

the Main Roads Department has been doing a little work and making a little progress there, but this has been going on for many years. There are people living from Trayning northwards who, if they wish to come to Perth, must traverse very bad roads before reaching the bitumen-surfaced roads. I believe that with a little co-operation, this work could be completed in the near future.

As to the construction of public works, I agree with previous speakers who have said it is time we reverted to the contract system to get many of these works completed. The present practice was quite satisfactory in years gone by when there were a lot of men and little money, but we have reached a stage when we have a lot of money for main roads, and to get men to drive the equipment is very difficult indeed. I am satisfied that we could get far more work done much more cheaply and expeditiously if we made provision for the contract system for all major public works.

Hon. G. Bennetts: The shifting of plant causes delay.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: Admittedly, there are many difficulties confronting the engineers of the Main Roads Department. The Government is doing some building under the contract system, and I should like to see the whole of our public works—many of them are wanted—carried on by contract, especially such an undertaking as the proposed additional bridge across the Swan River. I am afraid that members of this Chamber will not live to see another bridge constructed across the river, but I believe that, if a contract were let for the work, it might become an accomplished fact in 12 months; whereas we have had the spectacle of the construction of the Causeway, which is a fine structure, dragging. I would like the position to be that I, instead of my great-grandchildren, shall have the privilege of seeing the second bridge put across the Swan River. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

On motion by Hon. J. McI. Thomson, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.11 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 15th July, 1954.

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The Acting Speaker (Mr. Moir) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.

TOWN PLANNING.

As to Regional Plan for Metropolitan Area.

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

(1) When does he anticipate receiving the regional plan covering metropolitan areas, now being prepared by Professor Stephenson?

(2) In the event of any delay being occasioned would he undertake to discuss with the professor the siting of a second bridge—if such is envisaged—with a view to making a start on the preliminary work of such a major project?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) October, 1954.

(2) The question of a second bridge has been discussed with the professor, but no definite decision has yet been arrived at.

EDUCATION.

(a) As to Special Allowance to Women Teachers.

Mr. HUTCHINSON asked the Minister for Education:

(1) Is it a fact that the special allowance which had been created in order that women teachers should not suffer reductions in salary because of the withdrawal of long service increments shall not be paid if the difference is less than £5?

(2) If this is true, does it not mean that a number of teachers would have their salaries reduced?

(3) How many teachers have been affected by this proviso?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No.

(2) No.

(3) Covered by above.

(b) As to Salaries and Long Service Increments.

Mr. HUTCHINSON asked the Minister for Education:

If those women teachers who qualify for the long service increments (now withdrawn) after the 31st December, 1953, do not suffer a reduction in salary, because of the withdrawal of the increments, how may their loss of pay be described?

The MINISTER replied:

The salaries of the teachers concerned would remain at the same level as they now receive.

(c) As to Long Service Increments.

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

(1) How many women teachers not entitled to long service increments prior to the 31st December, 1953, would have become entitled to them in 1954?

(2) How many of the teachers referred to in question No. (1) are receiving salaries equivalent to or greater than those they would have received had they now been receiving the long service increments?

(3) What salaries were those teachers receiving on the 31st December, 1953, and what salaries are they receiving now?

(4) Does he know, and if not will he ascertain and inform the House what (if any) difference would have been made in the decision of his predecessor to discontinue the long service increments if those increments had been—

(a) £25 per annum after 20 years and £30 per annum after 25 years as stated by the member for Cottesloe; or

(b) £25 after 25 years and £50 after 30 years as stated by me?

(5) If the position would have been that the existence of such increments as are referred to in question No. (4) would have made no difference to his predecessor's decision to discontinue the increments, can he inform the House why his predecessor spent so much time on Tuesday last in providing and discussing the correct figures?

The MINISTER replied:

(1), (2), (3) and (4) As the information desired will necessitate a lengthy examination of the records of some 1,500 women teachers, it is not considered reasonable to occupy the time of departmental officers in preparing the details requested.

(5) See previous answers.

OIL.

As to Ampol Exploration and WAPET.

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) Is the issued capital of Ampol Exploration Ltd. 8,000,000 five shilling shares?

(2) Does this issued capital represent a twenty per cent. interest in WAPET?

(3) If the answers to questions Nos. (1) and (2) are in the affirmative, has not the WAPET venture, on the present price of Ampol Exploration shares, a market valuation of over £200,000,000?

(4) Does he consider this valuation to be justified?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) and (2) While I have no detailed information of this company's capital position, I understand it is somewhat as described.

(3) and (4) I have no idea what the ultimate value of the oil deposits in this State will be. There is today a share boom in Australia, not only in regard to oil, but also uranium, gold and other things. This probably results from the extraordinary finds made in Australia of

recent months in relation to these commodities, and also from the generally prosperous state of the country, and the fact that Australians are notoriously speculative-minded.

Incidentally, the availability of capital is resulting in many of our State deposits being thoroughly explored.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES.

As to Extension to Kellerberrin.

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Works:

In reply to a question asked by me on the 4th December last, regarding the supply of A.C. electric current to Kellerberrin, he advised that the power line from Northam to Kellerberrin would be completed by the summer of 1954-55 and that current would be available to Kellerberrin consumers by the end of June, 1955.

Will he advise if this time-table is still expected to be adhered to, and, if not, what delay is anticipated and the reasons therefor?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Works) replied:

As far as can be seen at present, there may be a delay of up to six months due to shortage of labour and material.

RAILWAYS.

(a) As to Overhead Bridge, Collie.

Mr. MAY asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Has any decision been arrived at with regard to an overhead railway bridge between Throssell and Forrest-sts., Collie?

(2) If the decision is in the affirmative, at what point between these two streets is it proposed to erect the bridge?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Railways) replied:

(1) The site of the bridge is still under consideration with the Collie Coalfields Road Board.

(2) Answered by No. (1).

(b) As to Marshalling Yards, Collie.

Mr. MAY asked the Minister for Railways:

When is it anticipated the new marshalling yards at Collie will be completed?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Railways) replied:

If loan funds are available, it is hoped that the marshalling yards will be completed in 1956.

(c) As to Flashing Signal, East Guildford.

Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Has a decision been made to erect a flashing signal at East-st. crossing, East Guildford?

(2) If the answer to No. (1) is in the affirmative, when will the signal be completed?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Railways) replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Work is in progress but cannot be completed until a flashing relay is received from the Eastern States.

(d) As to Suburban Diesels.

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

(1) Regarding the improved suburban rail services to operate when all the diesel cars are delivered, how will the morning and evening traffic during the peak load be handled?

(2) How many carriages can be pulled by the suburban diesels?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Railways) replied:

(1) Steam trains and diesel railcar trains will operate during peak periods, both being on the faster time-table.

(2) Two of the new diesel railcars coupled together can satisfactorily haul one other non-powered car, making a three unit train.

TRAFFIC.

As to Queues at Police Offices.

Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Police:

To avoid queues at police traffic offices in the metropolitan area during the current period of the year, and particularly at the lunch-hour period—12 noon to 2 p.m.—would additional officers be temporarily employed or some extra offices opened to solve the problem?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Police) replied:

The unusual conditions existing at traffic offices over the past month have been caused by the need to relicence approximately 4,000 vehicles owned by metropolitan residents and licensed in country districts.

Extra staff has been appointed for this work, but under normal conditions the volume of business over the luncheon period varies considerably and generally the existing staff can cope with the work without causing undue delays to the public.

NORTH-WEST.

(a) As to Carnarvon and Overseas Ships.

Mr. COURT asked the Minister representing the Minister for the North-West:

In view of the answers given to questions 15 and 16 on the Notice Paper of the 14th July, 1954, would he advise whether certain overseas ships which normally call at Carnarvon are at present by-passing the port because of uncertainties in the loading of such ships?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied:

The movement of overseas shipping to Carnarvon is controlled by private owners.

It is suggested that the hon. member contact the local agent in connection with the information he desires.

(b) *As to Reason for Ships By-passing Carnarvon.*

Mr. COURT (without notice) asked the Premier:

In view of the answer given to my question, No. 11, by the Minister representing the Minister for the North-West, will he now undertake to examine the matter raised in my question, which I thought would have been vital and current information readily available to the Minister for the North-West?

The PREMIER replied:

I suggest to the hon. member, in a friendly way, that as these ships are run by private companies which have offices in the City of Perth, and as the hon. member is probably on quite friendly terms with the local managers of those companies, he could easily ascertain the reasons from them.

PERTH CITY COUNCIL.

As to Widening of Adelaide Terrace.

Mr. YATES asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

Would he approach the Perth City Council to see if Adelaide Terrace could be widened by reducing the boundary of the existing footpaths?

The PREMIER replied:

The Minister for Local Government has no jurisdiction in this matter but he will refer the suggestion to the Perth City Council.

HOUSING.

(a) *As to Committee Dealing with Evictees.*

Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) Is the committee set up by the previous administration to consider applicants for housing following eviction, still in operation?

(2) If "Yes" is the answer to No. (1), who are the personnel of the committee?

(3) What principles have the committee been instructed to follow in order to determine the necessity, or otherwise, of the State Housing Commission giving assistance?

The MINISTER replied:

As I have no written reply to this question, I will answer it verbally, as follows:—

(1) No, but the emergent committee decides in connection with any cases that may require special consideration.

(2) The personnel of that emergent committee are the property officer, the tenancy officer and the eviction officer.

(3) The policy is that accommodation will not be made available for two-unit families other than where both parties are over 70 years of age or where there are some special circumstances, such as state of health. In determining the size of families, where there are daughters under the age of 21 years or sons under the age of 18 years, they are counted as units, but if over that age they are disregarded.

(b) *As to Availability of Information.*

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT (without notice) asked the Minister for Housing:

In relation to my question on the notice paper, which has been postponed at the request of the Minister, I appreciate that it is sometimes difficult to supply information, but as I intended to use the particulars when speaking to the Address-in-reply, the debate on which I understand is to close today, is there any possibility of the information being obtained for me during the afternoon?

The MINISTER replied:

I will endeavour to do what I can in that direction. I would point out that answers to the question are readily available, but it is a matter of whether it is proper for me to supply the information. As the hon. member is aware, the State is merely an agent for a Commonwealth department in this regard and certain instructions have been given by the Commonwealth as to what information, pertaining to the operations of the War Service Homes Commissions, can be made public. There was a case recently when a member of the Legislative Council wanted certain information and I wrote to Canberra, but permission was not given to supply the answer to that question.

(c) *As to War Service Homes.*

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) How much money was made available by the Commonwealth Government to Western Australia for war service homes for the financial year 1953-54.

(2) How much was actually utilised?

(3) How many war service homes (to be built through the State Housing Commission) were allocated to Western Australia for the financial year 1953-54?

(4) How many were able to be built during that year?

(5) How many homes (to be purchased already built for the purpose of war service homes on behalf of applicants) were allocated to Western Australia for the financial year 1953-54?

(6) How many were actually purchased?

(7) How many applications for the discharge of mortgages through, and by, the war service homes department, were allocated to Western Australia for the financial year 1953-54?

(8) How many of such mortgages were actually discharged?

(9) Was there any waiting list in respect of applications covered by questions Nos. (5) and (7) or were applicants able to have their applications dealt with immediately?

(10) What percentage of tenders called by the State Housing Commission for the erection of group and individual war service homes are tenders actually being received at the present time?

(11) When the State Housing Commission has accepted the eligibility of an applicant for the building of a war service home, is his name placed on a list and are tenders arranged and settled for the building of the home for such applicant in order of priority according to the list and as soon as the commission is able to arrange for the building of such home?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Allocation September, 1953: £3,902,300. Amended allocation January, 1954: £4,080,000. Revised estimates, April, 1954: £3,864,000, following experience with tenders and delayed rate of completion of homes.

(2) £3,817,000..

(3) 1,273.

(4) 1,214.

(5) 217.

(6) 263.

(7) 118.

(8) 105.

(9) No waiting period at present.

(10) Group homes, 90 per cent; individual homes, 65 per cent.

(11) Yes, and this at present involves a waiting period of approximately twelve months except with respect to emergent cases, which are dealt with out of priority.

FIREARMS AND GUNS ACT.

As to Departmental File and Correct Procedure.

Mr. HEARMAN (without notice) asked the Premier:

(1) Is he aware that the member for Victoria Park last night, during his speech on the Address-in-reply, gave information on the Firearms and Guns Act which information he claimed was obtained from the relevant Government file?

(2) Is he aware that the member claimed to have seen the file?

(3) Does he know that this file has not been tabled during the life of the present Government?

(4) Will he cause inquiries to be made and inform the House as to the circumstances in which the member for Victoria Park saw this file?

(5) Would he, for the guidance of members, inform the House of the accepted code of parliamentary ethics as applied to information contained in Government files?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) and (2) Yes.

(3) No.

(4) Yes.

(5) As I understand the procedure in connection with Government files and their availability to members of Parliament, the position is somewhat along the lines that I will now briefly explain. In the first place, if a member wishes to see a file, the usual practice is for him to ask the Minister whether he can see it. If the Minister is willing for the member to see that file, it is made available to him in the Minister's office. If the member then feels that for some reason or other the file should be made public, he asks the Minister to lay it on the Table of the House. The Minister then decides whether he should answer that question "Yes" or "No." If the reply is "No," and the member is still dissatisfied and anxious to have the file laid upon the Table of the House, he has the right to move, in the House, that the file be tabled. Because of that situation, officers of the Housing Commission are, at this moment, investigating to find out for certain whether the information can be made available.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott and Minister's Replies to Questions.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I wish to make a personal explanation in view of the Minister's answer to my question without notice. I particularly wanted the information because the statement made by the member for Collie the other evening was incorrect. I undertook, if my statement was incorrect, to correct it publicly in this House. The only person from whom I can get the information is the Minister for Housing.

Mr. May: I have already given you proof.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: No.

Mr. May: Yes, I have.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I still think the hon. member is entirely incorrect and that is why I wanted the information. This is a matter of some embarrassment to me and I cannot get simple questions answered. The Minister says that the information is readily available, but he doubts whether he can supply it. Under those circumstances, I think the information should be given, because I believe it is of some importance. If I give an

undertaking in this House I try to honour it, and I expect other members to do the same.

The Minister for Housing: I can tell you that the member for Collie was right in his statement.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: He was not right, and that is why the Minister will not admit it.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Ninth Day-Conclusion.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. NIMMO (Wembley Beaches) [2.32]: Like other members, I want to talk about my own electorate, and the first matter will interest the Premier and the Minister for Education—I refer to the subject of kindergartens. In one part of Scarborough there are 394 homes, and in that area there are 186 children of kindergarten age—that is, from 3½ to 4 years. As most members know, it costs about £5,000 to build a brick kindergarten and few districts can afford such a large sum even though the Perth City Council or the road boards, as a rule, provide a block of land, and the Lotteries Commission, and the road board or council to a certain extent, provide a sum of money.

In this area the Housing Commission resumed most of the land and paid a fairly low price for it. Scattered throughout the district are still a few empty blocks; and on those areas I think the Government could erect buildings, something along the lines of a home, for use as kindergartens. That might sound a little ridiculous, but the dividing wall between two rooms could be omitted, thus making one large room available for use as a kindergarten. Another room in the building could be used for a baby clinic. In this area in Scarborough, known as Killarney, there are about 258 children aged about one year, and yet there are no baby clinics. If the Government could build these homes and use them as clinics and kindergartens, it would be of considerable assistance to mothers. One such building could be erected in nearly every street; and after they had outlived their usefulness, they could be converted into private homes and sold. In that way, the cost to the Government would be quite small. I know that a number of districts would welcome the idea.

Most districts have no hope of getting kindergartens. In Scarborough there is only one such building and it can cope with no more than 50 children, if that number. In another section of my electorate there are 1,080 homes and 2,000 children. Many of these areas want to build kindergartens, but they cannot get the money. One kindergarten in which I am interested has been trying

for eight years to make a start on a new building, but in that time only £700 has been collected. The council will give us a block of land and the Lotteries Commission, and to a certain extent the council, will help us financially, but still we cannot get sufficient funds to make a start. In districts where kindergartens are needed, I would suggest that the Government lend money at a small rate of interest. Some members might say that there is no security. Perhaps that is right, but the council and the road boards, and the Lotteries Commission, donate certain sums of money for this purpose.

The Minister for Housing: In many cases local authorities lend money for the building of bowling club pavilions. Why do you not approach the local authority for a kindergarten building?

Mr. NIMMO: As a matter of fact, in one instance we did and the council gave us some monetary assistance. The trouble with some road boards is that they have not the money to lend.

The Minister for Housing: The State Government has not too much, either.

Mr. NIMMO: But it has more than the other bodies.

The Minister for Housing: And it has more obligations, too.

Mr. NIMMO: Most of the dwellings in Killarney are State rental or war service homes and, in the majority of instances, the occupiers are young people. They should be given some encouragement and help, and to my way of thinking kindergartens and baby clinics are most essential.

The Premier: Would trained teachers be available?

Mr. NIMMO: I am afraid not, but I find that in most districts there are married women who have been teachers and they would gladly take on the job of handling kindergarten children. Some people may say that is undesirable. It is not, however, because I can name kindergartens which are controlled by ex-teachers under the supervision of the Education Department, and that department is very satisfied with them.

The Premier: Are you referring to ex-State schoolteachers?

Mr. NIMMO: Yes, and there are quite a few around. Some of the children in these districts have not had an opportunity of enjoying the benefits that many other children have had. I would stress upon the Premier, the Minister for Education and the Minister for Housing the importance of ascertaining if this proposition could be carried to fruition. It would require to be thoroughly investigated, and perhaps in the area to which I have referred there could be one building erected in every other street. That would cover only three blocks. However, it must be

realised that when this district grows every house built in the Killarney estate will have an average of two children.

Where houses have been established some time, I found that only 424 out of 1,504 had no children in them between the ages of one and 14. Of course, many of the people have children who are now married, or who are over 14 years of age, but I was not interested in them. There is no doubt that the cost of running a kindergarten is high, and many of the committees in control cannot obtain the money from parents to enable them to pay their way and, of course, it is very difficult to obtain money to erect a building.

I now wish to draw attention to the need for a fire station in the Scarborough district and I hope I shall interest the Minister in this matter. The blocks in the Killarney estate are only 49.7 ft. and not 50 ft. wide, and many of the homes built on them are constructed of white wood. I often wonder what would happen on a windy day or night, when people were away on holidays or absent at the pictures, if one of those houses caught fire. A major tragedy could result because the fire could sweep through the entire locality, and much delay would occur since the fire brigade would have to come all the way from North Perth to Scarborough.

When one sees these rows of weather-board houses on stilts, one can easily visualise what a terrible tragedy could occur. I appeal to the Premier to ascertain if something can be done to have a fire brigade station established there. I understand that four or five years ago it was proposed to establish one at the corner of Main-st. and Scarborough Beach-rd., where Millett's garage is now situated. In view of the rapid increase in population in that district, I consider it is high time that a fire brigade station was provided.

I am sorry the Minister for Education is not present, because I wish to point out to him that at present we have to transport children from Scarborough to the North Wembley school because of lack of accommodation. Following a deputation to the Minister, we were told that a new building would be commenced last month, but no start has yet been made on the work. At the same time, we were also told that some of the rooms would be ready for occupation by February next. The site for the new school is in the Killarney district but, in view of the rapid expansion of housing and the number of children that are residing there, we may be forced to look for accommodation all over the globe. I think the position is serious.

Then again I also wish to draw attention to the condition of the Scarborough Beach-rd. My district commences at Harbourne-st. and that of the Minister for Education meets mine at Innaloo, where we share the road. Some time ago I led

a deputation to the Deputy Premier on this question, but he informed us that he could not do anything to assist. To put the Scarborough Beach-rd. into proper repair would cost £180,000, which is a great deal of money. Here and there along that road, a few aprons have been provided which have to be paid for by the Scarborough people.

We want that road to be declared a main highway because Scarborough Beach is becoming more popular than ever and, because of the heavy traffic caused by the building programme at Scarborough, the people in the locality are called upon to foot the bill for the provision of roads and footpaths and their maintenance. We feel that the burden is too great. The Perth Road Board works on its rates and taxes and we consider it should get some assistance from the Government to help it in widening that road. As I have mentioned in the House before, during the summer months that main artery is used by people from all over the State, and we naturally consider that other districts should help pay for the widening of that road, and it should not be left to the people of Scarborough to do so.

I listened last night to a speech by the member for North Perth. He made reference to the parking problem in the city. About seven years ago, and also during the last session, I spoke about the removal of the railway station. More often than not when we talk to people about removing the railway station, they smile. If Sir John Forrest were alive today I wonder what he would think of the 1,000 acres he had set aside for King's Park, or of the large areas that have been made available for parks by the Perth City Council. The railway station could be removed and the land from Wellington-st. to Roe-st. could be made a public highway.

From time to time, I have heard a number of people say that that might be too wide, or that it would be better for the Government to sell the land—in the event of the railway station being removed—because it would derive a certain amount of revenue. Let us forget about revenue for the moment and consider the years to come. At the moment the City of Perth is only one-third of a city; the other two-thirds could be over the railway line. What would be better than for the Victoria Park transport to go right through even to my district and from my district back again, thus ensuring continuous through traffic?

By this means we could avoid all the turning and twisting and holding up of traffic that is apparent today. If it were not possible to get through traffic in some parts of the area where the railway station is, we could construct islands, and on these islands we could place our conveniences, rest-rooms and offices for the bus companies. That would not take up very much

space. We would then find that the other two-thirds of the City of Perth would go ahead by leaps and bounds; that is, if the railway station were taken out. I think it was about seven years ago that I mentioned there would be nothing to stop trains going through underground. In that case one could go underground to the railway just before a street corner. The system could be similar to that employed in the Old Country. There is nothing to stop it. I have heard people say that we would strike water, but that would not present very great difficulty. I appreciate that there are a number of buildings in the vicinity of the railway station that are on lease, but we have to make a start eventually to get rid of the lot. We could proceed up Wellington-st. It might not be possible to get rid of the markets, but they would be on an island and the traffic would flow on either side. It would help the parking problem a great deal. Today cars are confined to about one-third of the city area.

Let us think it over and draw a mental picture of what Perth will look like after the railway station has been removed. It will have to go sometime, because we cannot continue as we are at present. The member for North Perth suggested the appointment of a select committee, and I am inclined to agree with him because I feel that such a body could perhaps solve a number of our traffic problems. Let us take one instance, and consider the heavy traffic in the city today. At the moment we find heavy lorries double parked; we cannot blame the drivers for that, because it is necessary for them to deliver their goods to the various stores.

I made it my business to go into one of those stores and have a word with the general manager. I said to him, "If there was a regulation that prevented you from receiving goods after a certain time in the morning, what would you say about it?" He replied, "It would be the best thing that could happen. My buyers would then have to make the necessary provision." He added that today if they run out of butter they ring up and a load of butter is sent around. This, of course, also refers to other commodities. It would do no harm to appoint a select committee; it would not cost the Government anything.

If it were recommended, I feel sure that a number of the big firms would agree that they would sooner have all their goods delivered by, say, 10.30, 11 or 12 o'clock, as the case might be. That would help solve one of the traffic problems in the city today. At one time it was suggested to me that it might be a good idea to solve the problem by charging each car owner one guinea to start with, and that money could be passed over to the Perth City Council. That would bring in from about £80,000 to £85,000. Let the council borrow about £600,000 to £700,000; it could then construct three or four large buildings in the

outer suburbs. On that proposition I might say that the Council could be allowed to borrow up to £1,000,000.

With £1,000,000 it would be possible perhaps to construct three or four up-to-date buildings: modern buildings, where it would be possible to take one's car in at the front door and have it taken to the top floor of an eight-storeyed building and parked properly. A select committee would be able to go into all the aspects of the case. There are quite a number of features that might be considered. At the moment, however, we seem to be blundering through with our traffic problem around the city. I think the regulations state that vehicles are supposed to park 30ft. from a corner. If members were to go out of this House they would find vehicles parked practically at the corners.

One other matter that I want to speak on concerns young people who are trying to build their own homes on blocks situated off made roads. In my electorate around Herdsman's Lake at the water end of the police station—and I suppose there are similar places in other electorates—there are roughly 30 homes. When I use the term "homes," I mean the one and two-roomed houses. The new research station just completed in that area is connected with water supply; yet standing at the door of one of the homes—and there are four or five homes built close together—I can throw a stone on to the sprinklers which water the lawns of the research station. The residents, however, on the opposite side of the road to the research station are not supplied with water, and not likely to get it for some time.

I made a personal canvass of the area and filled in all the forms requesting a water supply. I am still waiting for a final answer from the Water Supply Department. It seems to me that the department considers that the provision of this essential service to the area I mentioned will be unprofitable and that it cannot reap a profit from the capital outlay.

All along the area from the research station to Innaloo, through Lead-st., there is no water. Yet these young people are building homes there. They are doing so because they managed to buy their blocks very cheaply, from £40 to £180 a block. At the present time no block in that area can be bought at that figure. A similar situation arises in Wembley Downs. When that was first opened up, land could be bought from £8 to £12 a block, but today the price is much higher. Many young people who owned blocks in that area built small homes. We should admire them for their enterprise. It is up to the Government to assist them in every way possible, and it could do so by providing water. There is not much more I have to add. There

were many other items on which I wanted to speak but I shall leave them until a later date.

In conclusion, I would urge the Premier to give consideration to the kindergarten proposal by converting a modern home just built there. All that has to be done is to knock the two rooms into one. There are sufficient conveniences, and people would not worry about having two lavatories; they would be glad to have even the one. In time, when the kindergarten was no longer required, after the children had grown up, it could be converted back into a house.

The Minister for Housing: Are you seriously suggesting at a time like this that houses be made available for kindergartens by the commission?

Mr. NIMMO: I am in full agreement with the Minister that homes are the first requirement, but I think the people also need amenities. The children have to be considered, and considered very strongly.

The Minister for Housing: I think the children would prefer a roof over their heads, rather than kindergartens.

Mr. NIMMO: In the instance I mentioned, in 394 homes there were 186 children of kindergarten age. Surely the provision of one home for a kindergarten would not make much difference. I know other districts want the same provision, and I do not blame them. A few houses for this purpose would make little difference to the overall housing position. What would be the percentage of a few houses in the building rate of 8,000 houses for this State?

The Minister for Housing: It would deny another family a home.

Mr. NIMMO: I would not like to see any family denied a home, but I think the provision of kindergartens is very important. Take the case of the kindergarten being built in West Perth. Would the materials which went into that construction have been better used in building homes?

The Minister for Housing: I believe so.

Mr. NIMMO: I do not. I believe the people must have amenities. As a nation we must look after the children as well. If we can supply them with kindergartens and baby clinics, we shall be doing the children a great service.

MR. WILD (Dale) [3.7]: I want to make a few observations on matters affecting the Dale electorate. I am sorry that neither the Minister for Water Supplies, who is in charge of electricity matters, nor the Minister for Education, is present, but I hope that the Premier will pass on my observations to them. I want to comment on water supplies to Canning Vale. This has been a subject of representation going back to my knowledge, to 1947, although I believe that before I entered

Parliament other representations had been made, but we do not seem to have got very far. In June, 1947, I first took up the matter and was told that there were insufficient people in the area to warrant the installation of a water supply. It was said at the time that there were only 33 homes and there were 45 vacant blocks, and of the 33 people who were interviewed, 18 of them said that they did not require a water supply. That was a negative result.

Then in 1950 there was another deputation, and there was yet another in 1953, by which time the number of houses built in that area, as indicated to the Minister by the 1953 deputation, had risen to 66. We were again told that whilst the Government agreed to the scheme in principle, nothing could be done as it felt the scheme was too expensive, taking into consideration the number of people who would be served. Surely it is obvious that water is essential in that locality. I am going to suggest that in regard to the provision of water supplies, electricity, drainage and like services, we need a few more C. Y. O'Connors at the present time.

In putting this matter forward I am not bringing in politics. It applies to all Governments. We need a few far-sighted gentlemen to implement the services that I enumerated—of the type who can visualise that Western Australia is going ahead by leaps and bounds. Such people do not think of the State in present-day terms but what will be the position in 10 to 20 years time.

When the new bridge over the Canning was built in Royal-st., although the water at that time was laid up to the bridge in a 2-inch main serving a few people, the department installed an 8-inch main across the river under the bridge; this clearly indicated that somebody recognised that at some future time it would be necessary to bring an 8-inch main from Albany Highway to Royal-st. bridge in order to carry the water to Canning Vale.

The statement that a number of the people did not want water because they had their own supplies was, to my mind, neither a valid nor a reasonable one. Those people went to live out there instead of crowding into the city and they had to do something for themselves in regard to water, and the obvious thing was to provide their own supply. Having incurred the capital cost of sinking a well or putting down a spear and installing a pump, some of them, when asked by the Department whether they wanted water, inquired, "if I take the water, shall I be rated?" The answer to that question must, of course, be "Yes," and they, without giving the matter due consideration, then reply that they are not interested. Consequently the inspecting officer records on his list that the persons so interviewed do not want the water

The view I have just described is a shortsighted one. On the other hand, are the residents of a rapidly-growing area to be denied water for all time simply because a few people have been compelled to put in their own pumps? In those circumstances we shall never get water reticulated to Canning Vale simply because 16 or 18 people have already provided supplies of their own. Since 1950, when we had the last deputation, more people have come to reside in the district. Unfortunately I am not in a position to tell the House how many. I had a list of signatures forwarded to me three months ago and sent it to the Minister for Water Supplies, so the paper should be on the file. However, the number now would be closer to 100. Seeing that it has increased from 33 in 1947 to nearly 100 in 1954, one can readily appreciate that the population on the road to Canning Vale from Albany Highway is rapidly growing.

At the moment the matter is before the Minister, and an inspecting officer is looking around the district and interviewing householders to ascertain whether they want water. I hope that when the replies are received, if the 16 or 18 people still say they do not want water because they have a supply and do not want to be rated, their opinion will not outweigh that of the 80 to 90 people who sincerely want it.

The Parents and Citizens' Association and the Education Department have been pressing to get water supplied to the Canning Vale school. As a result of there being no water supply, the old-fashioned pan system is in use at the school though it is only seven miles from the G.P.O. From time to time in the summer months, water has to be carted by the Gosnells Road Board. When the Education Department made representations to the Water Supply Department, it was told, "You are a body that cannot be rated and you would not help the cost of getting the water to Canning Vale." The fact of the children at the school having no water should be a prime reason for conveying a supply to the district. Therefore I hope that the Minister will consider much more sympathetically the petition that has been presented to him.

Now I wish to mention what I consider to be a pernicious system that has been operating for a number of years when people outside the immediate metropolitan area apply for an extension of the water service. Quite recently there was a classic example at Armadale. Over the years I have had a number of similar cases, but this one comes readily to mind because it happened only three or four weeks ago. An English couple arrived in the State and decided to do something for themselves. The husband obtained work at the brickworks and set out to build himself a three-roomed house at Armadale.

When the application was made for water, he was told that it could not be provided unless he put up a guarantee. There was a normal quarter-acre block and the block alongside was served with water, and to supply him it was only a matter of extending the existing main from one quarter-acre block to the next. Yet he was told that he would have to give a guarantee; otherwise he would not get the water.

I wrote to the Minister about this case and he pointed out that it was the normal practice. I cannot understand why such a system should be adopted. If a person living in the metropolitan area wants the water main extended from the next block, to which it has already been laid, there is no suggestion of a guarantee, but because a man takes up a block 19 or 20 miles out of Perth, a different system operates and the applicant is required to give a guarantee.

Mr. Jamieson: That has always been the case.

Mr. WILD: The circumstances I have related are factual; the case is that of Mr. W. R. Savage of Armadale. When I directed the Minister's attention to the matter, and after the departmental view had been obtained, it was decided that the main could be extended as requested. However, the practice had been that a guarantee must be given. I do not think that is right because it gives no encouragement to people in the country to try to help themselves.

Next I wish to make a few observations in regard to electricity. All members, regardless of their political affiliation, talk of decentralisation with the tongue in the cheek. We say to people, "Go into the country and do something for yourselves." Immediately a man does so he is hampered by restrictions. If he wants water, or a subdivision, or electricity, the reply is, "No, I am sorry; you are too far away from the city." What does the man do? Is it any wonder that there are many people in the metropolitan area who, but for these restrictions, would go out into the country to live? When we give them no assistance, they prefer to remain in the city where all these amenities are available to them.

Turning to electricity, we recently had a deputation from the Progress Association to the Minister regarding the supply of current on the Southern River. The Minister was sympathetic and gave us a good hearing, but he said there was no possibility whatever of those people being supplied with current in the next 12 months at least.

I cannot understand the attitude of the Electricity Commission. Here we have people living in an area only nine miles

from Perth as the crow flies; living on the river where water is available, living in an area to which the local authority has seen fit to provide a bitumen road, people engaged in primary production—pig-raising, dairy and poultry farming, as well as one of the biggest horticultural properties in the State—all of whom want electricity badly, but most of whom have had to provide their own motive power to pump water from the river.

That condition has operated ever since this area has been opened up, and in recent years many people who installed pumping plants 15 or 20 years ago find that the time has arrived when the engines must be replaced. So, in addition to the many new settlers requiring electricity there has been this agitation from those men who have probably spent £75 or £100 on installing an engine and who are now faced with having to buy a new one, but who are hoping that the State Electricity Commission will provide the power and save them the necessity of having to purchase a new engine. All these facts were placed before the Minister by a deputation, but Mr. Edmondson, the general manager of the State Electricity Commission, was present and he said, "It is an uneconomical proposition." I asked a question of the Minister controlling electricity supplies in connection with the taking of power to Northam. My object was to strike a comparison.

We were told at this deputation that to provide roughly half a mile of transmission main to the Southern River, and then laterally half a mile either way, would cost something in the order of £2,500, and that the return from the 30 odd people, even though they would be using motors with a total of about 150 horse-power, together with a large number of lights, would not pay the department. Yet we were told yesterday that the commission was going to spend a large sum of money to put electricity into approximately 2,500 houses at Northam. Unfortunately my Votes and Proceedings for yesterday do not seem to be here and I have not the figures in connection with Northam at my fingertips at the moment, but I worked them out and it seemed to me that the number of consumers at Southern River would be sufficient to ensure a much larger return to the commission than will be returned as a result of making electricity supplies available at Northam.

I am not for a moment saying that we should not take electricity to Northam, but that town has a reasonably satisfactory system at the moment and probably could continue as it is for a few months. The people I am talking about have not any electricity at all except what they have provided for themselves, but they are told it is not an economical proposition for the commission to supply them. Mr. Edmondson said to the deputation that more people would have to go out there.

It is no good talking of what people did in the early days of the Goldfields when a man was a man and struck out for himself and went out to the far eastern district that the member for Murchison was talking about yesterday. Those days are gone. Practically everything now is being done for the average citizen in the city. He is housed, and gets all sorts of social services; yet when we want these things for men who are only a matter of nine miles from Perth, we are told, "Unless more people go out there, you cannot have them." Are the people going to move out that little matter of nine miles if they are told, "It is an uneconomical proposition and we cannot do anything about it?"

Hon. D. Brand: It would be a good idea if the Electricity Commission made one or two experiments along these lines by extending mains into places where development is going on.

The Minister for Labour: Have you ever suggested that?

Hon. D. Brand: Yes, as a matter of fact I have.

Mr. WILD: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition made an observation which I intended to make, and it is that today we have to look ahead. When I think of what has taken place south of the river in the past seven or eight years since I have been a member of this House, I am amazed. Surely there must be some people knowledgeable enough to be able to realise that the outer districts are likely to advance, and to have the courage to put in water supplies, electricity, roads and so on. If that is done, people, as sure as night follows day, will go there.

I had the opportunity about four or five years ago of reading a thesis written by John Johns of the local university. He wrote this thesis when he obtained his B.A., and it was published in book form. From memory it is called, "Local Government, with Particular Reference to the Metropolitan Area of Perth." He wrote on what would have to happen to Perth. It was not what he thought, but what he said would have to happen, because of water considerations, with particular reference to the area of land available on the other side of the Swan. I have that book at home and I occasionally pick it up and read passages from it.

It is amazing to see how much of what the author wrote has come true now because, in effect, he said the future of Perth definitely had to lie along the water line from the Canning Dam. When one looks at the development that has taken place there in the past five or six years, it is amazing and it bears out what Mr. Johns said. I feel that in regard to water, electricity, drainage and so on we should have men with vision who could say, "That is an area that will expand. Let us put in water and electricity because without a doubt the people will follow."

I do hope the Minister will have another look at this Southern River project.

I also want to be a little critical of the attitude of the Town Planning Board in regard to subdivisions. When the late Mr. D. L. Davidson was alive, he seemed to get most of the blame for the subdivisions that were not approved of. With his demise, Mr. Hepburn was appointed from England, and most local authorities close to the metropolitan area, and probably many members of Parliament thought there might be a change, but unfortunately no change eventuated. We have exactly the same policy operating today as has operated during the past eight or ten years.

When I say, "policy," it is not a policy at all, but a clear case of inconsistency. Since I have been a member, I have each year introduced six or eight deputations or made appeals against decisions of the Town Planning Board—nearly all of them on the ground of inconsistency—and most of them have been upheld by the Minister. This indicates to me that the Town Planning Board is more or less compelling the Minister to make the decisions.

Quite recently I had occasion, on behalf of the Gosnells Road Board, to appeal against four decisions. The Minister was good enough to come out and have a look for himself. He has already upheld two of the appeals, and I believe the other two are receiving favourable consideration. I feel sure that at least three—and possibly four—of those appeals will be upheld, and that seems to indicate that there is something wrong with the Town Planning Board. If one won one appeal out of four or five, that would be understandable, because the Minister might have looked more closely into it, but surely it is the job of the Town Planning Board to examine these questions carefully before coming to a decision. I am informed that today, however, it is the Minister who in fact is making the decisions as to whether subdivisions should be allowed or not.

The Premier: The difference in outlook might be due to the fact that the Minister goes out, looks at the land and studies the question on the spot.

Mr. WILD: The Premier is quite right there. Only a fortnight ago, when the Minister was out with us at Gosnells, there were two classic examples of what happens when one is on the spot. In the first instance, a man in Maddington-rd. had applied for the subdivision of a half-acre block into two quarter-acre blocks. His application was rejected on the ground that the country was too low-lying, and also that the application was inconsistent with other subdivisions in the area and that nothing less than half an acre would be permitted.

Early in my parliamentary life, I learnt the lesson that when people approached me about such matters I should have a look for myself and see what the facts were, as I did, in the early stages, fall into

one or two traps through not personally ascertaining the position and having, instead, been led up the garden path. On inspection myself, I was amazed to see that immediately behind the block to which I have referred were quarter-acre blocks, and on the east and west sides there were also quarter-acre blocks, and that there were houses built all around on those blocks, the main road being right in front of the land which was the subject of the application.

In spite of that, the decision of the board had been that the policy in that area was that there should be no block of not less than half an acre, and that the land was low-lying and unfit for the building of houses. When the Minister had a look at the position for himself, the first thing he asked, without being told anything about the matter, was, "What other subdivisions are there around here?" and we said, "Just have a look at the back." We had the road board plans and the files there and were able to show the Minister that at the back all the subdivisions were of one-quarter acre, with quarter-acre subdivisions to both east and west, and with houses already on the blocks. I might add that it was all level ground. It did not take the Minister long to make up his mind that the appeal should be allowed because, as the Premier said, the Minister went out and had a look for himself.

Surely, the persons sitting as a town planning board should see these things for themselves and thus save the Minister and the local authority a great deal of unnecessary waste of time. The second appeal to which I desire to refer was one by a father who had given the rear portion of his block to his son to build a house on. It was refused on the ground the land was too low-lying for the building of houses.

The idiosyncrasy in this case—I think that is the right word to use in the circumstances—was that the house had been built for three years on the block and the son had been living in it for that time; but, because the father wanted, in effect, to draw a pencil line on the plan between his house, which has stood on the front of the block for about 30 odd years, and that built by his son at the back, in order to give his son a clear title to that land, the Town Planning Board simply said it could not be done. Again, the Minister examined the position personally, and the appeal appears likely to be upheld.

Those are only two of a number of cases I could cite where I do not think the town planning authorities have their feet on the ground. Whether the Government is contemplating making any alteration in the Town Planning Board I do not know; but, if it has that intention, it will receive my full support as I think it is time something was done in the matter. I wish now to deal with a matter of drainage, and I am sure the member for Canning must

also be interested in this problem. All the way from Cannington through to Gosnells we are troubled with a lot of country on the east side of the railway line which is low-lying and badly needs draining.

It seems that over the years the different authorities concerned have just pushed the problem aside saying, in turn, "It is not our job, and so we are not interested." The present position is that if this land were drained it would become ideal for building purposes, as I am sure the Minister for Housing is aware; but at the moment, owing to lack of drainage, it is useless for that purpose.

Recently, the Albany Highway has been widened past the area to which I refer, and for the eighth or ninth time the Gosnells Road Board made representations to me to see if something could be done—even if only in part—about the drainage of this area. The issue was brought to a head when the widening of this road was commenced about 12 months ago. There seem to be three different authorities concerned, and they are each saying, "This is not our responsibility and so we will have nothing to do with it."

Years ago, when there was not so much water coming down as there was more scrub country, the rain was largely absorbed into the ground, so old residents tell me; but today, as a result of the clearing that has been done, the water flowing has increased in volume as one approaches the railway and Albany Highway. The railway culvert on the Bickley Brook was obviously constructed only to handle the volume of water that was passing at that time.

That is the first bottleneck. Then further on where the brook meets the main Albany Highway the authorities concerned years ago, put in a small storm-water drain. Both of those drains are now quite inadequate to handle anywhere near the volume of water that comes down each year when heavy rain falls, and so every winter we find that the land for anything up to one or two miles to the east becomes a lake of water.

At a deputation the department admitted that if only there was a bigger access for the water under the main road and through the railway culvert, all this floodwater would flow naturally into the Canning River; but the Railway Department says, "We are not interested in the amount of water flowing over this area," and the Main Roads Department says, "Our job is to build roads. We are not interested, provided the water does not affect our road and, in fact, it does not because the road is built up." They both then say, "The only authority left with the responsibility is the local authority." Can members imagine any local authority having sufficient finance to put into operation a drainage scheme to cover an area such as this?

Mr. Owen: They could only do it in co-operation with their fellow authorities.

Mr. WILD: Yes, it is far beyond their resources. The latest move is that last week the Gosnells Road Board and I had a conference with some of the departmental officers, and we now understand that the survey being made is nearing completion. This plan has been on the board for the last three or four years, but at last we are getting somewhere and I am told that it should be completed within two or three months. The department should then be able to arrive at an estimate of the cost and I have no doubt that the matter will come before Parliament for a decision. When the drainage work is completed, a vast area of land will be made available for housing and industrial projects.

Finally, I want to discuss the subject of education in my electorate, with particular reference to the Armadale High School. Approximately two years ago the department saw fit to install a junior high school at Armadale. Everybody, including officials of the department, recognised that it was absolutely necessary because children from as far away as Serpentine were attending high schools in Perth and were arriving home as late as seven or eight o'clock at night.

Mr. Norton: Did they cut the plans in half?

Mr. WILD: I do not know about that, but this is one of those occasions when somebody did not have sufficient vision to look ahead a few years. Actually the position has now caught up with the department as at Armadale the number of children attending the existing primary school has risen, since I have been the member for the district, from 230 to 400 with an additional 350 children attending the Junior High School, for which the department has erected three pre-fab buildings in the primary school ground.

The intake last year was 200 and I understand that for the forthcoming year it will be a little over 100. As a result of the erection of these prefabs the children have only one acre of ground on which to play and the department is already using the church hall which is immediately opposite the school. Next year, when we have a further 100 children, I do not know what will happen.

Mr. Brady: All the schools in the metropolitan area are in the same position.

Mr. WILD: Yes, but the point is that at Armadale the department already has a good site for a high school and 12 months ago, when the second prefab was erected, the department was asked, "Would it not be better to commence erecting these buildings on the new site? If you do not use them for normal school work they can be used for such work as metal

trades, domestic science, technical drawing or similar subjects." The buildings would not have looked out of place because ultimately a nice brick high school will be built on the same site. Unfortunately, the department did not agree and consequently the prefabs have been jammed on to this small piece of ground which was used as the playing area for the primary school.

As the department is faced with the position of a further intake of 100 children next year, another prefab will have to be erected somewhere. If it is erected on the last acre of land available as a playing area, the children will have nowhere to play, and I do not know what will happen next year. The Minister said yesterday that he hopes this financial year to make a move on the permanent structure, but I think something will have to be done immediately.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.5 p.m.

Mr. WILD: Prior to the suspension, I was, I think, discussing the Armadale High School, and the necessity for getting on with the job because the position really has caught up with the department. While on the subject of the high school, I want to mention the question of the large number of changes that take place in the senior staffs of these schools. I heard a question asked two days ago in this House about the number of changes in Mingenew, or some such country centre.

Although we have not experienced anything like 18 changes, in my view the position is very serious in the two big schools in the Dale electorate. Firstly, at Armadale we have had four headmasters in the past seven years, and the present headmaster would have left last year but for the fact that after he applied for Narrogin and was successful, he was told that the appointment would only be for one year and that it would be up-graded. Had it not been for these fortuitous circumstances, we would have had five changes of headmaster in seven years.

Since I have been a member, we have had six changes in Gosnells in seven and a half years. I know there are all sorts of difficulties relative to this problem; I know that gradings and long service leave have to be taken into account; I know that we have to consider the number of children going up and going down and the great movements in population in the past two or three years. We must, however, find some system that will obviate this, because it is hopeless from the children's point of view.

The headmasters have all been excellent officers and I am not criticising them in any way as it is only natural that when the opportunity offers itself for promotion, they make application and are transferred. We must devise some system which will obviate this constant changing of headmasters, because, after all, it is on the head that the policy of the entire school

must depend. Even if it is necessary to grant these gentlemen an increment, we must find a system whereby they are allowed to stay at the same school in order to provide continuity of policy for at least three or four years. Fortunately at Armadale the headmaster remained. He is an excellent officer and I know the parents and citizens would be loath to see him appointed elsewhere.

The position is such today that the department cannot hold a good officer because when an opportunity offers itself brought about by the shifting population and the up and down gradings, teachers have to apply for positions in order to improve their status. Schools all over the State, particularly the two in the Armadale electorate have in the past few years seen far too many changes in the teachers. We also experienced similar trouble in regard to the Armadale High School staff. I am advised that since it was opened nearly two years ago the school has had on paper three senior female assistants.

In actual fact, only one carried out any duties in the school, and that was for a period of two months. The first assistant was appointed during a period when she was on long-service leave; but before she could take up the position she was transferred somewhere else, so that was a mythical appointment. The second assistant was appointed also while she was on long-service leave; she did not turn up for duty until November, and occupied the position of senior assistant into part of December. When school broke up she was transferred. This year a new assistant has been appointed, but she is similarly away on long-service leave and will not be able to take up her duties until August.

So we have this peculiar staff problem in the Armadale High School, one of the biggest outside the metropolitan area. There are 750 children in the two schools, 350 being in the high school, yet for the last two years it has had only one female senior assistant, and she took up duty for 1½ months. Two of the postings were made on paper. I know it is very difficult for a headmaster to carry on a large school like this one. His time is largely taken up in administrative work, but when there is no senior assistant available to help him, he is called upon to perform some of the duties of the assistants, and consequently some of his own work must go by the board. It is not in the interests of the schoolchildren to find such a dearth of senior assistants. I ask the Minister for Education to inquire into this matter and see what he can do.

I also wish to mention the Byford school. Like many of the others throughout Western Australia, in the past three to five years it has absolutely outgrown itself. As a result, it was decided last year to use the Byford Hall, so during

this year approximately 30 schoolchildren use the supper room in that hall as a schoolroom. They are not allowed any fires.

The Education Department early this winter sent two kerosene heating stoves for the use of the schoolchildren, but the hall committee at Byford objected, and I think quite rightly, because the building is a very old weatherboard structure. They would not allow the kerosene heaters to be used, so the children, together with their teacher have had to sit through the freezing days of winter with no heat. I know this is not a matter of great magnitude, but I feel efforts should be made to overcome the situation.

One other school I would mention is that at Maddington, which recently was appointed to be a centre for the tuition of trainee teachers. This was a very wise move seeing that the school is situated reasonably close to Perth. It is an ideal site for such a school. But I would point out that the headmaster has no office; furthermore, he has to teach in a room within 10ft. of Albany Highway.

As members know, the volume of traffic which travels along the highway during the day is astronomical. So it seems to me to be a very short-sighted policy to put a trainee school such as this one, where the senior officer has to demonstrate to prospective teachers their duties—a few feet away from Albany Highway! There are two brick rooms centrally situated in the grounds of the school, and I would suggest to the Minister, seeing that alterations will have to be made to the school, that a prefab. structure be erected well in the block away from the traffic nuisance, and the room adjacent to the highway be done away with.

I hope that the Premier, who is making notes, will pass on my comments to the ministers concerned. These things affect my electorate and they exercise my thoughts from time to time, and I feel they should be looked into by the responsible Ministers.

MR. HEAL (West Perth) [4.18]: I wish to make a few remarks on one or two items affecting the electorate of West Perth. I was fortunate enough to be elected a member of the King's Park Board. The following comments on the park may be of interest to members. Members may recall that recently many people wrote to "The West Australian" stating that there was a great deal of waste land in King's Park which could be put to better use. Many claimed that buildings such as hospitals, and even houses, should be erected in the park. I disagree with those suggestions; and, as long as I have anything to do with the King's Park Board, I hope no buildings will be erected in the area.

The park is one of the most beautiful spots in the city of Perth. If buildings were erected in it, they would spoil the scene to some extent. I would like to quote

from the leader in "The West Australian" of the 19th January, 1954. The editor made some comments in regard to the park. They are as follows:—

LOOKING AHEAD.

In a letter to "The West Australian," a correspondent has passed on what he terms a sacrilegious thought about King's Park. The thought was that it was a "waste of land" to have such a large section of the Australian bush on the doorstep when our town-planners could possibly make better use of the area. It is, of course, easy to see how such an idea may be termed sacrilegious; West Australians, not without cause, sometimes use terms like "priceless heritage" when describing King's Park. In its way it is the State's Loch Lomond, its Niagara Falls, its Central Park.

But the thought of what the town-planners could do with it if they were permitted does raise the question of how long an expanding city can allow itself the luxury of a bushland area of this size right at its heart. King's Park is nearly 1,000 acres in extent. On the river side it provides access to some grand views; on the inland sides it is less prepossessing. In time, too, the value of the park as a native flora reserve will, through natural causes, tend to dwindle. Then future generations may ask themselves whether they should not take some proportion to provide for new development. Part may one day be turned into a recreation ground; another section may be used as a building site, perhaps for a public hospital. This could be done while still leaving Perth with an asset that the citizens of many larger cities would envy.

I do not agree with those views—

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: And no one else does, either.

Mr. HEAL: I certainly hope that they will not be followed. I have before me a copy of a brochure which is distributed to people who make inquiries when they visit King's Park. I should like to quote a few passages from it in order that a brief history of the park may be placed on record—

Welcomes take many forms and that provided by the beauty of King's Park is something the visitor to Perth and Western Australia will long remember.

This delightful area of natural bush land along whose eastern boundary the lovely Swan River wanders to the sea, and which has for neighbours attractive suburban homes and gardens, is dedicated and permanently reserved for the preservation of its indigenous flora, the only variation from this policy being a fringe of lawns and shrubberies in certain situations to meet intensive public usage.

The renown of Western Australian wild flowers is amply substantiated by the display in King's Park where many years of close protection has greatly increased the numbers to be seen.

The original high forest, either burnt by bush fires or felled for timber long before the area was reserved as a park is now being restored by reforestation and is being afforded protection from bush fires.

The park is administered by the King's Park Board, members of which are appointed by the State Government. Finance for maintenance and development is provided by a Government grant.

Many prominent citizens have acted as members of the board. Recently, the Chief Justice, Sir John Dwyer, decided to tender his resignation as a member of the board. I believe that he had been president for more than 20 years, and regarded the park as part of his life and did much for its advancement. The present board consists of Sir Thomas Meagher, an ex-Lord Mayor of Perth, as president; the present Lord Mayor, Mr. Murray; Sir Joseph Totterdell; Mr. Baron Hay; Mr. Boas; and Mr. Smith, Under Secretary for Lands. Mr. Watson is the superintendent and secretary, and does a fine job for the park.

[Mr. Brady took the Chair.]

Many people seem to think that the superintendent's job is a very easy and pleasant one. Certainly, it has its pleasant side, but in the summer months he is continually called out at all hours to deal with fires in the park. Last summer there were 24 fires that burnt out 80 acres of bush. Mr. Watson says that many of the fires originated through passing motorists throwing out lighted cigarette butts and by schoolboys going into the bush and lighting fires. We appeal to people not to do these silly things, which cause the superintendent and his staff much concern.

The superintendent's residence is at the top of Malcolm-st. There is another house at the Subiaco end, where one of the board's employees lives. The board intends in the near future to build a house for another employee at the entrance gates near the University. The three homes will be connected by telephone and, in the event of a fire emergency, the men will be able to contact each other quickly and get to the fire in time to save the burning of many acres of the park. The tea-rooms were built many years ago, and the board has plans for the building of a new structure. Proceeding with the history of the park—

In 1871 the then Governor of Western Australia Sir Frederick Weld suggested an area of land around Mt. Eliza to be reserved "for the purpose of a public park" and following up this suggestion Mr. (later Sir) Malcolm

Fraser, who was Commissioner of Crown Lands and Surveyor General in Western Australia, made the necessary recommendations to reserve for the people the first large area of land that, together with another area afterwards made available by Mr. John (later Lord) Forrest, ultimately became known as King's Park.

In 1873 Mr. Fraser had 452 acres of Crown land gazetted as a public park and Mr. Forrest added 550 acres to this in 1890. Some private land overlooking the river was repurchased and after adjustment of boundaries in later years, the area today is approximately 1,000 acres.

The establishment and early development of the park depended upon the energies in many ways of a few public-spirited men whose names are commemorated in drives and walks. Fraser, Forrest, Hackett, Lovekin, and Poole are thus remembered, whilst in recent years the sterling work of Saw and Law has been similarly recognised.

About seven miles of motor roads and many footpaths traverse the park, while four large parking areas overlooking the Swan River are situated along Forrest Drive.

There are many features in the park of interest to visitors. Unfortunately, many residents of the metropolitan area omit to view them, but people from the country and from the Eastern States are invariably enamoured of the beautiful views. I quote further from the brochure—

To the visitor from the city arriving via Malcolm Street, entrance is along Fraser Avenue. The superintendent's residence and office is immediately on the right, whilst on the left is a fine display of 100 hydrangeas under a large Moreton Bay fig tree.

Close by is a 15in. shell from H.M.S. Queen Elizabeth, the ship which helped to cover the operations of the A.I.F. at Anzac. This shell was presented to the park by Earl Beatty and is used as a collection box to help defray the cost of maintenance of fallen servicemen's commemorative trees which are growing around park drives.

A very fine memorial to W.A. men killed in the South African War stands close by the Queen Elizabeth shell.

Directly behind the superintendent's office is a children's playground, and close to this is the park nursery, where are raised the many thousands of trees that are being planted in the bush areas of the park. The nursery is not open to the public.

Passing further along Fraser Avenue, which is lined with lemon-scented gums (*eucalyptus citriodora*) planted in 1938, there is, on the right, the memorial erected by the 10th Light

Horse Regiment to those of their mates who did not return from war, and close by this is the kiosk used for band concerts. Further back and surrounded by pine trees (*pinus radiata*) is the Mt. Eliza Reservoir of a capacity of approximately 33,000,000 gallons. The waters of Canning Dam and other hills reservoirs are stored here and elevation permits of reticulation all over the metropolitan area. It must be noted that the public is not permitted entry to the reservoir grounds. Passing along from here, and still on the right, is a fine statue of Queen Victoria in coronation robes, the statue being flanked by four guns now well over 100 years old.

Members may have noticed that during the summer months the lawns do not look as well as they should. This is mainly due to the fact that the reticulation system, which was installed many years ago, consists of only 2 in. mains. In the near future, the board desires to have the size of the mains increased in order that the lawns may be adequately watered.

There are at present a number of facilities in King's Park; but if land is thrown open for more building, I think it will do much to reduce the glamour of that area. At present we have there the King's Park Tennis Club, King's Park Bowling Club, the Edith Cowan Memorial, the office of the board, the nursery, the South African War Memorial, the Light Horse Memorial, the Queen Victoria Memorial, the State War Memorial, the Jewish Memorial, the Lord Forrest Memorial and the tearooms which occupy the old bandstand.

At present King's Park is serving the City of Perth and the State of Western Australia very well and I am convinced that the future development which the present board has in mind will make this park a still more beautiful sight. I have been looking through past copies of "Hansard" and have not found there much relating to King's Park, but I would quote one matter discussed in this House on the 14th November, 1939. The Minister for Lands at that time, Hon. M. F. Troy, in moving the second reading of the Reserves Bill, said—

The Bill embraces some proposals which have come before the Lands Department, and which have been finalised up to the stage when Parliamentary approval becomes necessary. The first proposal relates to the elimination of small areas from the King's Park and Observatory reserves, both being Class A reserves, with the object of providing for the circus at the entrance to King's Park and of permitting of the widening of King's Park Road entrance from Thomas Street. Members are aware that much of the work has already been done. I regard the proposal as of distinct advantage both to King's Park and to the city.

So much for King's Park. I wish now to deal with the most interesting speech delivered last night by the member for North Perth and, although I do not agree entirely with all he said, I feel that he brought forward many points that the Government should take into consideration. He gave the House an exhibition of certain hand signals and I think that it is his hope that many of them will be cut out. He also mentioned a matter which is of considerable concern to my electorate and here I refer to the traffic along Hay-st. between King-st. and Milligan-st. Members know the bottleneck that exists in that street at times. It is seldom that a tram finds a clear passage along Hay-st. and is able to proceed without half-a-dozen stops between the Town Hall and Milligan-st.

I realise that trams are one of the quickest methods of moving people from one point to another, but I feel that they are now out of date and should be replaced by more mobile units. I am convinced that they are to blame for a lot of the traffic bottlenecks that at present exist in the city area. If one is unfortunate enough to be travelling in a motorcar behind a tram, the usual experience is to have to stop every time the tram stops, thus holding up all the traffic behind. I suggest to the Minister for Transport that if he could see his way clear to removing the trams from Hay-st.—especially in the centre of the city—he would do much towards clearing up one of the worst of the present bottlenecks.

As the member for North Perth explained last night, motor-trucks and other vehicles are often double-parked on both sides of Hay-st. I realise that the commercial vehicles are at a disadvantage as there are only very narrow lanes for them to back into in order to deliver their goods and I am sure the time is fast approaching when the parking of private cars in the city will have to be abolished. I think many members are aware of the position that exists as they now leave their cars outside Parliament House and proceed downtown by tram or bus in order to do their business.

I support the member for North Perth in the appeal he made to the Government to appoint a select committee to inquire into our traffic problems. I was approached recently by a number of business people operating in the city who were concerned about parking problems. They asked me to introduce a deputation to the Minister, which I did. Most of these business houses are in the vicinity of the intersection of William and Wellington-sts. They explained that one of their troubles is that since the buses were shifted from Wellington-st. into Murray-st. their business has fallen off by at least £100 per week. They put forward to the Minister a number of sound ideas as to why the

buses should be put back to where they originally were. I believe that the result of moving the Scarborough and North Beach buses into William-st. has simply been the shifting of heavy traffic further into the centre of the city, thereby causing more traffic jams.

The deputation suggested that the buses should stop further away from William-st., at King-st., but, unfortunately, the Minister and the Transport Board could not agree to that. I suggested that the traffic should be taken further over to the other side of William-st. but the Minister pointed out that one of the main reasons why the buses were shifted was that they were turning around in front of the railway station, thus causing much concern there.

I come now to a matter that is outside my electorate but which I think is worthy of mention. I refer to the facilities available to the public at present at Langley Park. Any member driving past Langley Park on a Saturday afternoon will notice 300 or 400 girls and men taking part in various forms of sport there. It is pitiful to see them having either to go down there dressed in their sports clothes or having to hide behind fences and so on in order to change into their sports gear. At present there is only one convenience there and it is not suitable to use as a place in which to change clothing.

Of course, I realise that this is not a concern of the Government, being a matter for the Perth City Council, but I understand that finance is the bugbear. If the Government considers this matter important to the youth of the State, I think it would be well advised to approach the Perth City Council and in some way share the cost of erecting the necessary facilities at Langley Park. Unfortunately that is not the only park where the same trouble exists. I often pass Monger's Lake park in the Leederville electorate and I know that the hundreds of people who take part in sport there are affected in the same way.

I am aware the Perth City Council is doing all it can with the available finance and at present it is spending many thousands of pounds on installing adequate facilities for the people at Leederville Oval. I believe that in the near future it is the intention of the Perth City Council to install similar facilities at Beatty Park at a cost of many thousands of pounds. The Government should consider this aspect and also the provision of suitable facilities for active sportsmen who are to become the citizens of the future. With those few remarks, I support the motion.

MR. McCULLOCH (Hannans) [4.41]: I wish to make some observations on the Speech of His Excellency. First of all, I desire to congratulate the Government on its decision to throw open more land for

settlement by civilians, apart from ex-servicemen. In the past such land has been allocated by the War Service Land Settlement Board, but the Government now proposes to throw land open to anybody who applies. It is most interesting when one realises the large tracts of land that still lie uncultivated in this State of ours. The total area of Western Australia is 624,588,800 acres. Of that total 242,478,692 acres have been allocated, but there are 382,110,108 acres still undeveloped. Therefore, it can be seen from those figures that over half of the State is not being utilised.

The Minister for Housing: A lot of it will probably never be used.

Mr. McCULLOCH: The other day I read of a remark by a Japanese captain of a tanker. He expressed the opinion that a large proportion of it could be put to greater use. If another nation were successful in taking over this State, I am sure it would not permit half of it to lie idle.

The Minister for Health: A greater portion of it could be used.

Mr. McCULLOCH: Anyone can drive along our country highways and see thousands of acres that are lying idle on each side of the road. The lack of water is a great problem which prevents its development, but there is no doubt that it is shameful to see land along the Great Eastern Highway and the Albany Highway still undeveloped. In the past the allocation of various tracts has been left to the War Service Land Settlement Board, but other individuals who, through no fault of their own, were unable to serve in the armed forces, should be given an opportunity to settle on such land. Therefore, the throwing open of land for this purpose should be encouraged and is a step in the right direction.

Some time ago I was told that part of a bargain that was mooted with the Japanese in the first world war was that if we gave them part of Northern Australia they would enter the war to assist the Allies at that time. However, Japan was never granted that concession. There is no reason, however, why that land should remain idle and we should take more active steps to ensure its greater use in the future.

One portion of His Excellency's Speech which interested me was that which stated that careful attention is being given to the control of the Argentine ant. Although I understand the Eastern Goldfields is not to be included in those areas that are required to make an allocation of money for the eradication of the Argentine ant, nevertheless I have received a letter from one of the local authorities on the Goldfields asking me to protest against any country districts outside the metropolitan

area being requested to strike a rate to raise money for this eradication campaign in the metropolitan area.

The amount needed for this work will be £100,000 annually for the next five years and each local authority concerned will be forced to levy its ratepayers in order to meet its expenditure quota. I wonder what would have happened if the metropolitan ratepayers had been asked to assist in the extermination of emus, grasshoppers and other vermin, some years ago.

Mr. ACTING SPEAKER: Order! There are too many private conferences going on and the speaker is not getting a fair go.

Mr. McCULLOCH: I wonder how the ratepayers in the metropolitan area would have reacted if they had been asked to contribute towards the cost of exterminating the emus, grasshoppers and other vermin in the country. I think they would have been up in arms if such a suggestion had been made. Furthermore, we in the metropolitan area know full well that unless this campaign is strictly policed, the authorities have no possible chance of exterminating the Argentine ant without wholehearted co-operation from the householders. Unless that is done, the £500,000 spent over the next five years will be wasted.

A great majority of the people are not interested in this fight against the Argentine ant. Therefore, to suggest that the people in the country should contribute towards the cost of this campaign in the metropolitan area would be extremely unfair. The member for Murchison last night pointed out the high cost of .303 ammunition, which is necessary for the control of kangaroos in the north country. I wonder what the people in the metropolitan area would say if they were asked to contribute towards the cost of controlling the kangaroo as a pest in the back country. I protest against any local authority outside the metropolitan area being rated for the eradication of the Argentine ant unless the pest is evident in its own district.

I am pleased to see that progress is being made with the placing of diesel locomotives on the railways. Strangely enough, here again the metropolitan area is to have preference. What about these long journeys of 400 miles where the train passengers have to sit up all night? Today such a trip takes about 17 hours 40 minutes and yet 30 years ago the time occupied was only 15 hours. On the suburban railways there are diesel locomotives and diesel railcars and on the roads there are the trolley-buses, diesel buses and petrol buses. Therefore, the people in the metropolitan area are well catered for. The time is overdue when some consideration should be given to the people in the outback to allow them to travel in comfort, because they have to pay for these facilities in the same way as those in the metropolitan area.

Next I will refer to the question of railway level crossings. In 1951 I asked a question in the House concerning warning signals being placed on the railway crossing at Kalgoorlie. Strangely enough there are only two outlets from the centre of Kalgoorlie: one at North Kalgoorlie and the second in another part of the town. One is an overhead bridge and the other is a level crossing. Only three years ago I was told that the apparatus and the material for the installation of warning signals were not available.

Nevertheless, I have seen flashing lights being installed at several level crossings since then. The reply that I received to my question was that some committee—I do not know which one—fixes the priority for the installation of these warning signals at level crossings. It is time the committee was changed, because it does not know what it is doing. Flash signals have been installed at the Coolgardie crossing where two trains pass through a day, yet at the Chapple-st. crossing in Kalgoorlie, where shunting goes on all the time, there are no flashlights. There has not been any collision between a vehicle and a locomotive at the Coolgardie crossing, but there have been some collisions at the Chapple-st. crossing.

I have been told that the installation of these lights at the Chapple-st. crossing is a No. 3 priority. The committee has just decided that the second priority jobs should be completed. The Liveseys siding along Great Eastern Highway has flash-light signals. About four trains pass through that siding each day. Motorists have plenty of warning, because they can see passing trains from a long way off; yet flashlights have been installed there for three years.

Another matter which concerns the Goldfields is water supply. Over and over again we have been informed the supply will be plentiful the next year. We have been told that the department concerned could not get steel plates for the manufacture of water mains. We know that there is an abundance of water in Mundaring Weir, but the task is to convey it to the people in the back country. Strangely enough, there is plenty of steel piping for the 30in. main to Kwinana. No difficulty was experienced in obtaining materials for this main; yet when the question arose as to supplying the people in the back country, who more or less have paid for the Goldfields water scheme over and over again, they were told that water restrictions would again be imposed in the coming summer.

Last summer market gardeners were working from morning till night for seven days a week to save their crops because of water restrictions. They must have lost thousands of pounds worth of vegetables in that period. The department permitted the people to plant their vegetables right up to December, and then turned around

and told the people that they could not expect water for their gardens except at a reduced scale during the hot months. This is unfair. But newcomers from Abadan can establish an oil refinery here, get all their requirements for housing, water and rail service, yet the people who pioneered this State, who have paid for this scheme, cannot get sufficient water in the hot months. It is time that a different outlook was taken in that regard.

On the question of schooling I wrote to the Minister for Education not very long ago. I wish to quote from that correspondence. The first is a letter written by the Kalgoorlie Road Board applying for a disused hall at Grant's Patch. Grant's Patch is non-existent today as a mining centre and the public hall is not in use. We asked for the hall, which was needed at South Kalgoorlie. The application was rejected because the Railway Department wanted to shift that hall to Bunbury. It can be seen how easily the hall could be shifted to South Kalgoorlie. That can be done by lifting it on to a jinker, driving it to Kalgoorlie and unloading it on to the stumps. But the Railway Department has decided to dismantle the hut, drag it to the railway siding at Broad Arrow, then tranship it to the State railways, take it to Bunbury and re-erect it for use as an amenities hut for W.A.G.R. employees. The letter is dated the 13th May, 1954, and reads as follows:—

I have been directed to contact you with reference to the public hall at Grant's Patch. No doubt you are aware that it was purchased at a public auction in recent years by the W.A. Government Railways for amenities and it is believed that the hall will shortly be transferred to Bunbury.

As there is a vital shortage of school accommodation on the Goldfields, my Board feels that if proper approaches were made, the hall could remain here and be re-erected to advantage.

The South Kalgoorlie Parents and Citizens' Association were primarily responsible for the latest move to retain the hall and have been asked to approach the Education Department and request them to purchase the building for that particular school, should it be made available.

Your co-operation in this urgent need would be greatly appreciated.

I wrote to the Education Department in connection with the matter and put up what I thought was a fair case to try to retain the hall for the Goldfields. I received this letter in reply—

2nd June, 1954.

Dear Mr. McCulloch,

With regard to your letter dated the 19th May, I enclose for your information a copy of a letter which I have

today addressed to the Hon. Mr. Styants regarding the request for the transfer of the Grant's Patch hall to the South Kalgoorlie school.

The enclosed letter reads as follows:—

Minister for Railways,

With regard to your memo. of the 18th May with which you forwarded copy of a circular letter of the 13th May from the secretary of the Kalgoorlie Road Board, I regret to have to inform you that it is not possible to agree to the request from the local residents that the public hall at Grant's Patch should be dismantled and removed for re-erection at the South Kalgoorlie school.

In conveying this information to you I should like to point out that, although there is a hat room in use as a classroom at this school, conditions generally compare favourably with those obtaining in many other country centres where detached halls and varying other temporary measures have had to be resorted to to provide classroom accommodation. In addition there is some doubt in the minds of my departmental officers that the enrolment figures at this school will be maintained at their present level.

Even if it were possible to accede to your request, it is extremely doubtful whether the Treasury Department would agree to the expenditure of the funds necessary at this stage, in view of the limited funds which are available to meet the extremely pressing demands from many other parts of the State.

Minister for Education.

This hut has been standing for years and there might even be a few white ants in the timber, yet we find the Railway Department is intending to transfer it to Bunbury. I do not disagree that workers should have amenities, but surely there is plenty of timber and corrugated iron around Bunbury to enable the Railway Department to put up a hut, instead of going 500 miles into Grant's Patch to get one. I hope that something will be done about this matter.

When I informed the Kalgoorlie residents about this matter, they told me not to be silly. They could not believe that the Railway Department intended taking the hut away when it was required in Kalgoorlie. The department considers that we do not require the hut. I point out, however, that in Kalgoorlie we have had to use a hat room as a school room. This is the only school in Kalgoorlie where there is vacant land available for the purpose of putting up any structure.

I think that the Education Department is only guessing when it says that the number of scholars will decrease. My

opinion is that the number will increase. The school at West Kalgoorlie has been closed for 15 or 16 years, and the children have to go to South Kalgoorlie or another half-mile to the central school to obtain education. The department says there is no acute shortage of accommodation at South Kalgoorlie. I say there is, and the hall would have been very acceptable to these people there; but instead, it has been shifted elsewhere.

Mr. May: The member for Bunbury must be a fast worker.

Mr. McCULLOCH: Yes. Another matter on which I want to touch is the condition of our roads. This is something that affects not only the Goldfields but other country areas. Some time ago a rig was taken to Exmouth Gulf for the oil-drilling operations. I was interested in the matter and had a look at the machinery. At Guildford, men were engaged in strengthening the highway to enable it to carry the traffic. The fact is that our highways are not sufficiently well built to take the traffic which uses them. As a matter of fact, the rig of which I have spoken was taken around via York because it could not be taken across the railway bridge at Clackline as it was too heavy.

Heavy machinery is being transported over these roads; and, in time to come, still heavier machinery will be taken from one place to another. And in order to enable it to be transported, men from the Main Roads Department will have to be engaged, as they were recently, in putting props under culverts. The time has come when we should look to what will face us in years to come. Twenty years ago we would have thought that our roads would be able to take any traffic; but the fact is that there is not a highway in the country capable, without being strengthened at culverts and bridges, of being utilised for the transport of heavy machinery. The member for Wembley beaches was correct when he said that we must look ahead and prepare for the future.

I would like to say something about civil defence. We have heard a good deal about A-bombs, H-bombs and C-bombs, and I suppose we will have some other sort of bomb later on. No attempt, however, has been made to provide shelters for the civil population in the event of such bombs being used in our midst. I do not think that the ordinary dug-outs would be of much use, but I consider people should have some sort of shelter to which they could go. If such shelters were provided, they would feel more secure. A defence authority should be set up. Not that I visualise any bombs being dropped; I feel certain they will not be.

But we should let the people see that the Government has some interest in safety precautions, and a committee should be set up which could provide for underground safety zones to be established.

Some cost would be involved, but it should not be very heavy. Shelters were provided during the last war; but there has been progress in the production of destructive weapons since that time, and more adequate provision is required. We do not know what may happen in a few years' time; but the civilian population should be given some sense of security by knowing that in an emergency they would have somewhere to go.

Recently I had inquiries from one of my constituents on the Goldfields who is interested in the export of rabbits. It appears that on the Nullarbor plain at present there are two trappers who have refrigerated vans and who are catching rabbits for consumption in Western Australia. I understand, however, that other rabbits are to be used for another purpose. From inquiries I have made at various Commonwealth departments, it would appear that there have been two trial shipments of rabbit carcasses to America. They are not being sent there for consumption, but the idea is to extract chemical substances from them, to be used, I expect, for the production of some substance to kill somebody.

I understand that it is of no consequence if the rabbits have been poisoned by myxomatosis or by the newest poison which has been produced for the destruction of rabbits. The people in America are not worried about the pelts; they want the carcasses. I understand that they are also interested in kangaroo carcasses. It seems to me that instead of our poisoning all these animals, it would be better for us to make inquiries as to whether they could not be put to use in the manner I have indicated. I have told members how far my inquiries have gone. There appears to be a hold-up in the matter caused by the trade commissioner in San Francisco. Eventually, however, we should learn whether the trial shipments have been successfully used. If so, we should have in that connection a reliable trade in rabbit carcasses.

HON. A. V. R. ABBOTT (Mt. Lawley) [5.10]: Some confusion seems to have arisen about the comment made by the member for Collie in connection with the fact that, apparently, one of his constituents could not get a war service home as quickly as he wished. That is regrettable, but it is also regrettable that the blame was placed on the Commonwealth Government. When I give the information which the Minister for Housing was courteous enough to supply me with a few minutes ago, members will be satisfied that I was right when I interjected that the statement by the member for Collie was not correct.

Mr. May: You are going to be a long time.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I admit, first of all, that the hon. member's applicant probably had to wait 12 months for his house, but what I intended to imply by my interjection was that it was not as a result of action by the Commonwealth Government. My note of what the hon. member said is this—

This Bill will not, but I am going to give the House one of the reasons why there is dissatisfaction and one reason why the building of homes is being held up by the Federal Government in its policy on war service homes. It is well known by members who have occasion to deal with applications of ex-servicemen that an application cannot begin to function until 12 months after the date it was made.

I interjected that that was not correct. Later, the hon. member said—

That is my reason for bringing this matter before the House, my object being to prove that the Federal Government, through the War Service Homes Division, is penalising the ex-servicemen in making them wait unnecessarily for a year before being able to start building their homes.

First of all, I wish to say that it is known that the State Housing Commission in Western Australia acts as agent for the War Service Homes Department, and, of course, it can only carry out its duties in accordance with the functions and financial arrangements, that are made with the Commonwealth Government or the War Service Homes Department. There are only two requirements necessary for a supply of war service homes—one is finance and the other materials. I think I shall be able to convince the House that the reason why applicants for war service homes are not satisfied more quickly is that it is impossible at the present time to supply more homes than are being built.

I am not suggesting for a moment that that is the fault of the Housing Commission or the Minister. It must be admitted that there is only a certain quantity of material available in Western Australia, and the best use must be made of it. A certain amount must go to rental homes, because rental homes are necessary, and a certain amount to war service homes, and some must be applied to the construction of other buildings, such as shops and factories because, with an expanding population, we must keep as near as possible to an even balance. Has the Commonwealth Government supplied all the money that can be utilised in Western Australia? The Minister thinks, by his answer to me, it has. I asked the question—

How much money was made available by the Commonwealth Government to Western Australia for war

service homes for the financial year 1953-54; and how much was actually utilised?

His answer was—

Allocation September, 1953:
£3,902,300.

Amended allocation January, 1954:
£4,080,000.

Revised estimates, April, 1954:
£3,864,000 following experience with tenders and delayed rate of completion of homes.

In other words, there was a surplus of £400,000.

Mr. May: Which makes your argument much worse.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: So the money was available.

Mr. May: That is right. There is no excuse there.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: All right! The next question I asked was—

How many war service homes (to be built through the State Housing Commission) were allocated to Western Australia for the financial year 1953-54; and how many were able to be built during that year?

The answer was that the number allocated was 1,273, and that the State built 1,214. I think that is quite a good effort, but the Commonwealth estimate was that there would be more houses than the State was actually able to build.

The Minister for Housing: That is not correct.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The Commission did not actually build them.

The Minister for Housing: Because of conditions imposed by the Commonwealth.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: We will see if that is so.

The Minister for Housing: It is very definitely so.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I shall be perfectly fair. My next question was—

How many homes (to be purchased already built for the purpose of war service homes on behalf of applicants) were allocated to Western Australia for the financial year 1953-54?

In other words, an applicant for a war service home, if he is able to purchase a home already built, can do so, and can be financed by the War Service Homes Department.

Mr. May: There is no disagreement on that point.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I point out that the allocation was 217, but the State Housing Commission managed to do more than the allocation; and it was apparently with the approval of the Commonwealth, because there were actually 263. So, more homes were purchased ready-built than were estimated or allocated, as the case may be. The third way in which assistance can be rendered is that an applicant who already has a home which is mortgaged can have the mortgage taken over by the War Service Homes Department. The estimate or allocation for that purpose to Western Australia was 118, and only 105 were actually taken over because that was the number of applicants who desired to avail themselves of this method. I think the Minister will agree with me when I say that there is no waiting list so far as those applicants who wish to purchase a home already built are concerned.

The Minister for Housing: That is true at the moment.

Mr. May: But that does not come into the argument; we are not arguing about that.

The Minister for Housing: It was true earlier in the year.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I have only recently obtained the figures from the Minister and he might be correct there. But as far as I can ascertain from the answers, there was no waiting for those who wished to have mortgages repaid, and it is clear that that was the position because there was a financial surplus of some hundreds of thousands of pounds of war service homes money. The next question I asked, which will perhaps satisfy the member for Collie, was—

When the State Housing Commission has accepted the eligibility of an applicant for the building of a war service home, is his name placed on a list and are tenders arranged and settled for the building of the home for such applicant in order of priority according to the list and as soon as the commission is able to arrange for the building of such home?

The answer was—

Yes, and this at present involves a waiting period of approximately 12 months except emergent cases which are dealt with out of priority.

So it is only reasonable that, when supplying homes during a period of shortage, there should be no preference and all persons in Western Australia should take their turn. I admit that that is the policy of the Commonwealth Government, rightly or wrongly. In other words, that Government says that all Western Australians shall take their turn according to the date their applications were accepted. This

prevents a preference being given to those who might have some influence, to those who might be able to get materials more easily than others—as always happens when there is an open go.

If this policy were not adopted some applicants might have friends who could supply them with materials more quickly than others could obtain them and so it is not unfair that applicants should be placed on a list; and, as the State Housing Commission is agent for the Commonwealth Government, it can let the contracts for these homes in the order of priority of the applicant. So to my question, "Does the State let the contracts and get these houses built as soon as possible?" the Minister must answer "Yes."

The Minister for Housing: If you read my answer to Question No. 10, you would find that for individual homes tenders are received in only a percentage of cases.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I agree that that is so. But it is a fact that the State Housing Commission builds these houses—or gets them built by contract or otherwise—as quickly as possible.

Hon. Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver: And some of them wait for a long time.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The applicants take their turn according to the date they applied and were placed on the list.

The Minister for Housing: Does this not seem ridiculous: If we cannot get tenders in Perth, and we have the money and applicants have the land, plans and a builder ready to proceed in, say, Collie, that we cannot do so for 12 months?

Mr. May: Because it is Commonwealth Government policy.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I admit it is arguable; but as the Minister knows, there is a limited amount of building materials available, and if bricks, timber and other materials go to Collie it deprives someone else of them. It may be wrong or it may be right; I think it is right and all applicants should take their turn and get their houses built as soon as possible. Someone might say, "Why build so many rental homes? Why not build war service homes, because if you cut down the number of rental homes you would get more war service homes built?" But would that be fair? The Minister has the responsibility of allocating the materials available to him.

Mr. May: It does not matter whether the materials are available or not. It is the policy of the Commonwealth Government not to start an applicant's house until 12 months after he has lodged his application. You stick to that point.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: That is incorrect.

Mr. May: I have proved it to you.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: It is not incorrect. I am sorry; the hon. member is getting me all mixed up. I should have said that his statement was not correct. If the State Housing Commission could get these houses built tomorrow—

Mr. May: It could not do it.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I know, but that is not the policy of the Federal Government.

Mr. May: Of course it is.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I might claim—without justification, I admit—that it is because of neglect by the State Housing Commission, and the Minister who is its head. But, of course, that would not be fair. I know that the Minister is doing his best to get as many war service homes built as possible. He has not been told, nor is there any suggestion, that he shall delay building. The money is there, and as soon as the physical effort can be made to get the houses built, they will be erected. But there happens to be a lag. Why is there a lag? Simply because the State situation does not enable war service homes to be built.

Mr. May: That is perfectly untrue.

The Minister for Housing: Unfortunately, up to August we had what was known as the special advance method, but Western Australia was told to cease work with that project. That is what the member for Collie and the R.S.L. are complaining about.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: That is not so now. I was not given any information about what happened last August, but I do know that what I have stated is the actual position now. Is it not?

The Minister for Housing: Yes, except that you did not ask questions about the special advance cases.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: No.

The Minister for Housing: I think you cleverly avoided it.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: You had all the money you wanted; you had £400,000 that you could not use.

The Minister for Housing: Because of the restrictions imposed by the Commonwealth.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: But there is no restriction.

The Minister for Housing: There is.

Mr. May: Yes, there is.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: No, there is not.

The Minister for Housing: Every day the Housing Commission is sending out to applicants for war service homes, letters couched in language similar to that in the letter read by the member for Collie.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: In that case, you cannot jolly well build houses.

The Minister for Housing: No, that is not so.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes.

Mr. ACTING SPEAKER: The member for Mt. Lawley has the floor.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: There is a lag of 12 months because people take priority according to the list, and that is only fair. The first applicant shall get the first house, and there is no special account or anything else.

The Minister for Housing: But there has always been.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: But there is not now.

The Minister for Housing: No, because the Commonwealth will not agree, except in rare cases.

Mr. May: You cannot talk yourself out of this one.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I suggest that the Minister's answers, which will go into "Hansard" prove conclusively that what I say is right.

The Minister for Housing: You ask the R.S.L. or the Air Force Association.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I have already told the Minister that I know something about the R.S.L. and his answers prove it. The Minister cannot build a house, even though the money is there.

The Minister for Housing: If the Commonwealth would leave us alone, we would.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: All that the Commonwealth has said is that every returned soldier in Western Australia, who applies for a war service home, shall be put on an equal basis whether he lives in the country or in the metropolitan area, whether he knows a contractor or whether he does not, or whether he knows a brick-maker or not. Those who have been accepted first shall be served first. The Commonwealth provides the money and the State provides the buildings, so that is that.

Mr. May: That is not so.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I have only two other matters to discuss, one of which the Premier will agree is only trifling. I wonder if the Premier could use his influence to have the Telephone Directory altered insofar as it relates to State departments so that from the index the average man could find the particular section of the department he requires. It would not be a great effort, and it would be a considerable help to the general public.

The second matter I wish to mention is one which, I admit, has been a hardy annual with me, but I make no apology for

bringing it forward again. It is something which in years to come will give great pleasure to many citizens of Perth and Western Australia, and also to those who travel to this State from other parts of the world. We have not got a botanical garden; a place where many of our wild trees could be grown and be readily accessible to the people of the State and those who visit it from overseas.

The Premier: What about wild oats?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: We have a situation which I think is ideal for the purpose; it is beautifully situated; it is on the Wembley-rd. and belongs to the City Council. I refer, of course, to Reabold Hill. One only has to go to Reabold Hill to see what I mean. I wish the Premier was able to spare a few minutes; I would like to drive him there in my own car at my own expense.

The Premier: What about the risk?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The Premier would have to take that; but after having listened to the member for North Perth very attentively, I do not think there would be any risk at all. There is a lake there, and I am informed that the soil is entirely suitable. Surely some arrangement could be made with the City Council to transfer a sufficient area to the State Gardens Board in exchange for many areas that are held by the Government, and which would be entirely suitable and useful to the City Council.

I refer, particularly, to the reclamation area adjacent to the Causeway. That could be made into playing fields for use by the City Council or it could be used for gardens. That would, of course, be for the council to decide. This area would adjoin the Swan River, and would only extend the very large area along the river in Perth which is already dedicated to the use of the citizens of the metropolis by way of gardens that have been transferred to the City Council for that purpose.

The Minister for Education: What is the area available at Floreat Park?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I understand the minimum area that would be required would be 250 acres: I think there are 1,000 acres there. Of course there are arguments for and against. The council says it is the only level ground that could be made use of for recreation purposes. But a botanical garden situated at Reabold Hill would be a very fine recreational facility, and I would readily approve any grant that the Government might care to make for this purpose, because I do think it would fill a long-felt want in Western Australia. I also feel that if the matter is left for a few years, it will be too late; the opportunity will have gone and the land will have been utilised for other purposes; vested interests will have been obtained in this land, and we will never have a botanical garden.

The Premier: I was advised recently that the land at Reabold Hill is not available for development as a botanical garden.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: That is the trouble. I know that what the Premier says is correct; it is not available because it belongs to the City Council and their intention is to use it for recreational purposes.

Mr. Nimmo: We do not want the Government to have a share in it.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The City Council might be prepared to negotiate an exchange. There is another way in which it could be done. Perhaps the City Council would care to contribute to a botanical garden and the Government could subsidise the council. We find that £10,000 is being spent on the Zoological Gardens; not that I am not interested in the zoo, nor do I suggest that it does not afford pleasure to a number of children. But there are a number of animals being fed in the zoo that could be done away with. They are not suitable. Lions and tigers could be shown in their natural condition by means of pictures. They are not very pleasant things; they are smelly, and most objectionable. Yet we spend £10,000 a year in subsidising the zoo. If we could only spend £5,000 a year to subsidise the Perth City Council, I am sure they would set aside a sufficient area for the establishment of a botanical garden.

Mr. Yates: The South Perth Road Board would be very pleased to see the Zoological Gardens removed from that area, and so would a number of the residents.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I do not think it is a very pleasant establishment. If one has any imagination, one would object to seeing monkeys living under such conditions; they become diseased. It is absolutely unnatural to find large animals living under such conditions. They become most unpleasant and they must surely be a misery to themselves. The small children who see them do not really appreciate what they are seeing, or what is being illustrated to them. It would be much better to present these creatures in coloured pictures of such places as the National Park in South Africa.

The Premier: A Government committee is looking around to see if there is an alternative site that will be suitable for a botanical garden.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I am very pleased to hear that. I think it is something that every big city and State should have. We have so many natural advantages by way of parklands, and it is a great pity that we have no botanical garden.

Mr. Nimmo: The best land in the State.

The Premier: Where is the best land in the State? What about Grass Valley?

Question put and passed; the Address adopted.

BILLS (14)—FIRST READING.

- 1, State Government Insurance Office Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Minister for Labour.
 - 2, Electoral Act Amendment.
 - 3, Matrimonial Causes and Personal Status Code Amendment.
 - 4, Coroners Act Amendment.
 - 5, Warehousemen's Liens Act Amendment.
 - 6, Inquiry Agents Licensing.
 - 7, Constitution Acts Amendment.
 - 8, Reprinting of Regulations.
 - 9, Crown Suits Act Amendment.
 - 10, Jury Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Minister for Justice.
 - 11, Inspection of Scaffolding Act Amendment.
 - 12, Public Works Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Premier for the Minister for Works.
 - 13, Police Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Premier for the Minister for Police.
 - 14, Stamp Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Treasurer.
- House adjourned at 5.51 p.m.*

QUESTION.**MIDLAND JUNCTION ABATTOIR.***As to Slaughtering Charges.*

Hon. L. A. LOGAN (for Hon. A. R. Jones) asked the Chief Secretary:

In view of the fact that I am desirous of making a comparison of the costs or charges for slaughtering of livestock prior to, and since, the Government took over the running of the Midland Junction Abattoir, will the Minister ask those supplying the information to cease being facetious and give this House the following information:—

- (1) What charge, per head or per pound, was made for the slaughtering and handling of stock from the killing pen to the point of delivery to butcher's van prior to the Government's completely taking over the handling and slaughtering of livestock on the 5th July, in respect of—
 - (a) sheep;
 - (b) lambs;
 - (c) pigs;
 - (d) cattle?
- (2) What charge, per head or per pound, is now made for the slaughtering and handling of stock from the killing pen to the point of delivery to butcher's van in respect of—
 - (a) sheep;
 - (b) lambs;
 - (c) pigs;
 - (d) cattle?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

The reply was the answer to the question and was not facetious. The hon. member is apparently unaware that prior to the Abattoir Board taking over full operational control at Midland Junction, the Government charged an abattoir fee to individual private operators covering the hire of killing space and facilities at the abattoir.

The actual handling of livestock from the holding pens to the killing pens and slaughtering of the animals was carried out by the operator through his own employee and at his additional cost. This cost varied according to—

- (a) whether official tallies were observed;
- (b) whether slaughtering was at ordinary or overtime rates;
- (c) whether penalty rate for types was paid and included extra to those such other additional factors as insurance, holiday pay, workers' compensation, etc.

Because of these latter variables which are known only to the individual operator and not to the abattoir authority it is not possible to state the slaughtering costs.

Legislative Council

Tuesday, 20th July, 1954.

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

ASSENT TO BILL

Message from the Lieut.-Governor received and read notifying assent to the Supply Bill (No. 1), £16,500,000.