

expect it to have been done up to now ; but before the House meets again I hope Ministers will tell us what they intend to do. It is true, as the Minister for Lands says, they may do it first and tell us afterwards ; but that is not the right course ; Parliamentary practice requires that Ministers should tell us first. The matter of water supply is being attended to actively in the agricultural districts by the energetic Minister for Lands, but he forgets that I carried most of the scheme he is undertaking up to a certain point, a point that helps him to go on with the work. Why not be generous ? Ministers have taken credit for many works. Many of the works were well under way before we left office. I had 24 road clearers and water supply carters out when I left office, and two years ago I established a system of sinking dams and wells and clearing roads for outback settlers.

The Minister for Mines : How many storage tanks did you put on the Dowerin-Merredin railway ?

Mr. MITCHELL : I ordered them to be put in ; it was entirely my idea, and if credit is due to anyone credit should be given for setting the work going. The Goomalling water scheme should be actively pushed on. Goomalling is a rising township and there is a tremendous settlement between there and Northam. The people are in a bad way for water, as unfortunately many of their wells are going salt. The Minister has inquired into this work, and I hope he will push on with it as soon as possible because it is urgently needed. I hope Ministers will remember it is not only the actual work of administration that counts, it is the influence of Government that counts. The work of a Government is an easy matter because they have competent officers, but the influence of a Government is quite another matter. I urge Ministers in this connection to consider well before altering the policy that has meant so much to Western Australia. At any rate, theirs is the responsibility. I am quite ready to admit they will not readily take responsibility without serious thought ; but after six years of

experience in the House, and after a life devoted to business, I am probably justified in expressing some opinion about the work of the Government. It is the influence of Government that counts. This great country needs men and money. It can get men and money ; it is for Ministers to do the work. Unless the work of development in the outback country is actively pushed on, the building now going on in Perth will stop. There is no need to be afraid of the future. There is a glorious outlook in every direction. There are immense possibilities, which only need skilful and bold handling ; and if the Ministry will be brave I am sure there are enough men on their side of the House to endorse them, and I am sure all will be well in this State of ours.

[*The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Holman) took the Chair.*]

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) : I rise to support the adoption of the Address-in-Reply with that natural feeling of diffidence and timidity that a new member may possibly be expected to disclose on an occasion of this kind. In the first place I wish to join in the chorus of congratulations Mr. Speaker has received on his elevation to the honourable position he now occupies. I regret, with the members of the Government that our eastern agricultural districts are suffering from the dry season which we have experienced, and I applaud the Government for their action in publicly announcing that they intend to give an extension of rents in those cases which are worthy, instead of giving extensions in a hole and corner manner as has been the practice in the past. The present season shows us that more water supplies are required, and that when we have good seasons it is the duty of the Government to enlarge the existing water supplies, particularly in the dry districts, and those districts to the east of the Great Southern Railway. I am perfectly confident the Government will enlarge and make more permanent our water supplies in these dry districts. It is pleasing to note from His Excellency's Speech that



the Government have every confidence in the mining industry. As a Western Australian born, as one who was here in the early days, I can appreciate to the fullest extent the great difference the discovery of gold made in this country to the prospects and future of us all. The people on the goldfields look to the Minister for Mines to do a great deal more to help bona fide prospectors than was ever done in the past. It has been my fortune lately to spend some 18 months on the goldfields, and I can say throughout the goldfields the feeling existed that absentee companies, concession companies and shepherders of leases got an amount of consideration from the late Minister for Mines they were not entitled to receive. Of course the Perth Press spoke in eulogistic terms of Mr. Gregory's administration of the Mines Department; but when we remember that not one goldfields district has returned a Liberal candidate, and that the Liberal party could not get candidates on the goldfields, we can see what the people of the goldfields, who are surely entitled to judge, thought of the past Government's administration of the Mining Act in mining districts. Another significant fact to which I would like to make reference is that, although the late Minister for Mines had time to go to my electorate and address some small meetings and tell them why the farmers should not return me, he did not dare to go to one of the principal mining centres of the State where his administration was known and understood to tell the people of the goldfields what he had done for the mining industry. It is a good thing for him he did not. It is pleasing also to note from the Governor's Speech that the lodes in the Kalgoorlie and Boulder Mines are improving at depth. As a representative of an agricultural district I am always prepared to help to give a legitimate measure of assistance to the mining industry that has been such a great asset to this State. People in the agricultural districts recognise that our great goldfields markets, our local markets, are the best they have. I look to the Minister for Mines to stimulate

the mining industry by letting prospectors get possession of those leases that have been withheld from them in the past, and also by giving cheaper water to the low-grade mines. It is pleasing to learn that several new agricultural railways are to be built by the present progressive Government. I cannot help referring to the promise the Premier was good enough to make at Narrogin that the Kulin loopline would be authorised this session and built as soon as possible. It may not be known to all members of the House that the Narrogin-Kulin loopline was recommended for special priority of construction by the Railway Advisory Board just about a year ago. Since the date of that recommendation the late Government introduced 11 agricultural railways, and these railways were authorised, but they did not introduce any Bill for the construction of the Narrogin-Kulin loopline though it was recommended for special priority by their own officers. On the other hand they shelved the report of the Railway Advisory Board. It was a disgraceful action, and one that recoiled on them with vengeance at the recent elections. I am sorry the leader of the Opposition is not here to give some explanation as to why that important railway, that would have served hundreds of settlers, was shelved in that manner. I am sorry he is not here to tell us whether political influence was at work to take it away from those settlers and give it to a different locality altogether. However, I do not suppose we will ever know the reason now, but the people should know why the railway was shelved when others were authorised. That railway will serve the Dorakin area. Three years ago Sir Newton Moore promised the settlers on the Dorakin area a railway. They have never had it although the price of their land was increased to pay for the railway they did not get. I hope the Government, when they build the line, will take it right through to Kulin and not delay it at any point short of that locality. The people at Kulin have always been promised the railway. Most of the country is settled right through in 1,000 acre blocks



and the building of the railway means the difference between success and failure to a lot of men who are already on their holdings. I would like this line built with some of the expedition that was used in building the Bullfinch railway. Although that line is a failure it at any rate gives us the opportunity of seeing how railways could be built when urgently required. I would like to see the same expedition used in building a line to Kulin as was used to enable stock-jobbers and market-riggers to make so much out of the Bullfinch gold mine. It is pleasing to note the Government intend to establish a Parliament Committee for Public Works. I hope to have the honour of bringing before that committee several important proposals. The first I hope to be permitted to draw their attention to is the strong case that can be made out for the immediate construction of the Narrogin-Armadale trunk railway, as that line is required to open up a great district and to bring the whole of the Great Southern districts, Katanning, Wagin and Narrogin, and all the eastern country, 57 miles closer to Fremantle, the port of export. I look to the co-operation of the metropolitan and other members in this matter. The distance from Narrogin to Fremantle *via* York and Perth on the present route, is 174 miles, whereas *via* Armadale it would be 117 miles. What does that mean to everyone travelling to the Great Southern district and to Albany? A saving of 57 miles on the present journey. I earnestly hope before the labours of this Parliament are completed that line, at least, will be authorised and on the statute-book. I may point out that the Narrogin-Armadale railway has been recommended by the agricultural advisory board. Another proposal I hope to bring forward is that of a railway from Williams to Quindanning and Marra-dong. There is an old settled district there of 50 or 60 years standing, and there is a big population, and they have never been considered at all by Liberal Governments in the past in regard to railway facilities. When we look at the other old settlements in Western

Australia we see that the fertile valleys of the Swan, the Blackwood, the Avon and other rivers have been opened up by railways, and I look forward to the time when the fertile valley of the Williams River will be similarly opened up by the Labour Government. True it is that there are some big empty estates in that district held up, such as Boranning and Jennamartin, and I understand that when railway measures are passed the Government are given power to resume these big fertile properties. Though this power has existed in the past it has never been exercised by Liberal Governments, and I hope when the railway proposal to serve Quindanning and Marra-dong is brought forward the Government of the day will not hesitate to resume some of that unimproved land and give the owners its value in full, and settle upon it many people who will be only too glad to take it up. I hope the Minister for Lands will send down the Advisory Board to report on that proposal, and that we may be able to have its report before the Parliamentary Standing Committee when the opportunity offers. The Wagin-Darkan railway is also one that I hope to see started and I trust it will be taken down South of Darkan to serve the settlers towards Moodiarrup. With regard to the Wickiepin-Merridin line, that was authorised in January last, I am sorry the late Government did not see their way clear to make a start with the work. I thought it was amusing to hear the member for Sussex talking about the delay in the construction of that line, when he authorised it and did nothing up to the time of the elections. Now he turns around and criticises the Labour Government because they have not made a start with it in less than a month. Why did he not make a start with it? At any rate, I would urge the Government to build that railway quickly. It is a very important proposal because it is going to give direct communication between the whole of the Great Southern districts and the goldfields markets. I was sorry to hear the remark that fell



from the member for Moore when he declared that the late Government had treated his constituency as an alien district. I would like to assure the hon. member that we have a Government now that will not treat any part of Western Australia as an alien district. I would like to say also that there is another part of Western Australia which has been treated as an alien district by the Government that has lately been given its deserts by the people of the State. The late Government neglected and traduced a fertile part of Western Australia and I need hardly say to the goldfields members that I refer to the district of Esperance. I hope the new Government will remember what the late Government did not know, that the Esperance-Norseman district is part of Western Australia and is entitled to the same consideration as other parts of the State, and I hope the new Government will set to work and let the settlers in that district have the same assistance from the Agricultural Bank and the same facilities which are given to settlers elsewhere. That is all they ask for, and I claim that the people living there are entitled to it. I do not congratulate the late Premier on the way in which, to retain office, he tried at the recent elections to stir up the dead cry of coast versus goldfields. The Esperance railway was the bogey he talked about in the coastal districts, and he tried to frighten the people of the coast into voting for his candidates, but the people everywhere recognised that they had a common enemy in the late Government and they refused to be bamboozled by that cry. Living as I did on the goldfields for some time, I was pleased to find that every second man had an interest in a block of land in the agricultural districts, and the people on the goldfields freely recognised that the ultimate permanent prosperity of Western Australia depended upon its agricultural industry, and the representatives from the goldfields heartily believe that too. The goldfields people and the goldfields members alike have the common desire to see the agricultural districts in Western Aus-

tralia opened up and settled, and we all know that many of our best settlers in the agricultural areas have come from the goldfields districts. I say, let us open up all parts of the country, the Great Southern district, our fertile lands in the South-West, and let us also open up the Southern mallee farming lands between Esperance and Norseman. In that district, we were told by a majority report of the Agricultural Advisory Board that there are a million and a quarter acres of first class wheat land available for settlement, and it is gratifying to know that this year, when there are so many water difficulties in other parts of the State, every dam in that district is full, and according to the hon. member for Kalgoorlie the settlers there are cutting two tons of hay to the acre. I hope that the Government will introduce a Bill this session to open up that agricultural land, and that the Bill will provide for the construction of a line from Esperance 60 miles northwards. Amongst the reasons for feeling thankful that the people returned the Labour Government the one that strikes one most is that the people recognised that they had a common interest right throughout Western Australia. The member for Sussex tried to stir up parochialism and prejudice to get support at the recent elections, but I am pleased to say that he failed miserably in his effort. It is dangerous to have a leader of public thought in Western Australia trying to set two great sections of the community against each other, and the people showed they were not prepared to listen to that cry which he urged so persistently. I was never alarmed by the thought that we would have a goldfields Ministry, and as a matter of fact to-day we have more Labour members from the coastal districts than from the goldfields districts, and all those members have elected Ministers who, they feel confident, will be fair and just to every part of Western Australia and every section of the community. I am particularly glad to know that the Government mean to introduce a Bill for the provision of homes



for the people, and I hope the effects of that Bill will not be confined merely to the centres of large population, such as Perth, Fremantle, Narrogin and Northam. I hope the residents of the smallest agricultural centres and the men on the land as well will be permitted to take advantage of the provisions of this measure to provide homes for themselves. It is particularly desirable that the men on the land should be assisted to make homes, but it is an unpleasant feature of our settlement in new districts that we have so many bachelors established on the land. The late Minister for lands—if he were here, I would call him the Minister for Lands and Promises—used to go about the country promising to take up the question of wives for the farmers, but he never did anything in the matter at all.

Mr. Green: He was not game to stop in the house and take his medicine.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Members opposite do not know half the things that gentleman used to promise when he went round the country. I say in all seriousness that we have a great problem to face in the fact that so many of the new settlers are bachelors. I am satisfied that if the Government will assist to build houses on the land, the bachelors have the energy and enterprise to do everything necessary to see that those houses are properly tenanted.

Mr. George: Does not the Agricultural Bank assist to build homes?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: It does not, but it should do so. It is satisfactory to know that the Government intend to liberalise the Agricultural Bank, and it speaks well for the confidence the Goldfields Ministry have for the farming districts, and it speaks well for the new Government's desire to help the men on the land when they declare that to be one of the first measures they propose to introduce this session. Everyone in the country knows how the Liberal Government, a little over a year ago, voted against the liberalisation of the Agricultural Bank, and it was peculiar to me to hear the Minister for Lands say that he approved of that plank when we all know he voted

against it a little over a year ago. On the eve of the elections, of course the Liberal party suddenly discovered they intended to liberalise the Agricultural Bank, but it is very doubtful if they ever would have done it, and it is doubtful whether the financial interests of St. George's-terrace, to which some of them pay so much consideration, would have allowed them to do it. I hope that very much larger advances will be made to the settler on the land, and I hope provision will be made to take over from the private banks some of the securities which they hold.

Mr. George: The private banks would be very glad.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: They have good securities down our way. I do not know about the hon. member's district. With regard to the public service appeal board, I am sure every member is pleased to know that the Government intend to remove the Public Service Commissioner from that board, and every civil servant will be glad to know that it will no longer be necessary for him to appeal from Caesar to Caesar, from Jull to Jull, in the way he has had to do in the past. If the Public Service Commissioner had a proper sense of the fitness of things he would have refused to sit in that position, reviewing his own decisions, for so long. I am sorry that the Premier did not tell us with regard to the Public Service Commissioner's appointment that it was the intention of the Government not to ratify what had been done by the late Government. The Premier truly said it was the most monstrous action he had ever heard of when he learned that the Liberal Government had renewed Mr. Jull's appointment nearly a year before the first term of office had expired. It appears that the appointment has not been confirmed, and I hope that the Government will shortly tell us, at any rate the people expect to hear it, that they do not intend to ratify the monstrous appointment that the other Government intended to make. The leader of the Opposition said the civil servants had supported the Labour party. I do not know whether they did so, but if they did it was because

they expected justice at the hands of the Labour party, and the rank and file of the civil servants will never get justice while Mr. Jull occupies the position of Public Service Commissioner. There are people in Western Australia who believe in very low wages for the rank and file, and plenty of increases for the man of influence at the top. I can imagine that a Government who represented people with that view found that Mr. Jull admirably suited them, especially if they had the back of their heads the idea of bringing the wages of the rank and file down to 6s. a day. Such people and such a Commissioner were in thorough accord. Anybody looking through the *Government Gazette* for the last three months would find plenty of reclassifications of civil servants drawing over £300 a year, while the rank and file have been absolutely refused reclassification at all, even when given important and arduous duties to perform. I disapprove of increases to public servants drawing over £300 a year, and the giving of the most of the work to underpaid officers and temporary hands at 10s. a day. I say that the seething discontent which permeates our public service is due to the presence of the present Public Service Commissioner in his position. What can you expect when you get a Public Service Commissioner who, having the right to appoint other commissioners to assist him in classifying the public service, turned round and did the whole lot by himself? It is a sign of his unbounded arrogance, and his brazen cheek, that he should have the unblushing effrontery to classify professional men by himself: he, a mere clerk, classifying geologists, engineers, medical men, scientists, such as the Government astronomer, surveyors, architects, draughtsmen, and other experts. I say it is an insult to those professional men to ask them to accept a classification by Mr. Jull. He actually takes credit for having done it by himself, but I do not think the officers he classified give him any credit whatever for the manner in which he did it. I hope that in the reclassification of the professional branch, to take place very

shortly, the new Government will see that the professional officers are classified with the assistance of professional men, and not left to the mercies of a mere clerk any longer. I would remind Ministers that the Public Service Commissioner actually kept them in ignorance of the fact that he had been reappointed to that position until after the election for the Metropolitan-Suburban province had taken place. Why was not the Premier told about it as soon as the new Government was formed? It was kept from him until after the Metropolitan-Suburban election was over, and the civil servants in that province were not allowed to know what Mr. Gregory had done until after the poll closed. If only it could be discovered where the Press got the information after the ballot boxes closed that night, it would probably be found that it came from Mr. Jull himself. I say the fact that the Public Service Commissioner lent himself to a secret conspiracy, such as his appointment was, is a sign of his utter unfitness for the position of Public Service Commissioner. The whole spirit of the Public Service Act is that full publicity shall be given to every appointment in the public service, yet this important appointment was fixed up not only without publicity, but absolutely in the dark, and in agreeing to this Mr. Jull showed his utter incapacity to hold the position of Public Service Commissioner. I would like to remind you, too, that when Mr. Jull was first appointed the positions in his office were filled in the same way, without applications being called, as directed by the Public Service Act. Our civil servants are a fine body and I hope the Government will not leave them any longer to the mercy of Mr. Jull, an unspeakable autocrat, who, nevertheless, proved to be a mere tool in the hands of the late Government. I may say that I was pledged to my electors at practically every meeting held, to oppose to the utmost, in the interests of the civil servants, Mr. Jull's reappointment, and I say the supporters of the Labour party throughout the country will be shocked if it

should happen that this secret arrangement between the late Government and their creature be confirmed. I congratulate the members for West Perth and Claremont on the fact that it was not known before the general election that that reappointment was to be made. In regard to the Governor's Speech, I am pleased to know that the local court procedure is to be simplified. As a clerk of courts for some years I know how necessary it is that the form should be made simpler, so that people can conduct their own cases without going to a lawyer. I hope the Government will also consider the question of increasing the jurisdiction of local courts up to £500. We now have competent stipendary magistrates in different districts, and I hope the Government will consider very seriously the question of increasing the jurisdiction of the local courts in order that people will not have to come to Perth to the Supreme Court with every little case. It is a good thing to know that the Government propose to establish a court of criminal appeal. The law of the country at present protects property and gives people the right of appeal in civil cases, whereas, so far, they have had no right of appeal in criminal cases, where a man's character, reputation, personal liberty, and even his life, may be concerned. I congratulate the Government on having determined to give the right of appeal in these cases. I am glad to see also that it is intended to give civil servants full political rights. This, in my opinion, should have been done years ago. In regard to educational matters, I would like to say that more schools are required outback in the farming districts. It is a grievous thing to see fine, healthy children not receiving proper primary education, and I hope the Minister for Education will take into consideration the advisability of converting a number of largely attended half-time schools into full-time schools. Some hon. members have spoken highly of the proposed establishment of a university, and I am glad to support those remarks; but to my mind it is of far more importance

that the children of our settlers in the backblocks should get full primary education. They are not getting it to-day. I hope that, next year, the Government will bring forward the question of State manufacture of agricultural implements. All the Labour candidates in agricultural districts have promised the farmers harvesters at cost price, and I hope those promises will be fulfilled, and the settlers relieved from the grip of the machinery rings. To me one of the most pleasing results of the recent elections is the fact that the breezy optimist from Northam, for so long the Minister for Lands, has now been removed from that position. The alteration is welcomed from one end of the agricultural districts to the other. His tenure of office was marked by a complete reversal of the land policy which had obtained since the days of Sir John Forrest until he (Mr. Mitchell) became Minister. Previously any man with a stout heart and a strong pair of arms could go on the land in this country; but Mr. Mitchell so increased the fees in one way and another, and the price of land, that now a man of limited means cannot go on the land in this State with any confidence. Until immediately before the recent elections Mr. Mitchell was charging up to 25s. an acre for land 60 miles from a railway, and which, on his own classification, was shown to contain one-third sandplain. That meant that at the end of three years the new settler on that land would have to pay £60 a year rent for 1,000 acres of it. The man would not get the money off the property, and so could not pay it. I hope that when our new Land Bill is brought down it will contain a clause giving these men relief under our new conditions. The trail of the money lender was over most of Mr. Mitchell's dealings with the new settlers, and the new settlers had to pay ever since the hon. gentleman was first made Minister. Through the open columns of the *West Australian* I charged Mr. Mitchell that during his administration of the department he had increased the price of land fixed or recommended by the men who inspected



the land; that he would not let the inspector who saw the block fix the price, but that from his office in Perth (he Mr. Mitchell) used to put up that price. The hon. gentleman has never contradicted that statement, and I say he cannot. Further than that, the member for Northam introduced a policy of centralisation in connection with the land board. Before he became Minister for Lands we did occasionally have a local land board sitting in Narrogin, but never while he was Minister. I say Mr. Mitchell assisted the speculator and the estate agent by having the meetings of the land board in Perth when they ought to have been held in country districts. I hope the new Minister will once more give us local land boards, and that when there are two or three applicants for on block, the board will once more go into the district instead of sitting in Perth. I hope, too, that the chairman of the local roads board will be given a seat on the local lands boards. Also, under Mr. Mitchell's regime delays of from 12 to 18 months took place in regard to practically every application for an unsurveyed block of land, and I hope the new Minister will put an end to these delays. The reorganisation of the Lands Department was also faced by the member for Northam, and he appointed three under secretaries to help with the work. One was to deal with people whose initials ran from A. to F., the second was to deal with those from G. to M., and the third with those from N. to Z. The result was that if Mr. Brown, Mr. Jones and Mr. Smith of Narrogin came to Perth with a similar request, they had to see three separate officers; and if their requests were at all involved, they would very likely get three different replies. The alphabetical system may be a good method to deal with bank ledgers, with which the member for Northam had so long an acquaintance, but it is a bad way of dealing with settlers on the land. I hope the new Minister for Lands will try to alter that system. I hope he will give each of these under-secretaries different districts or parts of the State to deal with. Possibly one could deal with matters concerning the wheat belt, the second with matters concerning

the South-West, and the third with matters concerning mining and pastoral districts. At any rate, let us have the work distributed and not on an alphabetical basis, which is cumbersome and unfair to the officers, because each officer has to keep at his finger tips knowledge of land matters affecting the whole State instead of having to keep in touch only with matters covering separate districts or parts of the State. The late Government put up the price of poison land and sandplain to 14s. and 15s. an acre. In regard to these poison lands we are face to face with the fact that we have parts of the State that are poor, and I hope the new Government when they are bringing the Land Bill forward will bring in special regulations to deal with this inferior class of country. We are pledged to let all settlers have their land for three years rent free. Why not let them have it for seven years rent free on this particular class of country? Because anyone who will face the task of removing the poison from this poor land is one that should be encouraged. We should also encourage the selection of sandplain country. Just before the elections the member for Northam appointed a Poison Commission, and the chairman of the Commission, needless to say, came from Northam. He was sent to the Williams-Narrogin electorate on the eve of the election in the capacity of Poison Commissioner, and was paid by the State. I consider it a scandalous abuse of the people's money. That appointment was made on the eve of the election, and a gentleman, whom I am told is a close friend and political supporter of the ex-Minister for Lands, was appointed chairman. The member for Northam used the State's money to send that Commissioner into my district for a considerable part of two months immediately preceding the elections, and from what I am told the chairman of the Commission was not backward in praising the member for Northam and the Liberal Government while he was supposed to be doing his work as Commissioner. I have something else to say about the election tactics of the member for Northam. I criticised his policy in the open columns of the *West Australian* some six weeks before the election,



but he did not reply to my criticism, which was somewhat on the lines of that I have uttered to-day. He could not reply to it, and he wisely did not, but he adopted the tactics of the cuttle fish in the matter. He waited until the very week of the election and on the Saturday before the election he published a column in the Narrogin paper dealing with different land matters and with my candidature. It was a despicable action to wait until it was too late for me to make any reply at all in the newspapers in Narrogin. He referred to the fact that I was an apostle of higher prices when a Lands Department officer. I do not quite know the Parliamentary method of describing that statement, but I will risk calling it a deliberate misstatement; because, while I was in the Lands Department, I always did my best to help the people to get their land at a reasonable price. He also referred to the fact that on many occasions I had expressed my admiration for his work. Well, those occasions are unknown to me; I defy the member for Northam to tell me of one. I knew too much about his work to express any admiration or any opinion different to what I have expressed to-day. This afternoon the member for Northam uttered a number of harmless platitudes with which most of us agree about the future of the country and the agricultural industry. I agree whole-heartedly with all those platitudes; and as we have had them once, I will not repeat any of them as I might otherwise have done. It is natural, when we come to consider it, the member for Northam should criticise the new Minister in the way he did. I venture to say that, whatever the new Minister did, the member for Northam would criticise in that same manner. We must remember the member for Northam has lost a good job which the new Minister has got, and that is responsible for a good deal of the criticism that has fallen from the member for Northam to-day. The member for Northam has said that the alteration in regard to potatoes does not mean much. Well, if it does not mean much, why does he object so much? I say it means much, because it means that in the Great Southern district, where we have a big population,

we will get cheap potatoes. We could not get them, we could not afford them when the member for Northam was Minister for Lands. I would like also to refer to the way in which the member for Northam starved the Narrogin agricultural farm while he was Minister. There has been no fresh land cleared on that farm for years. I believe he treated it as badly as he could. I am pleased to see the new Premier has been good enough to say that the claims of the Narrogin agricultural farm will be considered when the question of establishing an agricultural college in Western Australia is brought up, as I believe it is to be brought up next year. I hope the new Government when bringing forward their Estimates will carefully consider the question of increasing roads board grants. The late Government cut down the grants last year to about half what they were the year before. I hope that the new Government will bring them back to the old figure and at least distribute this year in road grants as much as was distributed by the Labour Government some years ago. We have big districts to open up, and it is necessary that the roads in these districts should be adequately considered. Many members travelled over the roads in the country districts during the recent campaign, and I am sure by their experiences they will be able to judge of the urgent need for increasing road grants right throughout the agricultural districts. In conclusion I would like to say I believe the Labour Government will do good work in protecting the producer against the middleman, and will serve the best interests of the people, not only in the agricultural districts but right throughout the State. There is good work ahead of the Ministry in regard to administration as well as legislation, and in both of these directions I look to the new Government to do a lot to make Western Australia a better country in the future than it has been in the past.

Mr. ALLEN (West Perth): The last speaker, like other members on the Government side of the House, said he rose with a great deal of diffidence and timidity to speak. I must confess he displayed very little timidity in his drastic