research. I refer to the sum of £1,060. That may connote some advance towards the new order, and I ask the Minister whether it does. I do not know what is hidden under that new title. The Minister said nothing that I can recall about that new department. I do not think he mentioned it, and I would like to know who is this highly paid officer, what are his duties and responsibilities, and what staff he has around him. He is entirely unknown to me and I would like to know when he was appointed. I see against that position a figure of £1,050 odd—whoever the occupant may be—indicating that that sum was paid to him during 1944-45. That would indicate, if it indicates anything, that he must have been appointed to this new position, about which no one here seems to know anything, prior to or by the 1st June, last year. The appointment may easily have been in the daily Press, and an item of that importance should have been there.

The Minister for Education: It was.

Mr. DONEY: Then I missed it.

The Minister for Education: A most unusual thing for the member for Williams-Narrogin.

Mr. DONEY: The Minister pays me a compliment that I do not deserve. I admit that if it was in the Press I did not notice it, and no one made any remarks about it. The Minister himself did not mention it, but he will surely admit to me now that it was a matter of sufficient importance to warrant mention by him during the introduction of his Estimates.

The Minister for Education: I made a public statement on the matter at the time when the appointment was made.

Mr. DONEY: Did the newspapers feature it?

The Premier: A sub-leader was written on it.

Mr. DONEY: I imagine the Premier is drawing on his imagination.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: The member for Williams-Narrogin did not see the significance of the statement at the time.

Mr. DONEY: The ex-Premier is now supplying me with an explanation that I do not require, though I thank him for it. Even if it was set out in the Press I did not see it, and I make a point of reading anything at all having to do with the future of education in this State. I do not complain of the appointment as I know nothing about it, and I do not know who holds the appointment. It may be a very sound appointment and, for all I know, it may be the commencement of the new order in teaching, to which I have referred. Perhaps when replying to the remarks on the Estimates the Minister will give a little more information about this mysterious man of the educational world.

The Premier: The member for Williams-Narrogin is trying to get the Minister to be rude, and to interject and tell him.

Mr. DONEY: No, I give the Premier all the leave he requires to interject as fully and as freely as he wishes.

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Williams-Narrogin is not in a position to do that.

Mr. DONEY: That, of course, is left to your discretion, Mr. Chairman. The Education Estimates have moved from £880,000 odd to £915,000, and I think from memory that practically all the difference between those two sums is represented by increases

in salaries. The only staff additions that I could trace were those of two junior clerks. There is no indication of any intention on the part of the Government to do anything more in the coming year than was done in the past year. I admit that it is easy to criticise, but surely the Estimates may be said to disclose an astounding capacity for just sitting tight. That is regrettable if my diagnosis of the position is correct. This amazing similarity between the Estimates of this year, last year and the year before, is a bit disquieting to those of us who hoped that there would be a big forward move.

I thought we were right on the threshold of a completely new and perhaps wonderful era, something dramatic almost, where the Education Department would be expected to play a most important part. On the face of things, however, it seems as if there is almost a bankruptcy of vision, of courage and of ability. Looking across at the Minister and reflecting that he possesses all those requisites, I must say that that simply cannot be especially since he is supported by a first class executive and a teaching staff that we in this State, particularly when we travel to the East, have a habit of boasting of. So I suggest to the Minister that there is a good deal, particularly in regard to the new order, that he might find it wise to explain when he replies to the debate.

I am not going to say that the bankruptcy is in money, because the Minister has said that money is no obstacle to him. Indeed I remember in this House something like two months ago his replying to an interjection by the Leader of the Opposition saying "We can get for education all the money that we need." I am very pleased to know that that is so. Not long ago I recall that the Premier referred to the penalties imposed upon this State by the Grants Commission because of our allegedly extravagant social services and the heavy losses on our loan expenditure. The Premier then told us that those penalties had been discontinued and that cheeping was no longer necessary. So I ask: How are we to explain this short spending on education at a time when record spending would certainly have been excused by every member of this Chamber? As I have already admitted, I do not know just what might be hidden under this new directorate of educational research.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: You cannot draw him out.

Mr. DONEY: I have never known the Minister so to resemble an oyster as he does tonight; usually he is full of information. However, I feel sure that by and by he will supply the details I am seeking. Had the Minister come forward with proposals for additional expenditure amounting to say £100,000 or £150,000, I am sure he would have been submitting those proposals to a very sympathetic Chamber. We are hoping to see the day when we will have all the rising generation in this State, black, white or half-caste, sound in body and mind and trained to the maximum of their natural abilities or their aptitudes. To the extent that we fail thus to develop our youngsters, so do we fail in our duty to posterity, and certainly to the people who returned us to Parliament.

The Minister will perhaps afford me advice upon another problem, not a new one, yet one that is seldom if at all mentioned in this Chamber. I certainly do not recall its having been mentioned. I refer to what is known as the child of pre-school age, that is, the neglected child, the child brought up on charity. The Minister knows more about this than I do. I want to know whether the Government has any plan for these children for the present or next year or in the near future as additional accommodation can be made ready for them. We realise that if all parents and all homes were ideal, there would be no need whatever for Government anxiety on this score, but unfortunately that is not so. We have all too many of the sub-standard homes with sub-standard parents and frequently, although not necessarily, sub-standard children, and I say that while this condition obtains, it is nationally and economically unsound for the Minister's department to be indifferent. I think that if the Minister last night when introducing his Estimates had submitted a comprehensive scheme of education, including the care of neglected children of pre-school age, a sympathetic Chamber would have been ready indeed to afford him practical support.

I had hoped that the Minister would refer to the unsuitability of many of the school buildings in the country and to the paucity of equipment. It may be that, in the closing ten minutes of his speech, he did make refer-

ence to some of the matters I am now mentioning, but I happened to miss that part of his speech and so am putting these matters up now. I think he might have taken us into his confidence regarding the provision in future of new secondary schools. I remind him that Narrogin claims to be first on the list for a new secondary school.

The Minister for Education: I fancy I have heard that before.

Mr. DONEY: I am sure of it.

The Premier: Do you believe they are a long-suffering people?

Mr. DONEY: I know what the Premier is referring to and I think I re-acted to the speech he has in mind in precisely the same way as he did. I think I am right in saying that the Minister will see that Narrogin is provided for in that way at the earliest possible moment. The member for York has said some nice things about country bus services. I have nothing but commendation for the part the Minister is playing there; it gives me every satisfaction. I did not hear the Minister make any mention of technical education, and I want to know what plans the department has in mind for the extension of technical training for the country. I point out to him that the lack of progressive technical education in the country is a very big handicap to the State, not only in workshops, but also on farms and of course in the homes. I want to make reference to the Narrogin School of Agriculture. I think the Minister will concede that it is doing a truly great work, having regard to the size of the school and the nature of the equipment that it has started with since occupation of the buildings has been resumed. I say that it is not only the high general teaching standard at the Narrogin School of Agriculture and the high ethical standard set by successive principals at the school that has given it its great name. That is so in part, but it is also because of the very fine technical tuition imparted there.

Incidentally, there is nothing whatever in educational activity that pays the State better dividends than does a school of agriculture. I recall—although this might have occurred during private conversation with the Minister a few months ago—directing his attention to the very low staffing at the school, and I drew a comparison between

the staff at that centre and the staff at Muresk. I am unable to quote the comparative figures from memory, but I will be substantially correct if I say that at the Narrogin School of Agriculture the staff is something like four for 78 students, whereas at Muresk the staff is something like eight for only 36 students. If I am wrong in substance, I should be glad if the Minister will correct me, but if I am right—and I feel sure that I am—I should expect the Minister to intimate that the Narrogin School will shortly have its staff improved in numbers, or else he will need to justify—he can do no less—the relatively large staff at Muresk. I am not saying that the Muresk staff is too large, I am only saying that the Narrogin staff, on the comparison I have made, is obviously far too small. Anyhow, I would like the Minister to give close attention to this matter and see that justice is done to the Narrogin school.

There is another matter in which I am interested for the moment and that is the disposition of the school inspectional staff. In all, we have one Director, one Chief Inspector, three senior inspectors and about 12 inspectors. The method adopted by the Director is to have all the more experienced inspectors in the metropolitan area and all the lesser experienced ones in the country areas. I do not know whether the Minister feels like contesting that point, but I should like to hear from him on the matter. I complained of this to a previous Director. I said that the senior inspectors should be distributed throughout the State for the obvious reason that the children in the country would then get the advantage of the more effective oversight that senior inspectors would be expected to give. I pressed that point with the Director for something like half an hour, and he replied stressing the need on his part for allowing senior inspectors to come to the metropolitan area and to live here as some reward for having lived in the country for so long. I took the Director's remarks as meaning that it was somewhat of a punishment for an inspector to live in the country areas. That was one reason—and there are plenty of others—why I did not see eye to eye with him in the statement he made to me. I consider that the children come first and that the material welfare of the inspectors

comes later. Anyhow he declined to alter his opinion and would not in any way change the disposition of the inspectors. I submit that as another little problem to which the Minister might give consideration in the future.

MR. TRIAT (Mt. Magnet) [8.47]: I differ from the member for Williams-Narrogin. When he commenced to speak I thought he was going to applaud the Minister a little more, but his note was a pessimistic one.

Mr. Doney: You could not have listened very carefully.

Mr. TRIAT: I did, and I think the hon. member must wear a belt as well as braces because he is so pessimistic. The Minister, when introducing the Estimates last night, gave us something of substance and to me it was of importance. He said that the expenditure was going to increase and that there would be improved methods of education, and consideration given to regional schools and hostels for the children of country districts. He went on to say that the extra expense, beyond the ordinary cost of living at home, would be met by the department. If that is not an improvement, I fail to know what is. I congratulate the Minister on producing the brightest spot in the Estimates this session! I hope he will be able to carry out his intentions. Unfortunately for my electors those intentions cannot be put into operation in my district. With the exception of two schools that are four miles apart, all the schools in my electorate are 50 to 60 miles apart. It will, therefore, be impossible to utilise many of the suggestions that will operate in areas like York and Narrogin.

The people of the goldfields, apart from those of the Kalgoorlie district which is a fine centre of education, suffer great disabilities. In many cases the schools are small and, I presume, are the ones included in the 56.2 per cent. where the cost of education per child is £26 18s. 6¼d. There are types of schools in my electorate that would be included in the 37 per cent. where the cost is £21 11s. 6d. per child. I expect the Education Department to stand up to the problem of good class teachers. Today we have in all the important schools, without exception, very high grade teachers. The moment the grade is raised the teacher is taken from the back country school and brought to a higher grade school in the met-

ropolitan area. That means that a lower grade teacher is sent to these schools, and that teacher is not as efficient as the other. I hope that when these teachers are suitable and their grade is increased they will be paid the extra money and kept where they are so as to give those children the benefit of the higher grade teachers.

I presume that visual education will not be put into operation in most of our back country schools. That is another matter for the more congested areas. Possibly places like Mt. Magnet, Gwalia and Leonora will be able to utilise visual education as there is electricity at those towns and projectors could be used. I hope that will be done.

The education of natives and half-castes is a big factor in my district and in other goldfields areas. I agree with the Minister that the segregation of these children is not possible. It could not be done at Mt. Magnet because the population is not large enough. The half-castes should be taught so that they get a better idea of hygiene. The ideas on hygiene that a person has depend on how that person is brought up in the first eight or nine years of his life. If a child is taught to be clean he will continue to be clean, whether he is black, white or brindle. Where children are brought up in a dirty state they remain dirty.

I was surprised to hear the Minister say last night that natives and half-castes are not able to assimilate a reasonable amount of education. I told members some time ago of an experience I had at Mt. Margaret mission where the teacher gave a demonstration. The Federal member for Kalgoorlie—the Minister for the Interior now—and I were present on that occasion. Three little children, not more than ten years of age, gave a demonstration of their capabilities in connection with mental arithmetic. I have never seen such a thing before. The demonstration was carried out with a sliding blackboard, about the size of an ordinary door, on a pulley which raised and lowered it. The board had three sets of the figures one to nine arranged higgledy-piggledy. Each child was given a wand and each wand was of a different colour, one being red, one white and one blue. The red was the multiplier, the white indicated shillings and the blue pence. The children turned their backs and the board was moved, and as they turned they struck the board with their wands and

instantaneously gave the answer to the problem presented.

I would not have believed what took place had I not seen it. They did this not once but a dozen times. No white children could exceed them in speed. I asked the teacher if they could assimilate higher education, and he said, "There is no limit to what a black man can do. At Kalgoorlie I will introduce you to a full-blooded Queensland aboriginal who went to England and took his B.A. degree. He is now one of our missionaries teaching in the islands." That shows what the black man can do, and if the black man can do it, the half-caste can.

The Minister for Justice: He can do it if he is given the opportunity.

Mr. TRIAT: Yes. Together with many white children on the goldfields he does not get the opportunity. There are not sufficient people to warrant putting in more schools on the goldfields. I am speaking of schools 50 miles apart. In between those schools there are station properties with, perhaps, two or three children. Those children cannot attend a school and the mother has to educate them by means of correspondence classes. That is very difficult for her to do together with her house work, cooking, etc. I am of the opinion that the hostel system will relieve these people. The hostel will be of no consequence to the younger children. It is not meant for them, but for those who are in the fifth to seventh standards. We would not send children of kindergarten age to a hostel.

Mr. Watts: The hostel system might mean that some of the present schools will be closed.

Mr. TRIAT: That is so, but children in the first and second classes would not go to a hostel. Those children would be much better taught at the schools in the back country. I hope the Minister will see his way clear to giving consideration to the propositions he has outlined. If when the time is available he will take the opportunity to make a trip to my electorate and through that of the Minister for Mines, he will realise the difficulties experienced by the people living there in the educating of their children. The wages received by those people do not warrant their sending the children to a school other than the local one. When those children complete their education at

the local school they cannot, without taking on a special course, go beyond the ordinary standards. They cannot get into the junior class because there is no opportunity to do so unless the teacher is prepared to teach them in his spare time. Therefore children of the back country cannot get into the State Civil Service.

I commend the Minister on bringing before the Committee the new educational proposals, and on the fact that he is prepared to spend some money on education. I assume that he is prepared to put up a better class of building. I do not think there is any district in the State that is more badly situated than mine in this regard. I have approached the department with scant results. I presume that is on account of the scarcity of materials and men. I trust that the coming years will give the department some opportunity to provide the necessary facilities such as shelter sheds and drinking facilities. We have hot weather on the goldfields and unless many good water tanks are supplied the children will have to drink hot water, which is totally wrong. Mr. Wilson, the goldfields engineer, told me that he had invented a system of cooling the water in the sun by means of a dual tank. He claims that the water becomes cool enough to be palatable. He has submitted the plans to the Education Department and the Public Works Department. The Government should give consideration to installing this system at the goldfields schools.

The Minister for Education: We have adopted that scheme and intend to do what you suggest.

Mr. TRIAT: I am glad to hear that. I subscribe to the Estimates as pronounced by the Minister. I trust that the coming year will see as much improvement as last year. If the Minister achieves that he will again get my support.

MR. NEEDHAM (Perth) [8.58]: I commend the Minister for Education on the very interesting speech he made when introducing the Education Estimates. He certainly gave me a new conception as to the improvements of education in this State because of the many reforms indicated by him, which he recommended should be put into operation. He mentioned the new schools. I assume that

the idea of having new schools is to be in readiness for the increased number of pupils that will result from the raising of the school leaving age. I also assume that in addition to constructing new schools it will be necessary, when the school leaving age is raised, to increase the accommodation at the existing schools. The Minister also pointed to the necessity for improving the quality of school teachers. Apart from that aspect, I think it will be necessary to increase the number of school teachers because once the school leaving age is reached and we have an increased number of pupils in our schools the numerical strength of the pre-war staff of teachers will be inadequate.

It has to be realised that during the war years the teaching staff was considerably depleted because of enlistments for war service. With the return to peacetime conditions many more teachers will be required to cope with the needs of the greater number of students at the schools. The standard of the teacher is an all-important factor. If we are to get the standard of teacher that the Minister stressed, it might be as well to consider extending the training period now available. A little time ago, the period was reduced to one year but later was extended to two years. In my opinion, in order to bring to the education of our young the advantage of properly qualified teachers, the Minister might consider, among prospective reforms, the increasing of the training period to at least three years.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: What about a refresher course of six months for men when they return from service?

Mr. NEEDHAM: That would be very useful indeed, but I do not think a training period of three years for ordinary teachers will be too little in order to have a properly qualified staff. It is recognised elsewhere in the Commonwealth and I believe, in the U.S.A. and Great Britain, that the period of training should be not less than three years. Another reform suggested by the Minister was the consolidation of schools and he indicated the advantages that would accrue to children were that system inaugurated. Among those advantages the Minister mentioned the benefit to be derived by association with other children and those visual aids to education that could not be provided in other circumstances, which was emphasised by the member for Mt. Magnet. If the distance that the children have to travel to

consolidated school—I believe the maximum distance suggested is 30 miles—then I think the establishment of these institutions will be a step in the right direction.

The Minister was questioned last evening about the possibility of Government assistance being forthcoming for the purpose of defraying the cost of meals at hostels that would be provided in connection with the consolidated schools. I hope parents will receive some assistance in that respect and that they will not have to bear the cost of the transport of their children to the schools. The Minister also indicated the intention of the Government to cater for the education of physically defective children and to help with the teaching of those unfortunates known as rubella children. I am glad to hear him say that it was possible to educate those young people with various aids. I am sure that is better than establishing special schools for them. While the Minister was speaking I interjected with a remark about the need to combat the cause of the ailments from which these children suffer, including the loss of hearing. The Minister rightly replied that that was a matter for the Minister for Health. I hope that later on we shall hear what that Minister's department is doing to cope with German measles so as to prevent, as far as possible, any addition to the number of rubella children.

Another matter that I hoped the Minister would have referred to in presenting his Estimates concerns the pre-school child and kindergartens. I wish the Minister had indicated the intention of the Government to accept full responsibility in that respect. I think the preparing of the child for attendance at school should be the responsibility of the Government. Perhaps that matter is under consideration and when the Minister for Education next presents his Estimates he may be able to inform the country what the Government intends to do. All the suggested reforms are so far, so good, but all will require the expenditure of money. I have been wondering whether the increased Education Vote for this year—the increase in the Vote amounts to £26,406—will be sufficient to meet the cost of the reforms indicated. We must all appreciate that other reforms are also required before our educational system can be placed on a proper basis. I am afraid that education has been looked upon as the Cinderella

of our social services, whereas to my mind it is most important as applying to our young people.

I realise that the Vote this year brings the allocation for educational purposes to the vicinity of £1,000,000. That is not too much to spend on the education of our children. In fact, it is far from being enough. I realise the difficulties of the State Treasurer in meeting the demands associated with a proper scheme of educational facilities. The task was difficult enough when the State had full control over taxation; it is much more difficult now with the uniform taxation system in vogue and the State having to take just what the Commonwealth Treasurer feels inclined to provide. It may be that uniform taxation will continue in peacetime. We do not know for how long it will continue, but even if the State regained control of its own taxation as formerly we would still require assistance from the Commonwealth Government in connection with our educational system. I understand that the Commonwealth Government is to devote £10,000,000 for educational purposes.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: The Commonwealth did not agree to that.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I thought the money was to be provided.

Mr. Watts: It was suggested that the Commonwealth should undertake the task.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: Yes, but the Commonwealth Government would not agree.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I hope that we will again ask the Commonwealth Government to do so. The State Government should persist with its appeal for financial assistance for educational purposes.

Mr. North: In conjunction with other States?

Mr. NEEDHAM: Yes. I realise that the States, particularly the smaller States of Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia, are handicapped not only regarding education but other matters as well. Those States require financial assistance for many reasons, one of the principal of which is that if they are to have the proper type of teacher they must be prepared to pay him an adequate salary. The salaries paid in this State at present are not commensurate with the responsibilities borne by teachers. Our first duty as parents is to develop the minds and ideas of our children and set them a proper example in our homes,

so that as they grow to manhood and womanhood they will develop into good citizens. There is a period in the life of a child, however, when it leaves the parent and is placed under the charge of a teacher in the school. The teacher then immediately assumes the responsibility that formerly was that of the parents. As we appreciate the responsibility of the teacher in that respect, we will equally appreciate the need for an adequate salary being paid to him.

The Minister for Education: Salaries are fixed by the Classification Board, and a re-classification is due next year.

Mr. NEEDHAM: Possibly the board did the best it could in the circumstances, but that does not suggest there is no room for improvement in the salaries of the teachers. There are reforms required which I am sure the present Minister for Education knows of, as he was in the Education Department himself. I feel certain he is sympathetic towards many of the reforms, but he must have the money before he can effect them. The question is, where is the money to come from? Mr. Chairman, it would be almost a banality or a platitude to say, "If we could get money for war, we can get money for peace." During the years of tremendous struggle from which we have just emerged, this country was spending colossal sums in the destruction of human life for the preservation of the liberty of the people of this country. If that could be done to preserve our liberties, surely money can be found to educate our children in order properly to equip them for the battle of life. I hope the Minister for Education and his Government will have no hesitation at all in making further representations to the Commonwealth Parliament as to the necessity for Commonwealth financial assistance for education.

[Mr. Fox took the Chair.]

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands) [9.17]: I join with the member for York in assuring the Minister that we all appreciate the vision, the energy and the enthusiasm with which he has addressed himself to the duties of his office; but all the vision, all the energy and all the enthusiasm imaginable can produce little, if any, effect unless money is available to produce that effect. I confess that I am somewhat in a fog as to the financial position so far as the Education Department is concerned. For instance, the

Minister assured the Committee that last year he exceeded the Vote by a very considerable sum. Is that so?

The Minister for Education: No, the year before.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I heard it repeated here.

The Minister for Education: I am not responsible for what the member for Williams-Narrogin said.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I do not suggest that but, as it was uncontradicted when I heard it, and as I did not hear the original statement, I took it for granted that what the member for Williams-Narrogin said was correct.

The Minister for Education: What I actually said was that last year our expenditure was £358 less than the Vote, but that the Vote last year was a very big excess on the expenditure for the previous year.

Hon. N. KEENAN: If that is correct, then last year the Vote was not entirely spent; a small amount remained unexpended. As for the present year, as I shall point out at a later stage, the proposed increase is almost negligible; in fact, of the proposed increase, the only item which shows a large measure of increase is that for the staff of the Teachers' College. There is an increase there of 44 per cent.; but with the exception of that one item, the increases—where there are increases—are of a very small character.

The Minister for Education: But surely you agree that that is the place to increase the expenditure first—in the preparation of the teacher.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Yes, I am quite prepared to concede that that might well be justified—and I want this to be appreciated by the Committee—that although it is absolutely necessary and proper to extend the period of training and thereby to produce a more highly skilled teacher, nevertheless it is possible to go too far in what one might describe as the output of the college. For instance, there is no greater mistake than the idea that in 1930 the Teachers' College was closed solely because of the depression. On the contrary, had there been no depression, it would have been closed.

I was then Minister for Education; and the first thing I learnt—and this is now within the knowledge of the present Minister for Education—was that nearly six years before, in 1925, the then head of the Teachers' College had warned the Govern-

ment that his institution was turning out more teachers than the system could absorb, and that there was necessity for closing it down to some extent. But no notice was taken of that warning, and so one of my first experiences as Minister was to be interviewed by fathers of children who had gone through the Teachers' College in 1927 and who had still not been appointed to any school. So, had there never been a depression and had no occasion arisen to cut down expenditure in every possible way, nevertheless the only proper course would have been to close the college for some period of time, or very seriously to curtail its operations in order to allow that excess number to be absorbed in the system. Although I do not have any reason to suppose that that may happen again, I would seriously warn the department against allowing such a happening to occur once more.

It is desirable to correct what is so frequently called in our party exchange of criticism the statement that it was an act of vandalism to close down the Teachers' College in 1930. The member for York and many other members who have spoken and who have anticipated me in catching the Chairman's eye, have deprived me of matter to which I would have liked to call the Minister's attention; but I am sure he has listened to them with great attention and I do not want to weary either him or the Committee by repeating it. There are, however, a few matters in respect of which I would desire the Minister to give me a hearing. If there is one subject upon which I feel myself thoroughly at one with the Minister, it is that there should be some very strong effort made to secure equality of opportunity. It is absurd to say that it can be achieved; it can be achieved in some degree, perhaps a large degree, but not completely because of the very grave disadvantages that are imposed on certain citizens by their distance from the metropolis and from the higher grade schools. For instance, take the University!

I have always contended that the University has a false name when it is called the University of Western Australia. It is no such thing; it is purely and simply the University of Perth. The first Senate, of which I was a member, almost kicked me out of the Senate room for being an exponent of that view. But it is a fact. It is a fact perhaps unavoidable. Even sup-

posing that we give, as we do give to a very large extent, free education at the University, it can only be availed of by those who live in Perth and whose parents can send them to the University. If they come from the country, unless they are fortunate enough to secure bursaries, it is an impossible proposition for them. So it is the University of Perth and not the University of Western Australia. It can never be the University of Western Australia until the system is made sufficiently elastic and sufficiently wide to give an opportunity to every child in the country, who shows herself or himself worthy of it, the means to attend the University.

Now, if I look at the University exhibitions which are provided for in this Vote, I find that they are absolutely miserable. So far from showing any increase they show a 25 per cent. decrease, and that is not a matter for any congratulation. The secondary schools scholarships are maintained at approximately the same figure, but only approximately. In the first case, for direct exhibitions for the purpose of attending the University, a miserable sum of £600 is provided; in the second case, for the secondary schools' scholarships the amount is a few pounds less than was provided for in last year's Estimates. Of course, everything comes back to the money question, and the Minister no doubt would say that what he has to do is to select from among a number of desirable things that have to be accomplished, what was the most necessary. I agree that that is so.

I agree that, unfortunately, the money question settles it. It is not as simple as the member for Perth seemed to think because, for the purpose of saving our national existence, we practically burnt our house down. It is no use shutting our eyes to the fact that the whole British Empire is a bankrupt concern today. Great Britain, we all know, is bankrupt; and we are bankrupt too. We had no choice but to be bankrupt, just as, for instance, Mr. Chairman, if a fire is approaching a homestead and there is a valuable crop in the way, the crop is burnt in order to make a last desperate effort to save the homestead. That is exactly what we have done as a nation—not merely Australia, but every part of the British Empire.

Mr. Smith: Do you think we will get a discharge in bankruptcy?

Hon. N. KEENAN: I do not know. If the hon. member were the person determining the matter I would have distinct hopes. In the absence of that position I decline to make any answer. Allow me to ask the Committee to realise that the Minister, and every Minister who succeeds him in office, have to recognise the unfortunate position of what I might describe as financial control. If we cannot get the money it is no use laying plans to do things; and if he can get but a limited grant of money he has to spend it, as I just said, for the most urgent and most desirable objects. I remember Mr. Clubb, a former Director of Education, being very angry at the time I spoke of, the depression, when that rule was applied. I wrote it in big letters and said, "Let us realise that we have only a small sum to spend and let us pick out from many worthy objects only those which are the most necessary." Although that rule is by no means so rigid to-day, nevertheless to a large extent it still continues; and the Minister has a perfect right to say that he has to avail himself of that rule and not carry on as he might well wish to carry on, I have no doubt, many other desirable reforms.

Mr. J. Hegney: Do you suggest increasing the deficit to make further provision for education?

Hon. N. KEENAN: By increasing the deficit we are doing something. We are increasing it today. It is a compliment to oneself to imagine that one is paying one's way. There are a few other matters I wish to comment on. One is the actual increase in the Vote. The member for Williams-Narrogin commented on the fact that year in, year out, these Estimates are pretty much the same. This year the actual increase is just under $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., and the same answer could be made to that which could be made to other comments; and that is that there is no possibility for the moment of going any further. I welcome the statement by the Minister that rubella children are to be dealt with in so satisfactory a manner. The first organisation I know of to deal with this very serious problem was formed in Nedlands. I think the Minister attended the opening ceremony.

Undoubtedly a number of very public-spirited people have thrown their heart and

soul into the project, and it will be a great consolation to them to be aware that through a system of increased hearing capacity these children may be educated in the ordinary manner with other children in the schools. That will not only relieve them from the large expenditure that must be incurred when these children are separately treated but will also increase the opportunity of the children to learn their work and appreciate their future duties of citizenship. I agree with the Minister in congratulating the parents and citizens' organisations on the work they have done. The Minister mentioned some particular bodies of parents and citizens which spent £500 or £600, but if I may once more indulge in parochial bragging, I would point out that the parents and citizens of Nedlands have spent over £1,000—I think the figure is in the vicinity of £1,200.

The Minister for Education: I was referring to the total expenditure, but not a single amount.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Even the gates of the school did not belong to the Government but to the parents and citizens, who presented them to the Government.

Mr. J. Hegney: That is the communal spirit we are trying to develop.

Hon. N. KEENAN: That is the spirit that exists in the particular part of the metropolitan area with which I am associated.

Mr. J. Hegney: It is not the only part in which it exists either.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I also want to support the remarks of the member for Perth on kindergartens. Again, in my electorate we are struggling to establish kindergartens. Nowadays, owing to heavy taxation and to appeals for patriotic purposes, money is very scarce; but we have raised between £800 and £900.

Mr. J. Hegney: We have a free kindergarten at Bayswater—the poor man's town.

Hon. N. KEENAN: This will be a free kindergarten when it is built. But the cost again the cost is colossal. The estimate originally was that the buildings and ground would be made ready for this first school to be started for £1,200. But that amount has increased to £1,600 for the same buildings and accommodation and that means an

ditional tax on those people, who nevertheless will, I am certain, carry their project through successfully.

I now have to say something very disagreeable; because if there is one member wholly averse to surrendering powers to the Commonwealth, I suppose I am that member. But it appears to me that the drawbacks evident in our primary education system can be classed under three main heads. In the first place, with the exception of some schools, the buildings are not suitable. There are some schools that can undoubtedly be classed as being in every sense of the word perfect for their work—but only a few. The great majority are not suitable; neither is the equipment. In fact, the other day there appeared in the newspaper a report of some country school where the desks consisted of some rough-hewn tops of cases. The Minister saw that report, I have no doubt.

The Minister for Education: It was unfair, and did not set out the true position. Sufficient money has been made available to renew out-moded desks in all schools, but we have not been able to get the desks made.

Hon. N. KEENAN: At any rate the conditions, when one learned of them, made one feel ashamed. The third drawback is lack of staff. No doubt, if the Minister had a free hand, the staff would be more than doubled. Today classes are far too large. As an ex-teacher, the Minister knows that one cannot expect a teacher to give attention to the huge classes he is called upon to attend to.

The Minister for Education: There again we cannot move, because the size of the classes is determined by the number of teachers available, and we have not sufficient teachers.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Minister can say all that when he is replying.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I am very glad to hear what the Minister has said, although it is not borne out by the Estimates. I would again remind members that the Estimates contemplate an increase of only 2½ per cent. In fact, the position is that we have no prospect of finding sufficient money to spend on education from our straitened resources, and we have to realise that. I said at the beginning that it is to me, possibly more than to anyone in this Chamber, a matter of repugnance to consider surrendering any powers to the Commonwealth. But I recognise that in this matter we cannot give that edu-

cation we all desire to give, with the resources at our command. That position is not one that we can hope will end tomorrow but is a state of existence that on the whole will deteriorate in the future; because no one of us anticipates that we are going to have increased revenue from the State's resources in the future over what we have enjoyed in the past.

That is an unfortunate position to which we must not shut our eyes. We must recognise it and be prepared to hand over to the Commonwealth, by reference under Section 51 of the Constitution Act, the control of primary and secondary education in this State. I believe we can maintain our university education, because fortunately it was endowed by very considerable sums by a gentleman who is now dead. Possibly, too, we may receive—and I hope we will—sums of money from other people that can be used for buildings and for the provision of professors, lecturers and other staff appointments. But there is no hope of our being able to meet the bill for carrying on primary education at the standard at which it should be carried on or secondary education, either. It is therefore only proper that we should recognise that fact and take steps which are necessary and possible to promote the surrender by the State to the Commonwealth of all responsibility for education.

MR. WATTS (Katanning) [9.39]: I promised the Minister the other night, when we were dealing with another item on the Estimates, that I would have a word or two to say to him in regard to his reply to a question I raised concerning the desirability of having separate schools for native children. I propose to discuss that matter to-night, not only in order to put certain views before the Minister, but in order that members of the Committee may be acquainted with the contents of certain papers that the Minister laid on the Table of the House. In the course of his speech last evening the Minister cited a report from an unnamed inspector, concerning the excellent progress being made at the Moore River Native Settlement School, recently taken over by the Education Department and apparently staffed—as I gathered from the Minister's observations—by persons who have some special qualifications in dealing with native children. That report indicated that those children are making good progress under

the instructors that they have, to the great satisfaction of the inspector, considering the short time they have been under that management.

Let it be remembered, by those who listened with satisfaction to the Minister, that this particular school is a native school in which, if I understand the position aright—as I believe I do—there are no white children at all, so the instance cited by the Minister did not go any distance to substantiate the policy of the Government, as expressed by the Minister, that there is going to be no consideration given to separate schools for native children even in areas or towns where they are present in substantial numbers, sufficient to warrant the establishment of a Government school in the ordinary way.

Among the papers tabled by the Minister, at the same time as he answered that question, was a report from a teacher who was formerly at Woogenellup in my district, a report from the head teacher of the school at Mullewa where about 40 per cent. of the children on the roll are native children, and a report from a teacher who was formerly at Mullewa and who is now in some other portion of the State, made on the 3rd May, 1944, which indicates that there are the strongest possible reasons for giving much further consideration to the question of separate teaching for native children, not only in the interests of the white population, but more particularly in the interests of the native children themselves. The first report to which I wish to refer was from Miss Lutz who, on the 22nd May, 1944, in the course of a report furnished to the Education Department, says—

Caste children are often withdrawn and shy to the extent of appearing obstinate. They are by nature happy with a "take no thought for the future" outlook. The future has little to offer the caste child so he does not think unduly about it. Typical of the caste child is his envy of the white child, an envy often aggravated by daily contact with the white child's superiority. His envy intensifies with age, turning into resentment as the caste child grows to maturity.

That is one paragraph that I wished particularly to bring before the notice of the Committee. The report from Mr. Nadebaum who, I understand, is now head teacher at Mullewa school—which is a document carefully drafted and containing tables giving considerable particulars of native and caste children at his school—goes on to cover a lot of ground that I do not propose to

traverse. He gives all the reasons that influence him in coming to the conclusion which I will read shortly. He gives the actual experience in that school regarding a large number of children under his care. He discusses their progress, whether normal or otherwise, and their attainments in various branches of learning such as arithmetic, reading, spelling and the like, their efforts in drawing, social studies and literature. He gives them full marks, as will be found from a perusal of his report, in any instance where they show any superiority, marked or otherwise, over the white children. He does not attempt in any portion of his report to take the part of the white children or to be in the least inimical to the native children, or to take up an attitude that is sometimes taken up unreasonably—and sometimes reasonably—objecting to the presence of native children in the schools. In my view he attempts to give a balanced judgment of the situation as he sees it, and to make a contribution to the discussion on this question, which I believe should be of great value to the Government in considering this matter. After covering all this ground in detail he concludes with some general remarks, that are as follows:—

From the aforesaid it may be evident that native children and castes cannot hope to enjoy an education suited to their needs and adaptabilities if they continue to be schooled under the existing conditions side by side with white children. I would advocate unreservedly special schools for native children and castes. If not special schools, then special classes, but special schools are infinitely preferable. Factors in favour of special schools are—

(1) The native child is one who reacts quickly to provocation, and the caste child reacts still more quickly. Teasing and the term "niggers" are common enough in a school where coloured children attend. The coloured child, frequently strong and wiry, is quick to react. How does he react? He picks up a stone. He seldom comes to close quarters. If forced to there he does not punch, but rather kicks or bites. School rules, fear of punishment, etc., are null and void when anger causes these instinctive tendencies to be employed.

(2) The native child needs a much more thorough and practical education in the matter of personal cleanliness and hygiene than does the white. The white child has much taught him in the home; the caste child very little. In a school where caste children attend, daily inspections of substantial thoroughness are necessary, and facilities must exist for bathing, head-combing treatment. These facilities do not exist in our schools at present.

(3) The native child requires a longer period of association with his teacher than does the white. It takes months to understand coloured children well enough to undertake successful teaching. I have noticed that progress in the second year, under a specific teacher, is almost invariably better. Special schools could well be organised, therefore, so that children would spend more than one year under the same teacher. It would seem so that boys and girls in or about class 4 should be segregated, though not because I have noticed loose morals in caste children attending schools.

(4) The native child requires a special curriculum and special teaching by special teachers trained for the job.

(5) Parents of white children frequently object to their children's association with natives and castes for many good reasons, if or some reasons unwarranted.

(6) The native or caste child is made to suffer some degradation even in the best of our schools. The most expert handling cannot stop the children from jeering and scorn.

If the factors against special schools, he names two—

(1) Some natives and castes are under the 'White Act' and may resent the segregation of their children in special schools.

If they are under the Native Administration Act and are classed as white children, I take it they would not be in a school for natives. I presume there may be some misunderstanding of the law in that paragraph. The only other factor against is this—

(2) Special schools may not be completely successful unless natives and castes are segregated in communal settlements.

That is no doubt responsible for the apparent complete success of the Moore River Native School. It may be possible that such places as Carrolup and elsewhere, if settlements were constituted, would be equally satisfactory. I do not think, however, it should operate to prevent the establishment of a separate native school where there are sufficient natives to warrant it. As the number which is commonly taken under regulation as being required for the establishment of a Government school is 14, I suggest that that figure be taken. I know that a lower number can be used when a Government building is not required to be erected.

The Minister for Education: Is not the weight of opinion on the file contrary to the opinion expressed by that teacher?

Mr. WATTS: I think not. I read the remarks of Miss Lutz. She does not express an opinion one way or the other

as to separate schools, but she endorses the reasons which Mr. Nadebaum gives as two reasons for the segregation of the children.

The Minister for Education: That is two reports out of half-a-dozen.

Mr. WATTS: It is three when I read the report of Mr. Staples, and the only three reports of the six or eight that are here that are worth reading. The remainder have not tackled the matter in a detailed manner. A few points have been scribbled down for consideration, such as the progress made with arithmetic. From that point of view, there are only three reports out of the lot that are of any use. These three, curiously enough, are almost entirely agreed as to most of the aspects involved. This report ends by saying—

I feel, however, that special schools for native and caste children would prove of substantial benefit to the nation, embodying all its inhabitants, white or black.

The other report I intend to read because I regard it as one which has endeavoured to deal with the subject, and it is that of Mr. A. C. Staples who wrote the report from Mullewa in May, 1944—I do not know where he is now—and comes, only by a much shorter route, to the same conclusion as the one I have just read. After covering the ground and giving his personal views and experiences on the attendance and attainments of the various classes of children he handled, he ends up by saying—

Where possible coloured children should attend their own school, which the whites' school can never be. They are keen to assume responsibility for something of their own. In the junior section of this school, where there are 16 coloured children to 20 whites, they assume equal responsibility with whites for gardens, closets, library. On the other hand, in the senior section where eight coloured children are swamped by 23 whites, they withdrew entirely. With a group of all coloured children, practical training in hygiene could be carried out more effectively—one would not seem to be continually singling out coloured children. The teacher would be able to recognise their colour more frankly and so be able to give more effective social training. Social activities of the parents could be centred on the school.

I do not in any circumstances wish to injure the prospects of our coloured brethren in our country. We have them here and we have to make the best we can of them. I am convinced we shall not make the best we can of them and the children of that

race under the present system. On the contrary, all I have seen and all the information I can obtain, limited though it may be, and the papers I have just read through from people who can be considered, I think, to have more chance of coming to a conclusion on the matter than I have, indicate that the present system is not satisfactory. It therefore becomes our duty—we have a duty and responsibility to these people—to find some better method. I believe that the better method is the one which will bring up these natives and half-caste children by a system of education which will be separate and distinct from their difficulties and needs. If the time comes when one of them or a number of them by the education they received can feel themselves put on an equality, mentally, with equivalent people in the white population, I have no doubt they will take their place with them. If we can by a separate system of teaching bring some of them into professions and trades so that when they attain years when they will be expected to earn their living they can take their place with a feeling of mental equality, no doubt they will be able to carry on successfully.

So long as the present system is persisted in, native and half-caste children will suffer from an inferiority complex which will follow them all through life. Not because I wish to take up the cudgels on behalf of those who continually complain about native children being at school but because I believe primarily it will be in the best interests of the natives and half-castes themselves, I seriously ask the Government to reconsider this matter and perhaps go so far as to conduct an experiment and see what the result of that will be. Is there any improvement? By a process of trial and error we may ultimately reach the best method of dealing with the problem. Further, I do not wish to lose sight of the feelings of some of the white people where there are instances where the conditions of native and half-caste children who attend country schools in particular are very poor. If we are not going to take steps to ensure that cleanliness and decency are inculcated in the homes of those coloured people, then we can hardly expect—if we are going to persist in the Minister's point of view as he enunciated it the other day—

the white population to receive these people, and so the situation will be that we cannot leave things as they are now.

If we are not going to accept the system of separate education, separate provision for the instruction and betterment of these children, then are we going to leave the position just as it is at present with no effort being made to cure the defects that obviously exist? We certainly cannot do that. There has to be an alteration one way or the other. Either we must have a segregated system of education or we must ensure, so far as is humanly possible, that the children of the native and half-caste type who attend the white schools are at least included amongst those of whom Mr. Nadebaum said in his report, "Cleanliness, very good." If we leave them as those described as "very dirty" we should have dissatisfaction and a worse state of inferiority complex. Do not forget that while the white population takes exception to the dirty ones, all the native and half-caste children come in for the criticism. So I earnestly appeal to the Minister who, I know, is a thoughtful man—if he were not, I would hardly have wasted my effort on him—to give consideration to those aspects and make some change in the present position, whether it be in one direction or the other.

The Minister for Education: The matter is under constant observation.

Mr. WATTS: But this position has existed for so long and protests have been voiced for so many years, though I have refrained from voicing them in this Chamber because I did not wish to associate myself with anything that would simply have the effect of damning the half-caste child, but there comes a stage where one has to speak, and so far as I am concerned, that time is now. I was anxious before I said anything to ascertain what some of the schoolmasters had to say on this very difficult topic. For to-night, however, I have dealt sufficiently with the natives.

I should like to say a word or two about the area school. The hon. gentleman said that the question of obtaining suitable sites for area schools was under consideration. There is a feeling abroad in many parts of the State that it is just as easy to establish the type of school commonly known as the

area school in Western Australia as it is in Tasmania, from which much publicity in regard to the matter has come to us. Of course it is perfectly clear that that is not so. Tasmania has an area which, by comparison with that of Western Australia, is extremely small. It is a closely-settled island by comparison with this State. I have no doubt it is more closely settled than is our South-West and, in consequence, the methods that have been adopted there have been much easier of execution than similar methods would be in Western Australia, because there are parts of this State where the population at present is of so scattered a nature, even in the South-West Land Division, that the proposition could not be tackled.

Undoubtedly there are districts in the southern portion of the State where area schools could be constituted something on the Tasmanian model and having such a distinct bias towards the industries that are carried on in the neighbourhood I am certain they would have very beneficial results. I can imagine, for example, such a place as Mt. Barker being a suitable spot. I think we could establish there that the majority of the children who would need to attend such a school would not have to travel more than 17 or 18 miles to reach it. There we have a reasonable and growing population and a district that lends itself to a number of rural industries. I could also imagine others at such places as Donnybrook, Bridgetown and similar centres. One might even go into some of the more settled areas of the wheat districts, although perhaps the distances to be covered there might be somewhat greater, and of course the industries, for the bias to be affected, would be very different. But beyond such places as those, there is limited scope for the type of school known as the area school, and I think the Minister ought to make that a little more clear to the people of the State. I believe that is his view, but if it is not, he will be able to tell us when he replies to the debate.

This, however, would not prevent us from compromising by an extension, as the Minister mentioned last night, of the consolidation of schools by the use of transport services. A great deal has been done in this direction. A great many consolidations, un-

fortunately, have been long delayed in being put into execution because of the absence of vehicles and the apparent inability of anyone to have them provided. The vehicles that have been used both before the war on the earlier consolidation scheme and during the war have been far from satisfactory. I am indeed surprised that some of the local authorities acting under the Traffic Act have been prepared to allow the vehicles to be used on the road for the conveyance of children to school. They are ill-ventilated and in many other ways unsatisfactory. In many instances they resemble the vehicle known as the Black Maria more than anything else, and I believe they are likely to become a standing disgrace unless some system of uniformity can be developed. The number of journeys made by the young people going to school have been on the increase; at least there has been no shortening of the maximum distance and of that I do not complain. In a country like this we have to cope with long distances, even in such matters as the consolidation of schools, but we do want to ensure that a reasonably comfortable vehicle is provided and that there is a uniformity of type of vehicle.

This may involve a greater expense on the part of the contractors. It may even involve a different system altogether of handling the buses for the transport of children. Let us assume that it means greater remuneration for the contractors because of the greater expense they would have to bear in the provision of suitable vehicles. If the job is worth doing at all, surely it is worthwhile making an effort to do it on a basis of reasonable comfort and efficiency rather than allow, without any criticism, the vehicles we see to-day in many places to continue. Some of them are quite good; I know of one that has been made from an ex-Army ambulance, and that I suppose is a smaller type of a Beam motor bus and is giving every satisfaction. But in the same district, right alongside that, and conveying children at the same time and to the same school, we find a vehicle which I say resembles more the Black Maria than anything else I know of. I hope, and I do not suppose I hope in vain, that the Minister will take very early steps to stop the introduction of addi-

tional unsatisfactory buses, and as early as possible bring about greater uniformity.

The consolidation of schools raises a great many other problems, as the Minister mentioned. There is a school, as the Minister knows, at Tambellup, which is an example. There are approximately 70 children attending that school. At three or four outlying schools there are 60 or 70 more children. We propose to bring them all into Tambellup. We shall then have 130 or 140 children in premises which are fit—I will allow for the purpose of this discussion that they are fit—to accommodate the original 70. The Department of Education says, "Yes, consolidation is desirable, and of course we will find some temporary accommodation." Temporary accommodation is found, but when is the position going to right itself? We must first provide materials, labour and finance to erect additional accommodation or new premises for the extra children. That is a problem which is not going to be solved for a considerable time. Therefore, the prospects of increasing the school-leaving age to 15 years, commencing the erection of area schools, of high schools and technical schools, all of which are distinctly required in country districts—ignoring the money aspect altogether—are not very bright in the immediate future. Indeed, I should say that it would be difficult to cope with the major part of it for some period to come.

That brings me to the last comment I wish to make on the Education Vote. Are any steps being taken, are any representations being made, to the Commonwealth with regard to the release of the necessary persons to enable this work to be put in hand as quickly as possible, and to enable the manufacture of materials to be stepped up? As I understand the situation, it is exceedingly difficult to secure the release of skilled men from the Forces. Labourers cannot be put to work unless planners and supervisors are available, and, as I understand the position, the latter are not being made available. Consequently, the operations of the Public Works Department, as well as of other Government departments—especially the Education Department—are being held up. So far from there being any noticeable or immediate increase in the supply of materials to cope with this problem, we find the Government

compelled to bring forward a Bill for the restriction and control of supplies of building materials.

For five years we have suffered the handicaps on education imposed by the war, handicaps of one kind and another. In the meantime we have had the public conscience aroused to such an extent that we must move faster than we did before the war. Not only have we to catch up arrears due to the war restrictions, but we also have to deal with the impetus that is expected—and rightly expected—to educational improvement in this State. Unless we can live up the supply of materials and skilled tradesmen, in addition to overcoming the monetary question, it seems to me that no matter how much progress the Minister may in his mind wish to make, he will not be able to make it.

The Premier: I had an interview with General Savige on some matters relevant to that subject today.

Mr. WATTS: That is very interesting information. I notice the Minister has been complimented on more than one occasion tonight on a new conception of the educational problem in Western Australia. I hardly feel inclined to put it that way. To do so would be to damn with something worse that faint praise his predecessors. My view of the matter is that the Minister has been in a better position, by reason of his past experience in the Education Department and the personal interest that he has in educational matters, to assess at its proper level the rousing of the public conscience to which I referred. Had his predecessors had the same opportunities in their earlier days as the Minister had and the same public pressure, the new conception which has been referred to may have taken place long before; but in any event I do wish to offer my thanks to the Minister for the informative address he gave the Committee last evening.

[*Mr. Rodoreda resumed the Chair.*]

MR. CROSS (Canning) [10.17]: In the brief remarks I wish to make, I desire to express to the Minister my deepest sympathy with him in what I consider is the gigantic task confronting him. I am puzzled to know where money is coming from for the materials to carry out work which it is imperative should be done in this State. There is an accumulation of five years' belated repairs. New schools are wanted almost throughout the State, and, because the Gov-

ernment has increased the school leaving age to 15 years, more teachers and more school rooms will be required, besides which overdue long-service leave will create a big problem. In drawing up plans, the Minister will be compelled, I think, to work on priorities. He will have to decide which is the most urgent work to be carried out first. I am particularly aware of this problem, because of the position in my own electorate.

Mr. J. Hegney: Do you want it to be made a No. 1 priority?

Mr. CROSS: If a fairly close examination were made of my electorate, it might be a No. 1 priority.

The Premier: It will have to be judged on the basis of hardship.

Mr. CROSS: The Minister recently purchased a new school site. There are 65 children who cannot be accommodated at the Forrest-street school at present.

Mr. Leslie: That is not the only school in that position.

Mr. CROSS: Within the next five months it is anticipated that another 300 children, apart from those who will have reached the leaving age, will want to attend that school. In addition, some 64 houses are being built on the polo ground; we can expect at least two children from each of those houses. That does not take into account the houses which are to be built by the War Service Homes Commission in the eastern portion of South Perth. I suggest that the Minister might have to make a start on that new school soon. When he does it would be as well to zone it because those children from the polo ground will have to go to the Kensington school in Banksia-terrace and the Forrest-street school is overcrowded. True, a new schoolroom has been built at Como, but there are more than enough children to fill it. I have only mentioned one part of my electorate. I think the Minister could take some notice of a suggestion I made to one of his predecessors and which I do not think was carried out. From quite a number of schools, particularly in the greater metropolitan area, come requests regarding broken panes of glass, leaking taps, and things of that kind. Under present conditions, inspections have to be made and there is much waste of time. I would like the Minister to employ three tradesmen to do the job. They could travel round on a truck, with a few tools, and

systematically visit the schools to do minor repairs without requests having to be made.

Mr. Leslie: Have you not got a school board?

Mr. CROSS: We have a Parents and Citizens' Association, but they do not put in panes of glass and do that sort of thing. As a matter of fact, the hon. member has drawn my attention to another point I had almost overlooked. The member for Nedlands said that a lot of work had been done at the Nedlands school; but in one of the schools in my electorate in the last few months £600 has been spent in gravelling the school-yard by the Parents and Citizens' Association.

Mr. Leslie: That is a mere bagatelle.

Mr. CROSS: It is a large amount of money for people to raise. That school is on the side of a hill, and the difficulty for years past has been that when the winter rains come they wash out the gravel; and year after year we have had to get more loads, for which the department used to pay. But now the Parents and Citizens' Association has done that. I would like the Minister, in the Christmas holidays, to take the opportunity to have that yard sealed with bitumen; because, if the Parents and Citizens' Association spends £600 in putting down gravel, it is up to the Minister to spend the few pounds necessary to seal it with bitumen.

The Minister for Education: The trouble is that there has not been any bitumen.

Mr. CROSS: I think there will be some available pretty soon.

Mr. Leslie: Inside information!

Mr. CROSS: I would have spoken longer, but it is getting late and others desire to speak. I think we should set out on a plan to catch up on belated repairs. I can visualise that quite a lot of money will be required. New buildings such as technical schools will be needed; and when the goldfields towns open up, quite a lot of money will have to be spent there on repairs and on new schools. I cannot see where that money is coming from and I can sympathise with the Minister in the task that lies ahead of him.

MRS. CARDELL-OLIVER (Subiaco) [10.25]: Rubella has been mentioned. I do not know whether the Minister for Education also mentioned the work being done at the Children's Hospital under the direction of

fact, every member of the Committee should the Education Department. If he did not, I would like to say that the Education Department has done a wonderful work at that hospital, and it should be put on record. In go there to see the work being done and how wonderfully the children have improved physically through the education they are getting from the department. I was unfortunately not in the Chamber when the Minister was making his speech, and so I do not know whether I will be asking for something he has already promised. For instance, I would like to see free transport for children from the North-West and South-West and from any part of the State to appropriate educational centres.

Mr. J. Hegney: For all children?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Yes. Both parents and children are at present under great disadvantages if they happen to be living in the backblocks. The children are suffering educationally and parents are suffering financially because they have chosen to sacrifice themselves by living in these outback places. Some of our schools, as the Minister knows, are shamefully out of date. They are dirty, badly-ventilated, badly-lighted and understaffed. In one country town I visited quite recently—Carnamah—the headmaster had classes containing children ranging from the very young to those of junior standard, and he felt it almost impossible to do the work adequately, especially with the boys that wished to get the Junior certificate. He worked with them at night, freely doing overtime so that he might do something for them. That small town has no fewer than 30 children who do not go to school locally, but are sent to Perth to secondary schools, because there are no local advantages. It is well known that even headmasters of State schools send their children to private secondary schools because the State schools are so overcrowded. Many of the classes contain 60 children, but the private schools have only 30 in a class.

Mr. J. Hegney: What private schools?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Any one.

Mr. J. Hegney: They are overcrowded as well.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: If the hon. member knows anything about them, he knows that they limit their classes to 30.

Mr. J. Hegney: I have a son going to one of them.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: He does not go to the right one. The ordinary State schools have at least 60 children in many of the classes. I visited a school today not more than a couple of miles from here and in one small classroom with a galvanised iron roof the lights were on at half past ten. There was no ventilation and the room was unbearably hot. If I had been a teacher, I would not have stayed there. All that was needed was plenty of windows. That teacher was thoroughly disgusted with the conditions. It is well known that in education our children are exceedingly backward. I do not think there are three per cent. of the children of the State schools taking their Junior examination in this State who get the certificate. I have that from the Teachers' Journal. Am I right?

The Minister for Education: No. The State average is over 60 per cent., and of those from country schools who sit for the Junior those getting a certificate average 8 per cent.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: They do not get their Junior certificate, according to the Teachers' Journal.

The Minister for Education: Yes, they do.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: In America no less than 80 per cent. of the children continue, after the school leaving age of the State schools, at the high schools and remain until they are 17 years of age. We can realise that there are many difficulties in this State because it is so large. When I was in the North-West, I was surprised to find that there were only 360 school children from Wyndham to Carnarvon. That number includes the half-castes.

I would like to say something about the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition who talked of segregating the half-castes. I did not find that any of those children suffered a disadvantage—either whites or half-castes—through mixing together. The half-castes were particularly clean and responded to their education remarkably well. I do not know whether the Minister promised hostels when he spoke last night, but if he did not I think it necessary that they should be provided in this State. If the Government cannot carry this scheme into effect, it should subsidise organisations or churches who would be willing to do so.

Another matter I would like to put before the Minister is that today, when visiting schools, I saw three or four ministers and a clergyman at one school, all waiting to give instruction to the various classes. I would like to see one minister or clergyman give a religious service every morning rather than have four or five each taking a period during one day in the week—I mean a clergyman or minister who is approved by all churches. I would like to see the Education Department assume the responsibility of giving milk to the children at the schools. That is done in some other States. In N.S.W., as the Minister knows, the Education Department takes this responsibility, and every child in the preparatory section of the State schools receives so much milk daily. One can easily distinguish the children who receive milk from the North-West of the metropolitan schools by their physique. I would like to see some supervision over the lunches of the children.

I think the Minister said that teachers are responsible for the children during the whole of the school period. During the lunch hour, the luncheon should be inspected and anywhere outside the school grounds should be out of bounds for the children, except for those going home for lunch. Domestic classes should be formed to provide suitable lunches for all the children. I would like to see the Education Department take on the entire responsibility for street trading by children instead of sharing it, as it does at present, with the Child Welfare Department. It has been suggested by some speakers that the Commonwealth Government should take over the department. I do not agree with that at all. I realise that in England the county councils definitely see to the education of the children, and they are subsidised by the Government. At the same time, the councils take on the responsibility of the needs of the children, and those children are two years ahead of Australian children, educationally. In addition, in 48 States of America the same thing applies. The States are responsible but the Federal Government subsidises them. In conclusion, I compliment the Minister on what he has done. He has been a wonderful worker since being in this department. Everyone appreciates his work and the great attention he gives to the department. But he cannot do much without money. Therefore, I would like to see the Government take a bold stand on

this subject and make a large grant so that the Minister can do something really worth while.

MR. J. HEGNEY (Middle Swan) [10.36]: I congratulate the Minister on his fine exposition of the education policy that the Government is pursuing and intends to pursue. From a knowledge of former Ministers, I might say that he has certainly elevated the position of Minister for Education. In his journeys through the State he has expounded the education policy and conveyed to the people what the Government has in mind and is anxious to do when normal times return. There are many problems confronting the Education Department so far as the country is concerned. One is that of providing for children who are far removed from towns. The Government has in view the establishment of hostels that will provide for children who live away from centres where they can get higher education. Just before Parliament assembled, I had an opportunity to go to the Premier's district where I saw the correspondence system in operation. I was much surprised at the progress made by the children under that arrangement. By following the lessons sent to them, they do excellent work. They are educating themselves, and they will later be a credit to all concerned.

The hostel question is important from the point of view of the country children. The parents suffer a great disability in not being able to arrange for their children to get proper education. I was in the Manjimup district last year and came into contact with many people who suffered that disability. They were living on farms too far from the Manjimup school for their children to attend. There was no bus service. The children could not go to school at an age earlier than eight or nine, when the parents made provision for them to board in the town. If the department improves the position of these children, it will be rendering a great service to the State. There are varying opinions on the question of whether we should establish area schools here. I have discussed the pros and cons with some teachers, many of whom, in my electorate, are old fashioned enough to want to stick to the old-fashioned system that provides for a good basic education.

The question of specialisation will develop later on. While the department is considering the establishment of area schools I have no doubt it will give the matter mature consideration. The Leader of the Opposition suggested that the Minister had taken up the question of education because it was a popular one. The Labour Government in Tasmania has popularised education for many years, and the Premier of that State is an ex-school teacher. We are fortunate, in Western Australia, in having, as the present Minister, an ex-school teacher who will bring to bear the knowledge and experience he gained in that profession. He has given a fillip to education in this State. Most parents know how necessary it is that their children should receive a proper education in order to take their place in the life of the community. The educational system is one of the most important activities in the State. The member for Nedlands said that we were bankrupt and must hand education over to the Commonwealth, but at a conference of Ministers of Education in Adelaide some months ago it was decided to ask the Commonwealth to provide £10,000,000 for education in the various States, and I think Western Australia's share was to be £100,000. Western Australia could easily spend £1,000,000 on improving the schools and their equipment.

We can find money for carrying on a war, and we were said to be bankrupt after the last war and interest payments had to be met, yet we carried on our schooling and other activities in the intervening years. When the recent war came along we had again to find money for war purposes. If we can tax the people for war purposes why cannot we tax them, in times of peace, in order to carry on our educational activities? The member for Pingelly seems to scorn that idea.

Mr. Seward: See whether the people will pay it in peacetime.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: If they realise that the money is being spent for a proper purpose and that value is being given for it I feel certain that people would ungrudgingly pay taxation for that purpose.

Mr. Doney: I feel sure they would not.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: Many people in this State are not only paying taxation to maintain schools but are also paying for their children to go to other schools. If people

will make that effort, why could not other sections of the population pay in order to get the best education possible for their children in State schools? It can be done if the right spirit permeates the people of the community, because people do make sacrifices for their children.

The Premier: The member for Williams Narrogin can go home now.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: Members will not get home at all if they keep on interjecting. There are 13 State schools in the electorate that I represent and they all require attention from time to time. The money has been allocated for some of the most urgent needs, such as for surfacing the playing fields. I hope that as soon as manpower and bitumen are available the playing fields at the Bayswater and Rivervale schools will receive attention. They should have been attended to right back in 1933, when the member for Nedlands was Minister for Education. He, and all Ministers for Education since then, have been on those grounds and have seen what is required, but the job has not been done yet. Half of Welshpool is in my district and the other half in the Canning electorate. The Education Department has acquired an area in Welshpool and the people in that district are looking forward to the establishment of a modern school there. For years they have used the Mechanics' Institute, a public building. They are looking forward to a modern school being erected there. I hope the Minister will have it in view to establish that school as soon as possible.

A lot has been heard about the Oslo lunch and a few weeks ago I saw it in operation at Rivervale. The women of that district are performing an excellent service by providing an Oslo lunch for the children of that school. Approximately 100 children participate in the scheme, but a suitable building and suitable equipment are lacking. At present they are using a room which, in the summer time, is used for washing purposes. If a small addition were made to the school, and further washing facilities provided, the room that is now being used could continue to be used to carry on the good work. That school is within three miles of the city. It is an area that is developing fast and the number of children will increase substantially in the near future. The work the women there are doing in providing the Oslo lunch is ex-

tremely valuable. A proposition was recently put up to the Minister and I will take the matter up with him shortly. I hope he will give every help to those women in their activities related to the Oslo lunch.

I realise that the greatest difficulty in carrying out these improvements is the manpower and material shortage, apart from the lack of teachers, about which the member for Nedlands complained. Hundreds of schoolteachers joined the Fighting Services and many of them attained high places and have been reluctant to come out of the Army, even when requests have been made for them to do so. Until demobilisation is finalised many teachers will not come back to the Education Department to work in the interests of the children of this State. Therefore, when we discuss this Vote 12 months hence, there should be apparent some alleviation of this difficulty for we can then expect many of the male teachers to be back in the department to carry on this very important work for the State.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.52 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Thursday, 15th November, 1945.

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

QUESTION.

SOLDIER SETTLEMENT.

As to Responsibility for Delay.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE asked the Chief Secretary:

1, Has the Government's attention been directed to the statement in "The West Australian" of the 24th October, 1945, by the Federal Minister for Post-War Reconstruction on soldier settlement?

2, Does not this statement suggest to the uninformed that the responsibility for delay rests with the State Governments?

3, As the contrary would appear to be the case in Western Australia, will the Minister respectfully suggest to the Premier that a full statement on the subject be made so that the people of this State may realise that the delay has not been occasioned by any failure of the Western Australian Government actively to promote settlement?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

1, Yes.

2, Yes.

3, Yes.

BILL—LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL (WAR TIME) ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT.

Annulment of Proceedings and Standing Orders Suspension.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [4.35]: I move (without notice)—

That the provisions of Standing Order No. 243 having been overlooked in connection with the second reading of the "Legislative Council (War Time) Electoral Act Amendment Bill" the proceedings on the Bill, subsequent to the first reading, be annulled; and that so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as to enable the Bill to be read a third time at this sitting.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I second the motion.

The PRESIDENT: Is it the wish of the House that the Chief Secretary have leave to move, without notice, his motion? There being no dissentient voice, leave is granted.

Question put.

The PRESIDENT: There being more than an absolute majority of members present, I declare the motion carried.

Question thus passed; the motion agreed to.