

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 12th August, 1953.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Questions : Housing, (a) as to outstanding applications	85
(b) as to land resumption, Kwinana area	85
Trolley-bus services, as to Grantham-st. and Floreat Park routes	85
War service land settlement, as to recommendations of Select Committee	86
Traffic, as to land abutting Fremantle bridge	86
Health, as to medical inspection of school children	86
Migrants, as to intake and housing situation	86
Education, (a) as to school for North Wembley	86
(b) as to Carnarvon school extensions	86
(c) as to overcrowding school buses, Kendenup area	87
Wheat, as to cost of production items	87
North-West, as to railway lines, Derby Jetty	87
Hospitals, as to expenditure on renovations and buildings	87
Sewerage, as to work in Claremont electorate	87
Harbours, as to expenditure at Fremantle and outports	87
Kwinana, as to community hotel, cost, facilities, etc.	88
Swan river, as to building second bridge	88
Water supplies, as to charges, town and country	88
Forests, (a) as to appointment of Conservator	89
(b) as to tabling papers	89
Loan funds, as to use for reducing contractual commitments	89
Betting, as to two-up on Goldfields	89
Crown Law Department, as to position of Under Secretary	89
Parliamentary Superannuation Fund, appointment of Trustees	90
Committees for the session	90
Council's message	103
Leave of absence	90
Address-in-reply, second day	90
Speakers on Address—	
Hon. D. Brand	90
Hon. A. F. Watts	95
Mr. O'Brien	102

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

QUESTIONS.

HOUSING.

(a) As to Outstanding Applications.

Mr. NIMMO asked the Minister for Housing:

What was the number of applications outstanding as at—

(1) The 30th June, 1952;

(2) The 30th June, 1953, for—

(a) Mc Ness homes;

(b) War service homes;

(c) Small units;

(d) Commonwealth rental homes;

(e) Under the State Housing Act?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) and (2) Applications outstanding—

	As at 30th June, 1952.	As at 30th June, 1953.
Mc Ness	159	120
War Service Homes	4,750	2,570
Small Units	(Included in No. 4— Commonwealth-State)	
Commonwealth-State Homes	12,044	11,737
State Housing Act	2,165	2,468
Total	19,118	16,895

(b) As to Land Resumption, Kwinana Area.

Mr. ANDREW asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

Regarding people who had blocks of land in the Kwinana area for the purpose of building homes, whose land has been resumed, is it the intention of the Government to give such people an opportunity of acquiring building blocks, if they so desire, in order that they can still build homes in that area?

The MINISTER replied:

In the development of a new industrial area of the magnitude of that at Kwinana, it is essential to proper planning that certain land be resumed, either for works or to provide for future orderly and economic development of the area.

However, it is the desire of the Government to keep to a minimum any inconvenience to individuals through such resumptions, and, if possible, people who have had land resumed will be given the opportunity of acquiring alternative sites in the general Kwinana area.

TROLLEY-BUS SERVICES.

As to Grantham-st. and Floreat Park Routes.

Mr. NIMMO asked the Minister for Transport:

Has the time-table been cut down on the trolley-bus service to Floreat Park and Grantham-st.?

The MINISTER replied:

Yes, Departmental checks had shown that the service on both of these branches was far too frequent between the hours of 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. Reduction of the services was made on the 3rd August to give a 10-minute headway from Gregory-st. to the city. Further checks made have shown that the resultant position is quite satisfactory.

WAR SERVICE LAND SETTLEMENT.

As to Recommendations of Select Committee.

Mr. HEARMAN asked the Minister for Lands:

(1) Does he consider the recommendation of the Select Committee to withdraw from the Commonwealth-State arrangement in connection with war service land settlement, the most important and far-reaching of the recommendations made by the Select Committee?

(2) Does he consider this recommendation to be in the best interests of soldier-settlers?

(3) In view of the legislation envisaged in connection with war service land settlement, does he consider the statement that "the Government had implemented in almost every respect the recommendations contained in the report of the Select Committee on War Service Land Settlement," as reported in "The West Australian" of the 22nd July last, a fair and proper presentation of the facts to the public?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) and (2) The Select Committee did not recommend withdrawal from the Commonwealth-State Agreement on War Service Land Settlement, but did recommend withdrawing support from an arrangement, other than a parliamentary agreement, between Commonwealth and State Ministers for the conduct of war service land settlement.

(3) Yes, when taken in its context. The hon. member has omitted the final portion of the sentence he quotes from "The West Australian" dated the 22nd July, namely, "so far as this could be done by the State Government."

TRAFFIC.

As to Land Abutting Fremantle Bridge.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN asked the Minister for Works:

What was the purchase price for the land recently acquired by the Government alongside the Fremantle traffic bridge?

The MINISTER replied:

Approximately £2,500 for two acres with improvements.

HEALTH.

As to Medical Inspection of School Children.

Mr. JOHNSON asked the Minister for Health:

With regard to the medical inspection of school children made by the Education Branch of the Health Department—

(1) Are parents informed of any major or minor complaints discovered by the inspection?

(2) Is any "follow up" procedure current to ensure that remedial procedures are followed—

(a) by parents;

(b) by any other authority?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) (a) Yes, in metropolitan area by school nurse. In country areas the teacher is requested to ascertain that medical attention is obtained.

(b) No other authority is involved unless parents refuse to obtain essential medical attention, whereupon legal action may be taken against them.

MIGRANTS.

As to Intake and Housing Situation.

Mr. ANDREW asked the Acting Premier:

(1) Did he see in the Press of recent date, where Mr. Menzies stated that the Commonwealth Government is going again to step-up the intake into Australia of immigrants?

(2) As the housing situation at present is in a deplorable position and as more immigrants will make it much worse, has Mr. Menzies approached the State Government for the purpose of planning and financing the extra housing that will be required?

The ACTING PREMIER replied:

(1) An announcement from Canberra to this effect has been noticed in the Press recently.

(2) No.

EDUCATION.

(a) As to School for North Wembley.

Mr. NIMMO asked the Minister for Education:

As the building programme in North Wembley has increased, will he indicate when it is intended to start the school at the corner of Dodds and Harbournes-sts., Wembley?

The MINISTER replied:

Approval has been given for the erection of a four-roomed prefabricated school at North Wembley.

It is anticipated that work will be commenced in the near future.

(b) As to Carnarvon School Extensions.

Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Education:

(1) In view of the increase in the number of children attending the Carnarvon State School, is it the intention of the Government to make early extensions to alleviate the overcrowding?

(2) Will domestic science and manual training courses be included?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No. In comparison with many other areas the Carnarvon School has adequate accommodation.

(2) Manual training is provided at present in the old school building. When funds are available, it is intended to erect new manual training and home science centres on the new site.

(c) *As to Overcrowding School Buses, Kendenup Area.*

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

(1) Is he aware of complaints regarding school buses serving children in the Kendenup area, particularly with regard to overcrowding due to increasing numbers of children?

(2) If so, are steps to be taken in the near future to remedy the matter?

(3) If he is not aware of the situation referred to, will he have an investigation made with a view to early improvement?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No. The department has not received any complaints of overcrowding. Latest figures do not indicate overcrowding.

(2) See answer to No. (1).

(3) Yes.

WHEAT.

As to Cost of Production Items.

Mr. JOHNSON asked the Minister for Agriculture:

Will he indicate the manner in which the cost of production of wheat is arrived at, to show the amount allocated to the various sections of cost per bushel, i.e., wages of employees, interest, return to producer-owner, depreciation, rent, manures, freight, etc.?

The MINISTER replied:

These details have not yet been released by the Commonwealth Government.

NORTH-WEST.

As to Railway Lines, Derby Jetty.

Mr. RHATIGAN asked the Minister for Works:

In view of the dangerous condition of the railway lines on the Derby Jetty, will he advise what action has been taken to put them in satisfactory working order?

The MINISTER replied:

The Public Works Department has no knowledge of any dangerous condition of rail tracks on the Jetty.

Some overhaul work is to be done on the approach tramway. Rails are on hand and sleepers are booked for forwarding from Port Hedland on the "Koolinda."

HOSPITALS.

As to Expenditure on Renovations and Buildings.

Mr. ACKLAND asked the Minister for Health:

Will he inform the House the amount approved by the Treasurer for renovations and capital expenditure on the hospitals at Moora, Wongan Hills, Goomalling, Dalwallinu, Morawa, Mullewa and Three Springs, during the past two years?

The MINISTER replied:

Moora Hospital, £10,288; Wongan Hills Hospital, £7,411; Goomalling Hospital, £200; Dalwallinu Hospital, £2,383; Morawa Hospital, £6,425; Mullewa Hospital, £70,194; Three Springs Hospital, —.

In addition to the above, the Lotteries Commission and the Hospital Boards have contributed money towards various projects.

SEWERAGE.

As to Work in Claremont Electorate.

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

(1) What sewerage work remains to be done in the Claremont electorate?

(2) Which of this work is set down for completion during the year?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The area between the eastern edge of Butler Swamp and Davies Road.

Two small areas around Cornwall and Iolanthe-sts.

Mt. Claremont bounded by Mayfair, Haldane and Lisle-sts. and Alfred-rd.

(2) Nil.

HARBOURS.

As to Expenditure at Fremantle and Outports.

Mr. MAY (for Mr. Guthrie) asked the Minister for Works:

Will he inform the House as to—

(1) The total amount expended during 1951-52 and 1952-53 to date on constructional works on harbours at Fremantle, Bunbury, Albany and Geraldton?

(2) The total amounts that have been provided to be expended during 1953-54 on each separate harbour?

The MINISTER replied:

HARBOURS.

Expenditure on Construction Works.

	1951-52.	1952-53.	1953-54. 1st July to 11th Aug., 1953.	Total.	Amount Provided 1953-54.
	£	£	£	£	£
Albany	535,303	376,360	28,589	939,252	100,000
Bunbury	258,047	73,351	4,184	335,582	35,000
Fremantle	621,328	682,345	4,426	1,308,099	361,000
Geraldton
	£1,414,678	£1,131,056	£37,199	£2,582,933	£496,000

KWINANA.

As to Community Hotel, Cost, Facilities, etc.

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

(1) Will the buildings for the proposed community hotel in the Kwinana area be erected at the cost of the Government?

(2) If so, what type of tenure is proposed to be given those responsible for the control of the premises as a community hotel and what is the estimated cost—

(a) of the interim bar facilities;

(b) of the completed hotel?

(3) What amount of the cost mentioned in No. (2) is expected to be expended in the financial year 1953-54?

(4) Will the interim bar facilities be controlled and managed by the State, and if not, by what type of management?

(5) For what period is it contemplated the interim bar facilities will be in use before the hotel is completed?

The MINISTER replied:

(1), (2), (3), (4) and (5) The Government announcement of its intention to make the first hotel at Kwinana a community hotel was a declaration of principle.

Financial arrangements have yet to be made, but the Government does not expect to have to provide the money necessary to erect the building.

It is believed that three years will be required to complete the building of the hotel, and as the Australasian Petroleum Refineries Company has asked for the provision of interim bar facilities, the Government will endeavour to provide them.

SWAN RIVER.

As to Building Second Bridge.

Mr. YATES asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Has the investigation by the Town Planning Commissioner concerning the building of another bridge across the river near the city, been completed?

(2) If so, what are his recommendations?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No.

(2) Answered by No. (1).

WATER SUPPLIES.

As to Charges, Town and Country.

Mr. McCULLOCH asked the Minister for Water Supply:

(1) What are the charges made for water in the metropolitan area:—(a) charges on rates per 1,000; (b) charges on excess; (c) sewerage areas; (d) unsewered areas?

(2) What are the charges in country areas of (a), (b), (c) and (d) of above?

(3) What are the charges on the Goldfields to (a) domestic users; (b) market gardeners; (c) poultry farmers; and (d) industrial concerns, ordinary and excess?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) (a) An annual allowance of 1,000 gallons of water is made for each 1s. 9d. of water rates charged.

(b) The price for water used for domestic purposes in excess of the annual allowance is 1s. 3d. per 1,000 gallons provided the year's rates are paid in full by the 30th November. When rates are not so paid the charge is 1s. 6d. per 1,000 gallons.

(c) and (d) No additional charge for water is made in sewerage areas, but an allowance of 5,000 gallons per annum is made for flushing each water closet connected to the sewer, or a septic tank, where the cistern is supplied with water from the department's mains. The sewerage rate charged in sewerage areas is 1s. 11d. in the £ on the annual value of the property.

(2) and (3) The information sought by this question is to be found in Table "A" of the Report and Recommendations of the Water Prices Investigation Committee, copies of which will be made available to all members.

Three alterations only have been made since the printing of the report, namely—

- (i) Rate in the £ for Waroona water supply reduced to 2s. 6d. for current rating year ending 30/6/54.
- (ii) Rate in the £ for the Serpentine water supply reduced to 1s. for current rating year ending 30/6/54.
- (iii) Rate in £ for Geraldton sewerage which was not available to the committee has been fixed at 1s. 3d. for current rating year ending 31/12/53.

FORESTS.

(a) As to Appointment of Conservator.

Mr. BOVELL (without notice) asked the Minister for Forests:

(1) Will he lay on the Table of the House the file containing all papers relating to the calling for applications for the position of Conservator of Forests of Western Australia?

(2) Is the appointment of Mr. A. C. Harris to the recently-formed Advisory Committee on Forestry a prelude to this gentleman's selection for the position of Conservator of Forests in Western Australia?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No.

(2) No consideration has been given to the person to fill the position of Conservator of Forests.

(b) As to Tabling Papers.

Mr. BOVELL (without notice) asked the Minister for Forests:

Why will the Minister not table the papers referring to the calling of applications for the position of Conservator of Forests in Western Australia?

The MINISTER replied:

Because I do not regard it as being in the public interest.

LOAN FUNDS.

As to Use for Reducing Contractual Commitments.

Hon. D. BRAND (without notice) asked the Acting Premier:

On the opening day of Parliament, I asked whether any payment out of loan money was made during June to contractors in England in reduction of amounts which were due but payment of which had been deferred from the previous year. I asked whether any such payment had been made and, if so, what was the amount available, and to whom and when it was paid. The Premier replied that a payment had been made, and said he would have the other information available in the following week. Is that information now available?

The ACTING PREMIER replied:
So far as I know, it is not.

BETTING.

As to Two-up on Goldfields.

Mr. OLDFIELD (without notice) asked the Minister for Justice:

Is it a fact that he has used his influence as a Minister in an attempt to allow the resumption of the game of two-up in the Eastern Goldfields?

The MINISTER replied:

I do not know whether I have used my influence with the Minister for Police. I do not think my influence would be very effective. However, I do feel that it was a very great injustice that the previous Government should have acquiesced in preventing the playing of two-up on the Goldfields. The game is traditional and one of the fairest that could be played. I do not want to say too much about it, but I say definitely that I am very sorry the Commissioner took the action he did, because the game is still being played, although those taking part are ready, like dingoes, to take to the bush.

CROWN LAW DEPARTMENT.

As to Position of Under Secretary.

Hon. A. F. WATTS (without notice) asked the Acting Premier:

(1) Were there applicants for the position of Under Secretary for Law other than Mr. Bateman and the successful applicant?

(2) If so, what were their names and in what departments were they employed at the time of application?

(3) On what date did applications close?

(4) Were any of the applicants named senior to the successful applicant at the time of application and if so, which of them?

(5) Did the Public Service Commissioner give the certificate referred to in the proviso to Subsection (1) of Section 38 of the Public Service Act and in respect of which of the applicants was it given?

The ACTING PREMIER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) (1) E. Shillington, Commissioner of Titles.

(2) J. H. Glynn, Public Trustee.

(3) T. A. Draper, Resident Magistrate, Kalgoorlie.

(4) L. W. Stotter, Resident Magistrate, Bunbury.

(5) R. P. G. Rodriguez, Coroner and Relieving Magistrate.

(6) M. Harwood, Resident Magistrate, Albany.

(7) K. H. Hogg, Resident Magistrate, Carnarvon.

(8) A. L. F. Taylor, Resident Magistrate, Broome.

(9) E. L. Turnbull, Deputy Master, Supreme Court.

- (10) R. C. Buchanan, Registrar of Titles.
- (11) G. F. Mathea, Chief Electoral Officer.
- (12) E. P. Foreman, Assistant Under Secretary and Accountant, Crown Law Department.
- (13) W. A. Petterson, Clerk in Charge (Legal), Crown Law Department.
- (14) C. L. McKittrick, Clerk in Charge (Conveyancing), Crown Law Department.
- (15) W. H. Butler, Assistant Secretary, State Housing Commission.

(3) 2nd May, 1953.

(4) Yes. Nos. 1 to 12 inclusive of reply to Question (2) above. Of this number, six were also resident magistrates.

(5) Appointment was made under Section 35 of the Act where seniority is subordinated to considerations of special fitness and the recommendation in favour of a junior officer inferentially provides the certificate required by Section 38, Subsection (1).

PARLIAMENTARY SUPERANNUATION FUND.

Appointment of Trustees.

On motion by the Acting Premier, resolved that pursuant to the provisions of the Parliamentary Superannuation Act, 1948, the Legislative Assembly hereby appoints the member for Boulder (Mr. Moir) and the member for Vasse (Mr. Bovell) to be Trustees of the Parliamentary Superannuation Fund as from this day.

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

On motion by the Acting Premier, sessional committees were appointed as follows:—

Library.—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Nimmo.

Standing Orders.—Mr. Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, Hon. J. B. Sleeman, Mr. Nalder and Hon. C. F. J. North.

House.—Mr. Speaker, Mr. May, Mr. Lawrence, Mr. Yates and Mr. Ackland.

Printing.—Mr. Speaker, Mr. McCulloch and Mr. Hutchinson.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. May, leave of absence granted for two weeks to Mr. Guthrie (Bunbury) on the ground of ill-health, and on motion by Mr. Bovell, leave of absence for four weeks granted to Mr. Wild (Dale) on the ground of urgent private business.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Second Day.

Debate resumed from the 6th August.

HON. D. BRAND (Greenough) [4.55]: In the absence of the Leader of the Opposition, Sir Ross McLarty, who, incident-

ally, returns to this State tomorrow morning, I will endeavour to make my contribution to the Address-in-reply to His Excellency's Speech. Sir Ross has been away from Western Australia for a considerable time and I feel that as a result of this, his second visit to England—as was mentioned in the Speech—together with the visit of the Premier, there will have been promoted a great deal of goodwill and perhaps a better understanding of the difficulties with which we in this island continent are faced. Statements have been made as to the Premier's efforts to place the problems of Western Australia before those in England who may be able to assist and we, on this side of the House, are hopeful that his efforts will be successful. Not only will that help overcome our immediate problems but also in the long run, bearing in mind our potentialities for the production of much needed foodstuffs for British countries and the world generally, the whole world will benefit.

At this stage we offer our congratulations to the Premier and his Ministers on their success in the last election. The margin of power in this House is not very great, but that was the decision of the people and we must abide by it. We, on this side of the House, will endeavour to play the part of an active Opposition and put forward our points of view whenever possible, thus following the precedent set by the present Government when in Opposition. I am sure there will be no complaint because of our activities.

The Minister for Lands: You made a good start last night.

HON. D. BRAND: The start was made seven years ago as you know, Mr. Speaker, not that you personally contributed towards the delays often inflicted on this House. I felt that we, the Opposition in this Chamber, already having so many grievances, should put them before the Government at an early stage in order that some adjustments and corrections might be made.

The Minister for Native Welfare: There must have been a lot of grievances left over from the last Government.

HON. D. BRAND: I feel sure there were not.

The Acting Premier: There was no money left over—you are right, there.

HON. D. BRAND: I am going to mention that matter. I did ask the Premier a question with regard to moneys that might have been paid, as the result of some balance in June, to manufacturers in England, off deferred payments from the previous year. Sir Ross McLarty, in the last Loan Budget that he introduced in this House, pointed out that there had been deferments of some £3,800,000 arranged, and I would be interested to know just what was the balance owing at the

30th of June last. I have a question on the notice paper to that effect and it is possible that some reduction has been made.

Since coming into power the present Government has on many occasions taken the opportunity to talk about contractual commitments. Indeed, I believe that not only in this year, but also for many years past there have been contractual commitments more or less, but following the years of rapid development which were magnified by an extremely live migration policy, introduced by Labour and followed up by Commonwealth Liberal Governments, naturally the sums of money committed by way of contracts from one year to another would be considered very high by the standards set years ago.

One often wondered what the Government would have done with loan money commitments or what contracts it would not have entered into had it been in the same position and suffering the same conditions of shortages of material and labour as existed in the years immediately following the last war. In respect to commitments for railway equipment, it was good indeed to see that the Premier, through the medium of published reports, said he was very pleased that the delivery of diesel engines and other equipment was being expedited and that they were coming forward in a shorter time than was originally anticipated. That was a reasonable attitude to adopt in view of the fact that there is an urgent need to proceed with the modernisation of the railways by equipping them with diesel engines.

The Minister for Railways: We do not mind the contractual commitments, but what about the £2,250,000 of I.O.U.'s that the hon. member's Government left over?

Hon. D. BRAND: If they were I.O.U.'s, I should imagine that they represented something relating to another arrangement that existed from year to year except that the sum of the I.O.U.'s might have been a little greater for the reasons I have put forward. I do not quite understand the Minister for Railways when he speaks of I.O.U.'s, but if he was referring to the deferred payments in England, I repeat that I, and I am sure all of us, would be pleased to have the information in that regard which is not yet available.

The Minister for Railways: Some of the money is at five per cent. interest sterling.

Hon. D. BRAND: That is something which naturally would relate to transactions that would be made between this country and the United Kingdom. There would be no other way of overcoming the difficulty.

The Minister for Railways: The interest represents 6½ per cent. Australian.

Hon. D. BRAND: When the Minister rises to his feet and suggests alternatives, which might have existed under the conditions prevailing at that time, I am sure we all will be interested to hear them. Much has been said on contractual commitments and every reasonable person will accept that, at this stage, a large sum of money was committed for public buildings, such as schools, hospitals, police stations and the like. I daresay that before this session has run its course the Treasurer will have supplied us with those details. When replying to deputations and addressing conferences the Treasurer has often repeated that the public was inclined to believe that there was something sinister about them. We make no apologies for committing the future in respect to the arrangements that have been made.

This State is very young and I feel sure that the vigorous policy of the previous Government in committing to the future some of its financial obligations must be recognised as progressive. I saw the Minister for Housing frown as if he did not believe that, although he is one who knows how true it is, because in an article that appeared in the "Sunday Times" he referred to record war service homes building and the slight delay in the production of tiles—from three months to two weeks. Does he kid himself that he is responsible? Of course he is not! Everybody knows that. He knows that he was able to produce tiles and other building materials at a greater rate as indicated in an answer he gave to the member for Wembley Beaches and he also knows that this was because of the administration and planning over the last three or four years and not over the last three or four months.

The Minister for Housing: The hon. member is talking without his book when he says that.

Hon. D. BRAND: I am not. Anybody with any sense at all realises that the increased production of tiles was not as a result of the administration under the present Minister for Housing.

The Minister for Housing: Or of a previous Government.

Hon. D. BRAND: It was.

The Minister for Housing: It was as a result of the efforts of the private concerns.

Hon. D. BRAND: Yes, and it is our policy to support private concerns of that nature. I only regret that the position was such that we were not able to do something more about private concerns of that nature and less about State concerns. The commitments which were made on steel and contracts dealing with water supply I feel sure will be those that are accepted as essential by the Acting Premier and his Ministers. All of them amount to a goodly sum, but it would be interesting to know what total moneys referred to as contractual commitments go to make up what will be this year's

works programme. When we were in office we placed the provision of water supplies on a top priority in the public works programme and this Government has followed the same procedure according to the statement made by the Minister for Works recently. I am pleased that water supplies in the country and elsewhere are being given the place that is rightfully and essentially theirs if this State is to produce the essential food requirements necessary to carry population, which it must, if we are to hold it.

At the present juncture I should say that steel is available in reasonable quantities. I am not certain that we can draw on as much plate steel from local sources as we desire, but I think there is sufficient steel available to meet the requirements, especially in keeping with the loan money available. In respect to that problem, it would be interesting to know whether the Government is proceeding with the three main extensions of the comprehensive water supply scheme, namely, to Narrogin, down towards Narembeen, and finally, by making a start towards Minnivale and Wyalkatchem. They were commitments that we made and, in some instances, because of the high cost of imported steel they have been very costly, but nevertheless such expenditure is basic to the progress of the country. Whatever money was committed to the future on that regard will be money well spent and a premium well paid.

Might I refer to the fact that the contractual commitments are those which concern Kwinana? Perhaps some efforts have been made to draw the inference that the money committed at that centre prevents the extension of water supplies and the like in the country but, as I said when introducing the Bill dealing with the Kwinana project in this House, the Government, having decided it should encourage the oil company to erect its refinery at Cockburn Sound, had to determine whether it should commit the future or not and there is not one member in this House who, having had that opportunity, would have turned it down. It is easy to say at this juncture that we paid too high a price now that we are about to have the refinery here. It is easy for members and the public to suggest that we should have struck a harder bargain now that we have the bird in the cage. It is so easy to be wise after the event.

At that stage, might I remind members, not the slightest interest in the project was taken by the public. In fact, one newspaper wrote something about the Eastern States joining in the project because it did not think it was possible to establish it here. Therefore, following on a visit to Kwinana today I am certain we did the right thing and that this development, even though it might cost the State a little more now, and even though we may be

forced to make some sacrifices, is going to progress and develop its industries into something of which this State will be proud.

I know there are commitments in respect to supplying water to that area, to the building of houses, the expenditure of petrol tax on roads and also quite a deal of money on miscellaneous items, but in the long run I consider it will be money well spent. Even today, after a short period, Kwinana is well worth a visit, and I recommend that members on both sides of the House should see for themselves what modern works really are, what progress can be made in a short time and what private enterprise of that kind can really do. The high-light in the establishment of the industry down there was the opening up of Cockburn Sound and the preparations made for the establishment of a real harbour on the west coast of Australia. It has justified the expenditure on dredging the Success and Parmelia sandbanks and I am certain that most of us will live to see the day when there is a great commercial port in that area; something that is difficult to imagine at this stage. I am sure the member for Fremantle will agree with everything I have said and he was indeed pleased—if all he said is true—when we decided to build the harbour seawards and not up-river as was originally planned.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: That is the most sensible statement I have heard for a long while.

Hon. D. BRAND: I did sense, over the last few days, that the member for Fremantle might agree with me. As the House knows the dredging through these banks cost less than was originally anticipated. On inquiry being made by the department and the Director of Works, Mr. Dumas, it was thought that the dredging might cost as much as 10s. a yard, but by calling tenders throughout the world the price charged was eventually between 3s. and 4s., and the work is proceeding at a pace forward of schedule.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Have you noticed from the report of the Commissioners of the Fremantle harbour that the ships are getting larger?

Hon. D. BRAND: I have, and I stand corrected. However, if the member for Fremantle has any argument in that regard I suggest he can have it out with Colonel Tydeman who advised me on this point. Dredging is a very costly project for this State to undertake. It is a national development and one that I feel could have been the basis of a case for the present Minister for Works to put to the Commonwealth in asking for more money for this State. The dredging of the channels through is a work enabling the Sound to be opened up and, as has been suggested by naval officers, provides a very real fleet anchorage on the west coast.

Some have talked about a naval base, but this is not possible there for the simple reason that it is necessary to have a fairly large number of men available by way of casual labour, a population centred there from which to draw professional men and experts such as welders, carpenters, boilermakers and the like. We may some day see a base there; we may some day see a second Singapore, in respect to defence, centred on that coast. But for the time being I believe it is right that we press the Commonwealth to accept this work as a national responsibility and to assist us in financing the contract. I would point out to the House, too, that this case was prepared by a committee set up by the previous Government comprising the Co-ordinator of Works, Mr. Dumas, the Under Treasurer, Mr. Reid, and the Under Secretary for Lands, Mr. Smith.

It took some time before this case could be prepared as it had to be thoroughly investigated and presented in the right way. It was prepared by men who knew all our problems—our very real problems. Mr. Dumas himself was to a very large degree responsible for the whole matter. The Under Treasurer was aware of our problems in respect of finance and the Under Secretary for Lands was associated with the difficulty of cutting up the land down there, resumption of land and the general establishment of the townsite which we now know as Medina. Following on my visit there I feel certain that not only shall we see the completion within the scheduled time of this large oil refinery, not only will we see real development in regard to the rolling mills of B.H.P.—of which we heard so much last year but very little during the elections—but we will see such firms as Stewarts & Lloyds and the manufacturers of tyres and those companies interested in chemicals being established.

All these projects are those of private enterprise; firms well established not only in Australia, but internationally. It is a great pity that previously we had not backed such large companies such as these in respect to the development of this country. They have all the money, the backing and the organisation, and even though the Government may be called upon to contribute something, provided they are in their turn prepared to contribute real money, we can be assured that a thorough investigation will be made before the project is gone on with. So we can envisage in the future a very modern cement works which will be completed in a few years time. All this vindicates the policy of support for private enterprise; support of the people who can really do things for Western Australia.

I know, Mr. Speaker, that you are interested in the North; I know that you realise there are real difficulties up there, even though they recently came into the picture and the people there were probably promised more in that short time

than they had been promised for many years past. It will be interesting to see just what takes place in the future. But the development of the North is beyond this State's resources. As a layman, and not altogether a student of the position, I wonder whether large companies would not be a means of establishing, developing and opening up this country, even though they may make a profit and even though they may take something out of the country at a rate with which we do not agree. The responsibility of the Government could be directed to the provision of services and amenities to encourage people to live in the North, and to provide the labour for whatever industry may be established or whatever undertaking is proceeded with.

So much for the real development that has taken place; so much for the change of front, the change of attitude, in respect to Western Australia. Everyone is hopeful, everyone believes, that ahead of us are great things. But we all recognise that unless the Government continues the policy of opening up the land and endeavouring to improve the conditions of the people in the country the mainstay of our economy will fall. I know it is very difficult to carry out a policy of decentralisation; it is much easier said than done. But every party contributes to it and, I think with real intention.

Reference has been made to the United States where large provincial towns have been established throughout the country; industry has grown up in and around them. But America is a much older country though I am confident enough to believe that many of our country towns, whilst not growing to the size of those referred to in America, will grow to be important centres, where people will be glad to live and where farmers will be glad to retire because they will obtain there the services and amenities which are provided in the city. Those services particularly are water and electricity.

I want to deal now, if I may, with electricity. Some years ago a plan was accepted, and the programme proceeded with, in respect to the setting up of an electric system throughout the South-West. That, I understand, is proceeding according to schedule. The original programme was of some 10 years duration. That has been a great boon to the South-West and to the people living there. I think it is time we gave some consideration to extending the system to the east and to the north. I know that the town of Geraldton is growing at a great pace. It is a very important town and is a port for the hinterland of the country districts of Greenough, the Murchison and down towards Moora. I know that the mayor and his councillors are facing great problems in respect to meeting the financial commitments as a result of enlarging the generating plant at Geraldton. I believe they feel the position to be almost im-

possible in regard to the provision of gas in that town. It is recognised that the whole system must be modernised if it is to continue and is to be enlarged.

In many of these country towns the local road board is facing a problem because of the difficulty of meeting the cost of generating direct current for the people who live there. Maintenance has been neglected by the owner for years simply because of the high charge of 1s. 4d. a unit or more; he could not meet that capital outlay. I am certain, therefore, that it would be in the interests of that area if lines were extended to the North or if there was development at Geraldton similar to that being done at Albany. There could be a large generating plant which might extend to Northampton and which would represent improvements to Yuna, to Morawa and down to the Wongan and Midland line.

There is a school of thought which opposes the idea of the Electricity Commission taking over these small shows. But I am certain we have now reached the stage where it is almost impossible for the local government to carry on in the face of rising costs, especially with the replacing of generating equipment and the motive power. I am going to urge that some investigation be made. From my knowledge as Minister controlling electricity I might say that an investigation was made when the present Premier was the Minister in charge, but it was thought that the country was too scattered and the population not dense enough to carry a system of that kind. However, the position has changed, the population is growing, the towns are building up and I am certain that a second look at this proposal will be quite worthwhile and in the interests of the State generally.

I do not propose to speak at any great length. I hope that the Government will honour the promises it made during the election campaign. I recollect the Deputy Premier's holding up a copy of the Governor's Speech and referring to it as a colourless document. I do not know whether the Speech now under consideration would be very colourful if it did not contain references to much of the work that had been planned and begun by the previous Government. There is nothing really original in it, but in saying that we must be fair and reasonable and concede that the time Labour has been in office on this occasion has been only short.

I know that the Minister for Mines has been very active, just as some of us were before our wings were clipped by the electors, but I think he now recognises that the work he thought necessary when he occupied a seat on this side of the House cannot be proceeded with owing to costs and shortage of funds.

The Minister for Mines: Quite an amount of headway has been made recently.

Hon. D. BRAND: I am pleased to hear that, but would be still more pleased if there were evidence of it.

The Minister for Mines: You ought to pay a visit to the Goldfields.

Hon. D. BRAND: I am sure of the Minister's interest in the Goldfields and that he will make the available money go as far as he can.

Let me conclude on this note: I repeat that the mainstay of this country's economy is primary production. In respect of wheat and butter, there are certain marketing difficulties, but the essential thing is to encourage people to live in the country districts and to keep them happy in their industry. This can be brought about only by continuing the policy of the previous Government, providing a supply of good potable water, and building schools, hospitals and public officers comparable to those in the metropolitan area and, in a general way, making the country town a better place to live in.

If the Government will follow the policy of land expansion, giving real consideration to primary production, I feel sure that the future of the State, even though we may experience some set-backs, will be one of stability and one on which we can rely for a very long time. Although much has been said about the development of secondary industries, I am certain that the mainstay of this country will be primary production, and that whatever is done in the direction of the building up of population for secondary industry, it will be supplementary to and by way of reinforcing primary industry and establishing somewhat of a balance between the two, which is something that has not existed previously.

Several new members have been elected to the House. I know that they have come here with ideas of how to put the country right. I hope they have not come with too great a political bias, but will recognise that members on both sides are capable of original ideas. Sitting behind the present Government, no doubt they will suffer a sense of frustration, as I feel sure that they will not be permitted to speak as they would like to do.

Mr. Andrew: Do not be too sure about that.

Hon. D. BRAND: Time will tell, but I am glad to hear that there will not be too much rigidity and discipline on that side of the House as there has been on previous occasions.

Mr. May: He did not say that.

Hon. D. BRAND: The hon. member implied it. The late Alec Panton, who was a very good friend of mine, once stated in this House that the only way to ensure contentment in political parties would be to provide a portfolio for every member, and in that regard I consider that he had something.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: And for the Opposition, too.

Hon. D. BRAND: That no doubt would appeal to the hon. member if he were still sitting on this side of the House. As the session proceeds, we shall have an opportunity to confer together, even on problems on which we disagree. I support the motion.

HON. A. F. WATTS (Stirling) [5.37]: May I say at the outset that I and those associated with me propose, at least for the present session, to give the Government every reasonable opportunity to conduct the business of the House and carry out its policy, not denying ourselves legitimate voices to say what we think or depriving ourselves of the right to support or oppose as we think fit any proposition placed before the House.

Hon. D. Brand: Surely they would not begrudge us that right!

Hon. L. Thorn: We shall be able to put them right on some things.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: Perhaps so. I think I can safely say that there will not be any criticism from us purely for criticism's sake; nor will there be any attempt to obstruct any business the Government brings forward, subject again to the exercise of our legitimate rights.

I regard the Governor's Speech, in the main, as a tribute to the activities of the Government that went out of office at the end of February last. To demonstrate what I mean, I should like to quote various passages from the Speech. The first one appears on page 4 and reads—

The State continues to make substantial progress. Business confidence is strong. Employment is high and rapid population growth has continued.

If the State continues to make substantial progress, it must have been making substantial progress for some time, and that time would cover the period of years when we were in office. There can be no question about that. When I recall to mind the advertisements published during the election campaign by the Government party on the subject of unemployment, I am surprised that members opposite do not hang their heads in shame at the language that was used regarding unemployment, endeavouring as they did and perhaps succeeding, in imposing upon this State and the Government of the day a position that existed throughout Australia except here, and particularly in the State of New South Wales which, over a period of time, the duration of which I have no recollection, had been governed by a Labour Government. Consequently it is interesting to read in the Speech that employment has been high because, as statistics show, there has been very little change in the employ-

ment figures in this State during the last five months. I turn now to page 5 of the Speech and find this statement—

The expansion of land settlement into new areas continues.

This again indicates that it must have started at an earlier time, as no doubt it did; it progressed substantially from 1948 to 1953. Then I find this beautiful paragraph—

In 1952, 7,730 homes were erected throughout the State.

I do not think that the members of the present Opposition parties during the election campaign in February ever went beyond stating that a building rate of 7,000 homes had been reached. So far from our having exaggerated the position, it is quite obvious from the information contained in this official document that 730 more homes had been erected than we had claimed. When I compare the total with the pre-war rate of a maximum of 2,000 houses and the immediate post-war rate of about 60 per cent. of that figure, I contend that we have a complete proof of the statement made a few weeks ago by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition about the magnificent results achieved over that period. While that rate may be maintained or even bettered, it is one that has resulted directly from the fact that, throughout our period of office, determined efforts were made, and with great success, not only to step up the building rate but also, as an essential preliminary to that, to step up the production of building materials.

Further on in the Speech we find this statement—

It is expected that the State Brickworks will produce 19,000,000 bricks this year and that the total production for the State will reach 93,000,000.

A total of 93,000,000 bricks compared with the position that existed in 1947 is almost an astronomical figure, and undoubtedly reflects considerable credit, firstly upon the enterprises responsible for the expansion, and, secondly, upon the Government, particularly the Housing Commission and the Department of Industrial Development which, over that period, assisted them by advancing considerable financial aid in many instances and considerable technical aid in some instances to enable that result to be achieved. On the next page we find these words—

There is a steady expansion in the State's secondary industries, which now employ over 45,000 persons.

That is true, but it is equally true that the steady expansion—in fact, rather more rapid than steady—was going on in the years 1947 to 1953. A great many new industries were started in Western Australia, and there was a great increase in the number of persons employed in industrial establishments. The whole business culmin-

ated in the arrangements for the establishment at Kwinana of the oil refinery, the premises of the B.H.P., and the cement works; and these enterprises, in turn, began to attract still larger numbers.

I felt then, and I do now, that these three major industries—oil, steel and cement—were essential not only for the industrial expansion of Western Australia but also for the satisfactory carrying on of our primary industries. A start has to be made in local production of the essential commodities for industry. What greater need is there today in primary industry than the provision of fuel oils of one kind and another for the driving of farm machinery, as well as industrial machinery? The great need of steel products of one kind and another in primary industries is also wellknown to most members, and I do not propose to take up time on the subject.

Everyone knows that the absence of a sufficient supply of cement, over a considerable period of years, has had a hampering effect on many angles of primary industry, and that a sufficiency of that commodity will be of great value, not only to that industry but also to the Railway Department and the building trade, because there is undoubtedly an architectural desire to create buildings of reinforced concrete, which are both durable and effective in appearance. When these works get into operation and produce a high-class article, there is no doubt in my mind that their production will be of value to all industries—both primary and secondary—and to the commercial world of Western Australia.

Mr. J. Hegney: Has the cement company started at Kwinana?

Hon. A. F. WATTS: No, because it will take two years to complete the works. How far the company has progressed with its plans for production I do not know, but nevertheless an agreement was made and funds provided for the purpose just before the conclusion of the last session of Parliament, so that there has been no opportunity to complete the works, as the hon. member will obviously know. I come now to this paragraph on page 7 of the Speech—

By the end of this year, the railways should be in a position to handle all traffic offering.

Early in 1948, a Royal Commissioner—a railway expert from the South African Union—told us that in his opinion the railways in Western Australia were the worst in the civilised world. They certainly were not capable of handling all the traffic offering, or anything like it. He expected that it would take a long period of years to bring them into the position of being able to handle it. To be told that at the end of this year the railways should be in a position to handle all the traffic offering is, in my opinion, a most complimentary statement to the Railway Department and to the Ministerial admin-

istration since 1947, which was shared between a member of my own political party—now a Senator in the Federal House—and a member of the party represented by my friends on my right—the Liberal Party—who was a member of the Legislature in another place. This commendation, in my opinion, is well deserved.

Mr. J. Hegney: You are not objecting to these bouquets, are you?

Hon. A. F. WATTS: No, I am delighted to find them there. I shall treasure this document. It contains a lot of information that I shall not deal with at the moment.

The Minister for Native Welfare: Are you taking it as a reference?

Hon. A. F. WATTS: No, as a record of our achievements.

The Acting Premier: It shows how very fair we are over here.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: Have I suggested that the Acting Premier is not? I hope he is not implying that I have, because if he is I shall have to take the matter up with him. On page 8 of the Speech, we find this observation—

The successful recruiting campaign for the teaching service has continued.

Once again, we have the word "continued." The Speech goes on—

At present, 810 students are undergoing training at the Teachers' College and 500 bursary-holders are studying at secondary schools for entry into the teaching profession.

I knew before the previous Government went out of office that these things were taking place. I am glad to notice that they are admitted in the paragraph I have just read. Later in the Speech we find this—

The establishment of the Salvation Army Vocational Training Centre for 14 to 18 year old boys at "Seaforth" should prove to be a successful innovation.

I well recollect the considerations which gave rise to that proposal. There was extreme difficulty, in face of building demands to cope with a vastly increasing population and for school accommodation, hospitals and other purposes, which prevented the erection of Government premises on a substantial scale for this vocational training plan. As a means of offering some improvement to the youth—sometimes called delinquent youth—that is committed to the care of the State through the Children's Court, negotiations were opened with the Salvation Army, which saw many difficulties, and we saw some. A great deal of negotiation and painstaking discussion had to take place before an agreement could be reached.

It was not supposed to be the alpha and omega of what ought to be done to provide some relief for this problem, but it

was undoubtedly the best that could be done in the existing circumstances to bring some early prospect of help for these unfortunate young people who, for the six years while I was the Ministerial head, came under my care. I was happy to sign an agreement, some time during the latter part of last year, to make arrangements for the building of a comparatively small centre, and for alterations to be completed at "Seaforth". I feel that the present Minister for Education, who is not, unfortunately, the Minister for Child Welfare as well, will do everything he can to make that venture as successful as possible until such time as a better and greater scheme can be put into operation with the requisite buildings, plant and staff in a way which the majority of us would like to see.

I come now to the last comment I wish to make on the Governor's Speech, where it states—

The preparation of an overall plan for the metropolitan area under the advice of Professor Stephenson is expected to be completed within the next two years.

Professor Stephenson was appointed to make that overall plan possible before the present Government took office, as was also the appointment made of Mr. Hepburn, the Town Planning Commissioner. I regret that the Bill for the establishment of a metropolitan town planning authority, which was agreed to by this House, did not pass. As one of those who supported the measure, I could see that the demands of planning in the metropolitan area, especially in the face of such developments as are taking place at Kwinana, would undoubtedly call for the greater part of the time and effort of any town planning commissioner who might be appointed under the existing law. Therefore it was considered advisable to have someone else to be substantially responsible for the metropolitan area in order that the requirements of the rural towns might be given more consideration, and opportunity for advice and planning than had been the position in the past. I think the same today. I believe it is highly desirable that steps should be taken to provide country local authorities with opportunities to receive advice and to work in with a town planner, because many of our country towns are today growing at a fairly rapid pace.

In the early days of their development, there was a certain amount of higgledy-piggledy planning—or the absence of it—and as they are expanding today, that position is likely to be magnified rather than reduced. I wanted to see the metropolitan authority look after the metropolitan area, and still consult with the other town planner, as the Bill provided, but he to have more time to devote to the essential work in some of our rural towns. I suggest that the Government today take

steps to ensure that the opportunities I have mentioned are available to local authorities, because I do not want to see them draw up town planning schemes which will pull down a great deal of what is already there and cause annoyance and inconvenience to persons who quite lawfully established their premises under the old system; but I do want to see that, where expansion is going on and new areas in these towns are being developed and built upon, there is not a repetition of what took place 30, 40 or 50 years ago. I submit to the Minister in this House representing the Minister for Town Planning that he give the suggestion careful consideration.

The Minister for Housing: Quite a number of local authorities have availed themselves of the services of a town planner.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: It seems difficult to obtain such services at present. A visit by a town planner is easy enough to arrange, probably, but I am thinking of the development and the planning right through to its completion. As far as I can ascertain, there is no-one at present in this State concerned with town planning who can give the necessary time and attention for that purpose. I think it would be a very good idea if arrangements were made to that end.

I made some reference last evening, when time was called, to a note I had seen in the "Government Gazette" of the 26th June, 1953. It occurred to me that it had something to do with the appointment of the Under Secretary for Law. I was not able to pursue the matter at that time and the Acting Premier made reference, in reply to one of the Committee stages last night, to laying the reason for the disagreement with the Public Service Commissioner's original recommendation on the Table of the House, which would be done in accordance with the Act. Then I realised that that probably did not involve the file but only the reasons themselves and therefore it would be well for me, if I wanted to know who the other applicants were and what the position was generally, to ask some questions without notice, which I did today. Those questions were answered by the Acting Premier a few minutes ago.

As I understand the position from the Press, the Public Service Commissioner recommended the appointment of one of the magistrates, Mr. Bateman, to the position of Under Secretary for Law, after applications had closed on the 2nd May. The Executive Council, or the Government, declined to approve of that recommendation, and with that point of view I have no quarrel whatever. I hold the same views myself and consider that an appointment to the position of Under Secretary for Law is one that should be filled by a person who has an administrative capacity and the position should not be filled by one who

has chosen the magisterial profession. That was the view of the previous Government on a similar occasion when Mr. Sheehan was appointed, and I do not disagree with it at all.

The next thing that happened, according to the Press, was that the Public Service Commissioner proposed that the Solicitor General should be made the Director of Crown Law and that in lieu of the Under Secretary there should be appointed an administrative officer, somewhat on the same basis, I presume, as exists in the Department of Agriculture where there is a Director of Agriculture in charge. As I understand it that recommendation also was not approved by the Government. I can see various reasons, without having had an opportunity to peruse the paper laid upon the Table, why that recommendation could have been legitimately turned down. Then we find that Mr. R. C. Green, the Assistant Under Secretary to the Premier's Department, was appointed to the position of Under Secretary for Law and the Press went on to state that Mr. Green had been in the Premier's Department for 20 years an prior to that he was with the Mines Department for four years.

At first sight, and not knowing anything about the position except what appeared in the Press, it seemed to me to be a little unusual that an officer from the Premier's Department who had experience only in the Mines Department as well should have been appointed to this position. Having a considerable knowledge of Mr. Green, however, I thought no more about it until a few days ago, when I saw, in the Government Gazette of the 26th June, 1953, this item—

Assistant Under Secretary, Premier's Department, occupied by R. C. Green, from Class C-II-8 to Class C-II-11.

That was a notice of amendment of classification and at that time I wondered why it had been done. I still wonder why it was done and why it was made retrospective for a matter of four weeks. Then I asked the question and since that time I have had a look at the latest Public Service list which is dated the 30th June, 1952, and I have written down the notes on the copy of the question which the Minister was good enough to give to me. I do not intend to include the six magistrates because, as I said, I quite agree that they should not have been appointed. The Minister said that Nos. 1-12 were senior to the successful applicant at the time of application but of that number six were resident magistrates and so that leaves six others. They were—

J. E. Shillington, Commissioner of Titles.

J. H. Glynn, Public Trustee.

B. L. Turnbull, Deputy Master of the Supreme Court.

R. C. Buchanan, Registrar of Titles.

G. F. Mathea, Chief Electoral Officer.

E. P. Foreman, Assistant Under Secretary and Accountant, Crown Law Department.

Each one of those was not only on a higher classification at that time than the successful applicant but also I find from the list, as at the 30th June, 1952, that they were senior in classification to the successful applicant even after the 26th June, 1953, when this notice appeared in the "Government Gazette." Although the classification C-II-11—as I understand it from some experience in the Premier's Department over a period of six years—is the highest of the clerical classifications, it is nevertheless subordinate to the administrative classifications which start at A-I-1 and the professional classifications which start at P-I-1.

So I had a look at the Public Service list and I found that Mr. J. H. Glynn, the Public Trustee, was on a classification of A-I-4 and Mr. R. C. Buchanan, the Registrar of Titles, was on a classification of A-I-1. Mr. G. F. Mathea, the Chief Electoral Officer, was on a classification of A-I-1 at that date and Mr. E. P. Foreman was on C-II-9 or, at that time, on a classification higher than that held by the successful applicant. But if these figures are still correct the successful applicant, even after the notice in the "Government Gazette," was on a lower classification than that held by the applicants other than the Assistant Under Secretary and Accountant of the Crown Law Department.

The only justification that I can see for declining to promote a person inside the department to such a senior position, and bringing in a person from outside the department and whose classification was decidedly inferior, was that the person in question did not have the knowledge, experience and ability to handle the job. Upon looking at the names of these applicants and knowing the positions they occupy and having some knowledge of the men themselves, I must say that I decline to believe that although the Minister in replying to my question said that the appointment was made under Section 35 of the Act where seniority is subordinated to considerations of special fitness and the recommendation in favour of a junior officer inferentially provides the certificate required by Section 38 Subsection (1). Let us have a look at Section 38 Subsection (1) and see what this recommendation inferentially provides. Section 38 Subsection (1) reads—

Before an officer is promoted from any office to a higher office in the Administrative or Professional or Clerical Division, there shall be submitted to the Governor the name of the officer recommended for promotion to such higher office by the Commissioner after a report from the Permanent Head; and any officer so recommended may be promoted by the Governor accordingly:

and now follows the proviso—

Provided that, in every instance where a junior officer is recommended, the certificate of the Commissioner be first issued certifying that there is no senior officer available as capable of satisfactorily performing the duties.

So that is the certificate which, according to the Acting Premier, is inferentially provided by the recommendation; namely, that there is no senior officer available as capable of satisfactorily performing the duties. The net result of being appointed Under Secretary is that one passes over, as far as I can see, all the administrative grades which go from 1 to 6 and becomes administrative special Under Secretary. But in the ordinary way, before one did that, one would have to go through at least some of the intermediate grades above clerical II-11 which is where the successful applicant was on the 26th June after this notice in the "Government Gazette." Mr. Glynn, whose classification was A-I-4, has been Curator of Intestate Estates and Public Trustee for a considerable number of years. He has had considerable experience in the ramifications of the Crown Law Department and has been deemed fit to be entrusted, by successive Governments, with the care of deceased persons' estates of all sorts, shapes and sizes. He has been remunerated with a salary of £1,539 per annum as against £1,134 paid to the successful applicant. Therefore, according to the Public Service list of last year, he was paid £405 per annum more than the successful applicant. Yet, inferentially, he is, according to the Minister, not as capable of satisfactorily performing the duties. If he is not—and I do not believe that for one moment—there is no justification for paying him £1,539 per annum for being Public Trustee. Some other less important occupation should be found for him. But, of course, that is not the position at all.

Mr. Yates: How many grades lower was Mr. Green than these other officers?

Hon. A. F. WATTS: He was four grades lower than Mr. Glynn even after he had been put up three grades. Mr. Glynn is on a grade of A-I-4 and this other officer was on a grade of C-II-11, four grades lower—that is after notification in the "Government Gazette" on the 26th June. Now let us have a look at the case of Mr. Buchanan, the Registrar of Titles.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: Before the tea suspension I said we would give some consideration to the position of Mr. Buchanan who occupies the position of Registrar of Titles in another branch of the Crown Law Department. His classification today is A-I-1. He was employed, according to the Public Service List of last year, at a remuneration of £1,334. If the observation of the Acting Premier in answer to the

question regarding the recommendation for the position of a junior officer inferentially indicated that this officer had not the capacity to carry out the position, it seems to me a most extraordinary state of affairs. I now propose to turn to the case of Mr. Shillington. I would suggest that this officer, who has a classification of P-I-5 and holds the position of Commissioner of Titles and Assistant Solicitor, might be easily the best qualified of the lot for this particular position.

I recollect quite well that until a few years ago he acted as Master of the Supreme Court, Registrar in Bankruptcy, Sheriff, private members' draftsman, and he occupied other positions in the Crown Law Department. As far as I could ascertain, during the period I was Leader of the Opposition as well as when I was a private member, he occupied those positions with distinction. Today we find him as an applicant for this office. He has been in receipt of a salary of over £1,600 and the position he occupies is a most responsible one. He is responsible today for the security of land tenures, and for securities registered against land tenures throughout the whole of Western Australia. Apart from that, he has occupied several other very responsible positions in other sections of the Crown Law Department. It would have given him an exceptional opportunity of assessing the duties that an Under Secretary for Law should carry out. I repeat that I am astounded at the position that has arisen.

Mr. Yates: Was Mr. Shillington a lawyer at one time?

Hon. A. F. WATTS: He was admitted to the Bar, but I do not think he has ever practised. He has been in the Civil Service practically the whole of his adult life. So far as I know—I have not been in close contact with him at all times—he has done his best to equip himself for his duties and he has carried them out for many years, although he is not by any means an old man. The same could be said about the Chief Electoral Officer, Mr. Mathea, whose classification is A-I-1 which is higher than that possessed by the selected applicant and equal to that of Mr. Buchanan. It is a well known fact that he is a gentleman who has occupied the position of Chief Electoral Officer for some years and, so far as we are aware, he has carried out his duties most efficiently. Prior to that he carried out duties associated with other positions in connection with the Crown Law Department such as that of accountant and Assistant Under Secretary. So, quite obviously over a period of years each of the gentlemen I mentioned have had excellent opportunity to know the requirements of the Crown Law Department.

It is not as though the position of Under Secretary in the Crown Law Department does not carry with it responsibility

ties of a somewhat different nature to those relating to other under secretarial positions. The ramifications of the Crown Law Department are very extensive in their jurisdiction, which includes control of magistrates and courts in various parts of the State, legal officers of the Crown and deals in many ways with most involved legal procedure. I know the officer holding that position can obtain advice from other Crown Law authorities, but matters must come before the Under Secretary for Law for finality. That suggests to me that either of these gentlemen would be very suitable for carrying out the work involved and the necessity for having one appointed who has been part and parcel of the Crown Law Department for a considerable number of years.

I have nothing but the highest respect for the successful applicant. I would say without fear of contradiction that he would have been in time a most suitable appointee to some other department when a vacancy occurred, but, in face of this list of men who have been rejected, the implication that is contained in their rejection, entirely passes my comprehension, and certainly needs some explanation. The implication, of course, is, in effect, that these men are not efficient. I suggest it is most wrongful to apply that implication to those in the list of persons I have mentioned, and could not, I repeat, with any fairness, be applied to them. It is not reasonable to allow that implication, or imputation as it were, to go down on record with regard to these men whose efficiency and ability and vast experience in the department are recognised by everyone. Decidedly it is not fair to allow that to remain.

What the effect of this, in all the circumstances, with such a list of applicants, must be on the Civil Service generally, particularly on the officers of the Crown Law Department and more particularly on those most intimately concerned, I cannot venture to prophesy. I say it will have a most undesirable effect. Beyond the slightest doubt it is going to create an impression that where a person remains in a department in an administrative capacity of one kind or another, and endeavours by every means in his power to fit himself for the work and increase his knowledge in that regard, the prospect is a futile one. I confess, without saying any more, that I do not like it. I do not think when all the facts are made plain, that the people of the State will like it. I leave the matter at that.

In recent times we have heard a lot about the shortage of loan funds and various attempts have been made to load the Commonwealth Government with the onus of failure to make loan funds available. I suggest that, fairly, there is no justification for that line of thought. The facts are that loans were being raised at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and for a considerable time the Australian public subscribed to them

very readily and in increasing amounts. Subsequently a loan at that rate was floated but it was not fully subscribed. Then a loan was offered at a discount of one per cent. with the same rate of interest. That was barely a success. It became perfectly clear that there was a demand from the public—I was present at the Loan Council when this was first discussed—for a greater return for the money they were prepared to invest and there was a disinclination to put money into the loan.

A suggestion was made with which I was rather taken as a matter of fact, that the next loan should be issued at a greater discount without increasing the rate of interest, the feeling being that the effect would be less harsh upon the previous bondholders who had taken out investments at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. than if a loan were floated at par with a considerable increase in the rate of interest. That suggestion, however, was not adopted. The experience in raising loan money that might be available from the public, which was the principal source from which money could be safely secured, was reflected in the increasing demand for public works in various States, partly because of rising costs and partly because of expanding works programmes.

In order to make some approach, therefore, to fulfilling the demands of the several States, the Commonwealth Government took a course that I understand was completely unprecedented in Australia and practically unknown anywhere else, of maintaining high and even higher rates of taxation in order that it might, out of revenue, make a contribution to the funds available for Australian public works. By that means the Commonwealth Government made available in two years a total of £260,000,000. For a Government to adopt that most unpopular method and to provide from that source the required funds that were not readily available through ordinary processes of loan-raising, to the extent of £260,000,000 for the purpose of endeavouring to ensure that at least essential public works throughout the country would be carried on and considerable unemployment avoided, is something to the credit and not to the discredit of the Commonwealth Government.

Unfortunately in public statements made in the last day or two, that position has been almost entirely lost sight of and the implication that that Government has done nothing to assist in the matter and has been responsible for the failure to raise loan moneys by devious means, is every day being talked about. I think it is about time it was made clear to everyone that the efforts made by the Commonwealth Government by the means I have mentioned have resulted in the amounts available being increased by £260,000,000, with more still during the current year, and were not only very creditable efforts

but such that if they had not been made, would have rendered the works programme of every State in Australia absolutely impracticable, because had it been left to the States themselves to raise the money without the benefit of the very considerable sum taken by means of most unpopular taxation, I venture to suggest that the States would not have raised 50 per cent. of it.

Mr. Johnson: What happened to capital controls?

Hon. A. F. WATTS: I am not going to enter into an argument with the hon. member on capital controls. I am stating the facts as I see them.

Mr. Johnson: You are going to overlook that fact, are you?

Hon. A. F. WATTS: I am not going to overlook anything. I observed that the States could not have raised 50 per cent. without the assistance received from the Commonwealth, because there were a lot of people who buttoned up their pockets and would not let any money loose at all until the rate of interest reached 4½ per cent. That is what it reached ultimately and the position is beginning to improve from the point of view of the investor.

A lot has also been said recently about the increase in railway freights and the closing of railway lines. I am well aware that from the point of view of the Railway Commissioners there are certain lines in this State that are unpayable in a way which impresses them with the necessity of having the lines closed. I understand that quite a considerable number of country lines of one kind and another can be or have been brought under that category. But I think that when we consider these matters we have to bear in mind the fact that those railway lines in the main were never established with the idea of making a profit or even of paying their way. They were instituted with the idea of developing Western Australia's lands at a time when there was little or no other means of transport and when land utilisation in the areas I have mentioned would otherwise have been practically impossible.

Along some of the lines that are marked down or have been suggested for this consideration, not only has settlement grown and prospered, but it is also being rapidly extended today. But still those lines do not pay. Costs have risen and the Commissioners persist, as I understand them, in saying that if a branch line covers 50 miles out of 300 and the freight is 300s. for the whole of the 300 miles, the branch line is entitled to only 50 of them. I cannot agree with that in the case of lines of a developmental character to which I have referred. Those lines are still needed for the development of this country.

The Minister for Railways: Farmers will not use them.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: There would be little or no traffic on the main lines which they serve were it not for the production and freight which are created by their existence; and anybody who looks upon the matter in regard to branch lines of any kind purely from the point of view of pounds, shillings and pence, on the basis I have mentioned, is doing a disservice to this country. Those lines are still wanted. I have said, and I repeat, that I do not think they were ever meant to be a profitable proposition; and the only way to get rid of them, especially when there is any quantity of settlement alongside them, which is so in many cases, would be to provide the most expensive type of all-weather road.

I see that it costs 17s. to put in a new sleeper and 9s. to take out an old one. How much it would cost to remove some of the lines I have mentioned on that basis I do not know, but I would suggest the cost would be very considerable. The greatest care has to be exercised before the closure of any of these lines is decided upon. In my view the country cannot afford to have them closed unless they are replaced by some other equally effective mode of transport and road, and that would impose a tremendous fresh liability upon the community upon which it appears to me—as all the available funds for roads are being used up in other essential maintenance and construction work—we would have to pay interest and so, in the ultimate result, we would be in no better a position.

I repeat that from my point of view any proposal of this nature should be given the closest consideration and not looked at only from the financial point of view, as the Commissioners would have us look at it. I would not object in the slightest if those lines were, on the financial side, taken from under the responsibility of the Commissioners; if all that was possible was earned from them and it became an obligation of the State directly to subsidise them in the interests of the country's development. That may be a practicable proposition; it is well worth looking at.

I will say in conclusion—because the matters which affect my own district and which I could deal with at some length can well be left until the appropriate departments come up for discussion—that I am not prepared to accede to any substantial increase in freights and fares which is going to fall hardest upon people who are furthest from the metropolitan area, when the Minister and his Government has reversed the policy, to which I tried to subscribe, of cutting down the losses in the metropolitan area so that there might be some overall saving which would improve the position of the railways, and which, coupled with some minor adjustment in freights and fares to cover more recent increases in basic wage costs would be all that I could subscribe to.

But so far as I can see, from the reported utterances of the Premier in Canberra, the figure he had in mind was something like an increase of £2,500,000 to be obtained from railway freights and fares in the coming financial year unless he was able to get £4,500,000 extra from the Commonwealth. That is going to be the figure which I would say would be something in the vicinity of 40 per cent. overall, because I presume there would still be some telescoping, as we call it, of the freight rates to further-out centres such as Kalgoorlie, and others 300 miles or more away. If we are going to impose a further burden of that kind upon the primary producing industries, upon the goldmining industry and upon the people of the country as a whole and the cost of living in the country generally, without trying to reduce the expenditure in the railway service in other directions and without trying to improve its efficiency, I promise you, Sir, that I shall wholeheartedly oppose such a move at every opportunity.

MR. O'BRIEN (Murchison) [7.54]: I have listened attentively to the previous speakers and agree with what the member for Stirling has said. I will not detain the House very long, but I wish to bring before members a very important matter concerning the position of the goldmining industry. In tonight's "Daily News" appears the following:—

W.A. Gold Shares Up.

Mt. Magnet mining shares showed gains on the Perth Stock Exchange today.

Oil shares maintained this week's sharp rises.

Hill 50 shares, which have been quoted recently at 84s. seller with buyers offering 82s., strengthened to 84s. 6d. buyer, 85s. seller with sales at 84s. 6d.

Shares in Yenberrie Gold N.L., which is investigating two mines at Mt. Magnet, rose from 3s. buyer, 3s. 1d. seller yesterday to 3s. 5d. buyer with no sales or sellers.

The present Government has been in office for six months and I have no hesitation in praising it for the progress it has made. The previous Government did practically nothing to remove the cause of the disabilities of the mining industry or to apply treatment. Immediately the present Government took over, it faced the cause and removed it by applying treatment in the way of giving some consideration to the industry. It is true that in the dying hours of the last Parliament the then Government gave consideration to Big Bell Mines Ltd.

Hon. D. Brand: Very real consideration, too.

Mr. O'BRIEN: But instead of giving proper consideration to the industry and advancing approximately £200,000 to enable that mine to develop successfully, it advanced £100,000, after very much consideration.

Mr. McCulloch: It was the Commonwealth Government which did that.

Mr. O'BRIEN: This means that operations in the goldmining industry are more or less hampered. The Big Bell Mine Company will be in an unfortunate position because the main shaft should always have been kept below the bottom level, and that has not been the case. Only two weeks ago, in the company of His Excellency the Governor, I visited the mine and went to the 1,250ft. level. Work has been carried out there very successfully, but the advance made by the Government was not sufficient.

Mr. Oldfield: What has your Government advanced?

Mr. O'BRIEN: The Government has progressed very successfully and assisted other mines in a small way. I was very pleased to hear the member for Stirling say that we should leave the railways in existence until every avenue has been exploited. That is very good advice. The railway to Laverton was to have been pulled up by the previous Government. I received urgent wires and replied "Hold fast" because I had unbounded faith in the Goldfields and particularly Laverton. It has now been proved that the Lancefield goldmine in that area is likely to become one of the biggest in the State. The manganese deposit there is very large and the Gladiator mine, which was worked years ago, is now in production and is keeping the State battery going, all because the Government has assisted as it should. If we let the people know that the Government is behind an industry, we remove much of the cause of failure. When something is wrong we must remove the cause and apply the remedy and that is the policy of this Government. Meekatharra, further south, is a field of proved values. That field years ago reached a depth where diamond drilling was required and I feel sure that as soon as money is available the present Government will do the necessary boring, which I believe will prove successful. The Meekatharra and Day Dawn mines are on the upgrade because they are receiving the necessary support.

Mr. Oldfield: What support are they receiving?

Mr. O'BRIEN: When the previous Government was in power the shares of the Hill 50 mine at Mt. Magnet were worth shillings but today they are worth pounds.

Hon. D. Brand: You might take credit for a wet season, but you cannot take credit for that.

Mr. O'BRIEN: That mine has been developed by diamond drilling and up-to-date methods encouraged by this Government.

Mr. Oldfield: Who paid for that? Not the Government!

Mr. O'BRIEN: A good deal of diamond drilling is required in the Murchison area which, as some of the old prospectors now in "Sunset" could tell members, will eventually prove to be as rich an area as the Golden Mile. The member for Maylands asked what assistance the Government had given the industry. It has raised the payment to prospectors from £2 to £4 10s. a week and has also paid practically in full for every crushing put through a State battery.

Mr. Oldfield: Which Government increased the allowance to prospectors?

Mr. O'BRIEN: The present Government and it has also paid them in full for the sands which were held by Governments in past years. A prospector now receives practically the full price per ounce for his gold, instead of perhaps £10 only, and that is of great benefit to him. During my last visit to the Murchison I noticed that acreage irrigation was on the move again. In some districts there has been a good season, with the water courses running and the grass two feet high, but in other areas such as out from Cue there is the acreage irrigation with a good harvest of lucerne and grasses to provide for drier times to come. At Wiluna the work of the late Mr. Damon is progressing steadily and I am sure that district will receive favourable consideration from the Government. Under the previous Government we had what was more or less purely a Mullewa line but the present Government will favour no particular area of the State. Many things are required in the Murchison area—houses, for instance—and I am confident we will get them in our turn. The previous Government promised to advance half the cost—approximately £8,000—of a water supply for Mt. Ida. The present Government will extend all these benefits providing it gets a fair deal from the Grants Commission. I ask members to co-operate with the Government so that all may receive their share and a square deal for the electors they represent.

On motion by Mr. Perkins debate adjourned.

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

Council's Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying the personnel of sessional committees appointed by that House.

House adjourned at 8.10 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 13th August, 1953.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Questions : Railways, (a) as to sleepers, removal and renewal	103
(b) as to Premier's statement at Loan Council	104
State Transport Co-Ordination Act, as to amending legislation	104
Dust nuisance, as to phosphatic rock pile, North Fremantle	104
Forests, as to appointment of Conservator	104
Medical services, as to reducing fees	104
Roads, (a) as to sealing Carnarvon-Northampton section	104
(b) as to Guildford-rd. rehabilitation	104
North-West, as to water supply, Broome, Derby and Wyndham	105
State finance, (a) as to balance owing to English contractors	105
(b) as to amount deferred	105
Electricity supplies, as to grounding of wires and transformers	105
Police, as to stations for Wembley and Scarborough	105
Education, as to Mt. Lawley school ground	105
Hospitals, (a) as to interrogation of parents re means	106
(b) as to charges for ward beds	106
Timber, (a) as to ply and T. and G. flooring	106
(b) as to payment of royalties	106
Swan river, as to building second bridge	106
Betting, (a) as to Minister's statement re two-up	106
(b) as to repealing Gaming Act	106
(c) as to legalising two-up	107
Bill : Supply (No. 1), £16,000,000, returned	107
Address-in-reply, third day	107
Speakers on Address—	
Mr. Perkins	107
Mr. Norton	113
Hon. C. F. J. North	119

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.

RAILWAYS.

(a) *As to Sleepers, Removal and Renewal.*

Mr. PERKINS asked the Minister for Railways:

What was the average cost in the years 1910 and 1938—

- (1) Of each new railway sleeper at point of use in the track?
- (2) Of removing each worn out sleeper and replacing the new sleeper?

The MINISTER replied:

- (1) 1910, 1s. 9d.; 1938, 3s. 4d.
- (2) Separate details of the labour cost were not kept but the estimated cost is—1910, 1s.; 1938, 2s. 9d.