

happy to continue it. I feel that the action taken by the United Nations is the correct one. This is a new method of dealing with disputes by means of an international police force and we hope it will be successful and will result in the avoidance of much bloodshed.

On motion by Mr. Bovell, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 7.39 p.m.*

## Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 9th August, 1950.

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

### QUESTIONS.

#### WATER SUPPLY.

(a) *As to Improving Pressure, Fremantle Districts.*

Hon. E. M. DAVIES asked the Minister for Transport:

Will the Minister advise what remedial measures have been, or are intended to be, taken in order to improve the water pressure in the elevated areas of Fremantle districts, especially Hilton Park?

The MINISTER replied:

Proposals are in hand to improve the water supplies in the high level area at Hilton Park, adjacent to the intersection of Carrington and South-streets by means of installation of a booster pump.

Similar action is in train with regard to high level areas in the vicinity of Melville and Richmond Reservoirs and Moreing-road. All plant for these improvements has been ordered.

(b) *As to Size of Mains.*

Hon. E. M. DAVIES asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) In view of the great expansion in Fremantle districts, both from residential and industrial aspects, is the Minister satisfied that the water mains supplying the Fremantle area are sufficiently large to meet all requirements?

(2) If he is not satisfied with the position, will he take the necessary steps to see that additions are made so as to avoid any shortages?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) With the installation of booster pumps, already ordered, for the high level areas, it is considered the department will be able to meet requirements.

(2) These booster pumps will be installed immediately they are received; in addition a new feeder main, varying in diameter from 30in. to 18in., which is to be laid from Swanbourne to Fremantle will improve the supply considerably. The pipes for this main have been on order for some months, but the main cannot be laid for use before the summer of 1951-1952.

Extensive investigations are in hand for further improvements.

#### BUSH FIRES.

*As to Utilising Land Settlement Board's Material.*

Hon. A. L. LOTON asked the Honorary Minister for Agriculture:

(1) In which country towns has the Land Settlement Board set up supply depots?

(2) What is the approximate quantity of—

- (a) galvanised iron,
- (b) galvanised plain wire, and
- (c) galvanised rabbit netting,

on hand at each depot?

(3) If any settler who was burnt out during the bush fires of last summer is having difficulty in obtaining a supply of galvanised iron, galvanised wire or galvanised rabbit netting, will the Land Settlement Board release such requirements from stocks on hand?

(4) Where the price of wire, iron or wire netting required by burnt-out settlers (except those in necessitous circumstances) to restore their holdings to at least the condition prior to the fire is in excess of the cost of the Australian manufactured article, will the Government give consideration to meeting the additional cost?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied:  
(1) and (2)

Depots	Approximate Quantities.		
	Galv. Iron Tons.	Galv. Plain Wire. Tons.	Galv. R.P. Netting. 100 yd Rolls.
Wheat and Sheep Areas.			
Moora	9	—	264
Northam	9	—	113
Pingelly	8	23	192
Narrogin	15	22	68
Wagin	3	19	309
Katanning	3	8	76
Many Peaks	6	27	—
	53	99	1,022
Dairying Areas.			
Kudardup	8	27	—
Pemberton	3	—	—
Denmark	12	8	—
Northcliffe	21	23	—
Hester	13	2	129
	57	60	129
Total in all depots	110	159	1,151

(3) and (4) Stocks of material held by the Land Settlement Board have been purchased from Commonwealth funds. A large proportion of such material has been imported at high cost.

Supplies also have been imported by merchants and are available through the normal trading channels.

Special arrangements have been made by the Government for assistance through the Bush Fires Relief Committee covering special necessitous cases.

#### PROBLEMS OF THE AGED.

*As to Representation at Washington Conference.*

Hon. J. G. HISLOP asked the Minister for Transport:

In view of the importance of the subjects to be discussed, and the urgent need there is for knowledge upon the subject of care of our aged in this State, and realising the tremendous value of the experience to be gained, will the Government seek permission from President Truman to send a representative from this State to the conference he has called this month in Washington to discuss the problems of the aged?

The MINISTER replied:

The problem of the aged will be discussed at a Commonwealth and State conference to be held in Canberra next week at the invitation of the Commonwealth Minister for Health, Sir Earle Page.

#### AGRICULTURAL COLLEGES.

*As to Report on Standard of Education.*

Hon. A. L. LOTON asked the Honorary Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Has the report of the committee appointed by the Government to make recommendations on the standard of education at agricultural colleges been received by the Minister concerned?

(2) If the report has not been received, when is it anticipated that such report will be received?

(3) Will the report and recommendations of the committee be tabled after the report is received?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied:

(1) No.

(2) No definite date.

(3) Will receive consideration when report is received.

There is no definite date for this report. This committee is an advisory one set up to advise the Minister, whoever he may be. It is more or less making recommendations all the time and early in the New Year I expect a comprehensive report from this committee. The report has been delayed for two very good reasons. Two members of the committee have been away oversea; Mr. Russell has been to America and I asked him specially to look into the matter of rural education in that country. I gave him letters to the Ministers concerned over there so that he could bring back a report on rural education in America. Also, Professor Underwood has been to Britain and he was asked to make a special investigation into rural education in England. Therefore, it was advisable that no report should be made until those two gentlemen had returned and submitted to the advisory council a report on what they had seen, heard and learnt when oversea. When the report is received I will give consideration to placing it upon the Table of the House. I would point out, however, that this is really a departmental report from a committee set up by myself and the report may, or may not be, public property. However, consideration will be given to the request.

#### NORTH-WEST DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE.

*As to Constitution and Meetings.*

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) Who constitute the North-West Development Committee, and what particular interests do they represent?

(2) How often does the committee meet?

(3) When was its last meeting?

(4) Are minutes kept of its meetings, and if so, are they available to all members representing North-West seats?

(5) Will the Minister advise all members of decisions made by this committee?

(6) Has the Government given consideration to North-West members being consulted in matters pertaining to their districts of which they might have considerable knowledge?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Mr. R. J. Dumas, Director of Works (chairman).

Mr. J. S. Foxall, State Mining Engineer; deputy, Mr. E. E. Brisbane, Assistant State Mining Engineer; Mr. A. McKenzie Clark, Acting Director of Agriculture; deputy, Mr. W. M. Nunn, Department of Agriculture, and executive officer, Ord River Experimental Station Committee.

Mr. H. Butcher, pastoralist, representing the southern section of the North-West.

Mr. L. G. Blythe, pastoralist, representing the area north of Broome.

Mr. H. R. C. Adkins, secretary of the Pastoralists' Association.

Mr. C. R. Kemp, secretary.

The committee has co-opted the Commissioner of Main Roads, the Chairman W.A. Transport Board, the Commissioner of Native Affairs, the Engineer for the North-West, and the Director of Education.

(2) When business requires.

(3) 1st February, 1950. The committee has made a number of recommendations which have been awaiting a decision of policy by the Commonwealth Department of National Development as to the extent of assistance to be given by the Commonwealth in the development of the North-West. That department has within the last two weeks indicated its policy on one of the recommendations made and a committee meeting has been called for next week.

(4) Full minutes of meetings are kept. The committee is an advisory one and the minutes therefore would not necessarily represent the policy of the Government.

(5) Answered by (4).

(6) The Minister for the North-West is always glad to receive suggestions from North-West members and to discuss with them any proposal pertaining to their districts.

## PARLIAMENTARY SUPERANNUATION FUND.

### *Appointment of Trustees.*

**THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT** (Hon. C. H. Simpson—Midland): In accordance with Standing Order No. 15 I ask leave of the House to move the motion standing in my name on the notice paper.

Leave granted.

**The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT:** I move—

That pursuant to the provisions of the Parliamentary Superannuation Act, 1948, the Legislative Council hereby appoints the President and Hon. Sir Charles Latham to be trustees of the Parliamentary Superannuation Fund as from this day.

Question put and passed.

## MOTION—MEDICAL ACT.

### *To Disallow Specialist Rules.*

**HON. J. G. HISLOP** (Metropolitan) [4.46]: I move—

That new Rules 22 to 29 inclusive, and Form H, made under the Medical Act, 1894-1946, as published in the "Government Gazette" on the 21st October, 1949, and laid on the Table of the House on the 1st August, 1950, be and are hereby disallowed.

I move this motion only after a good deal of consideration. These regulations and rules follow the amendment of the Medical Act in 1945 when Section 11 (a) was inserted. It reads—

The Governor may upon the recommendation of the Board from time to time by Order-in-Council declare what branches of medicine and surgery shall for the purposes of this Act be and be deemed to be specialities with respect to which medical practitioners who are duly qualified may be registered as specialists.

Then it goes on to give the powers of the board so that it may frame that list or register of specialists and specialities. Members will realise that it is over five years since the amending legislation was introduced in this Chamber and it has taken this long period of time for the Medical Board to arrive at what it considers are means whereby it can carry out the terms of that section of the Act. The whole method of deciding as to who shall or shall not be a specialist in medicine or surgery, or other branches, is very involved. Therefore, I will attempt to make the story of why I am asking for this disallowance as simple as possible.

First of all I am asking for the disallowance of these rules purely for the reason that I do not think the present set of regulations will give sufficient cover for the purposes for which they are required. I take it that the two main reasons why a register of specialists was required were, and still are, that the public should know who these specialists are and, secondly, those organisations—insurance companies and the like—which have to pay certain specialist fees under the Act, should know to whom such payments are due. I also move for the disallowance because I have the full support of the profession. This matter has been considered, and reconsidered, by us all. It has been considered by the full council of the British Medical Association and by a sub-committee of that council. Then I was called in to a consultation with them and we decided that the whole matter was so involved that I should proceed to ask for the disallowance. The main reason at the back of it is that we do not think these rules and regulations will protect either the public or those who wish to know to whom they should pay specialist fees.

To decide who is and who is not a specialist is something that has exercised the minds of the profession for centuries, but it is becoming much more clear in the last decade since colleges for further instruction in the various specialities have been formed. They have laid down what they consider is sufficient experience to warrant granting a license or diploma to a member of the medical profession desiring to practise in that speciality. We feel that the terms laid down in these regulations are so wide that they will have to be varied from time to time; also so many loopholes could be provided that we feel certain that this register of specialists will very soon be at a discount. Let me read the qualifications that will be regarded as necessary:—

Any person who desires to have his name entered on the register of specialists shall apply to the board in Form H as prescribed in the schedule to the rules and before he shall be registered under these rules he shall satisfy the board—

(a) That five years have elapsed since obtaining a qualification entitling him to registration as a medical practitioner, of which at least one year must have been passed as a resident medical officer in a general hospital or hospitals.

It was curious right from the very inception to realise that this rule might quite easily debar someone who had already been practising for years as a specialist—and so it has turned out to be. There has already been an amendment to this clause which I have not with me at the moment but which reads more or less that he has had satisfactory experience during that time, or words to that effect:

(b) that he has gained and maintained special skill in that particular speciality by adequate experience in that speciality in private practice for a period of not less than five years, or in a hospital or hospitals approved by the board for a period of not less than three years, or partly in private practice and partly in a hospital approved as aforesaid for a period of time not less than four years and has maintained such skill.

There is no question here of the board holding any examination to see whether an individual has had the necessary experience in private practice. It is regarded as almost impossible to obtain the necessary experience to become a specialist in private practice while devoting oneself to all the necessary calls of private practice. Yet an individual will be allowed to attempt to prove to the board that he

has gained and maintained this experience in his speciality. Let me now read this clause to which so much exception is taken by the profession—

It shall be deemed professional misconduct if a medical practitioner, at any time after the expiration of one year from the date of publication of this rule in the "Government Gazette," holds himself out to be or practises as a specialist without being registered as such according to these rules.

I cannot make out, and neither can my conferees, how it is one can persuade the board one has gained the necessary experience in practice and then find oneself faced with the clause that if one holds oneself out to be a specialist while gaining that specialist knowledge, one has committed professional misconduct. Professional misconduct is a very serious offence and none of the reputable members of the profession would like to have that charge laid against him. This is the sort of thing the Medical Board can take action upon, and if a person is charged with professional misconduct, the board can reprimand, impose a fine, or suspend him, and the only appeal that suspended person has is to the Supreme Court for a purely technical offence—because he has failed to register. The next curious clause that has been forced upon the Medical Board is Clause (c), which reads—

(c) That (in the case of a person applying for registration after the expiration of one year from the date of publication of this rule in the "Government Gazette") in addition to the above qualifications, he also possesses a higher degree or diploma in the speciality mentioned in his application.

Here we have to face the situation that at the moment a higher degree is not necessary. All the man has to do is to say five years have elapsed and apply to the board saying that he has gained this experience either in a hospital or in practice—and that is without any examination by the board. In a year's time, however, it will be necessary for all specialists to hold a higher degree. If it is accepted, and I think it is wisely accepted, that a specialist should be a man who holds a higher degree in a college in which he claims to be a specialist, why not accept the terms laid down by the college and say that this possession of the degree will classify that man as a specialist?

It goes on to say that if he possesses that degree the board will lessen the periods laid down in the two principal clauses by a period of six months. One may find that a man has a degree conferred upon him by an English college or an Australian college but he still cannot practise—in some cases they lay down four years as a necessary qualification—for possibly six months

after receiving such diploma. It has become so difficult that we consider the only real method of handling this is to disallow it for the reasons I have quoted, and for others which I will endeavour to show in a moment or two.

Let me cite my own case, for example. I really do not know, as a consulting physician, whether I am a specialist or not because my realm of medicine is an exceedingly wide one. It is so wide that in many countries of the world men have been forced to limit the work they do in regard to consultant medicine to a much less special degree or greater degree than I have. The result is that my position in this city is that I am a consultant, and we feel it would be very much wiser to have a register of all consultants than a register of specialists.

There is a considerable difference, because a consultant is a man who has, by the knowledge of his profession, become accepted as a person who can advise on certain special lines or activities in the profession. He has become accepted as such by his brethren. We will not accept a man as a consultant unless we feel that he can not only give advice to patients but give us advice as well—

Hon. E. H. Gray: Who judges that; the executive?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: We do ourselves, and the British Medical Association has for years had a list of consultants, and anyone who wants to know who are the consultants can very easily obtain a list from the office of the association. Reverting to my own case, I am not a specialist; I am a consulting physician. If I decided not to register as a specialist, I could be accused, under these rules, of being a specialist, and be charged, after having acted as a specialist for 20 odd years, with professional misconduct. Surely, all that is required is that the public shall be protected by being given a list of the persons who have acquired special knowledge and that those who are required to pay the fees should know that the persons are justified in receiving them as consultants or specialists!

There is a possibility of there being a very brilliant man who, by dint of sheer hard work and study, has acquired knowledge that has gained him the respect of his brethren and who will become a specialist or a consultant and not possess the higher degree. We have men of that calibre in this city, men who are in the top rank, and yet, if they fail to register in the next year, they could never be registered as specialists. It will not be very long before the Commonwealth produces some form of national medicine or national health insurance, and we feel that it would be much wiser to leave this matter in abeyance. Then, when that scheme is introduced on a national basis,

there must be some widely accepted definition of what constitutes a consultant. Otherwise we will have men registered as specialists and the other States will not. In Queensland, the registering of specialists has not proved a success, and I am quite convinced that these proposals will not prove a success, either.

Rule 26 provides that a registered specialist may, at the discretion of the board, nominate at any time for a second speciality. Are we to assume that an individual may be permitted to act in one speciality and yet not be able to say he is a specialist? To make the provision more definite, Rule 27 provides that a registered specialist shall confine his practice to the speciality or specialities in which he is registered; otherwise, his name shall be deleted from the register of specialists. Once a man is registered as a recognised specialist and provided he practises, he automatically continues during the term. If he does not confine his practice to the speciality in which he is registered, his name may be removed from the register, and yet he is to be permitted by the same rules to be registered for a second speciality.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Why was this a failure in Queensland?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: For the reason that all sorts of people crept in as specialists under the terms laid down who, as consultants, really did not have the confidence of their brethren in the profession. I consider that the term "consultant" is very much better than the term "specialist." I would prefer to see that a man given the right to charge the public special fees should have the confidence of his brethren in the profession. That could be arranged. In these days, when the profession gives honorary service to the hospitals, there is any amount of room for the profession to learn the worth of a man's work.

I feel that it would not be in the public interest that this register of specialists should be adopted, that the rules will not do what is required, and that we shall be opening the door to men claiming specialists' rates while they may not have the respect of their brethren in the profession. The whole matter should be left in abeyance until the Commonwealth has brought in a national scheme that will have the wider application and be a greater safeguard to the public. If the House in its wisdom believes that a register should be kept, I am quite in accord with that. It could be kept by arrangement with the Medical Board and the British Medical Association, but I believe that the term "consultant" will cover the position adequately. Because of the difficulties that will arise by the adoption of these rules, I ask for their disallowance.

On motion by the Minister for Transport, debate adjourned.

## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

*Fourth Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**HON. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM** (South-East) [5.7]: At the outset I should like to welcome the members who have been re-elected and also the two new members who have taken up the torch flung to them by their fathers. The successful careers of their fathers are indicative of the esteem in which they were held by their constituents, and I trust it will be the sincere endeavour of those two members to follow in their fathers' footsteps, and that their endeavours will be attended by equal success. There is a parallel, I believe, in the Scriptures. I feel that the reward of consideration and kindness that those two young members will receive at the hands of other members is merely the returning of bread cast upon the waters by their fathers. I tender them a warm welcome, and trust that they will continue as members for quite a long time.

I wish to refer to a passage in the Governor's Speech concerning the amount of money allocated this year for main roads. Reference has been made to the proposed record expenditure of some £1,600,000 for main roads. That is an enormous sum of money, but I am puzzled, in relation to the unfinished portion of the Perth-Kalgoorlie road, for instance, when I read in reports that there is something in excess of £25,000 unused from last year. This, of course, is due to the continued shortage of both labour and material. However, I feel that this money could well be made available to road boards that have sufficient material and, in many instances, sufficient equipment to carry on the work that the Main Roads Board cannot do. I am referring mainly to the bituminising crew.

One road board I have in mind is familiar to Goldfields members—the Kalgoorlie Road Board—which has a team and equipment for bituminising main roads second to none. The work done is first-class and up to the standard of that of the Main Roads Department. Merredin also has important roads, heavily traversed, in its district, but has to wait for the Main Roads Department before that work can be proceeded with. If the money were made available to those boards, they could obtain the requisite equipment and crews to do the work in their districts that the Main Roads Department cannot carry out under its present heavy programme. The Norseman Road Board is another local authority that could undertake such work. It has a very large mileage of main roads under its care, and year by year money from its own resources has to be used for dragging graders over corrugated surfaces.

It is necessary to travel on those roads to realise how quickly their condition changes. A grader may go over a road and put the surface in first-class order, and within weeks it becomes corrugated again with corrugations 18in. apart and almost as deep. I consider that when money has to be regularly spent on such work, it represents a waste. If funds were made available so that the local authorities could obtain suitable plant for bituminising, we would be making definite progress with the road plan that we so ardently desire in our country network.

Let me refer to the cost involved in obtaining machinery. The Norseman Road Board lodged an order for a very heavy grader, a D12, I believe. The board was unable to obtain immediate delivery and the cost has jumped from £2,000 to something in the region of £6,000. I believe that money not expended on the department's road programme should be made available to local authorities so that they might build up their equipment and thus be able to assist the department to get the roads into the condition we desire. It might be thought difficult to make the money available to the local authorities under these conditions. If there is any doubt in the minds of members on this score, I would refer them to a statement made by Mr. Fadden regarding the moneys allocated for roads. He said:—

Under present legislation two main grants are made to the States. One grant is for general road purposes, and the manner in which the grant is spent is a matter for the State Governments to decide. The State Governments may, at their discretion, themselves expend the money on roads or they may allocate any portion of the grant to local authorities for road purposes. The amount of that grant is estimated at £5,500,000 in 1949-50.

Under Section 6 (4) of the Commonwealth Aid Roads and Works Act, 1947-1949, provision is made for the payment of a special grant to the States each year for roads, other than main roads, in sparsely settled areas, timber country and rural areas or for the purchase of road-making plant for use in areas where the purchase of such plant is beyond the resources of local authorities. This special grant amounted to £1,000,000 in 1947-48, £2,000,000 in 1948-49 and £3,000,000 in the current financial year.

The State Governments may utilise this special grant themselves for purposes of secondary roads in the areas specified above or they may allocate a portion or whole of the grant to local authorities for expenditure on the secondary roads in question. It is known that this special grant has been of great assistance to local government authorities in these areas.

It will be appreciated, therefore, that the Commonwealth legislation is drafted in such a way as to permit the States to pass on Commonwealth roads grants to local authorities.

In view of the remarks I made earlier, I consider that to be most important. Mr. Fadden continued—

Decisions as to the distribution of these grants as between particular local authorities rest, however, with the State Governments. Representations by local authorities regarding the adequacy of roads grants which they receive should therefore be directed to the particular State Government responsible for their welfare.

I believe that if the Government would give consideration to making these moneys available, when the allocation for the year has not been expended, to the road boards I have mentioned—those in my area in particular, and no doubt there are others—it would mean that instead of the sometime proposed plant pool, the money could be put directly to the use of the road boards concerned to obtain their specific plant to do the particular job on this network of bituminised roads that we need. The question of the supply of tar or bitumen would probably arise, but I do not believe the difficulty there is as great as with that of obtaining bulk metal. But here again we have a board which on its own initiative invested in a rock-crushing plant, and it is actually supplying the Main Roads Department with metal. In another 12 months it will have completed its road programme in Kalgoorlie, and I have it on good authority that it will not know what to do with the plant apart from bituminising the small streets from kerb to kerb. One has to visit Kalgoorlie to see those small streets in order to realise what that means.

I want to touch on another subject which has exercised, and still is exercising, the minds of members in my district. Hon. E. Nulsen has pressed for this particular project for quite a long time, but has met with the same frustration as has every committee or member, in his efforts to obtain satisfactory results. I refer to bulk petrol installations at Esperance. We have a bulk installation at Geraldton, and that is the argument we advance in every instance against the refusal of the people concerned when they say there would not be sufficient consumption in the district, or that the area is not big enough to warrant it. If the area were extended to as far west as Southern Cross—because I understand that petrol can be supplied from Esperance to Southern Cross at a less cost than from Perth to Southern Cross—and to Leonora, Menzies and Laverton in the north, and taking in Kalgoorlie and Boulder and the district around Salmon Gums, a bulk installation would be justified.

When all that is taken into consideration, it cannot be denied that the argument seems very weak when they say that the consumption would not be sufficient to warrant the bulk installation. At the last conference of local governing bodies in Kalgoorlie this matter was brought up, and a small committee was formed to approach the Petroleum Advisory and Consultative Committee for the actual figures of consumption in the district mentioned, and figures on which we could again base an application for bulk installation. The point raised, and which I consider to be most important, was this: During the last war, when the east-west road was completed, the traffic began to treble on that highway and the great difficulty was the supply of fuel. The nearest point, as far as Western Australia was concerned, was Perth, where the bulk installation was.

The Eyre-highway goes within 120 miles of Esperance, and there is a railway from the port itself to Norseman. We believe that in the event of war in the near future—and it is something that cannot be overlooked—it would be of inestimable value to this State to have a bulk installation in the most southerly and protected port of Western Australia, and that bulk installation could, if necessary, supply the whole of our internal railway system to as far north as Leonora. I have the letter here which was submitted to the advisory committee, but I do not believe it would be of any help to this House to read it. However, I ask that when this matter does come before any member he give serious consideration to the points I have enumerated.

Another point I would like to mention whilst on this subject is that we are told that the cost would be prohibitive. I remind members that prohibitive cost is not stopping the petroleum companies from erecting another bulk installation tank, or tanks, in the Fremantle area at present. There is a man here now to do the job. We would feel delighted if that tank were being installed at Esperance; and it would not cost any more to erect there than at Fremantle. We say that would make petrol cheaper in our district. We do not like paying 1s. a gallon freight for petrol in Kalgoorlie, which is actually what we are told we are paying. It is 3s. in the metropolitan area, and 4s. at Kalgoorlie.

Hon. G. Bennetts: It would also save congestion on the main line railway.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Yes, and there is also a danger in transporting an inflammable substance through thickly populated areas. I intend to touch briefly on the housing question. At the present time in Kalgoorlie—a district I represent—I believe the housing problem is not as desperate as it is in the metropolitan area. However, we must look ahead to the almost inevitable expansion that must take place in Kalgoorlie when

trade and industries get rolling as they no doubt will. The housing target for the Government this year is in the vicinity of 5,000. I believe at present the number is around 4,500. This is an enormous increase on pre-war figures, and I must say that the departmental officers and the Government have been most co-operative as far as I am concerned in a scheme that we recently put forward for the erection in Kalgoorlie of a small type of worker's home. I am not calling it a worker's home in the Government scheme.

The plan we have in mind is the erection of three rooms of normal size which would be easily extended into a comfortable bungalow-type home. By cutting down all accessories and leaving them for erection by the man himself, we believe we can construct this type of house for about £560 and make it available to the man as his own home—not as a rental proposition. When he is prepared to extend the house, we will make available to him, ready cut, the necessary extensions to make the house of a size that will accommodate a larger family; and make them available to him at immediate cost. We were able to obtain the necessary land from the Lands Department, with the co-operation of the Minister. I believe that these houses will definitely be made available at our original figure of £560; and that is without expecting the Government to make available to us all locally manufactured material. A lot of the materials will be imported, but we still will be able to keep to the figure of £560. The first house, by the way, has been commenced and should be finished by the end of this month when it will be thrown open for inspection.

The Minister for Transport: What squarage will it be?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I cannot remember. It will have two main rooms of 12 x 12, a kitchen of 12 x 8, and what amounts to a verandah of 32 x 8 along one side. That verandah will contain the bathroom, laundry and a sleepout. The idea is that when the owner wants to extend he can build a similar verandah on the other side of the house and enclose it with louvres, and it will double the sleeping accommodation. The kitchen, lounge and bathroom need to be only the same size whether the family consists of three or five. The one extension that is needed is in connection with the sleeping accommodation. When the house is finished it will be seen to be a bungalow, which is ideal for the climate at Kalgoorlie.

Hon. G. Fraser: That would work out at only four or five squares at the most.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: In the basic design, yes, but it lends itself very easily to being extended so as to become a larger house.

Hon. G. Fraser: It is over £100 a square.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: That is cheaper than the Government can build. The cheapest that the Government is prepared to build in Kalgoorlie is £1,250, and that is far in excess of what the average man is prepared to pay there. I may be under-quoting, as a matter of fact, but I am keeping in mind figures I saw when Mr. Graham was there with the plans. The cheapest house was £1,250.

Hon. E. H. Gray: What size was that?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: About seven squares, I think. That is a dear house and not suitable in view of the fact that the average man in Kalgoorlie does not want to have to pay £1,250 for his home. The suggestion we have put forward is acceptable to the Government, and we are progressing as fast as we can in the matter. Much was said by one of the earlier speakers on the subject of milk.

Hon. E. H. Gray: What do you do with milk when it is watered?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: We are extremely concerned about the milk problem. At one time, before my interest in milk began—although I probably was interested in it in one way—there were nine or ten dairies in the Kalgoorlie and Boulder districts, but there are now about two left. That means that the people in that area are almost entirely dependent on the metropolitan area for fresh milk supplies. As happened last year, in the event of a sudden drop in the supply of milk, we are the first to suffer. At the time Perth supplies were reduced by 30 per cent. and those to the Goldfields were reduced by 60 per cent. That is rather a desperate situation. The milk that is forwarded from Perth in cans is pasteurised, but that precaution is nullified because the milk is then placed in a can with an ordinary cap which renders the supply more dangerous than it might have been before.

From time to time complaints have been made about the type of can used, which has a recess in the top in order to pull off the lid. There have been occasions when I have seen the milk cans packed in the railway wagons with other food on top of them including even carcasses of rabbits and crates of fish. In one instance there was a hole in the top of the can and body fluids from these carcasses had been dripping into it. This is not a general instance, but it is indicative of what we have had to contend with; and we consider that it is not good enough. As a result of such conditions the use of powdered milk on the Goldfields has greatly increased. I know of numbers of school children in Kalgoorlie and Boulder who prefer the mixed powdered milk to the fresh product.



Hon. G. Bennetts: I would not like to raise children on that fresh milk.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: As things are at present, we cannot raise them on powdered milk because the supplies are not regular enough, and periodically we have a shortage. About a month ago those in charge of the baby clinic in Kalgoorlie appealed through the local Press to those people who had surplus tins of powdered milk to bring them to the clinic for the mothers with babies who were desperately in need of it. All sorts of efforts were made to have supplies delivered to Kalgoorlie and special arrangements were made for it to be transported from Esperance. We had no other choice than to put up with the shortage of powdered milk for children and also for those who use it for every day purposes. I know that this is not the fault of suppliers in this State, but is probably due to the floods in the Eastern States. If we are to take notice of those in authority who have quoted estimates of our needs for the future, we shall be in a sorry plight if something is not done about the milk problem soon. Mr. Stannard estimated that an extra 5,000 gallons of milk would be needed daily next summer and a continued daily increase of 2,000 gallons would be needed each year. Further, if anything comes of the proposal to give school children their half pint of milk daily, that scheme is going to create even greater difficulties and shortages. It has been suggested that where fresh milk cannot be supplied in the outback districts, powdered milk will be used as a substitute. I am afraid the people on the Goldfields will be badly situated as to the supplies of both fresh milk and powdered milk.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: What about increased production?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: That is what I would like to see, but there is not much indication of it.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: I do not know.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Although I say that there is not much indication of it, I hope the Minister will give some intimation that my lack of knowledge is my own fault. The problem of vermin eradication is exercising the minds of people all over Western Australia and perhaps throughout the Commonwealth. In his Speech the Governor said that legislation will be submitted to give effect to many recommendations of the Royal Commission on Vermin. I trust that this legislation will be adequate and thorough. In the South-East Province we are cursed with most of the pests or vermin which various portions of the State have only singly.

Hon. H. Hearn: Members of Parliament, too?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Definitely I will deal with dingoes first. There is a path travelling westwards along the trans-continental railway where the dingoes feed on scraps from the trains until they strike a place which I think is called Coonana. There they strike south and congregate round the head of Lake Lefroy and Lake Cowan. That is where the females whelp. From there they split round the end of both these lakes with their young, continue down south and start their depredations through the Salmon Gums-Norseman-Esperance districts. One path of that migration then turns east again back through Fraser's Range, returning to the old hunting grounds. The other path turns west and north and goes up between Southern Cross and Coolgardie to the western districts. At the head of Lake Cowan one property owner employs two doggers who assist greatly in reducing the dingo danger. Another man, employed by the Government, has a roving commission over the whole district.

What concerns the Goldfields people is that when the dingo trapping campaign begins to make headway, the result will be an increase of rabbits because the dingo is their natural enemy. Foxes will multiply also but they are not so great a nuisance as are rabbits. The point that has been brought to my attention is that when the dingo trapping campaign is at its peak it will coincide with the development of centres in the Esperance district. Members who have not been there will be surprised to learn that a number of new holdings have been developed in that area. From Salmon Gums south along the main road clearing and fencing work is progressing.

There are now sufficient children of school age from Gibson's Soak to Esperance to warrant the running of a school bus, and there are some 30 or 40 children residing with their families within reasonable distance of the main road and the Education Department is now considering a suggestion for the commencement of a school bus service. If the vermin eradication campaign can be made to follow some pattern no doubt some good will come of it but, knowing the depredations which rabbits cause, I feel certain we shall be faced with the same problems that have been experienced elsewhere, resulting in farmers being driven from their properties.

Hon. G. Bennetts: It is pretty bad now.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: And we are still paying 4s. a head for rabbit carcasses brought from the Eastern States for food! At the conference of local bodies which I have mentioned, a question—it had been submitted by another conference further south—was raised as to some form of vermin eradication committee being set up to assist the Government by every means possible with its activities, and I

trust that some good will come of that. It is realised that the Government is faced with great expenditure for the eradication of vermin, which expenditure is continuing to increase. Another pest which is causing the greatest concern year after year is the grasshopper. In the Southern Cross area about this time the grasshoppers are beginning to be active. Under the heading of vermin eradication I consider that grasshoppers take first place.

The Government has spent thousands of pounds already on their eradication and, unfortunately, it will be forced to spend many more thousands. I have some figures obtained from other countries showing just what grasshoppers can mean in money and loss to the nation when they get out of hand. I have here a publication issued by the Agricultural Research Administration in America, which states—

For 20 years grasshoppers have been an annual 32-million-dollar menace to American agriculture. Since 1927, principally in the western two-thirds of the nation, they have destroyed food and feed crops worth more than 656 million dollars. At their biggest feast on record, in 1936, they gobbled up 102 million dollars in crops. In North Dakota alone, in 1933, they cost the farmer 25½ million dollars. These are the losses in dollars. In addition, grasshopper damage to range and pasture in some years amounts to unknown millions of dollars in lost feed and enforced sale of breeding stock and unfinished meat animals.

On top of this, of course, is the danger of soil erosion on land laid waste by the grasshopper. We have tracts of land, probably not as large as those mentioned in the American publication, between Southern Cross and Merredin that are ideally situated for the hatcheries of the grasshoppers. The insects have been there for years and probably because of the fact that it is a native pest and not imported like the rabbit, they have not spread to other districts as one might fear. In connection with the imported pest the usual procedure is to go to the country where it came from, locate its natural enemy and bring supplies back to the State so that one might destroy the other. Unfortunately, in some instances the killer has become the pest.

As regards the grasshopper we are not in a position to follow that procedure. Years before areas were developed and paddocks cleared, the grasshoppers were thriving there. Their feeding grounds were along the sides of roads, on football fields and so on. As the land became cleared there were parts under stubble and other portions semi-cleared that were ideal for the grasshoppers. Thus we are faced with the position that the danger of the pest increasing in virulence lies in our own

activities, and that covers also land that was once cleared but is no longer cared for. Such areas become the natural hatcheries for the increased population of the hoppers.

Experiments in dealing with the pest have been made in other countries, but it is a matter of pride to know that in Western Australia the department concerned is not only up to date in its methods but in some respects its experiments are leading other countries. Naturally, information on the subject is exchanged by the departments of the countries concerned. I understand that in America, up to at any rate 1947, the main method of treatment—this is quite apart from any experimental work undertaken—consisted of the usual baiting. We have our own baiting system here, and while it has by no means proved perfect it has accomplished much—and that applies to America as well.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Road boards in our district do not think the methods are effective, but regard them as a waste of public money.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: That may be so, but have they given a lead to the Government in any direction?

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Which road boards?

Hon. G. Bennetts: The Yilgarn Road Board is one.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: The fact is undisputed that bran baiting is still the method by which the most positive results are obtained. I believe the poison used in tests being made at present is gamixane. In America up to 1947 sodium fluosilicate was used. However, that poison was dropped for what they considered better mixtures of toxaphene or chlordane. Last year we found that the shortage in supplies of bran limited our activities in dealing with grasshoppers by means of poisoned baits.

I notice from Press reports published recently that this year that shortage will probably not be felt. I do not know whether it is true, but I understand that ample supplies of bran are now available. I trust that is so because bran constitutes a factor that will greatly add to the effective use of baits. I interested myself in the matter of getting a substitute in view of the shortage of bran, and I found that the bait could be considerably increased in bulk without lessening the toxic value by using large quantities of sawdust. In this State experiments have been carried on with the use of sawdust in the mixture of 25 lb. of bran with three times that bulk of sawdust and the necessary poison added.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: That was only because we could not get enough bran.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Quite so. The point is that bran has been in short supply in the past and we have ample supplies of sawdust that is going to waste in every town of any size in Western Australia. If we could use that sawdust it would keep down the cost of experiments, particularly in connection with the dropping of bait from the air. Recent experiments with the use of an aeroplane, although quite successful as far as the treatment of the pest was concerned, were found to be a little more expensive than distribution by mechanical means on the ground. I do not know if the excess cost was because of the expenditure upon the hire of the plane.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: The difficulty was the wastage.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: If it is a matter of wastage, I suggest that the ample use of sawdust would not make the wastage so important.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: What about the ingredients mixed with the sawdust?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: It would mean the use of half a pound of chlordane or 1 lb. of toxaphene mixed with the bran.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: The wastage occurred in spraying over places where there were no grasshoppers.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I have the suggested formula for the use of sawdust and it is as follows:—

Mill-run bran—25lb.  
Sawdust, three times the volume of  
bran—3½ bushels.  
Chlordane—½ lb.  
or  
Toxaphene—1lb.  
or  
Sodium fluosilicate—6lb.  
Water, to make a moist, crumbly  
mash—10-12 gal.

I suggest that if the wastage factor made the aerial distribution of bran baits too costly, the bran could be cut out and more than 3½ bushels of sawdust used. In that event, if there were wastage because there was too wide a distribution, the cost would be greatly minimised. I trust the Minister will have something to say on this subject. I am not endeavouring to create problems for him; frankly, I admit I am in his corner.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: I am always anxious to get advice.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I am open to be corrected on the point, but I think the spreading of the mixture is roughly worked out at about 20 lb. per acre. I do not know what the cost would work out at if we used gamixane. However, I do not think the cost would be so prohibitive if it obtained results. Over such a large area as I have mentioned,

I believe it would be possible to do the baiting from the air so that it would give the results desired, despite the wastage in areas where grasshoppers were not breeding. The area treated in America by this method was in excess of 2,000,000 acres.

The time factor for the baiting is most important. If the poison is spread at the wrong time, the insects will not take the bait, which must be spread when the insects are actually ready to feed. I would certainly like the Minister to comment on this question if he will. Has the treatment so far used been with wet bait or with dry bait, using the same poisons in each instance? Those poisons are soluble in organic fluids such as kerosene and fuel oil. The beauty of the dry baiting method is that the bait can be mixed and stored away for a long period prior to use without the poisons losing any of their toxicity. By this means the bait could be mixed by mechanical means at a central point and sent to the various districts where it was to be used and it could be stored there and spread at the proper time. On the other hand, wet bait must be used almost as soon as it is mixed. It cannot be stored for any length of time.

I trust that when the Government, or the department, is to engage in any further tests or experiments in this connection, members representing the districts concerned will be informed so that they may witness the operations. I was able to see the experiments that were carried out by the use of an aeroplane near Guildford some time ago, and I was most interested because I had been actively engaged in a similar procedure in New Guinea when D.D.T. was sprayed. I was rather disappointed when it was decided that the experiments were not so entirely successful as to warrant undertaking any further works on a large scale by means of aeroplanes.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: You can come and see the fog-making machine in operation when we try it out.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I will certainly accept that invitation in due course. I had hoped to obtain some further information from the department before addressing members on this subject, but, owing to circumstances partly beyond my control, I had to proceed with my speech without obtaining the details I desired in order to carry the matter further. I trust that what I have said will encourage the Minister to make available to members concerned particulars regarding the times of future experiments and any information at his disposal.

My next few remarks will be something in the nature of an appeal to the more experienced members of this House. I frankly do not know what I can do about the matter I have in mind; but if this House or any member can do something

about it, I for one will be deeply grateful. I refer to the income tax that was paid by the first batch of discharged servicemen from the Middle East. They were almost invariably men who had seen the longest and roughest service. They were the first to enlist and the first to come back and be discharged; and among them were members of the Services who had suffered serious war injuries and had been discharged for that reason. At the time of their discharge many of them were immediately faced with a large account from the Taxation Department for arrears of taxation. Those who had some sense of responsibility and wanted to settle down and make a new start paid the tax.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: That was taxation on income earned before they joined the Services?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Yes. The men to whom I have referred paid the tax, but those who shilly-shalied and refrained from paying were ultimately relieved of the responsibility. As many members of this House will know, at a later stage discharged servicemen did not have to pay arrears of taxation incurred prior to their enlistment. The number of men involved in this matter would not be very great. To the Commonwealth Government the sum involved would not be very large, but to the men concerned it is a big thing. Some of the accounts were for £40 or £50; and as I have said, some men paid up but those who avoided their responsibility at the time ultimately enjoyed the amnesty to which I have referred and did not have to pay the amount owing. Several men have approached me with a view to seeing what could be done. I have written to the Taxation Department here but I received no answer. Probably other members have had similar queries put to them. I believe something can be done about the matter but exactly what I do not know.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: Has the R.S.L. taken action?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I do not know. I am raising the matter for the consideration of members to see whether something can be thought of or done for these men, because those who were away in the Services and showed a willingness to accept their responsibilities and make a good start in the life again were actually penalised for that sentiment, while those who avoided their responsibility were ultimately rewarded for their dodging and were not forced to pay the amounts owing. A refund of those sums could very easily be granted, I believe, if a right approach were made.

Hon. G. Bennetts: I suggest that the R.S.L. be approached.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I will have a talk with the hon. member later about the matter. I would like to say a few words about the mining industry. In my district we are interested not only in gold but also in pyrites. Some time ago a committee was formed to investigate the possibility of using greater quantities of local pyrites in the manufacture of superphosphate. We know that the manufacturers of superphosphate are not particularly enamoured of the idea. They prefer to use imported sulphur, and many reasons have been advanced for that preference. However, figures show that despite the claims of the manufacturers that ultimately the cost would be greater to the farmer, the suppliers of pyrites claim that if they were in full production they could definitely supply their commodity at a figure that would make superphosphate available more cheaply when manufactured from pyrites than when manufactured from imported sulphur.

I do not know what became of the committee. I believe some activity was undertaken, because when I spoke to the manager of the mine concerned he said that some advancement had been made but of late very little had been heard from the committee. If we could get some information as to what is being done in this regard I would appreciate it very much indeed, because this is an industry that could be of great benefit to the southern portion of our State. At Koolyanobbing there is a deposit of iron ore which is being carted by road 30 miles to Southern Cross. It has a very high percentage of iron and the pig-iron being turned out at Wundowie from it is of excellent quality. Recently I was there and saw many ingots of this metal produced, and the hope was expressed that ultimately Koolyanobbing would supply a very large quantity of ore, warranting an increase in the size of the plant at Wundowie.

At present the ore has either to be brought entirely by road from Koolyanobbing to Wundowie or else taken into Southern Cross and then loaded on to railway trucks. I do not like to suggest this to the Minister as something that should definitely be done, but I believe that if Koolyanobbing is of such importance to this State as it appears it may well be, the installation of 30 miles of railway line to obviate double handling would be well worth while. I suggest to the Minister that inquiries be made into the possible life of the Koolyanobbing supply to see whether it would warrant the installation of that railway line.

The goldmining industry is at present enjoying a brief breathing spell from the crushing burden of costs that was slowly killing it owing to the alteration in the value of the pound. Nevertheless, hanging over its head like a sword is the fear that

if there is a further devaluation, the industry will be worse off than it was several months ago.

Hon. G. Fraser: Have a word with your friend Bob!

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I have a lot of faith in Bob. I hope the fear that is experienced at present will prove to be ill-founded. However, this thing can happen and we are fearful of what will occur if it does take place. I believe that the present time is ideal for such an event so far as the agricultural industry is concerned, and it would not mean ruination for farmers. No doubt they would oppose the move. It would lead to a reduction of their returns but the industry could well stand that. The goldmining industry, however, would be ruined, and we do not want that to happen.

Hon. A. L. Loton: You are only speaking for yourself.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Of course I am! Although I am not a mine-owner I must speak for the district I represent—if the hon. member will permit me. That is my job.

Hon. G. Bennetts: The goldmining industry has brought the State out of two depressions.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: It will get it out of another one, too. Another point to which I wish to refer is the shortage of water. I give full credit to the Minister and to the Government for the way in which the work of trying to obviate that shortage on the Goldfields year after year is being pushed ahead. The new dam at No. 8 Pumping Station is going ahead by leaps and bounds and the duplication of the line in another section is progressing. We hope that as a result we will not again have to suffer a shortage in Kalgoorlie and see our fruit trees and lawns die out. In this case I am speaking for myself.

Hon. G. Bennetts: That is only a four days' supply.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: It may be, but at present we have not even that four days' supply. I hope the Government will be impressed with its value and that in due course there will be a duplication of the dam on the other side of Southern Cross. I support the motion.

On motion by Hon. H. S. W. Parker, debate adjourned.

#### ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

**THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT**  
(Hon. C. H. Simpson—Midland): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday, the 15th August.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 6.13 p.m.

## Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 9th August, 1950.

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

#### QUESTIONS.

##### CHANDLER ALUNITE WORKS.

(a) As to Acquisition of Machinery and Equipment.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

(1) Did anyone on behalf of the board of management or the Government acquire any machinery, tools, apparatus, equipment, appliances, fittings and/or materials for use at the Chandler works subsequent to the 16th November, 1949? If so, by whom, and for what purpose was such machinery, etc., acquired?

(2) Was such machinery, etc., obtained with the knowledge and approval of the Minister for Industrial Development?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) A complete milling unit was purchased from Wiluna for installation at the Swan Portland Cement Company's works,