

RURAL AND INDUSTRIES BANK ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading.

THE HON. L. F. KELLY (Minister for Lands—Merredin-Yilgarn) [8.33] in moving the second reading said: The purpose of this Bill is to change the bank's balance date from the 30th September, as provided in the Act, to the 31st March in any year. The Chairman of Commissioners of the bank has listed the following advantages to be derived from this proposed change:—

- (1) Enable the laying of the bank's balance sheet and the Auditor-General's report on the Table of the House whilst it is in session.
- (2) Permit the printing and distribution of the balance sheet before it becomes stale.
- (3) Coincide the balance with the end of one season and the opening of another and thus allow in the report authoritative comments to be made on the past season and seasoned estimates for the forthcoming one.

Although the bank has customers in all walks of life, the largest individual group consists of farmers. There are many others who, whilst not themselves farmers, are closely associated with the farming industry and have parallel needs for banking services. There is every reason to think that the bank's traditional association with the farming community will remain a feature of its activities for many years to come. In these circumstances it is fitting that the bank's financial year follow the farming year as nearly as may be practicable; the proposed date of the 31st March is clearly more appropriate than the 30th September. Tied up with the closing of the bank's financial year is the annual report to Parliament as required by existing legislation.

It is intended that the bank continue to furnish annual reports to the Minister but now by the 31st May instead of by the 30th November.

Customarily the major part of the annual report has dealt with the activities of farmers, their financial results and so on; it can be expected that future reports will follow a like pattern but the change of date will enable the reports to be more up to date than hitherto as regards the results of the previous season. The new date of the 31st May will also enable inclusion in the report of an authoritative indication of farmers' plans for the forthcoming season, more particularly as regards cropping programmes in the wheat growing areas. It is pointed out that the early assent to this Bill will obviate the possibility of two balances at the 30th September, 1958, and the 31st March, 1959.

This is a very small Bill. The explanation that I have given covers the whole of the explanation needed and I commend it to hon. members. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Bovell, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.37 p.m.

Legislative Council

Wednesday, 3rd September, 1958.

CONTENTS

	Page
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE :	
Eastern Goldfields high school, finalisation and details of plan	502
State Forests—	
Availability of map to House	502
Act governing applications to Conservator	503
Railways Royal Commission, further extension of scope	502
Agricultural high school, establishment at Esperance	502
Housing, applications pending, homes erected and under construction, Geraldton	502
Esperance Plains (Australia) Pty. Ltd., disposal of land, Government policy, etc.	503
Water channels, legal position re cutting, etc.	503
QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE :	
State Forests, availability of map to House	503
ADDRESS-IN-REPLY, ninth day, conclusion:	504
Speakers on Address—	
The Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham	504
The Hon. E. M. Davies	515
The Hon. J. M. Thomson	520
The Hon. H. C. Strickland	522
Presentation	537
BILLS :	
Supply, £21,000,000 (No. 1), assent	537
Junior Farmers' Movement Act Amendment (No. 1), 1r.	537
Electoral Act Amendment, 1r.	537
Western Australian Aged Sailors and Soldiers' Relief Fund Act Amendment	
Order discharged	537
Plant Diseases Act Amendment, 2r.	537
ADJOURNMENT, SPECIAL	538

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

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE.

EASTERN GOLDFIELDS HIGH SCHOOL.

Finalisation and Details of Plan.

1. The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Has the Government yet finalised its plans for alterations and additions to the Eastern Goldfields High School as strongly and urgently requested by the Parents' & Citizens' Association?

(2) If so,

- (a) do the plans meet the most urgently stressed need for the erection of a new domestic science centre?
- (b) how many new class rooms are provided for?
- (c) how many extra class rooms are provided?
- (d) when is it expected that the work will be completed?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) (a) Yes.

(b) Eight.

(c) Five.

(d) March, 1959.

STATE FORESTS.

Availability of Map to House.

2. The Hon. J. MURRAY asked the Minister for Railways:

Will the Minister have prepared and made available to the House on a permanent basis, a map made up of the regular Lands Department sheets—one inch equals ten miles—and showing all the information in respect to working plan areas, State Forests, timber reserves and associated data, as shown on the map tabled in reply to my question on the 21st August?

The MINISTER replied:

No. This information is readily available at the office of the Conservator of Forests.

RAILWAYS ROYAL COMMISSION.

Further Extension of Scope.

3. The Hon. G. E. JEFFERY asked the Minister for Railways:

As authorisation has been extended to Royal Commissioner A. G. Smith to include in his investigation into railways in W.A., the recent discontinuance of 842 miles of railway, will the Minister request

the Government to further extend the scope of the Royal Commissioner to inquire into—

The re-opening of the Mundaring railway line—

(a) in its entirety; or, alternatively,

(b) as far as Greenmount in order that the residents of the Koon-gamia and other districts can utilise the service?

The MINISTER replied:

The Minister will place the hon. member's request before the Government for consideration.

AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL.

Establishment at Esperance.

4. The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM asked the Minister for Railways:

As I have had no answer to my letter in April of this year concerning the possible establishment of an agricultural high school at Esperance, will the Minister advise me—

(1) Is the Government giving consideration to the establishment of an agricultural high school wing at Esperance?

(2) If not, because of the isolation of Esperance from established agricultural high schools, and as there is already a research station controlled by the Agriculture Department at Esperance, will the Government inquire into the desirability and justification of establishing such a school in accordance with the strongly expressed wish of the local farmers?

The MINISTER replied:

No record of any communication from the hon. member regarding the establishment of an agricultural high school at Esperance can be found on the files of the department.

(1) No.

(2) The Government has inquired and it considers that there would not be sufficient numbers available to warrant the establishment of an agricultural high school at Esperance for years to come.

HOUSING.

Applications Pending, Homes Erected and Under Construction, Geraldton.

5. The Hon. L. A. LOGAN asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) How many applications are pending in Geraldton for—

(a) Commonwealth - State rental homes;

(b) purchase homes?

(2) How many houses are under construction in Geraldton for—

- (a) Commonwealth - State rental homes;
- (b) purchase homes?

(3) How many houses in addition to the above will be erected in Geraldton for the year 1958-59—

- (a) Commonwealth - State rental homes;
- (b) purchase homes?

The MINISTER replied:

- (1) (a) 115 (includes 13 2-unit cases).
- (b) 69 (includes 9 War Service Homes applications).
- (2) (a) 18.
- (b) 20.
- (3) (a) 17.
- (b) Nil.

Regarding pending applications, it is pointed out that many applicants apply for both rental and purchase homes and these represent duplications in the above figures.

Wastage on Geraldton applications is approximately 50 per cent. and rental houses are vacated at the rate of approximately 40 per year.

CROWN LANDS.

Applications to Conservator for Alienation.

6. The Hon. J. MURRAY asked the Minister for Railways:

In relation to applications for settlement of Crown lands outside State Forests and timber reserves:—

- (1) Under which section of the Forests Act is it mandatory to refer such applications to the Conservator of Forests?
- (2) Has such reference in the past been purely courtesy?
- (3) Under which section of the Land Act or Forests Act has the Conservator's veto to making such land available for selection been accepted?

The MINISTER replied:

- (1) Section 7.

(2) It has been the policy of succeeding Governments to refer to the conservator for his views on alienation of Crown land carrying timber.

- (3) There are no such provisions.

ESPERANCE PLAINS (AUSTRALIA) PTY. LTD.

Disposal of Land, Government, Policy etc.

7. The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Is it correct that Esperance Plains (Australia) Pty. Ltd. has disposed of considerable areas of Crown land held by it at Esperance at prices reported to be £1 or in excess of £1 per acre?

(2) If so, how much land has been sold to date?

(3) Has the Government power to prevent the disposal of land by the company in this way?

(4) Is the Government prepared to allow all settlers at Esperance to dispose of excess land in their holdings in this way?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Esperance Plains (Australia) Pty. Ltd., has purchased one parcel only from the State, a considerable proportion of which has been disposed of by transfer.

(2) A search reveals that transfers of areas aggregating 51,774 acres have been registered.

(3) Legal advice is being obtained.

(4) Selectors of Crown land under conditional purchase are required to comply with terms and conditions under the Land Act.

WATER CHANNELS.

Legal Position re Cutting, Etc.

8. The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Is it possible for a private citizen to obtain permission to cut and direct water channels on to a main road for the purpose of using the area bordering main roads as a catchment area to fill a private dam?

(2) Would such drainage be legal if it drained the property of another private land owner?

(3) If the flow of water being directed between the main road and the entrance of other private property interferes with the owner's easy access to his property has he any redress?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Although in certain cases permission can be obtained this depends on the exact circumstances of each case and without a knowledge of the circumstances no definite answer can be given.

(2) This is a matter as to rights between adjoining land owners and would be determined in accordance with statute and common law.

(3) Without a full knowledge of the circumstances this again could not be answer with any certainty.

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE.

STATE FORESTS.

Availability of Map to House.

The Hon. J. MURRAY asked the Minister for Railways:

In view of his answer to question No. 2 asked today, which was in the negative, was it given on the score of financial burden in supplying the information, or that it was not of sufficient public interest?

The MINISTER replied:

I shall make inquiries regarding the hon. member's question and advise him.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Ninth Day—Conclusion.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

THE HON. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM (South-East) [4.42]: First of all may I extend to you my personal congratulations, Mr. President, for what I consider to be a very fitting caption of a life of activities. Anyone at all who knows your past work in the whole of the Commonwealth must agree that your elevation must be very pleasing to yourself and gratifying to your friends.

On my first entry into this Parliament I received a most friendly overture from you, in the offer of advice and assistance; particularly at one time when I found myself struggling through a Bill, not knowing where to begin. You, sir, gave up some hours of your time showing me the manner in which a Bill can be traced through and how it can be checked with past statutes which contain references to it. I know that you have extended your assistance to other members of this House also, and they, too, must feel some gratification on your elevation to the Presidency of this House. I trust that your term will be a very happy one.

I would like to extend my congratulations to the new member, the hon. Mr. Abbey, on his entry into this House. Unfortunately I was not able to be present to hear his maiden speech, but I have heard enough to know that he acquitted himself well and will quite certainly be an asset to this House.

I express my personal regret at the passing of one of our oldest members and friends, the late hon. Sir Harold Seddon. Sir Harold was probably my mentor. He was a person to whom I could go for advice on matters relating to my electorate. I shall certainly miss his very generous offers of assistance. He was one of the old gentlemen of this House and all members must keenly feel his passing.

Together with other members, I hope that the hon. Mr. Gilbert Fraser will be back with us here very soon. He has had a pretty trying period and he had a hard job to do at a time when he was least disposed to do it. I hope his recovery will be complete.

During the Address-in-reply most members seize the opportunity of giving voice to many of the parochial questions which normally they are precluded from bringing before the House. Like other members, I intend to avail myself of this opportunity, by mentioning to the House many of the subjects that interest us in our own districts. I understand that one member, at least, has been very thorough in the coverage of the district concerned.

I have purposely refrained from reading his speech for fear that I shall find some embarrassment in repeating so much of what I know he has covered. The hon. Mr. Bennetts is probably one of the members most attentive to his district. At any time of the day or night he is quite capable of standing on his feet and discoursing on his province for some considerable time.

Owing to the nature of the publicity that particular area in the South-East Province has enjoyed in the last two or three years, it is of particular interest to the whole State, because it is the first and the biggest area of light soil land to enjoy the publicity which has brought the whole of Western Australia to almost international attention. It has been mentioned before that this light soil area has been wrongly named the Esperance sand plains. I would like to stress again that the term is erroneous; they are not plains and the land is not sandy. They are downs and the soil is silt. In recent years, because of the activities of local farmers in co-operation with the Department of Agriculture, this State led the world in unlocking the secrets of trace elements as applied to light soil areas.

Even giving full credit to Mr. Chase, who showed so much interest in Esperance, I cannot help but feel that too much praise has been given to the value of the publicity which resulted from Mr. Chase's activities in the district. I say that because well before the time when Mr. Chase became interested in Esperance, the district was well and truly on a forward movement of progress and development, and, as a matter of fact, this was as a result of the information which became available from the experiments undertaken by the Government research station and by well-established settlers in the district. In this respect I mention the names of Row, Kirvan, Keogh and Alf Button. Each one of them was able to make available information based on practical experience; this information actually sold the Esperance Plains to Mr. Chase. His interest in the district obtained world-wide publicity for this State. That was good. The subsequent publicity we have received is not so good.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Who has been giving it?

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Everyone concerned who was interested in the progress of the district has been giving it. I would like to remind this House that there was no-one in this Chamber who offered more encouragement, and was prepared to offer every encouragement to the Chase Syndicate than I, and the Government made available to the Chase Syndicate land which they promised to bring into production within a certain time. If the Chase Syndicate can still

keep to their promise and undertaking, I am prepared to encourage and back them to the limit.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: Had they taken notice of the research stations they would have been all right.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Exactly. The hon. member has hit the nail right on the head. After availing themselves of the information that was available, proving that the district had a very great potential, the Chase Syndicate then went on their own course and attempted—well meaning, admittedly—to bring land into production and have paying crops within 12 months. All the advice available at that time indicated that this could not be done.

The Hon. E. M. Heenan: They also struck an abnormal season.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Admittedly. They struck an abnormal season, but against that there were 27 private farmers who took up land at the same time as the Chase Syndicate in and around the same holdings. These holdings are now well and truly established pastures—sheep and cattle are running on the type of land that Chase has not been able to bring into production in the same abnormal season. But it now appears—I may be wrong, and hope I am wrong—that Mr. Chase is even now very doubtful as to whether he can start off from scratch again and make a go of the development, because he cannot get the finance.

There was at Esperance last night a meeting which does give something of a little ray of hope. He feels that something may still be done—and again, I hope it can. There are many bitterly disappointed people who have not been able to avail themselves of this land and are still prepared to go on it if we are able to make it available to them, at the same rate. Just prior to the advent of Chase there were 50 new settlers wanting to take up land. Many of those people are still hoping for land; although many have left and gone elsewhere; some back to the Eastern States. This is not good for the district.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: They were practical men with plenty of money.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I do not want to throw cold water on to a project if it is going to be able to do the State some good; particularly this portion of the State. I asked the hon. the Minister some questions which were answered today, and I am disappointed that the answers indicated that the Government has not made at least tentative inquiries into the possibility of establishing a high school at Esperance, for the purpose of training students in agricultural pursuits.

I am sorry about that, because the people of the district have formed themselves into a committee—and a very energetic committee—which has put out a report, hoping it might induce the Government to give consideration to making available, or at least setting aside, land for such a high school in the future.

The agricultural high schools at present established are at Denmark, Narrogin and Harvey, each of them serving a sphere the interests of which are a little different from those of other districts. At Denmark the primary activities are dairying and allied industries; Narrogin is the centre of a mixed farming area on the Great Southern; and Harvey, on the west coast, is mainly concerned with dairying and irrigation.

The Government has given consideration to the matter of agricultural high schools and it is known that proposals for the development of further such schools have been made at Mt. Barker, known for its mixed farming and apple growing pursuits; Manjimup where timber is the main industry; Kojonup, interested in mixed farming, stud, sheep, and cattle; and Wyalkatchem, in the north-east wheat belt. None of these towns comes into the area which we hoped might have given Esperance an opportunity—and that is the light soil area. The light soil land is becoming increasingly valuable. The whole nation is becoming more and more aware of its value and potential to the State.

I have referred to these areas previously as the future shelf in the larder of the West; but, still a district such as Esperance, with a progressive committee, which has gone into the matter and has tried in all ways to get the Government to give consideration to it, must suffer bitter disappointment.

The words that I deplore in the hon. Minister's answer to the questions previously referred to are—

The Government has inquired and it is considered that there would not be sufficient numbers—

I presume of students

—available to warrant the establishment of a high school at Esperance for years to come.

That is most disappointing, particularly in view of figures I will give in a few moments. The main reason why the committee feels that it would be justified in asking the Government for consideration of this matter is couched in this last paragraph of the committee's report. It reads—

Esperance is fortunate in having a research station controlled by the Agriculture Department. Here special investigations are being carried out in the establishment and use of pasture on light lands. This station could be a valuable affiliate of an agricultural

high school. There are also well-established farmers, who in their own right are recognised authorities on light land development. These have already indicated their willingness to assist by making facilities on their own farms available for teaching and demonstration purposes.

Esperance is remote from other agricultural high schools. Therefore boys and girls who wish to avail themselves of an agricultural education are forced to go elsewhere. This is already occurring to the detriment of the district.

The number of farmers in the Esperance district has increased in the last two or three years at such an amazing rate that I doubt if any other district in Western Australia could show similar figures. I quote a paragraph of a letter from the secretary of this Esperance Land Development Committee. It reads—

The district now has 52,780 acres in pasture, carrying the equivalent of 79,000 sheep (approx. 1.4 sheep per acre). Coupled with this there are 35,400 acres of newly sown pasture (1958) and 31,800 acres in fallow for 1959 seeding. Comparable figures for 1953 are 16,500 acres carrying 16,860 sheep.

Figures like that must mean—they cannot mean anything else—that private individuals in that district are so confident of its future development that they have sunk everything they have into its progress. Those figures indicate to me that within a very short time, that district will be able, very handsomely, to fill an agricultural high school with keen students. Even if a complete school is not built, but only an arm or a branch is established, using private settlers and officers from the Government research station as instructors and advisers, it would be of considerable help to the district. I am sure that in his speech the hon. Mr. Bennetts will have quoted the increase in the number of students at the Esperance primary school. As hon. members well know, a big building programme was completed last year, but Esperance is still short of classrooms.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: At least four.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I was not sure of the number, but that would be correct. That has occurred in the last two or three years, despite the inability of people, who want to take up land, to get it, because of the huge holdings controlled by the Esperance Plains people.

There is another point that would interest farmers. There is a growing feeling in the Esperance district that the average size for one-man farms—at present they average roughly 2,000 acres—should be reduced. That is rather an amazing statement, because 2,000 acres has been fixed as the size of an average holding.

This was the size of properties developed under different schemes throughout the years. Under the miners settlement scheme at Southern Cross, farmers were settled on 1,000 acres; these properties proved to be inadequate in size and settler after settler had to walk off his land, broken in both pocket and spirit. The few settlers who did remain took over some of their neighbours' properties and acquired 5,000 or 6,000 acres, from which they now get a most handsome living. Many of those farmers are comparatively wealthy today.

To avoid this danger, the Government has, from then on, allocated properties of 2,000 acres each. Under the present Act, farmers settled under these schemes cannot sell or let go portion of their land at a personal profit until they have complied with certain conditions and made certain improvements. I have spoken to a number of old and experienced farmers who have made extensive inquiries from the settlers down there, and they all agree that 2,000 acres is too much for a one-man farm in that district.

Mr. Button, whose name has been mentioned many times in this House—a most co-operative, understanding and sympathetic man to new settlers—says the same thing. He will do everything possible to help new settlers there and has put forward many suggestions for improvements to the district. He has a holding of about 2,000 acres and he could be called a true English husbandman of the land. But he says that 2,000 acres is beyond his ability completely to develop. He has about 1,100 acres under pasture now and he is engaged full-time in looking after it. His property is developed to such an extent that it returns him a most adequate income; and the same thing applies to many other farmers in the district.

The difficulty is that if a farmer is holding 2,000 acres under conditional purchase, and can develop from his own finances 1,000 acres of it, he can earn a good living. If he has not sufficient money to develop the other 1,000 acres he will let it lie idle or have to forfeit it. It is known that many of the farmers in the Esperance area, who have gone on to their properties and put all their money into developing them, have now reached the stage where they are at a financial deadend. It is difficult for them to apply for help from the Government and, generally speaking, bank assistance is not readily available.

I should like to put a suggestion to the Minister. I want the Government to give consideration to these people and inquire into their circumstances and, if possible, allow farmers there, who have established their properties to a certain point, to dispose of the land which they do not require, at a reasonable profit. Those who have proved beyond all doubt that their properties can earn them a good

living from, say, 1,000 acres, should be allowed to dispose of the balance of their land and thus provide themselves with the finance necessary to consolidate the work they have already done. Not all the settlers there would need to avail themselves of such an opportunity, but a great many would do so, as I can substantiate by reading a letter written on the 29th July by Mr. Grewar, Secretary of the Esperance Land Development Committee. The letter reads—

In a recent survey conducted by our committee, in which we circularised local settlers and inquired into their availability of funds to develop their properties, it was apparent that many farmers were in urgent need of finance.

Nineteen farmers stated their lack of finance in answer to our circular. We have reason to believe from inquiries through local bank managers, that a further 35 have a fairly urgent need of funds; if not immediately, then within the next two or three years.

On the basis of our calculations, between £160,000 and £170,000 are necessary to overcome this financial deficiency, thus enabling our district to develop and become stabilised.

The rate of district progress by a handful of settlers has been remarkable; but this development must continue. So much of our district (practically all the remaining land) has been resumed by the Government for an American syndicate. With the establishment of this company we have virtually lost 50, or more, settlers; the number that would reasonably be expected to have settled this land in the normal course of events.

I advance that suggestion to the Minister, to see if something cannot be done to amend the present Act governing this land. If these farmers were able to dispose of the excess portions of their holdings, people who want to settle in the Esperance district would have an opportunity to do so. I feel sure that such a plan would almost double the number of farms, and it would be of advantage to the district and to many farmers.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: They don't want to surrender it? It would solve the problem if they did.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: They do not want to surrender the land unless they get something for it. That is understandable. They have put a lot of work into their properties, and they are finding that they can make a reasonable living by using only a portion of them. They have proved beyond any doubt that the land is worth more than they paid for it—let us say 4s. an acre. I believe that they should be permitted to sell what land they do not want, at a reasonable margin of profit,

especially when we consider that the Chase Syndicate is selling some of its land for about £1 an acre, without any development at all. I do not know whether the syndicate has used a loophole in the agreement, or whether what is being done is not strictly correct.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Some of the land has been sold for £23 an acre.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Is that so?

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Not by the Esperance Plains people, but by others in the district.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: They have probably held the land for some time, under a different title.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Is that all right?

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: It is theirs to do with what they like, and they hold it under a different title. But I am speaking of the battler that has gone down there and sunk his finances in a farm; the man who wants to stay there; and who does not want to sell his farm. But eventually he reaches the stage where he needs further money to consolidate himself, and he cannot get it. He is holding portion of the land which he cannot develop himself, and he is asking the Government "Will you permit me to dispose of this land so that I can consolidate my holding?" Is that unreasonable? The Chase Syndicate is doing it under the same title.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: With impunity!

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I do not know about that.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: You all agreed to it.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I know that I agreed at the time, but I can remember some strong arguments about the holes that were believed to be in the agreement. I know for a fact that the land is being offered for £1 per acre; I can substantiate that statement.

Before I leave this portion of the district I would like to mention one other matter. It concerns the progress that has been made by the Wongutha Mission Trading Farm. This farm has been established by a church mission under Mr. R. W. Schenk, to train young native men in farm husbandry. They have done a very good job indeed. Two or three of the lads who have been through their hands have found well paid jobs with local farmers, and these farmers are very satisfied with the work the young fellows are doing. I would like to quote a small paragraph concerning this matter. It is as follows:—

Our first two exit students have gone out and Dr. Skoss, first Manager of the Chase Syndicate, took them. After

some months trial Dr. Skoss declares that they are just splendid. He gave them £7 10s. per week to start and has increased their wages to £10 per week and keep. Dr. Skoss said that similar boys will solve the problem of opening up this country.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: How old are they?

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: About 18 years old. That is the first result of this experiment. I saw this farm when it was first established in virgin bush. The people running it have done a very worthwhile job indeed. The Government has acceded to a request from Mr. Schenk for land to be held against the time when some of these young fellows might be in a position to buy it, with a view to running their own farms, and raising families. It has taken a long time for the Government to find the means of acceding to this request; but I think it ought to be complimented sincerely for making this land available.

However, like many other organisations, these people are continually pressed for finance. If it is at all possible, they would like further assistance from the Government. When one considers the amount of money made available to them, as compared with that given to other organisations which are not doing nearly as valuable work, I consider that a project as worthwhile as this should get all the help it needs. I could read a letter indicating the money they have available, and the amounts they receive, but if the Minister would bear this in mind and give me some brief answer to this request, I will not bore the House with the entire contents of the letter.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: This mission could be a help to the Minister for Native Welfare with his new Bill.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: It has already been a help to him, because these people have been able to prove that selected numbers of young native lads in that district; and others, are capable of absorbing and learning sufficient of agricultural affairs to bring forth reports such as the one I have just read; apart from this they receive a wage of up to £10 a week, plus keep. Work such as that speaks for itself.

Today so many of our missions can only do a certain amount of good. They take children from infancy, train them, teach them, and encourage them in their education up to the age of 16. From then on the opportunities for those same children are almost nil. If they are lucky enough to find work with a Christian family, they are better off than many of their fellow men. But there again the future is not bright for them. When a mission farm can bring the training of a young man to the stage when he is able to satisfy an

exact employer, in the person of Dr. Skoss, and receive complimentary reports such as I have read, and earn a salary of £10 a week, it should be encouraged. I hope the Minister will give consideration to my plea.

I have asked a question in regard to road work, and I expect an answer tomorrow; though I already probably know what it is, because the Minister has indicated what it is likely to be. As I have said, it refers to road work in the Southern Cross district, on the main road between Marvel Loch, which is a small mining town, and Southern Cross. This road is subject to very heavy traffic. It is probably the main road in that district serving farmers, and the mining settlement in Marvel Loch. Only quite recently a prominent mining firm interested itself in Marvel Loch and spent a considerable sum of money in developing the property. This firm is now carting ore to Bullfinch, a distance, all told, of approximately 45 miles. Half the journey from Southern Cross to Bullfinch is on a bitumen road; but from Marvel Loch to Southern Cross the road is grim. At ordinary times, and with the normal attention given to gravel roads, it has stood up pretty well; but when one considers the haulage by heavy 10-ton diesel trucks, at the rate at which that ore is being carted from Marvel Loch to Bullfinch, it is easy to see what could happen to this road.

The Hon. E. M. Heenan: What is the value of the ore?

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I cannot tell the hon. member that, but apparently it is rich enough to cart to Bullfinch to sweeten the ore they are working there at present. It is being carted at 4d. a ton mile on diesel trucks, which is a pretty low haulage rate, as the Minister will agree.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: For half the journey they travel alongside the railway.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: That is one of the anomalies. It is quite true that for half the journey they run parallel to the existing railway line, which has been closed. But the line is there.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: It is not closed; it is open, and you know it.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: It was to be closed.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: You said it had been closed; but you know it has not.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I did not make that statement deliberately to mislead the House. I was under the impression that the line right through there was closed.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: It is cheaper to cart by truck than load and unload.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: That is so. This company is hauling ore at 4d. a ton mile, which the Government could not possibly reach with rail haulage. In any case, it would still have to be hauled half way to Southern Cross, which would involve double the handling.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: You are not defending the railways.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I am simply stating that if the line from Southern Cross to Bullfinch is still open, anything loaded or carted from Marvel Loch to Southern Cross would have to be unloaded and carted to Bullfinch at an uneconomic rate, by road. That might put that area beyond being a useful and payable proposition.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Do you think they should still have a rail service?

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I did not say that.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: I am asking you.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Without examining the figures and knowing what work is available, that would be a serious question to answer.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: It would be unpolitical.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: If the Minister likes to say so! I have asked the Minister whether he will give consideration to putting this road in order. I have asked for a bitumen road, as I think it is warranted. The Minister says there are no funds available.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: I did not say anything.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: The Minister shook his head.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: I am not the Minister, and I do not answer the questions.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: If the Minister has taken offence at my remarks I will quote them more specifically. When I asked a question today the Minister vigorously shook his head. That was the only incident. If he is offended, I am sorry, as there was no intention to do this on my part. However, I still maintain that, in view of the survey that was taken of the amount of transport or traffic on that road, and in view of the fact that the transport and traffic is not diminishing, but is increasing at that centre and in all of the centres around the district, we do not want to see Marvel Loch put out of operation because of heavy costs. A bad road of necessity must increase the cost of haulage.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: How many miles of road are there?

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: About 22 miles to Marvel Loch and about another two miles to the mine. A lot of

work was done on a formed road when it was first opened, but it did not stand up to the heavy traffic; not only the main haulage, but traffic by farmers in the district, which at present is a very progressive one.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: About 60 to 100 men are employed on the mine.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: The hon. member is very helpful. Three years ago there were hardly 60 in the whole of the district, but the progress in the Marvel Loch district is only indicative of that part. The whole of the Southern Cross area has undergone a most amazing revival. It is one of the few mining districts which declined as a result of a lack of interest in mining, goldmining in particular. There has been not only a revival in mining, but also an amazing development in agricultural interests. In quite recent years the Government found it was justified in acceding to the request of the people to install a bulk bin for wheat at Southern Cross. Unfortunately, that bin has not been used to a great extent, because of two bad seasons. However, this year it will probably be used very heavily.

The Hon. E. M. Heenan: It probably won't be big enough.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: That is true. There is another bin at Moorine Rock and that will probably be filled, too. It is the only mining town that has staged a revival and achieved a balanced economy. It does not depend entirely on mining; it can show prosperity in both mining and agricultural interests.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: Do not forget iron ore.

The Hon. E. M. Heenan: Has the Country Party got a branch there yet?

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I would not know that.

The PRESIDENT: This is not question time.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I do not know what the increase in traffic to the railways will be in regard to that district, but it must be considerable. There is iron ore haulage from Koolyanobbing, and an obvious increase in the amount of super and wheat. Otherwise, the bin would never have gone in.

We have asked for an increase in the water line in this district. I remind the Minister that despite the refusal, for quite a number of years, to agree to the installation or replacement of one water line going out towards the Panizza's property, he agreed in relation to an experiment. He agreed to make materials available for the relaying of the water line, and the Public Works Department estimated that the work would take up to three weeks. Two farmers with equipment started clearing the land on the Monday and commenced the excavation. On the Tuesday they

carted and laid the pipes; on the Wednesday they began sinking; on Thursday they completed sinking and covering the line, and on Friday finished off the work. On Saturday they turned on the water.

When I knew water had flowed within the week, I mentioned it to the departmental officer concerned, who said in a nice and frank way that he did not believe it. However, it was true. Two boys did the work which the department estimated would take a period of three weeks. Why cannot we have more progress like that in this district? There are other areas which badly require relaying or renewal of lines. At Naremben, 50 miles is quite an average distance for farmers to have to cart water from the nearest standpipe in the dry period. These farmers are prepared to do the work themselves, if the department will make the materials available together with a supervisor to see that the work is done according to departmental standards. Money should be made available in this way in order to accomplish work which is wanted so badly.

Recently I made an extensive trip through portion of the province near the rabbit-proof fence, close to Holt Rock. It looks a desert; it is one of those blank open spaces. It has been in my electorate ever since I have been member for the South-East Province, and I am ashamed to say that on that trip I found that a number of farms which I never knew existed had been there for a considerable time and were returning a reasonably handsome living to the people concerned. The amazing thing to me was the reaction of these people. On meeting them and introducing myself and making the quite normal query of "How are things going?" I was almost sorry for having asked the question, because my visit was in the middle of the second consecutive dry season that they had experienced and the dams were dry, with great banks of soil blown up against the fences. I repeat that they had been through two pretty grim seasons, yet each of these farmers returned the same kind of reply. One would say, "Not too bad;" another, "We have been through worse;" another, "We will come good," and so on. That was the general reaction of those men to my query: an amazing feeling of optimism.

This is dry farming, as it is probably better known in Western Australia than anywhere else. I think we could claim that Western Australians have led the world in dry farming and one finds farmers, in an area such as I have referred to, having experienced two or three of the grimmest kind of seasons, still confident of the future. One of those men explained to me that it was quite a common practice for him to work on his property all day, have an early supper, put the tank on his truck and take it to the standpipe about 60 miles away to obtain water. He said it was agreed that he could take the whole

night to fill his tank, because that was how long it took to fill it with the small trickle that was coming through at that time. He would then sleep where he was and, in the morning, return to the farm to his routine work. In my view that is a pretty grim sort of life, yet the reaction of those people was, "We have been through worse; it will come good."

It was to me a humbling experience to go through that country, which I had previously thought was almost uninhabited, and find there farmers who were confident that they could make up, in a good season or two, what they lost through bad seasons. That is a district where projects such as that which I mentioned at Mooring Rock could be carried out and if the farmers were allowed to use the materials provided, under the supervision of Public Works Department officers, the money available for water supply extensions could be made to go much further than is possible under the present set-up.

In the mining districts, which constitute a great proportion of the province I represent, most parliamentary representatives are fairly close to the working people and know their conditions and hardships and much about their normal lives and wants. That is largely due to the activities of the union officers, who bring such matters forward from time to time and give publicity to the wishes of the workers. Generally speaking, the conditions of the workers there are kept up to within reasonable distance of what they want, but I wish now to mention another labour force; one from which we do not hear much. We do not hear of any troubles that may exist among these people, until some particular circumstance happens to bring them before the public; I refer to the police force.

We hear from time to time what a wicked place Kalgoorlie is; what a sinful city and what a lot of lawless citizens we have there—all of which is quite untrue. The police force in Kalgoorlie is probably smaller, per head of population, than that in most other places. So confident are the authorities of the law-abiding nature of the people of those areas, that we have there the peculiar position, in a district which covers an area miles beyond the limitation of the townsites of Kalgoorlie and Boulder—an area stretching six miles or more from the outskirts of the narrow neck of residential sections—of the police on duty having no vehicle provided to enable them to answer urgent calls.

If trouble should occur out at the other end of Boulder—and there is no night constable at present on duty at the Boulder station—people wishing to make a complaint have to contact the Kalgoorlie station and the report necessitates a police officer going from there out to Boulder. If the call happens to be made at midnight or early in the morning—which may often happen—the officer has

to cycle out or else depend on friends or private citizens for vehicular transport. I repeat that there is no police vehicle made available so that an officer may answer an urgent call at midnight—of which we get plenty—

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Have they not a Black Maria?

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: No, and they probably do not need one. The police officers in Kalgoorlie and Boulder often receive calls in the extremely hot weather—

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Haven't they got a motor bike?

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: No. To show how silly the situation can get, I might mention that there are six active cycle manufacturers or repair shops in Boulder and Kalgoorlie and yet, if a police bicycle needs repairs, it has to be sent to Perth for the repairs to be done, with all the accompanying waste of time and the cost of transport to Perth and back.

The Hon. E. M. Davies: I thought you were going to say that the constable had to ride the bike to Perth.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: The hon. member is entitled to be facetious in regard to a situation as stupid as this. Is it believed that the local manufacturers could not repair a bicycle properly, or that the cost would be less by sending the bicycle to Perth, having it repaired and then having it sent back to Kalgoorlie?

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: How long has it been going on?

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Ever since the police have been there.

The Hon. E. M. Heenan: How many bicycles have been sent down to Perth in the last 12 months?

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: It would be interesting to know, but I have not the figures available. However, any member who has owned and ridden a bicycle knows that bikes have frequently to be repaired.

The Hon. E. M. Heenan: You should be able to tell us how often bicycles have been sent to Perth in the last 12 months.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I do not know how often it has happened in the last 12 months, but I know it is what has to be done.

The Hon. E. M. Heenan: The force of your argument might be negligible.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: It might be, if the occasions on which bicycles had to be sent to Perth were extremely few.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Would they send a bicycle to Perth to get a puncture mended?

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: The constable would probably mend the puncture himself, but I have no doubt that

the patching outfit would have to come from Perth if it was requisitioned. However seldom or however frequently it happens, I know that the police bicycles have to be sent to Perth for repairs. How often it occurs does not matter, but what I have said illustrates the silly situations that are sometimes brought about by departmental rules.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Principles, as they call them.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: If the department will not make available a motor vehicle for use by the police officers concerned in emergencies, it should at least make it possible for an officer who is prepared to purchase his own vehicle to be assisted or given a mileage rate. At present during the day an officer receiving a call must use available public transport—

The Hon. G. Bennetts: I think the police in some country areas are dissatisfied with the allowances they get for their vehicles.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Perhaps so, but in this instance they have not any vehicles. Considerable concern is being felt by officers of the Police Department at the impending implementation of the 40-hour week.

A peculiar position obtains at present in the Police Force, in that its members already have in their award provision for a 40-hour week, but there is an agreement—a gentleman's agreement—that the 40-hour week should operate, then eight hours' overtime, if worked, should be paid for at the rate of time and a half, and any time worked beyond that should not be paid for. However, the extra time that is worked beyond overtime rates can be taken as time off subsequently during the week. So, if an officer works 50 hours a week, he is paid for his 40 hours, then paid overtime rates for the next eight hours, and for the remaining two hours he has time off in lieu, which has proved to be convenient to both the department and the officer concerned.

Many police officers are worried because, if the 40-hour week is implemented, it could mean a considerable reduction in their incomes. It can easily be understood that as this position has obtained for many years, many police officers have committed themselves to the purchase of homes, refrigerators and other domestic appliances, based on what they would earn in the future.

The Hon. G. E. Jeffery: That applies to everyone.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Yes, but the position is that the police officers are happy with the present set-up. They are concerned at the prospect of the 40-hour week being thrust upon them suddenly and the fact that all time worked after that will be overtime if there is not a large increase in the force. This is the stage at which the position becomes serious

and the Government, I think, needs to give careful consideration to it. Some police officers, after checking the overtime book to ascertain what overtime they have accrued, have found that they have more overtime accrued than their long-service leave could give them.

If such a state of affairs applied to all officers in the force, the money accruing to them could amount to a very big bill which the Government would have to face. We do not want the same position arising as that which occurred in the Railway Department and which resulted in a cost to the Government of £1,000,000 overtime in one year. In this case, the department and the officers are quite happy with the present setup. Also, so far as I know, the enforcement of the law is not suffering by virtue of the fact that the men are working overtime. If that could be proved, there probably would be justification for increasing the number of men on the force and implementing a 40-hour week.

However, again I think that some consideration should be given to those police officers who may find themselves financially embarrassed with a sudden switch to the 40-hour week. At present they are quite happy to take time off for the hours that they work overtime, but it is quite possible that certain officers might abuse a 40-hour week, if it is thrust upon them suddenly. It would be so easy for any officer to abuse it. For example, if an officer happened to see a drunk in the street 10 minutes before knock-off time, at the moment he would probably warn him and shoot him off in a taxi and that would be the end of the situation. However, if the 40-hour week were brought in, that drunk could be booked and if the making out of the charge sheet took the officer's time beyond that allotted for his day's work, he would then be due for the payment of two hours' overtime. If every officer adopted the same course, by abusing the implementation of the 40-hour week because of his financial embarrassment, the cost in overtime rates would be colossal, and no one could challenge his action.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: You have a poor opinion of the Police Force.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I have a very good opinion of the Police Force, but the opening for abuse would be there.

The Hon. G. E. Jeffery: You would apparently take the view that every time you saw a policeman outside a hotel he would be there because of his financial difficulties.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: That thought is the hon. member's. We would have very poor minds if we thought that. I am merely pointing out that if the 40-hour week is thrust on them suddenly, the opening is there for abuse, and if it is abused and advantage taken of it we would probably be surprised to see

what the overtime bill would be. Also, why introduce it when every officer in the Police Force is happy under the present set-up? They feel they are better off now; the department considers it is carrying out its job efficiently, so why bring in this 40-hour week award which apparently the men themselves do not want?

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: The award provides for a 40-hour week and now that there are plenty of recruits available the department is anxious to implement the 40-hour week in order to save overtime.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: The hon. member is probably on the right track. There are many recruits available today, although that has not always been so and perhaps the department feels that it should increase the number of men in the Police Force. I do not know whether that is because there has been an increase in crime or not, but I do not think that would be the position on the Goldfields.

I have a copy of the "Police News" here and all through it appear resolutions that have been made at various meetings of the branches of the Police Union. The following is an extract from the minutes of the C.I.B. on the 40-hour week:—

That this Branch views with alarm the Press notice of the 23rd of March, 1953, regarding the hours to be worked by Police

It then goes on. Here is another extract taken from the minutes of a meeting held by the Northam branch—

40 Hour Week: "That the Executive be requested to supply details to all Branches and Stations of the action they propose to take when the 40 hour week becomes effective . . . also any other matters affecting members as a result of the 40 hour week."

Here is another resolution taken from the minutes of the Fremantle branch—

40 Hour Week: "This meeting is unanimously of the opinion that the Executive of the Union should strenuously oppose any proposals made whereby different hours, i.e., 40, 44 or 48 hours should be worked by any member or members of the Union . . ."

In this copy of the "Police News" of July, 1953, there is also mention of a letter from the Kalgoorlie branch regarding the 40-hour week.

And so it goes on. The question is actively engaging the minds of all members of the Police Force. I would point out to the Minister that the officers themselves should be considered before this award is implemented, in view of the fact that the present arrangement is working so well at the moment.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: They do not—

The PRESIDENT: I hope the hon. member will not encourage interjections.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: But they are going to reduce their wages every week.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Through you, Mr. President, I will address the members of this Chamber on another matter entirely. This is a question that has been considerably aired in the Press. It is the problem of fruit-fly and its infestation in this and in other States. More particularly, I want to speak on the methods that are proposed to combat it. It is hoped that the importation of a wasp from one of the Pacific Islands may help to eradicate the type of fruit-fly that they have in the Eastern States.

This particular type of wasp is not very effective in eradicating the species of fruit-fly found in this State. I wish to sound a note of warning. So often in the past has a similar course been taken against some species of fauna or flora which has proved to be a pest. A search has been conducted all over the world for its natural enemy which, after it has been introduced to Australia and proved successful in eradicating the original pest, has shown that we have another one on our hands, which we are then forced to combat. With a pest that is so universal in this State, it is amazing to find the number of fallacies that are circulated concerning the fruit-fly. One of them, of course, relates to its destruction, and so many people believe that they are doing the right thing by burying the fruit. They have been told in some cases by officers of the department that if the fruit is buried deep enough, the fruit-fly will be destroyed. Those who have gone into this problem will probably know that the only and complete method of destruction is boiling or burning the infected fruit.

If we go back to the introduction of the fruit-fly into this State, it will be discovered that the pest was introduced many years ago in Seville oranges. Although the fruit-fly does not normally find its best host in oranges, it will attack oranges particularly in a dry season, such as the one we have just experienced, when the oranges were sweet but not very juicy. The fruit-fly will attack oranges, but generally speaking it will not mature or pass on through them.

Another point is that the fruit-fly does not attack unsound fruit. The fruit-fly will only attack sound fruit. It will only attack fruit when it is partly mature for this reason: The egg must be laid in solid flesh. It lays the egg during the period when the fruit is half mature, for the reason that the time when the fruit does mature must coincide with the maturity of the insect concerned, so that it can feed on the mature fruit.

The amazing thing is that if one were to pluck sound, uninfected fruit from an infected tree, and hang the fruit on the tree in any way, or merely rest the fruit on the tree, the fruit-fly would not

attack it. It will not attack plucked fruit although the tree may be riddled with fly. Somehow the fly knows that the instant a fruit is plucked from the tree, it is no longer of any use for the propagation of its maggots, and it will not attack such fruit.

Over 45 years ago experiments were carried out by expert fruit producers in this State—not by departmental officers—on what is now Hamilton Park, which in those days was known as Baskshall's market gardens. Despite the story that if one buried the fruit deep enough the fly would be beaten, an experiment was conducted to show beyond any shadow of doubt that this was not so. The experiment was conducted by erecting an 18 foot pipe 3 inches in diameter, plugged solidly at one end. Infected fruit in the last stage of larvæ development was placed in the bottom of the pipe; then 16 feet of hard packed sand was poured on top. A glass sheet was fitted over the top of the pipe. Within 10 days, underneath the glass sheet placed on top of the pipe was a colony of adult and mature fruit-fly, which had to pass through at least 16 feet of solid, dry, packed sand—sand not damped. So, burying of fruit cannot destroy the fruit-fly, even though the insect has to pass through 16 feet of sand. With clay the result might be different.

Another peculiar feature is that, despite repeated claims, the fruit-fly will not attack grapes or grape vines. I have had many arguments on this matter with interested people. The fly seen around infected grapes is the ferment fly. It is on record that many years ago departmental officers declared one vineyard in the metropolitan area to be infested with fruit-fly and demanded that the fruit be destroyed. The owners refused. The departmental officers went out with wood and other material; they stripped the vines and burnt the fruit. A court case ensued, in which the owners of the fruit were successful, because they were able to prove that the fruit-fly will not attack grapes. The department was faced with the costs of the action and damage to the vines. It is remarkable to hear the fallacies and the misconceptions that exist today concerning the fruit-fly.

Here is another point: Is it fair that the owner of a tree, whether it be isolated in a private garden or growing in an orchard giving a return, should be compelled to destroy the fruit or even the tree itself, when on Crown land—I can quote examples of places along the coast, between here and Mandurah—there are acres and acres of what are known as Chinese or crab apples. It is a prickly type of native shrub. This tree is a perfect breeding ground for fruit-fly. There are acres of Crown land and private land where this tree is growing. No attempt is made to destroy it,

Although the fruit of commercial producers may be destroyed, the fly will go to a perfectly happy hunting ground and continue to propagate in those acres of wild bush where no attempt has been made to eradicate the fly. I believe the department is well aware that the crab apple is the most potent source of fruit-fly propagation.

It is known that even in a rose garden, if left to full bloom to form a round cherry-like fruit, known as hips and haws, fruit-fly will attack that fruit heavily, and will breed and propagate. But this fact is not publicised and people are not warned to pluck rose bushes. They are told to cut or strip the fruit trees or to lay baits. Is it because the department does not know or care? It is a fact that the fruit-fly can be eradicated from a fruit tree, but it can continue to propagate in a garden of neglected rose bushes.

One final point which I would like to place before the House is the useful and interesting work that is being carried on all over Australia by the flying doctor service. Many of us have heard about this service. Many people have a vague idea that these doctors merely hop into a plane, fly to some spot, pick up an injured patient and bring him back. This is more than an over-simplification of the work done by the flying doctor service. Many people are not aware that every section in every State runs on different lines.

In Queensland the flying doctor service is heavily subsidised by the Government on a £1 10s. to £1 basis. The service in that State has no financial difficulty. It provides a marvellous service. It runs clinic flights in the various districts and divisions. Month after month, two or three doctors at times are on call at the base, with pilot and plane ready for an emergency. In addition they carry out the clinic flights around the districts.

The service in New South Wales is run on a slightly different method. There is a permanent doctor stationed at Broken Hill. In that State the permanent operators of the plane are available for charter.

Then there is a slightly different arrangement again in Perth, where a section known as the Western Australian section—which is a misnomer because there are a number of sections in this State, all of which are needed—is established. The Western Australian section raises finance and runs the Port Hedland flying doctor base. Strangely enough, there is a head office in Melbourne—although the State of Victoria is too small to find use for the flying doctor service—which finances and runs flying doctor bases in the North-West of Western Australia. I would draw attention to the strange fact that the Premier of this State was rather amazed to discover, when we appealed for financial assistance for Kalgoorlie, that there was a base at that centre. We did

get some small assistance to purchase our own plane and start clinic flights instead of the present emergency mercy flights, but we are amazed to find that the State Government pays some thousands of pounds per year to the Melbourne section to maintain its service re the North-West sections.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: The Victorian Flying Doctor Service.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Yes. That is right.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Subsidies?

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Yes, but the Western Australian service is not subsidised. That is the point I want to make. We are in a more difficult position to raise funds than is the Melbourne section. For instance, Kalgoorlie has to raise its funds from a very small section in sparsely settled outback areas and, although our work is heavy, our income is comparatively small and when we did approach the Government for a subsidy towards the establishment of a permanent plane we got something like £200 or £300; but we will come back again for some more later on. We have raised almost enough to purchase a plane. It will cost £10,500 and we have something like £9,000 in hand now, but the Flying Doctor Service is surely doing for this country something that no Government could do.

Even the Federal Government has gone into the possibility of taking over the Flying Doctor Service, because of its very easy conversion in wartime to a defensive organisation for the reason that almost every station in the outback has a transmitting and receiving set which could keep a check of all planes flying over. Imagine the value this network would be to the defence of this country. But when the Commonwealth Government went into the cost of running and maintaining this service it was staggered and dropped the idea like a hot potato. This Flying Doctor Service is mostly a voluntary effort, subsidised a little by the State Government. One of the differences between the situation here and in other States is that the Flying Doctor Service here takes no cognisance of colour. An aboriginal on a mission station is treated exactly the same as a white person, and the number of aborigines exceeds the number of white patients. In our case we are fortunate, because the Native Welfare Department defrays the cost of all native cases, which we consider very generous; otherwise these cases could not possibly be paid for.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: It is not free anywhere, is it?

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Yes, the Broken Hill—

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: I am speaking of Western Australia.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: No, ours is not free yet. In each State the position is different. In Queensland it is completely free to all cases, and the ultimate aim is free service.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: The Queensland Golden Casket pays for that.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: The Government makes available a great portion of the money; and in New South Wales the service is free. In our own section—I do not know about Perth—we have to pay the actual cost of the flight but not for the doctor's services.

The Hon. E. M. Heenan: Before you finish, I think you should pay a tribute to the pilot, Mr. Geo. Lewis.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Undoubtedly. I have specifically omitted mentioning names, but I am quite prepared—

The Hon. E. M. Heenan: But he stands out above all other men.

The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I am quite prepared to mention one or two names of people to whom we can give considerable thanks and express appreciation for the work that has been done. The section of which I am a member—the Eastern Goldfields section—was actually started by a private person, a pilot named Geo. Lewis. For many years he ran it primarily as a private committee. Today he is retained by the committee for a comparatively nominal retainer, plus mileage. We charter his planes and he pilots them himself; if there is an emergency flight he is advised and the plane is ready. If a doctor is necessary he goes with Mr. Lewis. Through the years he has given a very wonderful and remarkable service. In our case the doctor is not a pilot, so he is not strictly a flying doctor, as most people think. In Queensland, many doctors are their own pilots. Ours is a service we are proud of and I hope the Government will give it consideration when we make an approach in the future for assistance.

THE HON. E. M. DAVIES (West) [6.6]: With other members, I desire to add my short contribution to the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply so ably delivered on opening day by the hon. Mr. Wise, and I also wish to join with other members in offering congratulations to you, Sir, on your having been elected to the high office of President of this Council. I feel sure that with your very long experience in both Houses of this Parliament, and also as a member of the Senate, you have indeed gained a great deal of knowledge, and I understand you intend to terminate your long and meritorious service in the interests of the people when your present term expires. I trust that after having been elected to this very high office, you will enjoy good health

and be able to carry out your duties to the credit of yourself and to the satisfaction of the hon. members in this House.

I would not like to go any further without mentioning the hon. Mr. Loton, who held the office of President for some considerable time. I should like to say to him that all hon. members were well satisfied with him as President. He was always tolerant; I feel sure he could have been much harder at times had he so desired, but he took the easy path—and I believe the most friendly one—in dealing with questions that sometimes became a little difficult. I am sure all hon. members appreciated what he did and the services that he rendered as President. In addition, he took a keen interest in so many necessary improvements to this building; improvements which will be of benefit to both members and staff who work in these Houses of Parliament. When the suggestions that he made are brought to fruition, I feel sure we will all be thankful for the part he played. At least he had a start made on additions to Parliament House.

I would like to congratulate the hon. Mr. Hall on being re-elected as Chairman of Committees. I think I echo the sentiments of every hon. member when I say that he carried out his duties in a very fine manner; the fact that he was re-elected to this position indicates that hon. members generally were satisfied with the way he carried out those duties. I also offer my congratulations to the hon. Mr. Griffith on being elected as the Leader of the Liberal Party in this Chamber. He is a young man who has had a good deal of experience, not only in this Chamber but also in the Legislative Assembly. I feel sure he will be able to carry out his duties with credit to himself, and I trust that he will be blessed with good health in carrying out those duties which will now fall on his shoulders as a result of being elected to that position.

One new member has been elected, the hon. Mr. Abbey. I notice that he is not present at the moment, but I join with other members in offering congratulations to him on his election. Having heard his maiden speech in this House, I feel sure that he will pay close attention to the affairs of Parliament and that he will make a very good member. I also offer my congratulations to those members who have been returned; we in this House do not like to see old faces disappear, and the fact that members have been returned indicates that they have the support of the majority of the electors in their respective provinces.

One member, the hon. Mr. Baxter, has fallen by the wayside. That is something that can happen to any one of us when we are contesting an election. I appreciated the friendship that existed between the hon. Mr. Baxter and me and, although we might have had differences of opinion at times on matters discussed

in this Chamber, there was nothing personal in anything that was said. I regret the fact that he is not with us again this year.

Mention has also been made of some hon. members who have passed on during the recess, and I should like to identify myself with the remarks that were passed when motions of condolence were moved in respect to the hon. Sir Harold Seddon, Senator Seward, Mr. Rodoreda and Mr. Ackland. I knew Mr. Ackland many years ago; he was a resident of Northam at the same time as I was and it was like meeting an old friend when I met him for the first time as a member of Parliament. The relatives of those members who rendered such sterling service as members of Parliament, must derive a certain amount of satisfaction from the knowledge that they played their part as citizens of this State.

I feel sure that every hon. member here regrets the fact that the hon. Gilbert Fraser is still absent from the Chamber. We all join in wishing him a speedy recovery from a most serious illness. I visited him about a week ago and he appears to be making very good progress. I trust that the time will not be far distant when we will see him once more occupying his seat in this House.

Recently we had a local government week, and I think most hon. members will agree that the local governing authorities play a most important part in the Government of this State, and also other States of the Commonwealth. We do not grant local governing authorities as much power as they have in the United Kingdom, or in some of the Eastern States. But local government, as its name implies, is local and near to the people. Members of local government are rendering a very fine service and carry out many of the duties involved in administering the various Acts which are passed through Parliament. During the local government week many delegates, who represent local authorities far removed from the capital of this State, attended conferences.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The Hon. E. M. DAVIES: At the tea suspension I was referring to the important part that local government plays in the affairs of this State. I was also mentioning the fact that there had been a local government week, and that delegates from local authorities in far-flung areas throughout the State were sufficiently interested to visit the capital in this connection. I would like to take this opportunity of congratulating the organising committee on the very fine way in which it organised the entire week. Lectures were provided by competent persons in professional spheres, dealing with the various phases of local government; and this was most educational and interesting.

I feel sure that those who are engaged in local government, and give up their time to it, benefited considerably as a result of those lectures.

In addition to that, the opportunity was taken to visit various works in progress; apart from this, certain forms of entertainment were provided and, all in all, we witnessed a most pleasant occasion. I am sure this was appreciated by the people who had come from the country districts; those who had displayed such a deal of enthusiasm by giving up their time to hear something that would be to their advantage.

I would now like to congratulate the Government on its policy in providing flats for pensioners and aged couples. Most of us know, in the metropolitan area particularly, that quite a number of people on pensions and low incomes, in some instances have not been able to acquire homes of their own. Naturally they were compelled to pay rent. With an increase in valuations of properties it was necessary for rents to be increased, and in most cases it was difficult for the people concerned to pay those rents. In other instances residences were purchased, and there was no alternative but for these old people to be evicted and obliged to find other accommodation. It was, however, impossible for them to find suitable accommodation within their means, which meant that some of them faced great difficulties.

Accordingly, the Government is to be congratulated for the policy it is pursuing in providing these flats for pensioners and aged couples on small incomes. I suggest that the good work be extended with a view to possibly evolving a scheme which might cater for widows. We often find that unfortunately some woman is left a widow. In most cases her family, have reached maturity, have married and left, and eventually she loses her partner and is thus left on her own.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: Those are the civilian widows.

The Hon. E. M. DAVIES: I am talking about the civilian widows. I admit that war widows are also entitled to consideration, but perhaps they are better off than most civilian widows. These people are not able to pay the rent asked of them, out of the one pension they receive, and, as a result, they are evicted, because the house is perhaps sold and is required by the new owner. There is no provision in the State Housing Act whereby a single person can be provided with accommodation. Accordingly, we find some of these widows being left with what furniture they might accumulate during their married life, with not a great deal of money, and certainly unable to pay for accommodation, which might be available, because of the cost involved.

I think the Government would do well if it could evolve some scheme to provide such women with accommodation in the declining years of their lives. Another important aspect, on which I wish to touch, is the fact that we are engaging in a policy of migration, whereby people are brought to Australia in an endeavour to increase the population. I think everybody subscribes to a migration policy, but if we are to expend a large amount of money on migration, I believe we should also do something to assist people with large families. Under the Commonwealth-State rental agreement—and we should all be pleased to know that that exists—income is taken into consideration. If a person's income is below a certain marginal rate, he is entitled to a rebate, but, if not, it does not apply; and it is necessary for him to pay the rent applicable to the type of residence in which he lives.

I know a case in my province of a family with 11 children. It is, of course, necessary for them to have a large house but, as we all know, a large house means a large rent. The rent necessary to pay for such a house is far above the means of this family. There are innumerable other instances where it is found most difficult to rear large families. I would like to suggest that where large families are involved, some provision should be made under the Commonwealth-State rental agreement, to enable them to receive some consideration. I say this because I believe that the continent of Australia, with its vast area, needs to be populated as quickly as possible. If we are to pay a large amount of money each year to accomplish this by immigration, then the people who are rearing large families, and who play an important part in populating this country, should also be assisted. Another aspect concerning the payment of large rents by large families, is that before long one or two of the teenagers start work, which means that that income is taken into consideration when computing the rent for purposes of rebate. There is apparently no rebate for people who are rearing large families, because they are above the line of demarcation set, and accordingly are not entitled to any consideration.

So, if we are going to encourage the population of this country, and we all know that it is most important for us to do so, we will not be on the right track if we endeavour to carry out this policy by means of immigration. It is the people who are here, and who are rearing large families that are most important when it comes to populating this country, because it is they who raise the future citizens of this land.

I would like to deal with the question of housing. Many thousands of houses have been built in this State since the cessation of hostilities, but unfortunately

many others have reached a stage of decay and should be demolished. However, it is not possible to do so at the present time, because various local authorities are permitting houses to be occupied as the people concerned cannot be accommodated in a housing scheme.

While some people may say there are other means of obtaining a house, I would point out that, as far as the major portion of the West Province is concerned, no homes have been built for rental purposes by private enterprise for many years. I do not blame people for not investing their money in that particular manner, as there are possibly other means whereby they could obtain a greater return for the money expended.

The Hon. R. C. Mattiske: You cannot say they have been given any encouragement.

The Hon. E. M. DAVIES: No such houses are being built around Fremantle; they are being built in the more popular suburbs where they command a higher rental. In that respect private investors are fulfilling their obligations. In the Fremantle portion of the West Province no houses have been erected by private enterprise for letting purposes for quite a number of years—not since long before the war.

The Hon. R. C. Mattiske: Has your Government encouraged the building of houses for letting?

The Hon. E. M. DAVIES: I do not know that it has discouraged it.

The Hon. R. C. Mattiske: Hasn't it?

The Hon. E. M. DAVIES: No, I do not think so. However, that is not the point to which I am referring and the hon. Mr. Mattiske will have an opportunity to express his views, if he so desires. I do not feel disposed to be drawn into that argument at the present time, because it could be very protracted. I am endeavouring to ask the Government to give consideration to the expansion of its house-building programme in the West Province.

I realise there are other parts of the State and of the metropolitan area that must receive their proportion of houses but, as representative of the West Province, I believe that the programme must be extended. I understand it is the intention of the Government to do so, and I would like it to have regard for the West Province as early as possible.

I wish now to refer to a question which has been raised in this House by those members who represent country districts. I refer to bacterial treatment and the sanitary arrangements in schools. I feel that the Government must do something in that respect because, not only in country districts but also in my province, we have some cases due, of course, to the fact that water reticulation is lacking. However, from a health point of view

something should be done in the way of making money available for this purpose, in order to provide these schools with septic systems. Most parents and citizens' associations have been endeavouring, from time to time, to bring this forcibly before their representatives in both Houses of Parliament, but unfortunately lack of money is the difficulty. Therefore, I would ask the Government to try to make money available this financial year for that purpose.

The question of hospitalisation is one that must be given consideration. We know that a great deal of money has been expended on the Royal Perth Hospital and additions are being made at the Fremantle Public Hospital. However, with the increase in population, particularly south of the river, it is now necessary that some form of hospital facility be provided for the people in that area. Since the war quite a number of new suburbs and housing settlements have occupied what used to be vacant land. In that regard, adjacent to Fremantle we have Applecross, Mount Pleasant, Brentwood, the extension of housing in the Riverton district and across to Canning and into Salter's Point, Collier, Manning, Coonawarra, Beeloo and Bentley. I feel that these people should be provided with a system of hospitalisation instead of their overcrowding the Royal Perth and Fremantle public hospitals.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: The people in Canning are asking the Government for a hospital south of the river.

The Hon. E. M. DAVIES: As one of the representatives of the West Province, I am endeavouring to suggest to the Government that something in this regard should be done as early as possible.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Good for you!

The Hon. E. M. DAVIES: Another question I wish to mention in regard to districts south of the river is that of a sewerage scheme. For quite a number of years we have heard talk of a south-of-the-river scheme and I think it should be made known when it will be possible to bring this scheme into being. Not only quite a number of residential districts, but also an industrial area of Fremantle, known as O'Connor, would come into a south-of-the-river scheme. These people would then be provided with a sewerage scheme, instead of having to carry on as they are at the present time, with the disposal of the effluent from their industries.

The Government would be doing something of great advantage to these areas if it were able to make money available for this scheme—a scheme that has been talked about for a considerable time.

There has been quite a lot of Press controversy regarding the historic buildings in this State. When one visits some

of the older countries one finds that endeavours are being made—particularly in the United Kingdom—to preserve some of the old historic buildings and the architecture of the earlier centuries.

Although this State was established as late as 1829, and we therefore have not a great deal of history behind us, we have still some examples of our 19th century architecture. From rumours that one hears it appears that a move may be made to demolish that historic building at Fremantle, known as the old asylum, which was used for that purpose over many years and later served as a home for aged women. Since the war that building has been used as an annexe to the Fremantle Boys' School, and for other purposes. While parts of it may be dilapidated and deteriorating, it is not beyond repair. I feel it would be a shame to destroy that structure, because I think we should endeavour to preserve some of the buildings erected early in the life of this State.

Many of the historic buildings and examples of early architecture in the British Isles are preserved by a national trust and I feel that a similar body should be formed in this State, to ensure that any historic buildings we have are retained, in order that in years to come we may be able to point to examples of the State's earliest architecture.

I have noticed in the Press, recently, some controversy regarding the Commonwealth-State financial relationship, with reference to the North-West of this State. I was surprised to read, in the Press, a remark attributed to Senator Spooner, to the effect that the Commonwealth had spent more money in our North-West than the State Government had. This takes my mind back to the history of the Commonwealth of Australia, and I can recall reading, in a printed history of events leading up to the formation of the Commonwealth in the early part of this century, of a plebiscite taken by the people in each of the States. After a good deal of argument and delay the Commonwealth Constitution was brought into being and was proclaimed, if I remember rightly, in 1901, and the people were jubilant.

What I read stated—

In adopting the Constitution, we have given a nation to a continent and a continent to a nation. We have created one people, proud to be known as Australians, but honoured and privileged to be members of the British Empire.

The Commonwealth of Australia is not a federation of States, but a Commonwealth of the Australian people; the continent of Australia with a nation known as Australians but, because we are unfortunately at the western end of the continent, with approximately 1,100 or 1,200 miles of no-man's land between here and South

Australia, we seem to be classed—as many people have lived in the past—as a Cinderella State.

Some people blame us for coining that phrase, but I do not think that is correct, as I have heard it used in the Eastern States. During a recent visit to South Australia a remark was made to me about Western Australia being a Cinderella State and I replied, "I have heard that before; but we take a great deal of comfort and courage from the knowledge that Cinderella eventually triumphed over her ugly sisters." The fact that we are at the western end of the continent is no reason why the Federal Government should not make more money available to this State, just as it has been made available in the Eastern States.

If we are to populate this State as we must—it must be recalled that during the last war Western Australia was declared, together with Darwin and parts of the North of Queensland, to be in the war zone—a great deal of money will have to be spent on the development of the north. If Australia were to be invaded, it is quite possible that the invasion would be through the North-West of this State and that was recognised by the military and naval authorities in the last war, when many battalions of troops, normally stationed in the Eastern States, were sent to our North-West for the purpose of repelling an invasion, should it be attempted.

The railways of Western Australia were used very largely for the transportation of troops and war materials—so much so that high military officers complimented the railways on the work that was done, notwithstanding the fact that ours are narrow gauge railways. The last straw, which broke the camel's back, was the fact that no labour or materials could be released to keep our railways in proper running condition. I believe that the cost of rehabilitating our railways should have been a charge on the Commonwealth as war expenditure, but the Commonwealth Government did not realise what had happened and the State Government had to bear the whole brunt of it.

The Hon. L. C. Diver: And a handful of settlers are deprived of their railways.

The Hon. E. M. DAVIES: I am very sympathetic towards some of my friends in the country districts and I trust that the statement attributed by the Press to the Minister for Railways was true; that if it could be shown that those railways should not have been closed, they might be reopened. Western Australia is a most important State, situated on the western side of the continent and Fremantle is known as Australia's western gateway. It is the first port of call for people coming from the United Kingdom and Europe and it has played a very important part in the

past. I venture to say that Western Australia has greatly assisted the Eastern States and the economy of the Commonwealth generally.

As is well known, the discovery of gold in Western Australia in the latter part of last century, gave the Commonwealth a great boost and many people came from the Eastern States to live in Western Australia—incidentally, that is how I came here. For a number of years, when things were not too good in the Eastern States, the gold obtained in Western Australia was of great value to the Commonwealth as a whole. Therefore, when we hear remarks about what the Commonwealth has done for this State, we should remember that the assistance given has been only a hand-out here and there. Western Australia has a huge territory and a small population and it is unfair for a Federal Minister to say that the Commonwealth has done more for the North than the State Government has.

Are we to be regarded as not being part of the Commonwealth? That seems to be the impression in the minds of many people in high positions in the Eastern States. I am pleased to know that, following the approaches made by the committee which was formed to go to Canberra and place our views before the Federal Government, a number of Federal parliamentarians—including the Prime Minister, visited the North-West of this State. Although nothing much has eventuated from those visits, a certain amount of money has been made available and I feel sure that, having been apprised of the fact that this State has a North-West which must be developed unless someone else is to take it and do the development, further assistance may be forthcoming from the Commonwealth. The imaginary boundaries between the States should mean nothing and, although they are marked on the map, were it not for a signpost or some other indication, one would not know when one was crossing the border from one State to another. One can travel right through the length and breadth of Australia and one would not be able to tell, by the manner of speech, whether a person came from Queensland, Western Australia or Tasmania. We are all one people. We became a nation on this continent and I am hoping that in the future we will be regarded as part of the nation so that we, too, may receive consideration in regard to that expenditure which is so essential in the north of this State to encourage people to live there and to remain there in contentment if possible.

I do not want to conclude on that note without making some mention of a matter which is most important and which will show what the Commonwealth Government thinks of the North-West of this State. Some hon. members may be aware that the residents of the Murchison and of North-West of Western Australia do not

get any recompense from the Commonwealth medical benefits scheme, merely because the Commonwealth makes available to the State a great deal of money for hospital purposes. At least, that is so according to the reply that was received by the Federal member for Fremantle, when he asked a question in the House of Representatives on this particular matter, following representations that were made by me.

We know that all the hospitals in the metropolitan area share that money which is made available by the Commonwealth Government. The so-called hospitals in the north may share those benefits too, but the State Government, like the Commonwealth Government, has to pay the salaries of the doctors resident in those parts in order to encourage them to go there, because there is not sufficient return for a doctor to engage in private practice. Because a patient is encouraged to consult a North-West doctor whose salary is paid by the State Government, the Commonwealth Government says, "No, we will not pay our portion of the sickness benefits to you because the State Government pays the doctor's salary." I have here a copy of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates for the first period of the third session of the twenty-second Parliament; for Wednesday, the 19th March, 1958. In that Hansard a question asked by Mr. Beazley and the answer given by Dr. Donald Cameron appear, and they are as follows:—

MEDICAL BENEFITS SCHEME.

MR. BEAZLEY: My question to the Minister for Health arises from the fact that a patient who consults a salaried medical practitioner in the Northern Territory, whose salary is paid by the Commonwealth, is entitled to receive a refund on his account, under the medical benefits scheme, but a patient in the remote areas of Western Australia who pays fees to a medical practitioner whose salary is paid by the State Government is deprived, under Section 19 of the Health Act, of the advantage of a medical benefit refund. Will the Minister explain why there is this discrimination between patients of doctors whose salaries are paid by the Commonwealth and patients of doctors whose salaries are paid by a State, in view of the fact that in each case the patient must pay his account in exactly the same way as if he were being treated by a private doctor?

DR. DONALD CAMERON: The facts are correctly stated by the honourable gentleman, and this difference does exist, but it exists for a very good reason. The National Health Act lays down that payments will not be made to a State hospital or to an officer of a State hospital, the reason being that the Commonwealth makes very substantial payments to the

States for hospitals and on other accounts, for instance for such things as pharmaceutical benefits. In the case of the Northern Territory, the Commonwealth carries the entire expenditure itself.

I do not know, but it seems to me rather peculiar. The Minister makes reference to hospitals and doctors, but friends of mine who have moved from the Fremantle district to the Murchison district have bitterly complained that they have been unable to receive a refund after paying a doctor in those parts for the services he has rendered to them.

I have raised this matter with the State Government, which has already taken it up with the Commonwealth authorities; but they remain adamant and will not do anything about it. They merely put up the excuse that they will not pay their share of the medical benefits because the doctor is a State salaried officer. However, I do not think that there should be any differentiation made between the Northern Territory and the North-West of this State. We are endeavouring to encourage people to go there to live and should they do so they should be entitled to their full share of medical benefits. Therefore, the State Government has had to fill the breach again. This letter which I have received from the Minister states that the hon. Premier has approved the payment by the State, in respect of persons in the North-West and Murchison areas, of that amount under the schedule of medical benefits which was payable by the Commonwealth, in respect of patients of private medical practitioners. In the letter it was pointed out that this action will overcome the anomaly caused by Section 19 of the National Health Act.

It seems to me very peculiar that the Commonwealth Government could not amend Section 19 of the National Health Act. The only reason I can give for its action is that it has no desire to amend it, and apparently says, "Let the State pay it." In my opinion, however, the North-West is part of the Commonwealth and residents there should be placed on the same basis as those in the Northern Territory, which comes under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth Government.

THE HON. J. M. THOMSON (South) [8.7]: I wholeheartedly associate myself with the congratulatory remarks that have been made to you, Mr. President, and to those hon. members of this House who have been returned as a result of by-elections; and I also wish to associate myself with the expressions of concern that have been made regarding our much-respected and highly-esteemed Chief Secretary. I regret, too, of course, the passing of a very distinguished member of this House in the past, who served the State well for very many years. I refer to the late hon. Sir Harold Seddon.

At this juncture I do not want to keep the House very long, because this Address-in-reply debate is drawing to a close. I felt that as various important industries of the State have been referred to adequately by previous speakers, there is no necessity for me to add any further remarks along those lines, because we will have an opportunity to discuss various matters relating to those industries in the debates on many of the Bills that will be brought before us in the near future.

I want to refer, however, to one or two things before this Address-in-reply debate closes. One is in regard to the responsibility we have for the welfare of the youth of this State. I do not care for the word "delinquency," because I consider that it has been used too freely of late and in my opinion we have been too anxious to condemn the youth of today for actions of which we do not approve. I think that from time to time too much emphasis has been placed on the exuberance that is displayed by youth, and therefore, whilst we do not wish to encourage any violent actions by adolescents, we should consider the matter with the object of discouraging any action which leads young people into trouble and which causes the adult population a good deal of concern.

In my view both the State and the Commonwealth Governments have responsibility in this regard. If we look at the expenditure figures of the Commonwealth Government it will be noted that £72,500 is the Commonwealth's contribution to the National Fitness Fund. I have been unable to ascertain what contribution the State Government makes to the National Fitness Fund, but, nevertheless, if we divide the Commonwealth grant by six it gives us a total of £12,000 for each State.

I do not think for one moment that the contribution we receive from the Commonwealth Government would be anywhere near the amount received by Victoria or New South Wales. I am sure it would be far less than £12,000. I consider, from what we see and from what we know of what is going on around us in the city and also in the country centres, that there is an immediate need for the establishment of youth centres which will enable boys and girls to mix together in general activities. I think that such a step would be a big improvement on the provision of a club which caters for only one sex.

I am loud in my praise of the work that is being done in various parts of the State by police boys' clubs. However, those clubs are for boys only, and their activities are limited mainly to gymnasium work and boxing. On the other hand, if we were to establish youth centres in the various towns—particularly in the provincial towns—various social activities could be entered into by the youth of those centres. For example, they could have such recreation as table tennis, badminton and folk dancing—which, of course,

is very popular—apart from general gymnasium activities and other physical exercises which are most desirable in developing a healthy body and in turn developing a healthy mind.

Therefore, I sincerely hope that the Government will realise the seriousness of the position that is confronting the State in regard to our youth, so that it will be able to impress upon the Commonwealth Government the necessity to increase its grant to the National Fitness Council, and thus enable the establishment, within towns outside the metropolitan area—apart from the metropolitan area itself—of suitable youth clubs, with all those amenities which are desirable to entertain adequately the boys and girls attending the clubs and to keep them profitably engaged for two or three hours on at least one night in every week.

Such a club could serve not only the purpose and the objects of one organisation, but would also be able to meet the needs of various other organisations within a particular area. For example, we all know that churches of various denominations play their part in encouraging the establishment of youth clubs, and therefore I think the establishment of a youth centre such as that which I have suggested should be given serious consideration and a definite move should be made towards that end.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: In Kalgoorlie the Police Boys' Club caters for both boys and girls.

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: That is very interesting to know. Many police boys' clubs are confined to boys only.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Are you aware that many of these youth clubs are already established in towns?

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: I know that. There is one in my own town.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It is only a matter of getting the children together.

The PRESIDENT: Will the hon. member address the Chair?

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: Whilst it may be a matter of getting the boys together, the necessary equipment has to be found to enable the boys to enjoy their recreation. Money is required to provide that equipment. Frequently the money is contributed by the people of the towns, and they contribute generously. It would be a forward step to establish proper buildings, equipped with the wherewithal, for the boys in country towns. The funds needed for this purpose are far beyond the resources of the State to contribute in full.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Has it not been your experience that communal and parental support is even more important than money?

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: I grant the hon. member that. What I would like to see is the establishment of clubs containing the amenities I referred to, and to bring that about will cost money. As the youths are the responsibility of the whole nation, the latter is responsible for providing the money to purchase the equipment. I would ask the State Government to increase its contributions so as to encourage further the establishment of youth centres in this State.

I was very interested to read the annual report of the Child Welfare Department for 1956-57 which was laid on the table of the House recently. Regarding the field staff situation the report sets out—

Probation service. Five male probation officers in the metropolitan area to watch the boys under notice and three female probation officers are responsible for the girls.

District officers are centered at Kalgoolie, Geraldton, Northam, Katanning and Bunbury and are responsible for surrounding areas. The areas allocated are too large to patrol effectively.

The field staff situation will need to be reviewed in the coming year to (a) create smaller areas to enable effective handling, (b) reduce case loads of field officers generally.

I consider this a very important step for the Child Welfare Department to carry out, but it will require money for the purpose. If the Child Welfare Department is to function in the manner it desires, it will be necessary to reduce the areas and provide additional field staff. I trust that the Government will, in its wisdom, see that this is done. There is need in country towns, particularly in those where the population has increased greatly in the last six or seven years, for further supervision by the Child Welfare Department. I trust this further supervision will be brought about in due course to meet the needs and requirements of the various country centres.

Before I conclude I would like to refer to a question asked by the hon. Mr. Murray this evening. He asked the Minister for Railways—

In relation to applications for settlement of Crown lands outside State Forests and Timber Reserves—

- (1) Under which section of the Forests Act is it mandatory to refer such applications to the Conservator of Forests?
- (2) Has such reference in the past been purely courtesy?
- (3) Under which section of the Land Act or Forests Act has the Conservator's veto to making such land available for selection been accepted?

The reply of the Minister was as follows:—

(1) Section 7.

(2) It has been the policy of succeeding Governments to refer to the Conservator for his views on alienation of Crown land carrying timber.

(3) There are no such provisions.

The Minister was well off the beam when he referred to Section 7 of the Forests Act because that section says that Section 2 (B) gives the Conservator control of the forest products on Crown land. So it is not mandatory to refer such application to the Conservator of Forests. I am not holding the Minister for Railways responsible for that answer, because I am aware that the answer came from the Minister for Forests. It is, however, desirable that answers to questions asked in this House should reveal the true position. I support the motion.

THE HON. H. C. STRICKLAND (Minister for Railways—North) [8.23]: I have previously congratulated you on your election to the Presidency of this House. I also want to express my appreciation of the courtesy and thoughtfulness extended to the Chief Secretary and myself by the previous President. For one or two Ministers to attend to all the Government's business in this House is by no means a sinecure and the leniency and thought of the President is really appreciated.

While welcoming the hon. Mr. Abbey to our deliberations, I regret the absence from the House of the hon. Mr. Baxter. Lasting friendships are formed here, and there is a sense of personal loss when a member's term of office, whether of one's own or another political party, comes to an end. I, too, deplore the unfortunate illness being suffered by the Chief Secretary, but find it very pleasing that a more optimistic future outlook for him now appears possible. I was speaking to the Chief Secretary at lunchtime today. Not having seen him for a fortnight, I am very greatly surprised and pleased to be able to inform the House that he certainly is making a great improvement.

I listened attentively to the speeches during this debate and was struck by the moderation and reasonableness shown by most members of the Opposition parties. Each speech has been carefully gone through and any enquiries, suggestions or complaints have been forwarded to the appropriate Minister or departmental head. I will refer this evening to a number of these matters. In regard to those to which replies have not yet been received, I will at a later date advise the hon. member concerned.

I congratulate the hon. Mr. Abbey on his maiden speech. His references to problems and other matters in his province were most interesting. The hon. Mrs. Hutchison asked if some attention could be given

to drainage near Brown's Lake, which is situated between Bedford Park and Morley Park.

Consideration has been given to this matter. I can advise the hon. member that the construction of a pipe drain in a tunnel at a cost of £75,000 should be completed by the beginning of next winter. The hon. Mr. Willmott made some very interesting comments on the fruit-fly menace. His contention that the markedly larger number of condemnations since 1955-56 pointed to an alarming increase in infestation is, however, not soundly based. A study of condemnation figures over a longer period than quoted by the hon. member, reveals considerable variations. For instance, rejections in 1949 were far higher than those of last year. It is a fact, too, that infestation was greater in the years preceding the establishment of the Fruit Fly Advisory Board.

The incidence of fruit-fly is greatly subject to seasonal fluctuations. In years which favour its build-up, such as last year, the incidence generally is proportionately worse in most areas. At such times infestation occurs in areas where it is not normally found, such as Albany. In mentioning that export grapes were condemned last season because of the fly, the hon. Mr. Willmott said grapes were seldom subject to infestation. This is not correct, as certain grape varieties, including export types, are regularly attacked by fruit-fly.

As hon. members are aware, the Fruit Fly Advisory Board, consisting of representatives of the fruit and grape industries and of departmental officers, advises the Minister for Agriculture in regard to the control of fruit-fly. In three areas fruit-fly baiting schemes are operating. These baiting schemes do not work under the advisory board, but are operated by local committees of growers with departmental officers as chairmen and their functions are governed by the provisions of the Plant Diseases Act. In these schemes baiting of commercial orchards is carried out by persons employed by the local committee. The growers are charged for these services, but contributions to the schemes are made by the Government. It is recognised that fruit-fly baiting schemes have been successful in achieving considerable control even in years when the incidence of fruit-fly is high. In seasons when fruit-fly is particularly bad, many growers find it advantageous to supplement the routine baiting done under the scheme with additional applications of poison bait.

It is felt that the hon. member's suggestion to implement an eradication campaign, which would include raising the registration fees of non-commercial fruit tree owners, would unfairly increase the burden on this section. At present householders pay two shillings per annum for their backyard trees and are also required

to undertake the necessary baiting. Commercial orchardists pay two shillings per acre, which would cover about one hundred trees.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: You overlook the fact that I suggested that the householder should be relieved of that responsibility.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: They undertake their own baiting, except where fruit-fly baiting schemes are operating. Where the baiting schemes operate, growers pay their committees a charge which approximates to 8d. per tree and thereby comply with departmental requirements for fruit-fly baiting.

There is no sound evidence that a programme of eradication, involving the increased finance suggested by the hon. member, would satisfactorily accomplish the desired ends. I understand that the eradication programme in South Australia has already cost over a million pounds and that each year considerable expenditure is incurred in dealing with subsequent outbreaks. Fruit-fly is still being found in South Australia in spite of the fact that when the programme was put into operation in that State, infestation with fruit-fly was limited and was in no way comparable with the infestation which exists in Western Australia.

With our present knowledge, the attack on fruit-fly is one of control, as eradication is not financially practicable, and, perhaps, not physically practicable. Where new pests have been discovered and eradication seems practicable, the Government has made substantial contributions towards enabling this to be done, as is the case with the codling moth and the Argentine ant.

The fruit industry in Western Australia has generally taken a responsible and constructive view of its problems. It is pleasing that the executive of the Fruit Growers' Association has agreed with the recommendations of the Fruit Fly Advisory Board, to submit to its annual conference that a levy be instituted to finance a greatly increased campaign against fruit-fly. This would include an increase in fruit-fly baiting schemes, extending the seasonal activity of these schemes and increased research and publicity.

The hon. Mr. Logan's view that the Government, while offering assistance to industry to come to this State, is neglecting our primary industries, is unsound and narrow. He overlooks the fact that the present Government has made money available for a five-year programme for improvement in sub-standard dairy farms in the Northcliffe and Margaret River areas. This scheme is in its third year of development. The other light land settlers to whom the hon. member referred have been assisted by the Government for several years. The previous

Government did nothing to assist sub-standard dairy farmers and those light land settlers. The hon. member stressed the need to assist primary industry. Does he not know that the State has already written off over £20,000,000 losses incurred in developing primary industry? Has he forgotten that the previous Premier committed the State to £1,000,000 worth of aid to the Rugby Cement Company?

At the present time all primary products are difficult to sell on overseas markets. Primary producers are bawling the fact that they cannot produce and sell overseas at present prices. It must be realised that the State's greatest need at the present time is secondary industries that will provide a more balanced economy. If we can establish a few heavy secondary industries we will make definite progress. This is essential, particularly when the State's imports annually exceed £140,000,000.

The Hon. L. C. Diver: Can you tell us any country in the world that can produce cheaper wheat?

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The hon. Mr. Logan complained that the Premier erred in promising the Perth City Council £100,000 towards the cost of the Empire Games. He considered the Premier should not commit the State to so far ahead as 1962 and referred to the possibility than another Government might then be in power. He forgot that the previous Government committed the present Government several years ahead for expenditure running into millions of pounds.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Overseas goods.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: There was £6,000,000 for railway stock bought by the previous Government.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: All rubbish!

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Yes, and with regard to a lot of it that Government did not ask what it was going to cost.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Tell the whole story.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: It was a case of writing an open cheque.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member has a right to make his own speech.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Hon. members devoted a good deal of consideration to education problems. The hon. Mr. Bennetts was concerned that some of the children at Norseman had to use the R.S.L. Hall, which is half a mile from the school. This particular accommodation problem is due partly to the generosity with which the Education Department has staffed the Norseman School. A strict adherence to the regulations would have resulted in awkward grouping and a reduction by two in the teaching staff. It was considered better to give the children the benefit of

smaller classes in less adequate accommodation, than to have larger classes in the main school. However an additional room is to be built on to the school during this financial year.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: It wants three.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The hon. member's comments as to deficiencies in school playgrounds cannot be denied. The problem is lack of finance. With the restricted amount of loan money available, classrooms must take precedence over playgrounds and other facilities such as septic tanks.

The hon. Mr. Diver also referred to the demand for septic installations in schools. As I have said, however, the difficulty is that while the Government would very much like to see septic tank installations at all schools where adequate water supplies are available, it cannot put such installations ahead of classrooms so long as insufficient loan moneys are available. If the Government were to adopt the suggestion of the hon. member and immediately provide £150,000 per year for septic installations, the net result would be that over the whole State, some 1,500 to 2,000 children could not be admitted to school. I am sure the hon. member will agree that this would be a retrograde step. If hygienically cared for, no harmful result follows from the use of earth closets. This does not mean that the Government does not desire to see septic installations provided, nor that it will not proceed as fast as possible to do what it can to provide them, but the fact remains that first things must come first and education is regarded as more important than septic installations.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: And the health of the children!

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: It is not correct to say that ill-health must result from continued use of earth closets nor is it true that the Director of Education has stated that he is not charged with the health of the youngsters in the schools. He feels not only that his responsibility is for education, but also that the education should be given in reasonable surroundings. However, there is a very great difference between what is urgently necessary and what is desirable.

The hon. Mrs. Hutchison went to considerable pains to promote the claims of Esperanto for inclusion in the school curriculum. She deplored the answer to the question she had previously asked in this House; that Esperanto had made such little progress in gaining recognition as a world language that its inclusion in the already overcrowded curriculum was not warranted.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: No wonder, when educationalists did not think of it.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The Education Department receives many requests for additional subjects to be taught in schools. These come chiefly from small groups in the community, who have an intense personal interest in a particular field. The problem is that no more subjects can be included in the curriculum without deleting some of what is already there. It thus becomes a question of what the community as a whole requires. To ascertain this, the Minister for Education this year set up a curriculum committee to ascertain what should be taught in our high schools. Many sections of the community as well as educationists are represented on that committee. The work of the committee is proceeding very satisfactorily and it is hoped they will reach their conclusions within the next few months. The claims of Esperanto will be considered amongst many others by that committee.

The Education Department feels that Esperanto, although it has been in existence for over half a century, has not attracted sufficient adherents to its cause to warrant it being taught in the schools.

It has been taught at various times by private teachers and by the Technical College, but the classes have languished rapidly for lack of interest.

The hon. Mr. Bennetts has suggested that success might follow drilling at Coolardie. As a matter of fact the Government intends at an early date to commence drilling on the Lady Loch and the Forest King Leases, which are south of Coolardie. It is proposed to put down two drill holes on each of these areas. A number of submissions for drilling has been received from the hon. member for Eyre and these have been examined by the Government Geologist. Several of these propositions are already held and the owners, if they wish, could apply for £ or £ subsidised drilling.

The hon. Mr. Jones is of the opinion that an appeal should be made to the Federal Government for additional assistance for prospectors. He also considered that teams should be formed consisting of an experienced prospector and a younger man and should be given up-to-date equipment. It has always been the policy of the Mines Department to encourage prospectors to work with a mate, but it is becoming increasingly difficult for prospectors to find suitable mates, and, in some cases, prospectors have been granted assistance when working alone. As stated by the hon. member, the prospecting scheme has been liberalised. Prospectors now receive £4 10s. per week in areas south of the Tropic of Capricorn and £5 10s. per week north of the tropic. In addition, tools and other equipment can be obtained from the Mines Department under the prospecting scheme. There are several compressors and percussion drills which are let out on hire, and when a show has

been developed, the Mines Department may grant loans for development work and the purchase of machinery in approved cases.

Further assistance to prospectors is provided by the State batteries for crushing facilities, and an ore cartage subsidy is paid on ore carted to the batteries. The hon. Mr. Jeffery referred to the need to widen the Helena River bridge at South Guildford and the traffic bridge over the Swan at Guildford. I can advise the hon. member that the widening of the more heavily trafficked bridges in the metropolitan area is kept under consideration by the Main Roads Department. The bridge over the Canning River at Gosnells was considered to have the greatest need from a traffic intensity viewpoint and this widening work has recently been completed.

With a view to the future widening of the bridge over the Helena River at Guildford, the embankment has been widened already in order that settlement can take place before final road construction is undertaken. Detailed plans of the bridge and road approaches are being prepared, and money has been made available so that timber and other materials can be assembled.

Widening of the bridge over the Swan River at Guildford will probably be carried out in the not far distant future. The position of a bridge between Garratt-rd. and the Bassendean bridge at Guildford on the route of the proposed Gosnells-Beechboro-rd., will be determined by several factors associated with the alignment of the road and its crossing over the Midland Junction railway line in the vicinity of Whatley Crossing. It is not anticipated that this bridge will be built for some years.

The hon. Mr. Griffith considered that the installation of traffic lights in William-st. had resulted in increased traffic delay. He stated that at the morning peak a bad traffic jam occurs on the bridge because there are too many traffic lights; some of the streets are too close together for the use of lights, and because of these lights, road traffic-blocks occur where formerly traffic sorted itself out in a much speedier manner. During the morning peak, the traffic on William-st. is predominantly moving towards the city, and I am advised that reports of traffic jams on the bridge have not been confirmed by observations by the Main Roads Department.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: All they have to do is to travel from the north to the city in the morning on a week-day and see it for themselves.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Well, that is what they advise. If traffic jams were to occur, they would do so because of traffic exceeding the capacity of the Wellington-st. — William-st. intersection.

The effect of new traffic lights north of the bridge is to release traffic toward the city in platoons which are more easily handled by the traffic lights at this intersection. It is contended that the installation of lights in William-st., north of the railway, can have nothing but a beneficial effect, at morning peak, on traffic congestion on the bridge.

The Main Roads Department does not agree that, under present traffic conditions, the new traffic lights installed on this important city radial road are too close together. When traffic increases to a point where congestion occurs because of the short length of some of the city blocks, consideration will be given to linking the traffic lights. At this stage it is not considered necessary to incur this additional expense. I might add that the need for this is continually under review.

The hon. member and others may have suffered minor delays in William-st. since the lights were installed. Some degree of delay is inevitable in peak city traffic, but speed studies made by the Main Roads Department, between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m. along William-st., have shown an average journey speed toward the city of 15.8 miles per hour over the journey from Bulwer-st. to Bazaar Terrace, a distance of 1.2 miles. The journey speed is not the travelling speed on unrestricted sections, but takes account of all delays. It is considered that this is a very good speed under peak conditions for a section of an important city street which contains many major intersections. Prior to the installation of lights, traffic in William-st. may have enjoyed a clear run into the city. While this traffic flow was obtaining its right of way by weight of numbers, cross traffic in the side streets was compelled to wait. The installation of traffic lights has given the cross traffic a chance to move without undue delay.

I might add that before the traffic lights were installed at Roe-st., it was common at the evening peak for queues of traffic to be formed on the William-st. bridge extending into Wellington-st. Since the traffic lights were installed these long queues have not been observed.

It has been suggested that traffic lights are being overdone in Perth. Up to the present 29 sets have been installed, which is a very low figure for a city of this size. A programme of traffic light installations is carried out only after studies have been made of traffic volumes and, where necessary, of the accident pattern. Lights are not installed unless it can be shown that the control is desirable to facilitate traffic flow, or that there is an expectation of a reduction in the number of serious accidents.

The hon. members for the South-West Province were critical of the tying-up of land in State Forests.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: My word they were!

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I might say that the forest policy of Western Australia is very largely laid down in the Forests Act, and follows lines more or less shaped over the past forty years under a succession of Governments. Section 7 (ii) states—

The Forests Department shall have exclusive control and management of—

- (a) All matters of forest policy;
- (b) all State Forests and timber reserves and the forest produce of other Crown Lands.

That particular paragraph might answer the query raised by the hon. Mr. Thomson.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: Many of the big cockies have a lot of land tied up.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Section 8 (ii) (c) states—

The Conservator shall be directly responsible to the Minister.

Section 31 (iv) covers the making of working plans which have to be submitted to the Governor in Executive Council, and when approved, shall have effect and shall not be altered except on the recommendation of the Conservator. Detailed working plans are submitted every five years for approval by Executive Council.

Forest policy over many years has been directed towards securing the reservation of all available suitable forest country for the practice of forestry in perpetuity.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That word "suitable" is the operative word.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I will explain it shortly. To enable considered judgments to be made on the use of remaining Crown lands, a Land Utilisation Committee, appointed by the present Government, has operated for the past four years. It is made up of—

- The Surveyor-General (Chairman).
- The Director of Works (represented by Hydraulic Engineer).
- The Director of Agriculture.
- The Soils Conservation Commissioner.
- The Conservator of Forests.
- The Treasury economics research officer.

In its earlier stages this committee discussed at considerable length the principles which should guide its deliberations and information was submitted on timber reserves, future usage, and the need for dedication of State Forest to give security on which to base forestry planning.

Areas under investigation from time to time are very carefully considered, and decisions are reached after the submission of facts and figures. No area is rushed through, and it sometimes takes up to one or two years to reach ultimate decision. Decisions have not been reached by vote but by careful consideration of the merits of each case until unanimity is arrived at.

It is important to realise that the Conservator of Forests is only one of the members of the committee.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: But my word, he is a big one.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: But he is only one out of six. The Forests Department does not expect to hold permanently land which it cannot expect to use economically; but it is necessary to set aside a considerable area of land for the practice of forestry, both now and in the future when our population will be very much greater than it is at present. Each year the Forests Department agrees to the release of quite considerable areas of country, but, of course, refuses to agree to the alienation of other areas, where it considers the timber interest is more important.

It must be remembered that there are huge areas of land alienated but undeveloped. The fact that 20 per cent. of the State's annual timber production comes from alienated forest land shows that serious inroads have been made in the original forest area.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: Nobody is denying that.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: As a matter of fact, last year 22½ per cent of the commercial timber came from alienated land; that means that many so-called farmers are really private foresters.

The Hon. J. Murray: That land was alienated before the time of the previous Conservator and the present Conservator.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: They are still doing it. They are not farming; they are selling the timber and making a lot of money from it. They are doing very well as private foresters, because they were responsible for 22½ per cent. of the State's production.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The land might have been taken up before.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Later on I will tell the hon. member how his arming friends could have got hold of it. Unfortunately, forestry is not being practised on these areas which will either be cleared or allowed to remain under rough forest, but without the practice of forestry. It would be folly to allow the alienation of land carrying timber wealth already in existence, until the timber is removed in an orderly fashion which has no fit into the plans of existing sawmills.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is fair enough.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: These timber values are higher than is usually recognised by non-timber authorities, each load of timber in the log representing approximately £10 or more worth of sawn timber. By and large, the land is just as productive under forest as under the average form of agriculture.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: That is not true.

The Hon. J. Murray: It is nonsense.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: That is what they argue.

The Hon. J. Murray: But it is not true. The Minister has only to examine the position.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: It depends on the value of the agriculture.

The Hon. J. Murray: Agriculture goes on year in and year out.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: We will examine it. It is important that in an economy primarily agricultural there should be industrial balance, and the sawmilling industry is one of the few industries we have which can provide some of this balance.

The Hon. J. Murray: It is not paying its way now, you know.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: To some it may appear more spectacular to have 50 small farms scattered around the district than to have 50 workers grouped in a sawmill in the same area. In many districts in timber country, if it were not for full-time employment in sawmills and the industry generally, many small so-called farmers would have to walk off their blocks.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: They have established the whole of the South-West. No one denies that.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The Forests Department has been able to buy back many areas on which farmers, after many years of struggle, have had to give up the fight to make a living. The department has been able to purchase quite well developed farms on good soils at very low prices, for the purpose of pine planting.

The Hon. J. Murray: They do not want to bring that one up.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Your people did not want them and they were put up for sale. Private enterprise did not want them. They have been offered for sale for years.

The Hon. J. Murray: I admit that.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: They were bought because a land agent, who wanted to get commission out of the sale, finally offered them to the Forests Department and said, "Here is some land and some of it cleared."

The PRESIDENT: I advise the Minister not to take notice of any interjections.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: It was offered at so much per acre and was purchased. Summing up, the royalty derived from the timber alone resulted in their obtaining more than they had paid out for the land. Those farmers who wanted to put their sons on the land did not do

anything about it. These areas were available on the open market for purchase by other land seekers who seemed to be in no hurry to avail themselves of the opportunity.

In all cases the department has been able to secure them for a price lower than it would have cost to clear the land had it remained in its original form, indicating that somewhere along the line severe losses were incurred by the farmers who developed them. If agriculture cannot succeed on these good soil areas how can it be more successful on ironstone gravel soils carrying jarrah which may cost anything up to £50 per acre to clear ultimately?

Western Australia is in a pioneer condition with a relatively small population, and therefore the future timber position here is obscured. But if we look at the position in Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia, which are more developed, we find that they are in a more difficult position with regard to timber, although their populations are still not as great as that which Western Australia can look forward to.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Victoria's position has been brought about in the main by bush fires.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: New South Wales and South Australia are very heavy importers of timber, and the Victorian forests are said to be nearing exhaustion, so that the Victorian economy is being sustained by imports from Tasmania and overseas. Western Australia is fortunate in being able to observe these awful examples, and take long-term measures against such a state of affairs arising within its boundaries.

The sawmilling industry is not as vocal in its demands for the reservation of forest land as the agricultural interests are in pressing for its alienation. This is natural as the agriculturalists are individuals, whereas the workers in the sawmilling industry, by and large, do not know what is going on and do not make individual demands. The timber industry receives no subsidies—

The Hon. J. Murray: Don't say that! The losses on the saw mills alone were really subsidies.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The timber industry receives no subsidies by way of freights.

The Hon. J. Murray. I grant you that.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The hon. member will not listen to me and so I cannot convince him. The timber industry receives no subsidies such as are received by many sectors of the agricultural industry in the way of freights, etc. The dairying industry, which has been one of the worst causes of forest destruction in

Western Australia, survives only by colossal subsidies and assistance, and has been shown to be only a marginal industry from which most settlers escape if possible.

The value of the wandoo forest for honey alone is very large, and the Bee keepers' Association is pressing for the reservation of all possible wandoo country for this purpose. In addition, the tannin extraction industry produces wealth of over half a million pounds per year from such forest.

It is true that at the present time, with our limited population, we are not able to make the fullest use of the forest areas in order to develop the resources properly but this will come as population increases. Large industries, such as charcoal-iron paper pulp, hardboard, etc., will in time be based on the forest areas. As the farm lands of the wheatbelt become more developed they will have to look more to the forest country for fuel and fence post which today they secure from the development of their own lands.

The firewood requirements of cities such as Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide are still colossal in spite of the very high price paid for such wood. In Melbourne approximately one million tons of firewood are used per annum in spite of the cost, which is three or four times greater than the price of wood in Perth.

Hon. J. Murray: You are not trying to tell me that firewood is more important than agricultural development?

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: It is part of the product of the forest. In the agricultural areas the Forests Department has been following the policy of releasing many areas formerly reserved under conditions whereby the mallet timber only is protected. It is certain that the Saw millers' Association, who are closely watching the position, will raise very vigorous objections to further onslaught on the available forest area for agricultural purposes.

Consideration is being given to an extensive forestry programme aimed at encouraging landholders with good forests on their holdings to practise forestry under Forests Department guidance, on areas which they do not intend to clear. That would be hilly land and land unsuitable for agriculture. It is significant that a small country like England is trying desperately to replant some five million acres with forests, and that France is following a steady policy of increasing the planted forestry area. The same trend is shown in the United States which expects its timber usage to rise by 75 per cent at the end of this century.

We have neither the funds nor the population to make the fullest use of our forest area at the present time, but there is no the slightest doubt that as the country grows we will need every acre that we

are able to set aside for this purpose, and that the forestry industry will be quite as productive as ordinary forms of agriculture, on the average.

The present price of wool raises serious doubt as to the advisability of costly land clearing to establish pasture on areas now carrying forest. Forest areas which are cut through by a mill cannot be classed as cut out, because there are intermediate age classes of trees which are advancing towards maturity and cannot be sacrificed to the clearer without considerable economic loss eventuating.

Western Australia covers 624 million acres of the earth's surface. Fifty-eight per cent. of it has less than 10 in. rainfall, but with artificial water supplies could, and will, produce increased food supplies. The remaining 263 million acres is approximately equally divided between the two zones of the northern rivers and the southern rivers. The northern zone has a vast potential for food production in the future, but is as yet relatively unknown, and likely to remain so with the present population and economics of Australia.

The southern zone of Western Australia covers all that land between the 10 in. rainfall line and the south coast—approximately 104 million acres. Of this 104 million acres, looking forward to the provision of artificial water supplies and new sources of power, it could be envisaged that about 63 per cent of it—65 million acres—lying between the 10 in. and the 15 in. rainfall line, which is today only partly used for wheat and sheep, would become capable of the production of cereals and many other farm crops. The other 37 per cent—39 million acres—of this zone, from approximately the 15 in. rainfall line to the south and west coasts where rainfalls run as high as 60 in., is today recognised as the main agricultural and forest area of Western Australia. This area of 39 million acres is further divisible into rainfall zones as follows:—

Rainfall.	Million Acres
15 in. to 20 in.	16.9
20 in. to 30 in.	12.2
30 in. to 40 in.	5.6
40 in. to 50 in.	3.1
50 in. plus	1.7
	<hr/> 39.5

Economic forestry for timber production in Western Australia can be carried on only in areas of above 25 in. rainfall, estimated at 16 million acres, of which approximately 4 million acres are at present State Forest. Thus, from the main agricultural area of 39 million acres with more than 15 in. rainfall, only 4 million acres are State Forest and probably not more than a 5 million acre total could be considered suitable.

The Hon. J. Murray: There are a lot more subject to this blind veto by the Conservator, to which I have referred.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Looked at from the wider angle of all land in the south of over 10 in. rainfall coming into use for food production, the comparison is that out of 104 million acres of potential agricultural country, only a total of 5 million acres, or less than 5 per cent., can ever be devoted to economic wood production. This figure by all world standards, is very low, and it is quite evident from figures produced in other publications that with the increasing development of food production throughout the South-West of Western Australia, an area of 5 million acres of State Forests should be carefully guarded, with a view to the reduction of the inevitable imports of timber to Western Australia.

Due to a number of factors, it is unlikely that forestry will be extensive in the small area of over 30 in. rainfall in the Kimberleys, so that if and when the vast northern areas of over 10 in. rainfall are populated, the comparison will be still more striking, as the 5 million acres of forest cannot expand, while the agricultural zone will grow to 41 per cent. of the land area of Western Australia, or 258 million acres, all of which activities will require timber, wood derivatives, paper and pulp products.

When we consider developments within the various rainfall areas of the southern portion of the State, we find the following figures, as obtained from the Government Statistician, for 1955. Developed land is taken as—areas under crop, pasture, and fallow and areas newly cleared or used for grazing.

Within the 30 in. rainfall area of 10.4 million acres in the South-West, 2.94 million acres are privately held, but only 1.28 million acres are developed. Between the 15 in. and 30 in. rainfall lines, the figures are given as 15.13 million acres privately held and 9.13 million acres developed. Between the 10 in. and the 12 in. rainfall line we have 9.87 million acres privately held, of which 2.04 million acres are developed. Between the 12 in. and the 15 in. rainfall line we have 15.83 million acres privately held, of which 7.29 million acres are developed. Thus, out of a total of 104 million acres, only 19.74 million are developed, although 43.77 million are privately held.

Below the 10 in. rainfall line there is, of course, virtually no development at present, beyond extensive grazing on natural top feed. The Forests Department has carried out a special study from air photos of two important sections of the South-West. This will be most interesting to members representing the South-West. The area of high rainfall between Busselton - Margaret River - Augusta, in which it is found that out of 282,000 acres privately held, only 82,000 acres could be regarded as developed, that is, either cleared or having been ring-barked and

carrying pasture. Portions of the under-developed 200,000 acres had been at one time ring-barked but had reverted to jarrah regrowth and/or dense scrub.

A study of the Denmark area showed that out of a total area surrounding Denmark, of 63,200 acres, only 13,100 acres had been cleared or could be regarded as developed by ringbarking and pasture. The remaining 50,100 acres fell into the same category as the under-developed land in the Busselton-Margaret River-Augusta area.

It is apparent that throughout the high rainfall areas of the South-West the alienation of the land in many cases is not leading to development, and although the earlier fashion for ringbarking large areas has diminished and almost vanished, it is evident that much of the land taken up is for speculative purposes. In good forest country this is not only a loss to the State of timber land, but it also means that in due course the owner of such land, even by carrying out a comparatively small amount of developmental work, becomes entitled to a proportion of the royalty value of the standing timber, for which only in very exceptional cases does the owner do anything to protect or perpetuate the crop.

The land, when alienated, is usually sold on long term payment, at a few shillings per acre, and in nearly every case in forest country, this value is considerably less than the value of the forest, even if it is forest of very low quality which could not be marketed for perhaps another one or two decades. It may interest hon. members to know that a number of agricultural properties in the Blackwood Valley have been bought by the department for pine planting. One block of 800 acres, which was bought in 1954 for £2 per acre, had been alienated since before World War I. It was ring-barked and part cleared, and after over 50 years of so-called agricultural development it had practically no agricultural value and very little grazing value. On other lots bought by the department the value of the timber far exceeded the purchase price. Some of these were as follows:—Purchase price £582, timber value £2,300; price £3,000, timber £11,760; price £162, timber £3,692; price £352, timber £9,000.

There are other comparable instances. The hon. Mr. Willmott contended that lack of co-operation between the Lands and Forests Departments has resulted in the tying up of land in State Forest areas that were unsuitable for timber, but could not be made available for agricultural purposes. Contrary to the hon. member's allegations, I am informed there is close liaison between the two departments; and if he would be so kind as to let the Minister for Lands' office know precisely where is the large State Forest area near Wilgarup, which he states carries less than

one load to 50 acres, the land will be inspected so as to determine whether, if it is suitable for agriculture, it may be released for subdivision and settlement. The policy being followed by the Forests Department is an important one and taking the long view it is, in my opinion, correct.

Another lot of 445 acres was on the market for some time as a dairy farm. It was almost wholly cleared, but was overrun with bracken and rabbits, and much of it was too steep to be worked with implements. It was good pine land and cost the department only £2 10s. per acre. As with the other block the cost of clearing for pine planting was very low. Another lot which was alienated over 40 years ago was bought by the department for £4 per acre, of which two-thirds will be recovered from timber royalties in the clearing of the land for radiata planting. Another 400 acres of unproductive country was bought at £3 10s. per acre, and another of 1,000 acres for £4 per acre, of which a considerable portion will be recovered in timber royalties. All of these properties were on the open market and failed to attract buyers as farming propositions.

A report from the Forests Department indicates that both State Forests, Nos. 9 and 37, which are near Wilgarup, are carrying a good volume of timber. This is estimated at 8½ loads to the acre in No. 37 and 16 loads to the acre in No. 9. Somebody in Bunbury said they were going to settle hundreds of thousands of people in that area. To follow that up, arrangements were made to meet the Conservator of Forests, who was asked by the Road Board Association to visit that area. When he got down there, only three people were interested enough to turn up. This was in April. The Conservator had with him maps of the district, and when he showed those maps to one of the three representatives of the board, he (the representative) said he had always thought that that area was State Forests. His comment was, "I see there is one block of 25,000 acres which has had nothing done to it."

I would not be surprised if the Leader of the Opposition, when he drove around that area, did not get the impression that all the vacant land he saw belonged either to the Crown or to the State Forests, but that is not so. In spite of this agitation which is supposed to exist throughout the South-West for these forests, when arrangements were made by the Road Board Association to meet the Conservator, only three people turned up.

One in particular, said to him, "I know that 25,000 acres. It is near my place and I know to whom it belongs." This man always thought that it was forest land. Most people do so until they see it on a map, but in actual fact it is not. I would say that the policy of the Forests Department is right and it would be very

foolish for the land to be taken away from forestry areas, when there are still many millions of acres of good agricultural land available in this State.

Farmers' sons may have to go a little further from their present homes, but there is plenty of land which they can take up and develop if they sincerely want to enter into agriculture. The hon. Dr. Hislop objected strongly to the lack of enthusiasm for his suggestion, made recently by means of a Parliamentary question, that certain Class "C" hospitals should be classified as Class "A." For the benefit of other hon. members I would explain that a Class "C" hospital deals with convalescents and cases of chronic illness. A Class "A" hospital is an acute case hospital for general, medical, surgical and obstetric cases.

Patients in Class "A" hospitals are entitled to full hospital benefits, that is, both hospital and fund benefits. Those in Class "C" hospitals receive Commonwealth benefits only and are specifically excluded under the Commonwealth National Health Act from fund benefits.

The hon. member suggested that certain Class "C" hospitals should be classified as Class "A" Medical so that patients undergoing medical treatment could receive fund benefits as well as the Commonwealth payment. This is the first time this matter has been brought to the notice of the Public Health Department, which was not aware it was regarded as a serious problem. I understand that where a genuine medical case is an occupant of a bed in a Class "C" hospital for medical treatment and nursing care appropriate to a Class "A" hospital, and is under the care of a doctor who certifies to this effect, it can be expected that fund and hospital benefits would be paid.

The benefit societies frame their own regulations governing the payment of benefits. If the State Health Department altered its system of classification of private hospitals, the position might arise that the societies would alter their regulations to meet the situation. The hon. Dr. Hislop said it was news to him and probably to Goldfields members and others, that radiological findings were only one of the means used to determine pulmonary disease in mineworker applicants for compensation. The Director of the Tuberculosis Control Branch (Dr. Alan King) has advised me that radiological evidence is only one of the links in the chain of evidence and is definitely not regarded as necessary final conclusive evidence.

Dr. King states that in assessing claims for disability for silicosis, every effort is made by the medical officers concerned to give a just assessment. He would like the hon. Dr. Hislop to know it is appreciated that there may be marked pulmonary disability due to silicosis, even in the absence of anything but the absolute minimal

radiological evidence of silicosis. On the other hand, marked radiological evidence of advanced silicosis can exist without any degree of pulmonary disability.

Dr. King states that pulmonary disability may result from chronic bronchitis and emphysema, which can attack anyone in the community. The effects on the lungs of tobacco smoking are also becoming well known. I have seen, also, a report from the chairman of the Workers' Compensation Board that in all claims that have come before the board for some years, the evidence of the medical reports from doctors at the Kalgoorlie Laboratory included the past history of the patient, clinical examination and symptoms, as well as the X-ray reports. The chairman emphasises that the board well understands that there is no predictable or necessary correlation between the morphological changes associated with silicosis, and the degree of disability which may be found in the affected person.

The hon. Dr. Hislop stated that more progressive countries were discarding silicosis as a basic claim and were using the words "pulmonary disability." If by "progressive" he means South Africa, he is not correct. South Africa has not discarded silicosis as a basic claim. It is treated there similarly to our Act. They do, however, have a special Act dealing with pulmonary disability which is not silicosis, and which in its definition excludes both silicosis and tuberculosis. The hon. Mr. Jones criticised the answers I gave to questions asked by the hon. Mr. Logan in connection with drilling for water in the Badjingarra district.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: I should think he would, too.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The hon. Mr. Jones explained that the Mines Department has two water drilling plants for use in country areas. The hon. Mr. Logan, in his questions, asked how many plants were situated in the Badjingarra district and, whether they were all in use.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Why didn't they say where every one was taken to.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The answer was "one" and that it was in use. This was the answer requested.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Two had been in the area?

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: You did not ask that. You asked how many plants were situated in the Badjingarra district and whether they were all in use.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Why can't they answer it?

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: You didn't frame the question correctly.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: There has been quite a deal of complaint in regard to the replies given to questions. I am not defending every reply, but would

say the departments, in answering a question, attempt to answer specifically what is asked. We cannot expect somebody to forecast what an hon. member may have in his mind. With a lot of questions that are asked, the questioner knows the answer, but this does not apply to the officer in the department. I will inform the House about a question later.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Questions cost the Government a lot of money.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The hon. Mr. Jones stated that the answer gave no reason why the other plant was not there. Of course it did not, as he did not ask for that information. The next question was as to whether the Government was aware that the total cost of establishing a complete water supply in this area was upwards of £1,500. The answer to that was "No." The hon. Mr. Jones considered that if the Mines Department officers were not aware of this cost they should not be holding their jobs.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: They were aware of that.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Enquiries at the Mines Department have elicited the advice that, while the cost of a bore-hole is governed mainly by depth, other factors may affect the position, such as the recent rains which held up boring work at Badjingarra. It is of course common information that it is not possible to estimate accurately at what depth water will be obtained. A good flow may be encountered at less than 400 feet, or perhaps the hole may be dry. The Mines Department does not propose to equip the Badjingarra hole with a windmill and tank, and so, the cost has not been estimated.

The hon. Mr. Logan asked if the Government knew that the settlers in Badjingarra had no hope of providing the amount of £1,500 upwards referred to by him. Once again the answer was "No." The hon. Mr. Jones said the department should know, because Government financial aid has been asked for. The department's reply was soundly based, however, as some settlers have refused to enter into an agreement for other than financial reasons. The answer to the hon. Mr. Logan's question as to whether the Government was prepared to financially assist settlers who had not the money to establish water supplies, was that the Government paid the full cost of dry holes, and the settler paid only for successful bores.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: You do not think that is the answer? That is not an answer to a question.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Now the hon. member is complaining because he gets an answer he did not expect. A few minutes ago he complained because he did not get the answer he thought he would get.

The hon. Mr. Jones thought this reply most unsatisfactory. It must be admitted, however, that the present Government assistance is not negligible. Payment for dry holes is of substantial help, and to that must be added the aid given in providing the drills and the geological examinations. If they have not already done so, the hon. members concerned should submit cases for additional assistance to the Minister for Mines.

The Hon. L. C. Diver: If they had replied to my speech it would have covered the whole point.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The hon. Mr. Logan was very wroth about the reduction made in polling booths in the Midland Province for the last Legislative Council election. However, while the previous contest for this province in 1950 resulted in a fifty-five per cent. vote, the voting indicated that a large number of the polling places were not warranted.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: They were all warranted.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: In 1950 there were 63 polling places; of those, four are now in the Central Province as a result of the 1955 re-distribution, and of the remainder, 27 were not appointed for the 1958 election. These 27 polling places at the 1950 election polled in the aggregate a total of 362 votes, giving an average of approximately 13 votes to each polling place.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Don't you think they are entitled to them?

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Nine-teen of these polling places would be less than 12 miles from another polling place and the furthest would be about 26 miles; but at that polling place only five votes were taken. It costs about £10 to staff a polling place, plus the added expense of bringing the ballot box to the counting centre. This means that in a poll of 13 votes, the cost of a vote would be in the vicinity of £1. This is a luxury price, considering adequate provisions were available for postal voting. The hon. member said that the electors would not complete a form of application for a postal vote as required under the new system of postal voting; but strange to relate, we find the position much different, particularly in the Midland Province. At the recent election for that province, 305 postal votes were recorded as against 125 at the 1950 election.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Why compare the two; that is stupid.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: They are the figures.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: You did not have the polling places in 1950.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The increase of 180 must be considered as justification rather than condemnation of the new system. In the period between the

two elections, the enrolment figures for the province increased from 5,104 to 5,293 and therefore would have no bearing on the substantial increase of postal votes.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Do you know what it cost to get those postal votes?

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I had a polling booth in my area where there were only 14 votes.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The hon. Mr. Murray again spoke at length and with bitterness about the Betting Control Board. His remarks were probably an attempt to avenge the complete disposal previously of his attacks on the board and its work. So far as I can tell, the position created by the establishment of the board has, in sensible and unbiased people's views, very much improved the circumstances surrounding starting price betting. On analysis, all that the hon. member's criticism results in is a comparison of the salary paid to the chairman of the board with those of senior departmental officers.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Does it bear comparison?

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: He said that the salary paid to the chairman could not be justified to public servants. My enquiries lead me to believe that the hon. member is drawing on his imagination.

No senior public servant is envious of the Chairman of the Betting Control Board, whose position has no security of tenure and which is supported with neither long service leave nor superannuation. Also, and I think this is an important fact, the Betting Control Board is dealing with a business with a turnover of about £26,000,000 a year. Taking all factors into consideration, and the hon. member's own intelligence does not require me to detail these, it cannot be said that the senior executive officer of such a board is overpaid in receiving £3,000 a year.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: Then do you not think you should pay the Principal Architect more?

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I do not think I would be exaggerating in saying that in similar circumstances, private enterprise would have paid a far greater salary. Last financial year the cost of administration of the Betting Control Act was £15,482. This included the expenses of the Betting Control Board office and the work done for the board by the Commissioner of Stamps' office. The hon. member cannot charge the Government with financial waste in the conduct of the board.

The reorganisation of the board has resulted in a saving of more than £3,000 annually. I think that the hon. Mr. Murray's remarks about Mr. Styants were not creditable. I suppose it is too much to expect that the hon. member will believe that Mr. Styants, when appointed deputy chairman, was never

promised the position of chairman. I can say, however, that Mr. Styants received no assurance of his promotion until about four weeks before it occurred.

The hon. Mr. Murray again drew on his imagination by saying that an amendment of the Act last session gave the Commissioner of Stamps the responsibility of deciding the legality of a bet.

There have been no amendments to the Betting Control Act, since its inception, except those which made provision for alteration to the scale of turnover tax. The Betting Control Board is the sole authority to adjudicate on betting disputes and whether bets actually have been made. The hon. member alleged that evasive methods are still being used in betting. What knowledge has the hon. member of the shadier side of betting, that he is aware of these things; and what steps has he taken to convey his knowledge to the Betting Control Board? I have been told that, despite his strictures regarding the application to its duties and the work done by the board, he has not, within the knowledge of officers of the board, ever visited the board's office.

His allegation, therefore, that the staff neither toiled nor did they spin, was an unfortunate reflection from a lofty eminence against persons who themselves have not the power to reply. The hon. Mr. Murray said that Mr. Styants had no ability and no knowledge of the subject except what he gained on short trips to Tasmania and New Zealand. He was, as usual, wrong in saying "New Zealand." This should have been "South Australia." It would have been hard to find someone more suitable than Mr. Styants. As Minister for Police he investigated off-course betting systems in Tasmania and South Australia. He was responsible for the drafting of the legislation and its passage through Parliament. He had also eighteen months experience with the board prior to becoming its chairman.

It would have been difficult to find anyone more adequately equipped or with more rigid principles and character to assume the responsibilities of chairman. Notwithstanding the hon. member's strictures, I think that it is most satisfactory that bookmakers and the betting public generally do not hesitate to express their satisfaction with the administration of the board. Another matter in which the hon. Mr. Murray expressed dissatisfaction was in regard to the use, by the State Government Insurance Office, of private assessors in connection with motor vehicle comprehensive insurance. The hon. member stated it was common knowledge that in calling for tenders for work on a motor vehicle after an accident, these assessors would, without any other considerations, accept the lowest tender. Then, said the hon. Mr. Murray, because of the strange powers vested in them, they would, when

the job was done, present the vehicle owner with a bill for other work done on the car.

Hon. members on both sides of this House will appreciate that because of the comprehensive and liberal policy offered by the State Government Insurance Office, there is a large number of policies in existence. It is necessary, therefore, for the office to utilise the services of some private fully qualified assessors to assist the office's two qualified assessors. It does not matter whether the motor vehicle claim is handled by a staff or a private assessor; the procedure is precisely the same. Quotes are called only from repairers qualified and able to handle the type of damage that has occurred. Immediate attention is given to having the damage repaired. In some cases the owner may have called for a rough quote from a repairer who may or may not be able or competent to carry out the necessary work. The assessor uses his discretion in such cases, as to whether he considers the repairer competent, and also, of course, as to whether the quote submitted is the lowest.

Quotations or estimates for repairs of vehicles are often couched in terms of labour, and are accompanied by a list of parts that are required. The cost of these parts is not shown, as naturally they are charged at the list price, plus freight if applicable. I think that has covered a large section of the views expressed by hon. members during this debate. As I mentioned earlier, those hon. members who have not been replied to so far will, following the usual practice, have the information sought forwarded to them by letter.

I was interested in the remarks of the hon. Mr. Cunningham this evening, in relation to the Chase Syndicate, but I could not balance up his ideas. As I said, apparently some hon. members knew the answers but still asked the questions, so evidently at times they know more than various Government departments. I was surprised when the hon. Mr. Cunningham told us, during his speech, that the Chase Syndicate was selling land for £1 per acre. If he knew that the Chase Syndicate was doing that, why did he ask the question?

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: To see whether you knew.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The Government does not know and could not find out in 24 hours. The hon. Mr. Cunningham wanted to know whether it was correct that Esperance Plains Pty. Ltd. had disposed of considerable acreages of land at Esperance at prices reported to be £1 per acre, or in excess of that. In "The West Australian" of the 29th August we read, "Chase land sale ban demanded." According to that article, Mr. Jack Cunningham, member for the South-East Province, said the company had offered to

sell areas of undeveloped land at £1 per acre, and that that should be stopped. If he knows that this is going on, why does he ask questions here about it and then be dubious regarding it in the course of his speech?

He wants to ban these people from selling land at £1 per acre, and then requests the Government to allow settlers, already there, to sell at a reasonable price the land which they are unable to improve. I do not know what he considers to be a reasonable price. I asked him that question, but either he did not hear my remark or could not say what was a reasonable price—

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Has this now become your baby?

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I am the Minister who, unfortunately, has to answer some of the most ridiculous questions ever asked. In "The Countryman" of the 28th August there is an advertisement by Goldsbrough Mort as follows:—

Esperance. Great Opportunity. A partly developed grazing property of 5,741 acres in an area where great strides are being made, featuring 1130 acres of pasture, 2,100 acres rolled, burnt and ploughed. Practically all ringfenced for large or small stock. Ten paddocks, two excellent bores, 70 x 30 steel shed, including living quarters. Price £26,000 cash.

That is close to £23 per acre, plus a small balance owing to the Crown. They would have bought that land at shillings per acre and are asking £23 per acre for it now. I do not know where the hon. Mr. Cunningham would obtain his reasonable price, but there is one instance of a partly developed grazing property of 5,741 acres—

The Hon. L. C. Diver: How can it be £23 per acre?

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: It is 1130 acres at £26,000—

The Hon. H. K. Watson: You said it was 5,000 odd acres.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: It is less than £5 per acre

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: That is so; I was taking into account only the pasture. There was another advertisement of a property at Esperance published in "The West Australian" last Saturday. It stated—

Esperance, 1350 acres of freehold, nine miles north. Fences, new iron shed 20 x 15; 200 acres of fallow. £4 10s. per acre.

From where does the hon. Mr. Cunningham get his reasonable price? He has argued here that settlers who have perhaps 2,000 acres too much for their resources to develop and more than they need for successful farming—I do not think it would be sufficient for them now that the price of wool has dropped—should be enabled to get out of their

financial difficulties, by being allowed to dispose of the land, although they have not complied with the conditional purchase provisions. It is a good proposition. Help them, by all means, and I would support that move, but, on the other hand, the hon. Mr. Cunningham says we should ban the Chase Syndicate from doing it, although they have already spent hundreds of thousands of pounds there. When they try to retrieve their loss by selling land at £1 per acre, he objects.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: But one is under an agreement.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: They are both settlers, no matter what areas they hold. I cannot balance up the hon. Mr. Cunningham's reasoning. I can support his reasoning in regard to small settlers, and in regard to the unfortunate Chase Syndicate attempting to retrieve its losses in the same manner as the smaller settlers have, but no small settler went out 42 miles, where Chase started. I went down there, with my wife, in June last year, and when we wished to see the land being developed we were told we would have to go 42 miles out, to where the first of the ploughing was being done. We drove out there and I have no hesitation in saying—although I am not a farmer and do not profess to know much about it—that I was surprised at what I saw. I said to my wife, "If anything can grow on that type of ploughing I will come down here, because no-one could go wrong." All that had been done was simply to turn the roots over and whoever was responsible for passing that ploughing for payment was far too lenient. I am sure that the hon. Mr. Willmott would never have paid for such work.

The Hon. L. C. Diver: They were not realistic with the land they tried to plough.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I never pour cold water, just because he has failed, on anyone who wishes to spend thousands of pounds on a place. Had the Chase Syndicate been successful, there would have been flag-waving, back-scratching and clapping, as is always the case. So I say that we should treat this syndicate in exactly the same way as we would treat a smaller settler down there, who is in exactly the same position. We know that some small settlers will have to abandon their farms at Esperance, unless they obtain assistance, especially if the price of wool stays at today's level.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Is the syndicate entitled to sell land under the terms of the agreement?

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I do not know. We are getting legal advice on that. We ought to have some knowledge in regard to that tomorrow, perhaps. Even if the syndicate has lost its money, surely

none of us here should be happy about that or should want to make capital out of that sort of thing!

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It would not encourage anybody else.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: That is because of the type of publicity they get. The following is a cutting taken from "The West Australian," dated Friday, the 29th August, 1958:—

Chase Land Sale Ban Demanded.

Kalgoorlie, Thursday: The Government should take immediate steps to stop Esperance Plains (Australia) Pty. Ltd. selling undeveloped Esperance holdings at exorbitant prices, Jack Cunningham, South-East Province M.L.C. said today.

Further down in this cutting the following appears:—

"I will ask the Government to hold the company to its undertaking to develop all land before placing it on the market," Cunningham said.

There you are! Yet he will ask the Government to help anybody else. He states that as the land is undeveloped, the syndicate should not be permitted to sell it at a reasonable price.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: On the principle that what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: That is what I say, but the hon. member is not concerned. That sort of publicity does not do anybody any good. No-one wants to see failures. We know that the Esperance Plains project has failed in its first year. Chase described it in these words: "We fell flat on our face." An Australian would say, "We were taken on."

The Hon. H. K. Watson: If it was "taken on", it was not at that end of the barrel.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I am not saying that we should give that syndicate the world, but let us give it a fair go, which is the traditional Australian practice. Let us give Chase the same go as we would the small settler.

The Hon. L. C. Diver: I challenge any claim that a settler has had the same opportunities as the Chase Syndicate had at Esperance.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The land has been lying there ever since I have been a member of this House. The hon. Mr. Cunningham was in this House when it was lying undeveloped and the hon. Mr. Bennetts has told us all about it at every session of Parliament.

The Hon. E. M. Heenan: Thomas Walker mentioned it 30 years ago.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: There you are! But who really attracted the big capital there? It was the Chase Syndicate, because it tackled the project in a big way.

The hon. Mr. Cunningham read a letter pointing out, in effect, that because this syndicate had interested itself in Esperance, it had prevented 50 other settlers from taking up land there. That is not correct, because there were not 50 locations surveyed. A large tract of land was granted to this syndicate, but it is still not surveyed into small holdings and, as hon. members know, no settler can obtain a block of land until it has been surveyed. That is all I want to say about Esperance Plains Pty. Ltd. I felt that I had to make some reply, in view of the concern that was expressed by the hon. Mr. Cunningham in regard to the settlers in that district and, as the hon. Mr. Watson has said, what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander.

The hour is getting on, but I must have another ten minutes to discuss the question of iron ore. Much has been said in this Chamber about iron ore, since the State first had an opportunity to sell £6,000,000 worth and to spend all of the proceeds in this State. However, that opportunity could not be availed of, because the Commonwealth Government, has, so far, withheld permission to export 1,000,000 tons of iron ore. In order to expedite the granting of the necessary permission, a motion was moved in this House to the effect that this Chamber would support the Government's application for an export licence.

Unfortunately, the members of this Chamber did not see fit to support the motion, although the export of 1,000,000 tons of iron ore would have brought in over £6,000,000, all of which would have been spent in Western Australia. We have recently listened to a very good and extremely comprehensive coverage of the steel industry and the iron ore deposits in Australia generally, by the hon. Mr. Mattiske. He put forward a very strong case, from his point of view; suggesting that we should be very careful as to how our iron ore deposits are utilised.

No doubt the hon. Mr. Mattiske has had a good look around the works of Broken Hill Proprietary Ltd. So have I. I agree with him that it is an excellent company and nothing can be found wanting with its products or its treatment of its employees or anything else connected with it. It is a very good company. However, I could not but feel that the hon. Mr. Mattiske was holding a brief for Broken Hill Proprietary Ltd.; because he did not take the opportunity to impress upon this Chamber that it would still be a good thing to export 1,000,000 tons of iron ore from Western Australia.

We have heard other speakers in this House talking of iron ore, and I have been somewhat amazed at the attitude they have adopted and the general tone of their speeches. One hon. member said that had the Government merely sought permission to export 1,000,000 tons of iron

ore, it would have obtained the necessary support. The hon. Mr. Simpson also told us that as the Leader of the Liberal Party and the then Leader of the Opposition in this House, when the motion was put forward last year.

Of recent date we have heard the hon. Mr. Murray and the hon. Mr. MacKinnon express exactly the same view; namely, that had we just asked for permission to export 1,000,000 tons of iron ore, they would have supported the motion requesting the Commonwealth Government to grant its permission. However, because the request to the Commonwealth Government was tied to the suggestion that an industry be established in the South-West to produce pig-iron—probably in the Bunbury district—they voted against the motion. They have also cast reflections and have said they are suspicious of the Government's action and, in effect, that the Government is not sincere in its objective.

I do not see how they could ever arrive at that conclusion, because the Government has been open handed from the very start on the question of the export of iron ore. It has always said, whether in correspondence to the Prime Minister or to Sir Arthur Fadden, prior to mentioning the subject here or in the Press, that it wanted to export 1,000,000 tons of iron ore, the proceeds from which were to go towards establishing a charcoal iron industry in Bunbury.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The Premier has repeatedly said that no location has been decided on.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: It was Bunbury or Collie. I am sorry if I am offending the hon. member. Those are the two places where I would like to see the industry established. They are the logical positions. Bunbury would be alongside the shipping wharves. Would hon. members expect the industry to be established 100 miles inland?

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It is established at Wundowie.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: That is 35 miles inland. The part with which I am intrigued is the backsliding attitude of some hon. members. What is their reason? Why did the two Liberal members for the South-West Province tell this House that, if the Government had not tied up its proposition with the establishment of the charcoal iron industry, they would not have objected? What was their objection? Are they displaying feelings for some of the unemployed in this State and feeling sorry for some business that lost in Geraldton in respect of shipping at the wharves there and discharging in Bunbury? What is the idea of their apologetic attitude on this occasion? I cannot fathom it. Were they thinking that the hon. Mr. Mattiske had not impressed them, or have they some inside

knowledge of the fact that the Commonwealth is still considering the question and that they might be on the wrong side, or that they could be out of step with their masters in Canberra?

Let them answer these questions when they get the opportunity. Tell us why their hearts are beginning to soften a little towards the proposition. They say they want to agree to the export of 1,000,000 tons of iron ore now, provided the proceeds are not used to establish a charcoal iron industry in Bunbury!

The Hon. R. C. Mattiske: The two things are entirely separate.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Their attitude is amazing. I would like those hon. members to tell us the real story in regard to the number of unemployed in Western Australia, who would be employed in this industry had it been going. Are they sorry for those people, or have they had any pressure put on them by the business people of the towns concerned? What is the reason?

The Hon. R. C. Mattiske: You told us tonight there was no money available for building latrines at schools.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: We have listened to the hon. member pleading for B.H.P. None of us objects to the B.H.P. It is a fine company and 1,000,000 tons of iron ore exported from this State will not make much difference to the supplies available. Let us not forget that it was said by the Premier, when he was approached, that the Government in this State does not want to establish a charcoal iron industry if the B.H.P. or any other company wants to establish one. The Government wants to set up such an industry because it is the only party interested in so doing.

The Hon. R. C. Mattiske: You told us there was no money for latrines in schools; yet you want to spend a couple of million pounds on this industry.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The hon. member is an able accountant and knows that money for schools comes from Loan funds. He knows, as a businessman, that if the Government sells iron ore, the money received will be used to establish the industry. I am sorry again—

The PRESIDENT: So am I.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: —if I injured the hon. member's feelings. I know he barracks for one team, but I barrack for them all; for the association. I am supporting this State and not one team. The Government is thinking of the unemployment in this State. It is strange that any step attempted by this Government to set up an industry or to do something beneficial for the State is absolutely ridiculed by members of the Opposition. I cannot understand their attitude. One would think that they would get right

behind a proposition such as this and impress on their colleagues in Canberra the importance of such an industry to the State. There would be an enormous amount of money coming into this State, and not a penny going out, if the proposition were agreed to.

I hope that those members, when they get the opportunity, will answer those questions. Tell us what has softened them. Has it been the kindness of their hearts in considering the unemployed, or has some pressure been put on them? I would like the answer to that question at any time. I am very pleased with the very wide scope of the questions raised during the Address-in-reply. I must apologize for those members who have kept me speaking so long and who have kept you, Mr. President, so long while I answered the points raised by them. I support the motion.

Question put and passed; the Address adopted.

Presentation of Address.

On motion by the Minister for Railways, resolved:

That the Address be presented to His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor and Administrator by the President and such members as may desire to accompany him.

ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Lieut.-Governor received and read notifying assent to the Supply Bill (No. 1), £21,000,000.

JUNIOR FARMERS' MOVEMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 1).

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by the Hon. A. F. Griffith and read a first time.

DISCHARGE OF ORDER.

On motion by the Minister for Railways the motion for leave to introduce a Bill for "An Act to amend the Western Australian Aged Sailors and Soldiers' Relief Fund Act, 1932-1934" was discharged from the notice paper.

PLANT DISEASES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading.

THE HON. H. C. STRICKLAND (the Minister for Railways—North) [10.7] in moving the second reading said:

In 1935 a Bill to amend the Plant Diseases Act was introduced to Parliament. The purpose of this amending Bill was to give effect to the suggestions of a committee which had been formed, following several meetings that had been held in the

fruit growing centres throughout the State. The realisation of the danger was causing great concern to fruitgrowers, who had found that many fruits, previously thought to be immune or highly resistant to fruit-fly, were subject to infestation.

The Government decided to give effect to the suggestions put forward by this committee, which had advised what action should be taken to control and eradicate the pest. The Department of Agriculture, however, was of the opinion that it should be in a position to know the location where fruit trees were grown, not only for commercial use, but for private household purposes. To ensure the accuracy of this information, provision was made in the Bill for the registration, annually, of all places where one or more fruit trees or vines were growing. The Bill also proposed a nominal registration fee of one shilling, and from the revenue obtained was to be paid into a special fund (The Fruit Fly Eradication Trust Fund) the money which was to be utilised for the purpose of control and eradication of the pest.

This amendment to the Act was passed by Parliament, and in 1952 a further amending Act raised the nominal registration charge to two shillings, which is the fee charged at present. For some time now, there has been considerable pressure from both sides of the House, and a fair amount of public interest shown, in a proposal for the registration of orchards for a five-year period, instead of insistence on annual registration. The relevant Section of the Act specifies that application for registration of an orchard shall be made annually. The Bill now before the House provides for registration as prescribed, and if passed, will allow for registration of orchards in advance, and will also permit payment of an annual fee where the owner wishes to pay annually.

It is pointed out that some saving will be effected in cost of stationery, postage etc., when payments are made in advance for five years. If the Bill becomes law this proposed legislation will become effective as from the 1st July, 1959, as registration for the current year has already been effected on an annual basis. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by the Hon. F. D. Wilmott, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE HON. H. C. STRICKLAND (the Minister for Railways—North): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 2.15 p.m. tomorrow.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 10.11 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 3rd September, 1958.

CONTENTS

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY:	Page
Presentation	538
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE:	
War service land settlement, dairy farms	539
Cotton growing, inquiries for suitable land	539
Rural & Industries Bank—	
Soliciting business	539
School branches	540
Drive-in theatres, traffic lanes, parking lots, etc.	540
Infant health centre, provision at North Innaloo	540
Unemployment relief, amount paid and number receiving assistance	540
Hire purchase, Premiers' conference	541
Leukaemia research, inquiry and report	541
Water supplies, position at Point Sampson	541
Commissioners for Declarations, powers to witness, etc.	542
Canning River, clearing of obstructions, etc.	542
Bush Fires Board, procedure for fixing dates for burning	542
Companies Act, proposed amendments	542
Perth parking, survey results	542
Railway crossing, York-st., Albany	542
State Shipping Service, agents and Goldfields travellers	543
Railway travel, break of journey	543
Kalgoorlie firewood, distance from supplies	543
Railways, cost of special train on Kalgoorlie-Broad Arrow run	543
Nomenclature Committee, powers and details of appointment, etc.	543
Teachers, provision of quarters and water supply	544
Driving, incidence of liquor or drugs, blood tests, etc.	544
State Housing Commission, allocation of Commonwealth funds to building societies	545
Fishing regulations, alleged Abrolhos Islands breaches	545
Colliery Miners' Union, Rule 91b	545
MOTION:	
Metropolitan Beach Trust, introduction of legislation	556
BILLS:	
Health Education Council, 1r.	545
Government Railways Act Amendment, 1r.	545
Junior Farmers' Movement Act Amendment, 3r.	545
Broken Hill Proprietary Steel Industry Agreement Act Amendment, report	545
Racing Restriction Act Amendment, 2r.	545
Legal Practitioners Act Amendment (No. 2), 2r.	550
Land Act Amendment (No. 2), 2r.	554

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

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Presentation.

The **SPEAKER**: I desire to announce that, accompanied by the member for Pilbara and the member for Murchison,