

**QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE**

**DENTISTRY**

*Number of Clinics and Government Policy on Extension*

The Hon. V. J. FERRY asked the Honorary Minister assisting the Minister for Health:

- (1) How many dental clinics are established in this State, permanent or mobile units?
- (2) What is the Government's policy in respect of extending dental clinic services?

*Private Practices in Country Areas*

- (3) What assistance can be extended to dentists desiring to set up private practices in country areas?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied: The honourable member was good enough to give me some notice of this question, so I am able to advise him as follows:—

(1) Departmental:

3 clinics in the northern part of the State.  
12 school dental service caravans.

Perth Dental Hospital:

6 clinics.  
3 road mobile clinics.  
2 aerodental clinics.

- (2) The Government is concentrating on the development of mobile clinics in country districts and remote areas of the State where there are no available dental services, dependent, however, on the availability of necessary finance and staff.
- (3) There is an arrangement by which shire councils will construct surgeries and provide equipment. The Government will financially assist in providing the equipment and will consider joining with shire councils in a guarantee of a dentist's income.

**MINING ACT AMENDMENT BILL**

*Leave to Introduce*

**THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH** (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [3.48 p.m.]: In order to assert and maintain the undoubted rights and privileges of this House to initiate legislation, I move, without notice—

That leave be given to introduce a Bill for an Act to amend the Mining Act, 1904-1964.

Question put and passed; leave granted.

*Introduction and First Reading*

Bill introduced, on motion by **The Hon. A. F. Griffith** (Minister for Mines), and read a first time.

**GOVERNOR'S SPEECH**

*Distribution of Copies*

**THE PRESIDENT** (The Hon. L. C. Diver) [3.49 p.m.]: For the sake of accuracy, I have obtained from His Excellency the Governor copies of the Speech he has been pleased to deliver to Parliament. These will be distributed amongst members.

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: FIRST DAY**

*Motion*

**THE HON. E. C. HOUSE** (South) [3.50 p.m.]: I move—

That the following Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor in reply to the Speech he has been pleased to deliver:—

May it please Your Excellency: We, the members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia, in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament.

I am very conscious of the honour that has been given to me today of moving the Address-in-Reply to the Speech delivered by His Excellency the Governor of Western Australia. I am a firm believer that our Sovereign's representative should be an Englishman, for I feel this is one practical way in which we can draw closer the bonds which unite our British Commonwealth.

South Vietnam, and the fact that Australian soldiers are once again fighting on foreign shores, expresses the paramount need for such unity. Our ties with Great Britain have always been strong. Her investments, the quality of her products, and the fairness of her dealings, have been a great aid to the development of this country. We must hope that our link with Great Britain will not be weakened as other countries seek investment in Western Australia, or as new trade links are forged with countries closer to us.

No doubt our leanings towards Great Britain spring from the fact that most of us are descended from British stock. But there is a danger that the traditions and relationships which hold the two countries so closely together will diminish with each succeeding generation. In order to counteract this, a strong flow of British migrants and British capital to this country is essential. The future character of Australia will depend on the quality of its migrants. The courage of Britain in the defence of democracy is an example to all freedom-loving nations. We need these people; we need their skills in industry and on the land.



His Excellency made reference to the release of new areas of land for development. It is good news that the War Service Land Settlement Board has had a reprieve and will hold office for another 12 months. The board has been an unqualified success through expert planning and administration, though it probably has not received the recognition it fully deserves. It has been a triumph for the Department of Agriculture, which accepted the challenge, and which, with scientific experiments, brought into production land that had never been successfully farmed before. The way to develop millions of acres of light land that might have stayed dormant for many years was shown to established farmers.

The total Commonwealth expenditure was £40,000,000. Of this, £23,000,000 was spent in clearing and developing 2,000,000 acres. To date, in round figures, £16,500,000 of the principal loan moneys has been repaid by the surplus, together with £1,500,000 in interest and £1,500,000 in rentals. The money which made these farms possible has been put to good use, and the gross value of cereals, wool, meat, butterfat, etc., is approximately £8,000,000 a year.

There are vast areas left to develop, and the War Service Land Settlement Board, with this experience, could play a big part in establishing a civilian land settlement scheme. If £7,000 could be made available to each of a group of 10 to 15 farmers as a pilot scheme, the loan to be written into the purchase price of the land and repayable over a period of years, it would allow additional borrowing by the settlers through other avenues for extra development. This would mean the provision of certain structural necessities and 500 acres fully developed. The work could be carried out by bulk contract over the group of farms before the settlers were allowed on to the land. It would be similar to the war service scheme, but on a smaller scale. An area of 500 acres would ensure against undue hardship and provide income to develop the remainder of the block. This would be a gilt-edged security, because of the keen demand for land.

Should this prove successful, an approach could be made to the Commonwealth Government in the interests of national development and progress for, say, £5,000,000 through the Commonwealth Development Bank. This is not an unduly large sum on present standards, and it would help to establish 700 to 1,000 farms. The benefit to the State and the nation would be immense; and the war service scheme has proved the economics of the suggestion.

Decentralisation is a word that is frequently used, or misused. Many think of it as some magical process following the development of big industry. But in reality the most we could hope for is to encourage

our population to spread as much as possible so that the city and country may grow in better proportion by the provision of amenities and lower freight rates. Small industries would naturally follow. One of the greatest aids to decentralisation is the extension of the activities of the State Electricity Commission to as many country towns as possible, and as quickly as possible.

Country towns begin rapid expansion the moment they are connected to the S.E.C. It provides bigger and better amenities which help to prevent the drift of people to the cities. Cheap electricity is becoming more of a necessity for country areas, towns, and farms, because of increased mechanisation, and because the shortage of labour remains acute.

Shire councils are faced with heavy loan repayments and, to supply current and support those loans, have to charge prices ranging from 1s. 1d. to 1s. 3d. and in extreme cases, 2s. per unit, making the operation of many electrical appliances prohibitive.

The State Electricity Commission has made a valiant effort to meet the demand for country extensions; and not many people realise the economic problems that are involved. In the past five years, 28 country towns have been connected, and power has been made available to 3,050 farms. It is unfortunate that the present main lines will not allow further expansion to the northern and eastern wheatbelts and the southern areas; and before these towns can be connected an extensive 132,000 volt transmission system with substations is urgently needed for towns and farms beyond the present extension.

The 60,000 kilowatt generator at Muja station, mentioned by His Excellency, has now come into operation, and three more similar units are to be installed during the next four years. These will provide sufficient power for industry and eastern areas; and extensions will only be restricted by the availability of capital and skilled labour. It is doubtful if there is a full appreciation of this urgent need; and every effort should be directed towards finding the capital and the labour needed for this project.

His Excellency mentioned an important question exercising the minds of many people at this time; and I refer to a central traffic control. I do not wish to provoke any quarrels, but would like to say that one must have doubts that central control in Western Australia will be any more successful than in the Eastern States. New Zealand and Western Australia, both under shire council control, have a low country accident rate in comparison with the central police control in the Eastern States. In 1963, Auckland, a town comparable with Perth in size, population, and



car numbers, had 846 accidents for 15 fatal accidents. In that year, Perth had 1,095 accidents for 109 fatal accidents.

The appointment of a committee to investigate traffic problems is a sound move, and we must congratulate Cabinet for bringing this about. It should clear up a lot of misunderstanding, and it could lead to a more uniform standard by shire councils, which, at the present moment, are restricted by legislation to the amount they can spend on traffic; that is, to the base year of 1958-59. Inspectors' appointments are not on a State basis, as the authority of a shire inspector ceases at the shire boundary. Taking into account the vast road system of Western Australia and the difficulties which confront either the police or the shires in effective supervision, and comparing those difficulties with what obtains in the compact metropolitan network, it reflects great credit on the shire councils' appreciation of their responsibilities.

It is because of these facts that shire councils are resentful of the inference that their administration is the cause of country accidents. It would be equally ridiculous to say that poor control by the police is responsible for the high accident rate in the city. Let the shire councils and the police co-operate in a concerted effort to keep the high road toll within bounds.

Before I conclude I would like to refer to the great development which is taking place in the north of this vast State, particularly the Ord River scheme, which all Western Australians are anxious to see taken to a successful conclusion. A foundation stone has been laid which will, as time goes by, develop into a tremendous, thriving project and cause future generations to look back on it much as we look back on the goldfields water scheme—a courageous long-sighted engineering feat which has led to the comprehensive water scheme. The value of the Ord to the beef industry in the Kimberley area could be immense, especially in drought years; and the regeneration of badly denuded areas from erosion will be of national benefit.

The danger of soil erosion over the whole of Western Australia is serious. Once-thriving areas of the world which are now arid should serve as a constant reminder that we cannot overstock our land, and that we must protect our trees and natural vegetation. If we forget these things we will be squandering our national asset, the soil, and become a poor nation, instead of a rich one supporting millions of people. All avenues of water conservation must be explored from the Ord River south.

Some idea of our water needs can be gauged by the new Muja power station, which requires 2,400,000 gallons of water per hour. Much of this will be recirculated,

but 40,000 gallons per hour will be lost in evaporation. It takes 65,000 gallons of water to produce one ton of steel. If we take into account all the major projects planned, even without the domestic requirements of an ever-increasing population, we can see that water conservation will be one of our most necessary and costly needs. Australia, with an average of 16.5 inches of rain, as against a general average of 26.5 inches, is the driest continent in the world.

Finance is the key to most of the projects I have mentioned, and it is always difficult to find sufficient to adequately service the dreams of our ideals. We must guard every pound jealously, making it do its full share, and not wasting it on bad planning or bad workmanship. We should consolidate on our expansion and make sure there is sufficient finance forthcoming to service the necessities that go with development.

In conclusion I would like to take this opportunity to thank members of all parties, who have been most generous in their willingness to assist in every way to make the new members welcome; and to all officers and their staff I extend my thanks for their consideration and guidance. It speaks well for the spirit that exists in this Parliament.

**THE HON. V. J. FERRY** (South-West)  
[4.11 p.m.]: I formally second the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **The Hon. F. J. S. Wise** (Leader of the Opposition).

*House adjourned at 4.12 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 29th July, 1965

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