

AYES.	
Mr. Abbott	Mr. McDonald
Mr. Ackland	Mr. McLarty
Mr. Bovell	Mr. Murray
Mrs. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Doney	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Seward
Mr. Hall	Mr. Watts
Mr. Hill	Mr. Wild
Mr. Leslie	Mr. Yates
Mr. Mann	Mr. Brand

(Teller.)

NOES.	
Mr. Brady	Mr. McCulloch
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Needham
Mr. Fox	Mr. Oliver
Mr. Graham	Mr. Pantou
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Reynolds
Mr. Hegney	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Styants
Mr. Kelly	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Triat
Mr. May	Mr. Rodoreda

(Teller.)

PAIRS.	
AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Thorn	Mr. Wise
Mr. N. Keenan.	Mr. Smith

Question thus passed; the motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE PREMIER (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray-Wellington): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 7.30 p.m.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 10.18 a.m. (Thursday).

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 8th September, 1949.

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The **SPEAKER** took the Chair at 7.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.

LOCOMOTIVES, ENGLISH PURCHASES.

As to Engineer to Inspect.

Mr. **STYANTS** asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Is it a fact that the Railway Department has obtained the services of an engineer, outside the State Railways, to inspect and report on locomotives to be purchased in England?

(2) Is this engineer to become a member of the permanent staff, and if so, what classification will he hold?

(3) If he is not to be a member of the permanent staff, what are the conditions of his employment?

(4) In view of the recommendation made by the Royal Commission and agreed to by him (see "Hansard" of the 3rd August, 1948) why is the opportunity to obtain overseas experience denied to local administrative officers?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) No.

(3) The conditions of engagement have still to be determined.

(4) While it is the department's policy to give its local staff the opportunity to acquire oversea experience, shortage of professional officers within the department, which has been accentuated by the recent unfortunate deaths of senior officers, has rendered this impracticable at present.

RAILWAYS.

(a) *As to Water Haulage.*

Mr. STYANTS asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) How many million gallons of water were hauled by the Railway Department (because of climatic conditions) for the 12 months ended the 31st July, 1949?

(2) How much of this water was directly used for railway purposes?

(3) What were the other purposes for which the remainder was used?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) 103,650,000 gallons.

(2) 101,400,000 gallons.

(3) Stock and domestic purposes

(b) *As to Freight on Bread, Menzies-Goongarrie.*

Mr. OLIVER (without notice) asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Is he aware that the freight on a loaf of bread is sixpence from Menzies to Goongarrie, a distance of approximately 20 miles?

(2) In view of the fact that the bread is mostly carried for aged pensioners, will he give consideration to reducing the freight?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) and (2) I am not aware of the fact stated by the hon. member, but if he will bring the matter to my notice later I will take steps to see whether the charge can be rectified.

CO-OPERATIVE BULK HANDLING LTD.

As to Bunbury Agreement.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN asked the Minister for Lands:

(1) Has any agreement yet been made between the Government and Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. concerning the taking over by the latter of the State's bulk wheat handling terminal at Bunbury as from the 1st October, 1947?

(2) Will he table the agreement?

(3) If an agreement has not yet been finalised, when is it expected that the matter will be completed?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No.

(2) Yes, as soon as finalised.

(3) The papers were sent to the Crown Law Department for final preparation of the agreement, but are at present held up pending agreement to a minor amendment to the draft. The matter will be finalised as quickly as possible.

EDUCATION.

As to New School, Baker's Hill.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE asked the Minister for Works:

When is it intended to commence work on constructing the proposed new school at Baker's Hill?

The MINISTER replied:

It is proposed to call tenders in about six weeks.

WATER SUPPLY, WEST NORTHAM.

As to Amenities for Workers.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE asked the Minister for Works:

Does the Government intend to provide any large scale amenities this year for the men employed at the West Northam Water Supply Depot?

The MINISTER replied:

Plans have been prepared for construction of a modern depot at Northam, including an amenities block.

Construction is delayed owing to the housing priority.

HOSPITALS.

As to Regional, Northam.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE asked the Minister for Health:

(1) Does the Government intend to establish a regional hospital at Northam?

(2) If so—

(a) is the proposed hospital to be a completely new building?

(b) Have the plans been drawn?

(3) When is the actual work of construction likely to commence?

The MINISTER replied:

(1), (2) and (3) The Hospital Planning Committee set up by the Willcock Government recommended that Northam should be a regional hospital, and the hospital facilities at that centre are being increased from time to time. No consideration has been given to any further hospital buildings for Northam.

HOUSING.

As to Rental Homes, Baker's Hill.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE asked the Minister for Housing:

When are tenders likely to be called for the building of the six rental homes approved for Baker's Hill district?

The MINISTER replied:

Contracts will be let when suitable land has been acquired. Inquiries are now being made regarding the acquisition of certain blocks with services available.

TIMBER INDUSTRY.

(a) As to Amenities for Workers.

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

Has anything further been done towards providing amenities for the timber workers of the State?

The MINISTER replied:

Following on the conference called some little time ago under the chairmanship of the Conservator of Forests, I have now communicated with the Sawmillers' Association and asked it to set up a committee of the Association for the purpose of preparing a plan for the progressive improvement, as far as practicable, of amenities for the timber workers.

(b) As to Increased Price for Timber.

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

Is it a fact that millowners have received a considerably increased price for timber?

The MINISTER replied:

It is a fact that following on increases in prices the sawmillers have received an increased price, which I understand was considerably less than the amount for which they made representations.

BILL—INCREASE OF RENT (WAR RESTRICTIONS) ACT AMENDMENT (No. 4).

Council's Further Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it no longer insisted on its further amendment to which the Assembly had disagreed.

BILL—FISHERIES ACT AMENDMENT.

Third Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR FISHERIES (Hon. A. V. R. Abbott—North Perth) [7.37]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

MR. FOX (South Fremantle) [7.38]: I move an amendment—

That all the words after "That" be struck out and the words "the third reading of the Bill be postponed until after the receipt of the report of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the fishing industry" inserted in lieu.

I think no harm at all will be done by holding over the Bill until next session. We do not know what the proposed license fees for boats are to be and we should have some idea of the amounts. I asked the Minister to let the House know approximately what the fees would be. Surely he should be able to give us that information. I am greatly concerned on the point, especially when we contrast the little help given to the fishing industry with the assistance given to other industries, such as the farming industry, in connection with the carriage of superphosphate and so on. Very little assistance is given to the fishing industry in any shape or form in comparison with that given to other industries. They are a struggling lot, with the exception of those fishing for crayfish.

I can understand the Minister getting a little extra out of those who are making very large sums from the crayfishing industry, but those who go out fishing with lines or nets have a very hard life and we should give them a little assistance instead of trying to get everything we possibly can out of them.

Mr. Graham: They should reduce their price too.

Mr. FOX: I do not know. Fish may be dear. Snap-frozen whiting from Albany costs 4s. a lb., but it is very good. I do not think we could get a better article anywhere.

Mr. Graham: The price is high.

Mr. FOX: Yes; 4s. is high. We may be able to have that reduced if the Minister will wait until we have received the report of the Royal Commission on the fishing industry. There may be something in that report that will have a bearing on the price of fish, as well as on the cost of licenses. I have spoken to many fishermen and they are very much concerned about the license fees. The least the Minister could do would be to indicate the approximate amounts likely to be charged. It is all very well for him to say that he does not know. Any Minister in charge of a department such as this should be in close enough touch with his officers to be able to tell us to within a pound or so the amount to be charged for any specific license. If the Minister is not able to do that, he should not be in the position he holds. I hope that if the Minister replies to the debate he will give us some indication of the fees likely to be imposed.

The fishermen are very perturbed about the license fees to be charged. If they are going to be high, they may be the means of diverting the whole of the fishing fleet into the catching of crays, and the people will be without fish altogether. Another ship is likely to enter the trawling industry in the South-West. I do not know what the Minister will charge a trawler which is engaged in fishing and brings in 20 to 30 tons of fish, or whether we would be justified in charging higher fees when the people concerned are prepared to invest a lot of money in the industry and to undertake deep sea fishing. Such enterprises may be the means of bringing down the price of fish.

For those reasons I am not anxious to see the third reading carried. The Minister has been hasty in bringing down the Bill. It could have been held over until next session, when we would have had the report of the Royal Commission which has done such a tremendous amount of work. I am sure that when that report is read, it will be found to contain a large amount of information which should be of great help to the Minister and the department in arriving at a decision as to what should be a fair price to charge for the licensing of these boats.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member's amendment is not in order, though on the second reading it may have been. I would draw his attention to Standing Orders 304 and 305, which read as follows:—

304. On the Order of the Day being read for the third reading of a Bill, the question shall be put, "That this Bill be now read a third time".

305. Amendments may be moved to such question leaving out "Now", and adding "This day three months", "six months", or any other time, or the question may be negatived, or the previous question moved.

Mr. FOX: Then I will alter my amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member has already spoken. Does he want to move another amendment?

Mr. FOX: I want to alter my amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER: What does the hon. member want to do?

Mr. FOX: I wish to withdraw the amendment and move another.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. FOX: I move an amendment—

That the word "now" be struck out with a view to inserting the words, "this day three months" in lieu.

THE MINISTER FOR FISHERIES
(Hon. A. V. R. Abbott—North Perth—on amendment) [7.45]: I cannot agree to the amendment. I have already told members that any proposed scale of license fees—there is no question of fines; it is purely a question of license fees—will be submitted to the fisheries advisory committee before being implemented. There is a fishermen's representative on that committee. I fully appreciate the hon. member's feeling for

fishermen at Fremantle who are not operating on a large scale, and I can assure him that that will be taken into consideration. In the same way, those engaged in crayfishing on a large scale will probably have to pay a higher license fee than others.

Hon. A. A. M. Coverley: Do you think that the person in this morning's cartoon, with a crayfish attached to him, had any reference to the member for Geraldton?

The MINISTER FOR FISHERIES: No, I do not. I hope the amendment will not be agreed to.

HON. A. H. PANTON (Leederville—on amendment) [7.47]: I do not know that there is any fishing in my electorate, except at Lake Monger, but I think the proposition put forward by the member for South Fremantle is reasonable. It is rather a pity the Government introduced the Bill in this way. This is the second time during the session that something of the sort has happened. We had a motion on the notice paper having relation to the dual position of President of the Arbitration Court and Judge of the Supreme Court; and before anything was decided, the Attorney General introduced a Bill to amend the Supreme Court Act in that connection. I took exception to that procedure at the time. In view of the fact that a Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the fishing industry and we are now awaiting its report, the Government would be well advised to read that report before taking action. It is not much good appointing a Royal Commission if we are going to rush in with legislation while awaiting its report. That report may suggest quite a different approach to this question from that proposed in the Bill.

The Bill provides for certain license fees. I do not think the Treasury will feel the effects very much—if so, we can go to the Grants Commission and obtain a reimbursement—if the fees are not levied for another three or six months. A postponement of the Bill for three months is not long enough. I would sooner the period were made six months. In view of the fact that we are awaiting the report of the Royal Commission, the Government would be well advised to hold up the Bill until that report has been submitted.

The Minister for Fisheries: Any suggestion in the report as to license fees could be implemented.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: I do not see how, if the fees are set out in this Bill.

The Minister for Fisheries: The fees are not set out in the Bill.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: That is the trouble. That is what we are growling about.

The Minister for Fisheries: They could be implemented by regulations.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: There is no harm in asking for the Bill to be postponed.

MR. KELLY (Yilgarn-Coolgardie—on amendment) [7.49]: There is disappointment on the part of members who anticipated that the Minister would be amenable to reason during the second reading discussion and the Committee stage of this Bill. I think he could have been reasonable. He still has time to atone for his unreasonable attitude in the earlier stages of the discussion on the Bill. As the previous speakers have pointed out, there will undoubtedly be in the commission's report, without anticipating it at all because of the vast amount of information obtained, some reference to the matter of license fees. If the matter were stood over for a little while, it would not hamper the Minister. He has given an assurance that the fishermen will have nothing to be scared of in regard to a higher license fee, or one above their capacity to pay. If, as a result, we need not be concerned, I still think that so little would accrue to the Treasury that it would not matter if this were deferred for a while. The Minister could reconsider his decision and allow the Bill to stand over for some three or six months.

MR. LESLIE (Mt. Marshall—on amendment) [7.52]: It is impossible at this stage for any individual member of the House, or of the Commission, to anticipate any specific recommendation which may be included in its report. As has been said, very comprehensive inquiries were made into the fishing industry. I think it will be shown, as a result, that the ramifications are much wider and have a bigger impact on the economy of the State than is generally realised. It is a matter of regret that some of

the members of the Commission, at least, did not have an opportunity of seeing the set-up in the other States. Because of the lack of the opportunity, the information has had to be obtained by lengthy and more protracted means. Whatever the Commission's report might contain with regard to licensing, I very much doubt whether it will mention any particular rate or rates. It might suggest that the present license fees are either too high or too low, but I doubt if it would lay down a specific scale of charges.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Neither do the proposed regulations.

Mr. LESLIE: The report could recommend a maximum charge for a particular type of boat, and a minimum charge, and the scale to be fixed in between, but the actual fees would have to be fixed by regulation. I can see no other method. The report could indicate that the present license fees may have been keeping worthy men out of the industry, or that the fees are too low, so that some fishermen are indulging in practices which are detrimental to the industry. Those factors could be taken into consideration. As I see the position, I am wholeheartedly in sympathy with the objective of assisting the fisherman, which is in the minds of the member for South Fremantle and the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie. I agree that the fisherman, because of the hazardous nature of his industry and the uncertainty of his return, is entitled to every bit of assistance we can give him. But we are concerned with the position as it is at the present moment. The report might contain recommendations in connection with the welfare of the industry in the future, but at the moment we are dealing with the situation of the industry as it exists now.

I think the Government is quite entitled to make regulations to meet the present circumstances. As I see it, we have to ask ourselves: Is it desirable at the moment for the Government to have the right to make alterations to the license fees? I can see no objection to that. It might be necessary to lower them, or it might be necessary to raise them. I personally believe there are some cases where they should be lowered. On the other hand, I think there are some circumstances which will permit of an increase. That would be so where it could be shown that the fishermen are definitely receiving a

benefit as a result of the activities of the department. If the license fees are related to the cost of the industry, that fact must also be taken into consideration. I suggest the Bill should go through. There is no definite understanding that the fees are going to be raised to any specific amount. If the fishermen find that the licenses are beyond their capacity to pay, then they can approach the department or the Government, and prove their case.

HON. A. A. M. COVERLEY (Kimberley—on amendment) [7.58]: The Minister would be wise to accept the amendment. When speaking on the second reading of the Bill I said I did not like government by regulation, and that if the Bill were passed the possibility was that the fees would be imposed by regulation; and if they were too high, or unsatisfactory in any other way, the fishermen would have to wait for some eight months before they could take any action. That is so because it will be about that period before this House will have an opportunity to object to any such regulations. It would not have done any harm if the Minister had conferred with the fishermen's advisory committee. I hope he will agree to the amendment.

Amendment put and negatived.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1949-50.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the 6th September; Mr. Perkins in the Chair.

Vote—Education, £1,852,311:

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. A. F. Watts—Katanning) [8.0]: Mr. Chairman, it gives me considerable pleasure to introduce the Estimates for the Department of Education for the year 1949-50, as I believe the year just past and the year now current will both show considerable development—particularly in certain aspects—in the activities of the department. I wish to pay a tribute at this stage, for fear that I should omit to do so later, to the departmental officers and staff of the Education Department. As to the former, with whom of

course the Minister is more closely in contact as a rule, I say without hesitation that they have given of their best in an effort to combat and overcome the difficulties with which the department has been faced and to improve the conditions and make the work of the Education Department really worthwhile.

Members are probably aware that in the middle of last year the Director of Education, Mr. Little, travelled to Europe and the United States of America. In the course of his journeyings, which lasted for about 10 months, he also attended the U.N.E.S.C.O. conference and, I believe, took a considerable part in certain of the deliberations of that conference. As a result of that he returned to Western Australia and to his duties, about three months ago, with a considerable amount of information and with that broadening of experience that naturally follows from contact with other parts of the world, over a reasonable period, no matter how well informed an individual may have been before he started on his journey.

I understand that it is Mr. Little's intention shortly to present a report upon his inquiries and investigations, together with suggestions for improvements in the trend of education in this State, derived from the information he gathered oversea. I have no doubt that that document will be a very valuable one and will contain much that over a period—I do not suppose for one moment that it can be done immediately, or in one lump—can be adopted with advantage to the educational system of this State, although I have reason to believe that our system compares at present, as indeed it has for some time, reasonably well with those of other places where greater and less scattered population, together with other factors, are more amenable to the better development of such a system.

Mr. Styants: Will that report be printed?

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That is a question to which I will give consideration. Offhand, and not having considered it until now, I think it would be a good idea. In the absence of Mr. Little, Mr. T. S. Edmondson, Superintendent of Primary Education, acted as director, and during that considerable period gave very valuable service to this State. As to the teaching staff, I believe their services—as is

only to be expected of a professional body of men and women of that kind—have been of a high order in their several capacities. I feel we are all indebted to them for the efforts they have made during the year, in many cases under circumstances not entirely those that one would wish to see.

The expenditure for 1948-49 was £1,759,635. Salaries accounted for £1,368,882 and other expenditure for £390,753. The estimated expenditure for this year is considerably higher, the figure being £1,852,311. That increase follows on considerable increases in the two previous years. It is expected that salaries will account for £1,430,000 and incidental expenses for £431,000. The total estimated increase is £102,676, the increase for salaries being £61,634 and that for other expenditure £41,042. The salary increases are due primarily to the following causes: liability for the payment of higher rates under the Public Service Appeal Board award, promotion in position and classification of teachers as provided by certain regulations, some easement of the restrictions hitherto operating in regard to the granting of long service leave, extension of special school activities, payment of higher salaries to entrants to the service, higher allowances to Teachers' College students and higher salaries and wages costs resulting from adjustments due to basic wage increases.

It is hoped, by the granting of six months' long service leave to 100 teachers in February next, to make up the leeway, occasioned by the war, of accumulated leave rights, and subsequently to permit of the maximum number of teachers being granted leave, having regard to prevailing staff requirements. This matter is one that has been given considerable thought by the officers of the department entrusted with that work. It was obviously necessary that some attempt should be made to square up the long service leave difficulties, as the accumulations were reaching 12 months in a number of cases, and so this arrangement, as I have said, has now been made. The position is that 450 teachers are eligible for six months' long service leave and approval has been given to the conservation, up to 12 months, of leave rights in favour of teachers approaching the retiring age, so that they may take their

leave immediately prior to retirement and obviate, as far as possible, interruption of the department's service.

It is thought that the contemplated action will both serve the department and satisfy reasonably the desires of those concerned. During the year the salaries paid to monitors have been increased above the rates prescribed by the award, as a result of which, and with the assistance being rendered by the staffs of high schools in encouraging recruitment to the service, it is hoped that a larger number of monitors will be enrolled in the department's ranks than has hitherto been the case. I discussed this matter with the Director recently and I think there is evidence in his possession that that will be the result.

I have some information about the Teachers' Training College which I think might, with advantage, be conveyed to members. For the year 1949 there are 416 trainees at the Teachers' Training College. That compares with the 1948 figures of 434 and 1947 of 363. So that up to this year the number of trainees has, in the last three years, been reasonably well maintained. The training college was never meant—as an inspection of it by members would show—to accommodate such very substantial numbers. It was, I should say as a rough guess, originally contemplated to have accommodation for not exceeding 150. The fact that these very large numbers have, in recent years, been satisfactorily handled by the principal and his staff with extremely creditable results, would indicate, without further evidence, the very valuable work being performed by those people.

I also have with me the figures of the number of trainees at the training college for the pre-war years. These figures were supplied to me by officers of the department and naturally I do not intend to touch upon the war years because they would be quite out of place in the circumstances. In 1935 there were 161 trainees, in 1936 there were 146 trainees; in 1937 there were 153 trainees and in 1938 there were 151 trainees, while in 1939 the number was 150 trainees. Of those a number took only the six months' course. The total for the five years was 761 trainees, of which 235 took the six months' course and 526 the 12 months' course. The figures for 1947—363—in-

cluded 347 on the two year course and 16 on the one year course. The figure for 1948—434—included 19 on the one year course and 415 on the two year course. For 1949 the total of 416 included 18 on the one year course and 398 on the two year course. Therefore it would be quite apparent that in the more recent years the number of trainees at the training college is very much more substantial than those in the five pre-war years.

It is quite clear that strenuous efforts are being made to maintain and improve, where possible, the staffing position and to attract young people into the service on the one hand by increasing salaries paid to monitors and on the other by progressive increases in the allowances paid to trainees. At present those allowances are £150 for trainees living away from home and £115, I think, for trainees living at home as compared with £100 and £70 respectively as operated in 1947. Careful inquiry was made into the question of what should be paid at the last increase and the figures applicable to the other States of the Commonwealth, particularly New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland were gone into. Our figures compare more than favourably with the maximum figures ruling in those particular States, to which I think we have to pay some regard, having in mind the calculations of the Grants Commission.

There is no doubt that the education profession still offers, not only from the aspect of the important work that it does for the youth of the country, and consequently for its future citizens, but also from the point of view of the prospects, quite an attractive avocation. There will be a wider field in the teaching profession, because of the steady expansion that must take place and the immediate need for additional numbers, than is likely to be the case in other professions such as, say, engineering. While that profession, and others, might at the moment offer some more lucrative opportunities, they will not have the firm foundation such as that upon which the teaching profession is based.

•Hon. A. H. Panton: Have you any idea of the proportion of females to males?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Not in the trainees but I have the proportion for those in the department. From memory I think that the males are two and

the females three out of every five and therefore it is quite probable that the figures for the trainees are something the same.

Hon. A. H. Panton: I was wondering whether the wastage through marriage would be comparable with that of the nurses.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: There have been, in recent years, more males than normally. That has resulted from the large numbers of C.R.T.S. trainees but, of course, their numbers are dwindling rapidly and it is expected that with very few of these trainees coming forward there will be about 300 only in the college next year. However, it is not now possible to give reliable figures because the final inquiries are not made until the end of the calendar year. I mentioned earlier that special education was occasioning some expenditure for additional staff and among the items that are being covered by them is, for example, the teaching of Balt children for which two teachers have been undergoing a course of occupational training. It is anticipated that there will be a number of them completing their course very shortly. The Rubella classes, of course, have been maintained. There are now at Victoria Park two teachers, Cottesloe two, Highgate one and Boulder one.

Special classes for retarded children are in operation, as before, at Highgate, Beaconsfield Infants', Thomas-street, Fremantle Boys' and Princess May schools. During the year representations were made on behalf of the spastic children, they being the children, of course, who have suffered gravely from what I believe is known as cerebral palsy. Considerable activity has taken place in the department in an effort to commence something for the assistance of these children, particularly all those who are eligible, and who I understand, constituted a substantial number of them. Mr. Worner, a senior inspector and acting superintendent of primary education at that time, made inquiries in New South Wales and that gentleman has done considerable work in this matter since. I understand that in no other State in Australia has a Government yet given attention to the education of these children. The institution in New South Wales, which Mr. Worner inspected was, I believe, run institutionally by people quite outside the Government.

There has been a spastic group at Lady Lawley Cottage for several years which has been taught by one of the department's most experienced teachers who gained some insight into this work at Mosman, Sydney. Three teachers have been appointed to that school prior to taking up work at the Thomas-street centre. What must be aimed at is good physical health and that degree of utilisation and capacity which medical and professional knowledge can make possible, namely, a feeling of security within the child, opportunity for play, and participation in family, community and national life; some academic and cultural, as well as vocational education and, within the limits of their physical and mental capacity, training for some occupation. It is therefore apparent that the service must include, as well as special education, some medical and convalescent care, physical occupation and speech therapy. It will be readily realised that those aspects present quite considerable difficulty.

It is evident that the medical side must be supervised and dealt with by the Medical Department and equally with the other aspects, educational features must be dealt with by the Department of Education. To co-ordinate the activities of these two departments, even to a limited degree, and in the absence of thoroughly desirable premises of a high-class order and size for use as a spastic clinic which at present is obviously not an easy proposition, quite clearly would occasion some difficulty. But I think that most of those difficulties have been overcome.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Would you need an orthopaedic department attached to it?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: An orthopaedic medical officer must be available and that is, in conjunction with the medical and educational work, the reason why it has been decided to make the first governmental effort at the Thomas-street State School, because that school is in close proximity to the Princess Margaret Children's Hospital and will, I hope, bring those two departments into close activity. The conversion of rooms, the provision of new lavatories with different sized pedestals, special doors, ramps for wheel chairs, extra store room, additional washing facilities, furniture, special chairs and desks for each child and other equipment has all been undertaken in two rooms at the Thomas-street State School.

which were available for that purpose. Again, from memory, I think that the expenditure on that work will be something over £3,000.

Special apparatus is to be provided such as magnetic numbers and letters and Montessori-type apparatus. A list of sufferers must be furnished and then the children must be examined so as to ascertain whether they are capable of receiving the valuable results from the tuition that can be offered them at such a place as this in conjunction with the medical and convalescent care. When those children are finally selected it is obvious that the homes of their parents will be scattered in parts of the metropolitan area, particularly. It is equally apparent, I think, that they cannot, by reason of their physical disability, go to the school by themselves, however close they may be to it.

Hon. A. H. Panton: They will probably be scattered all over the State.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: And so transport has to be arranged by the Education Department to bring them to the school, and it is quite clear that voluntary assistance must be organised through a duty roster for parents to assist in bringing the children to and from the bus, and for one or two mothers to accompany them to the bus and a mother at the school who may attend to the feeding and lavatory needs of the children. I think it will be necessary to have that work organised. The adults of the spastic children group will be asked to organise these and similar services. Whilst the department will provide extra equipment for the classroom, parents will be asked to supply additional articles for the use of their own children. It might be well to arrange this, because, as has been pointed out to me, the fact that one is a parent does not mean that one is necessarily equipped to bring extra knowledge to bear in the child's special problem either in the clinic or in the classroom.

As I said earlier, there are many difficulties associated with this work and that is why I pay a particular tribute to Mr. Worner for the attention and activity he has displayed in bringing these arrangements now almost to fruition. There is only, I think, a small amount of the work to be done at the premises in Thomas-street and

the completion of the bus service organisation either by a bus run by the Education Department or through a suitable contract with some company.

Hon. A. H. Panton: A mothers' committee similar to that which assists kindergartens would be of great assistance.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It would, unquestionably. The classes, of course, will be smaller because it is quite likely that it will not be possible successfully to handle more than 12 children, and in view of the medical treatment to be given to them it is impossible for a child to attend a class more than half a day in each day, the other half being spent under medical care. So it is quite clear that the two classrooms will accommodate only 48 children, but it must also be clear that when the screening takes place, a number will be found who cannot be dealt with by any such system because of the extent to which these children have lost the use of their limbs and possibly the use of their mental faculties. But in every case, where the child is likely to be educable or is likely to be able to be trained for community life, then every effort will be made to accommodate them as soon as possible.

I would like to return to one or two other items relating to special education. With regard to deaf and dumb children, there has been proceeding for a very considerable time—the member for North-East Fremantle will recollect that he started the move—negotiations to take over the premises of the Deaf and Dumb School at Cottesloe. One of the principal stumbling blocks was the desire of the committee that the department should be responsible for the domestic or residential accommodation at that place as distinct from the educational side. It was not regarded either by me or by the officers advising me that the matter was something the Education Department should undertake, because it opened up a vista of trouble and difficulties for which, at this stage anyway, I do not think the department could assume responsibility. The committee for a considerable time did not apparently desire to proceed unless that question was solved, although an offer was made in respect of the residential premises that, in addition to that received from other sources such as child endowment, the same subsidy as the department is now paying,

namely, 2s. 6d. per child per week to institutions conducting hostels for children with departmental approval, would be paid. There was also some difficulty with regard to the staff that would be taken over, their entry into the Education Department's service, and the conditions under which they would do so.

I may safely say that these difficulties have practically all been overcome and I have reason to believe that the necessary agreement will be completed in the very near future. With regard to itinerant teaching, a second teacher has been appointed in the north-western areas of the State. The first was appointed in 1946 and the teacher in question gave very good service indeed. However, it became quite apparent in more recent times that, in order to make the service really worthwhile, additional assistance would have to be made available. In consequence, the areas involved were zoned and two teachers are now engaged in the work. Great satisfaction has been expressed by those who are being served by the teachers.

As I told the Committee, I think a year ago, the department had agreed to provide funds to assist parents and citizens' associations in the provision of certain equipment which hitherto had been acquired by them entirely out of funds raised by themselves but which the department regarded as of essential value in the teaching of the children. Included under that heading were, of course, visual aid projectors and a subsidy of £50. plus in cases where there was no alternating current available, the payment of the cost of a converter was offered to the association. In addition, assistance was offered in respect of the provision of Oslo lunch rooms and school libraries. Much additional money was provided for the improvement of other libraries either under the control or within the influence of the Education Department. I particularly desire to refer to the visual educational side. In 1946 two State Schools were equipped with 16-millimetre sound projectors. In 1947 there were 17, while in 1948—I say it without fear of contradiction—as the result of the changed policy of the department in respect of assistance rendered to parents and citizens' associations, there were 67, while to July, 1949, there were 120.

The number of children served by visual aid projectors in 1946 was 800; in 1947 the total was 5,600; in 1948, the number of children served was 25,400, and to July, 1949, the number was 48,800. The number of 16-millimetre films borrowed in 1948 was 4,102 and in 1949, from February to July, the number was 6,663. The mobile unit itinerary in 1949 covered 33 schools and approximately the number of children catered for was 5,280. In the adult film section, which the film advisory committee under Mr. Uren is endeavouring to build up, the groups registered in 1948 totalled 97 and to July, 1949, they numbered 162. In 1947 there were 105 borrowings covering 523 loaned films; in 1948 they totalled 386 covering 1,758 films loaned; in 1949 the number was 633 covering 2,611 films loaned. The adult audiences in 1948 averaged a monthly attendance of approximately 8,000 and in 1949 the monthly attendance was 9,500. There are now 895 reels of 16-millimetre films in school libraries covering 468 titles.

Multiple copies of teaching films are gradually being built up to five or six of each title, to enable adequate use to be made of the teaching aid and equipment. There are now 393 reels of 16-millimetre films in the adult library covering 342 titles. It will be necessary to increase the library by at least 100 per cent. to give an adequate selection of subjects to the groups. The production section has now produced fourteen 16-millimetre silent films, of which 39 copies are in circulation, and four 16-millimetre sound films, of which 18 copies are in use throughout the State. A further 20 sound films are now at the stage of having the sound track recorded. In addition, fifty-two 35-millimetre still strip films and 409 copies have been produced this year, and those copies have been sold to the schools at 1s. 3d. each.

The work being performed by the Visual Education Branch, notwithstanding a certain lack of facilities, although an extra transport van for films and equipment has been provided, has been very reasonably covered. The premises occupied by the branch are, in my opinion, exceedingly unsatisfactory and efforts are being made to provide more space and therefore greater opportunity for the rapid and more comfortable development of the work

of the branch, which now has a greatly increased staff. The more tribute, therefore, I say must be paid to the staff for the excellent and considerably increased work it has done during the year under rather cramped conditions. It will be interesting to note that the despatch of parcels alone is reaching almost unmanageable proportions under existing conditions. The aggregate weight of films despatched weekly is 2,860 lb., and the same quantity approximately is returned each week.

It will be apparent that, with the exception of additional building accommodation, nothing reasonably required has been spared in order to build up this important aid to education. There is little doubt in my mind, and I think there will be little doubt in yours, Sir, that what one can see is more readily grasped than by the use of our other senses. We have no adequate idea, and may never have any adequate idea if we lack opportunities to travel, of what exists in other parts of the world. It can be described to us and we may read about it, but I venture the opinion that we get a better and quicker realisation of it by viewing an authentic film. I would suggest that that remark applies with equal force to many other phases of what is necessary to the general education of every interested man and woman. As I said, there has been a considerable expansion of the activities of this branch of the department, as the figures I gave will disclose. I sincerely hope that the rapid progress made in the last couple of years will be maintained.

There are in operation now 262 school bus contracts. These busses transport over 7,000 children daily to and from school. As a result of the appointment last year of a special school bus inspector, not only has the standard of vehicle used for this purpose been appreciably improved, but many new vehicles, replacing wartime types, are now operating. As the inspector is undoubtedly an expert, we now have some clear assurance that these vehicles are and will be kept in an efficient state of repair. Instances have occurred, even during the short period of seven or eight months that this inspector has been employed, where he has, without fear or favour, ordered vehicles off the road because in his opinion they were unsafe. He is also able to tender advice in connection

with the purchase of new vehicles and that, coupled with his supervision, has substantially removed one cause of some complaint by parents' organisations.

The rising cost of vehicles—and of body construction and maintenance—has made it necessary for the department to pay much higher mileage rates. No specific rate has been laid down for any type of vehicle, because it has been deemed advisable—in view of the varied conditions under which these vehicles travel and the varying districts, depending upon population—to deal with each case to a great extent on its merits.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Has the inspector authority to put a bus off the road without a recommendation to anyone?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes, and he has done so on two or three occasions. The demand for additional services has to be restrained in some instances on account of the extreme difficulty of accommodating children at schools where they are proposed to be taken. We have had more than one instance where parents have been informed that there is no prospect of additional accommodation being made available in the near future; but that if they are prepared—on the understanding that there will be greater opportunity for the education of their children—to accept discomfort for the time being, favourable consideration will be given to providing the service. In some instances, however, that has not been so and the approval of the service has been postponed until consideration could be given to the expansion of school accommodation. You yourself, Mr. Chairman, are aware of one of the former type to which I have just referred. The cost of driving allowances has increased and advantage has been taken by many parents, residing more than five miles from a school, of a special allowance of 1s. 6d. per day to meet the cost of their children's conveyance to school as an alternative to their being boarded out.

Referring for a moment to school furniture, in December, 1948, approval was given for the manufacture of tubular steel desks and chairs to accommodate 9,500 children. The quoted cost of manufacture for the desks is £13,879 and for the chairs £9,003. This furniture is to be provided in addition to that required to equip new schools. The

latter equipment is being charged to the Department of Public Works. It is therefore apparent that the Engineering Works is undertaking the construction of the furniture required for new buildings, while private contracts have been let for the desks and chairs to accommodate the 9,500 children to whom I have referred and who are now using existing premises. Up till the middle of last month, 1,400 double and 1,357 single desks and 4,157 chairs had been supplied to schools and 2,678 double and 511 single desks, in addition to 5,867 chairs, are on order. In this equipment 82 metropolitan and 102 country schools have shared and the improved type of desk has been greatly commended wherever it has been used.

A school map of Western Australia has now been prepared by the Department of Lands and Surveys and copies are to be mounted and battened for distribution to schools to the order of about 1,000. I mention that because representations have been made to me that a map of the world should be similarly provided. Unfortunately, the determination of boundaries and nationalities and so forth, consequent upon the recent war, appears not to have been made; and to have such a map prepared at this stage with the almost certain prospect of its being very substantially amended, possibly in a short time, would, it is thought, be unwise. It is unfortunate because undoubtedly the maps available in this State are out of date. We know they have been changed but we do not know what changes have been made. We can only await the decision, if there is a decision in a reasonable time, of those who are responsible for the final determination of the disputes which arose out of the conclusion of the last war.

The department has further recognised the work being carried out by the Parents and Citizens' Federation. I think I mentioned last year that some premises had been found for the organisation and done up; that a typist had been provided; and that a grant had been made for the purpose and a telephone supplied by the department. This year approval has been given for an increase in the grant paid to the federation from £100 to £250 per annum.

The Government has recently decided to assist country teachers in their costs of accommodation in districts where such costs are unusually high. The excess above £2 per week in the case of teachers receiving £300 per annum or less and above £2 10s. per week for those receiving up to £600 per annum will be paid by the department for a maximum of six months. The bona fides of all cases will be subject to inquiry where necessary.

Mr. Graham called attention to the state of the Committee.

Quorum formed.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: As an adjunct to visual education, considerable expenditure has been approved by the Treasury for the curtaining of classroom windows in no fewer than 90 schools, to permit of the screening of educational films. As a result of investigations, curtains were found to be more suitable than blinds, enabling better darkening of the class rooms and better ventilation. This year—I think for the first time—all schools will be issued with first-aid kits of a suitable size, the contents of which were recommended by the Department of Public Health. The initial cost was £976, the replacement cost being estimated at £400 per annum.

During the year, considerable progress was made with regard to school buildings. It is my intention to touch on that subject a little later. I regret that the member for Hannans is not in his place, because I obtained some information which I thought would be of interest to him in view of his earlier observations on the general debate on the Estimates when he made a statement to the effect—I say “to the effect,” because I cannot recall his exact words—that nothing had been spent on schools in the Goldfields area since this Government took office.

I find that on the Kalgoorlie school £842 12s. 11d. has been spent in repairs and renovations; and on the Kalgoorlie infants' school £263 8s. 6d. For new works for the Kalgoorlie North school, tenders are now being called. These provide for lavatories, septic tank installation, etc., at a cost of £5,250. Repairs and renovations already executed have cost £94 4s 5d. Renovations of a substantial nature at the Kalgoorlie

South school involved £1,328; and minor renovations, £160 12s. 6d. In connection with the Eastern Goldfields High School, a contract was let on the 4th October, 1948, for a new brick lavatory and septic tank installation at a cost of £3,700; and for the bituminising of the verandah and alterations to the assembly hall a sum of £1,068 was approved on the 8th July last. On repairs and renovations £236 2s. has been spent.

In addition, requests have been made to the Public Works Department as a result of a visit I paid to Kalgoorlie to have a general schedule of repairs and renovations drawn up in regard to the Eastern Goldfields High School, to be put in operation during the Xmas vacation. As far as I know, those preparations are proceeding. It is expected that the work will run into £2,000 or £3,000. At Boulder approval to the extent of £3,000 for improvements was given by the Treasury and tenders have been called. The sum of £276 0s. 6d. has been spent on repairs and renovations. There was an expenditure of £114 12s. 3d. for repairs and renovations to the Boulder infants' school. At Boulder South, £47 was expended and on a small school at Brown Hill, £82 17s. 4d. So I think it would be admitted by the hon. member were he here that the statement he made was not entirely correct.

I think I mentioned last year that it seemed to me that a greater degree of assistance must be rendered in the maintenance of roads which are used for the transport of children to school by busses paid for by the Education Department. I believe I mentioned—if I did not, I will do so now—that local authorities must experience some difficulty in providing or maintaining roads for these services, because they do not necessarily serve places which the local authorities would desire in the normal way to serve but simply cover places where there are children. More than that, the department must reserve the right to alter a route as the residences of the children change through their leaving school or their leaving the district. As a consequence, local authorities have, whilst being most eager to co-operate in these works, experienced some difficulty in carrying them out.

I have made representations for a considerable period to the Main Roads Department to lay down some plan whereby this work might be carried out in much the same way as the Main Roads Department assists local authorities in the maintenance and construction of other roads which, while not being main roads, are considered worthy of assistance. I am glad to say that of recent months such an arrangement has been made, and it is expected that the expenditure by the Main Roads Department this year will amount to £21,500. The basis of it will be £4 for every mile of road, other than roads which the Main Roads Department is responsible to maintain, that runs through the board's district and is used as a school bus route. If, for example, there are 100 miles of such road, the amount will be £400. I think that is a satisfactory proposal which will go far to improve the state of affairs which has hitherto existed.

In the last financial year the Main Roads Department made available to local authorities its usual considerable grants, and laid down that in the selection of the work to be done, preference was to be given to school bus routes. That did not altogether work out satisfactorily because the amount to every local authority was virtually the same, and other roads had to be attended to. On the other hand, some local authorities had one bus route and others had up to ten. As a consequence, the present proposal is a better one, and it reflects great credit on all concerned. Considerable work has been done in the carting, drainage and servicing of schools. Some 15 schools in the metropolitan area and five in country districts have been completed and work is proceeding on ten others. The policy of installing septic tank systems in large schools not connected with deep sewerage is being pursued. But opportunity can only be taken where soil and water conditions permit.

That is a point I wish to stress to the people who are somewhat concerned because they cannot have this facility in the immediate future. It is not practicable, I am assured, to carry out successfully the septic system in some places because of the soil conditions, and in others because of a lack of sufficient water supplies. It must be recollected, of course, that there

are definitely some limitations upon the work that can be done for the Department of Education by the Public Works Department, or by private contractors under plans prepared by the architects of the Public Works Department on behalf of my department. If we were not to take that into consideration it would be quite clear that a much greater drain would have to be made on the resources of manpower and materials, both of which are still limited, with the result that the housing programme would have to be restricted to meet the growing demands of the Education Department; let alone those in connection with other public buildings such as hospitals and the like. Yet I say, without fear of contradiction, that a good job has been done and considerable progress made.

The activities of the Housing Commission greatly accentuate the problem. If one takes the opportunity of looking at the various parts of the metropolitan area one finds that in the last 12 or 15 months there are, in some cases, thousands, and in others hundreds of houses where there were few, if any, before. We find that a school of two, three or four classrooms, almost overnight springs into one requiring five, seven or eight rooms, or even more. We also find, as a result of the present consolidation of schools, and as a result, in some cases, of increased population, that similar conditions apply in other parts of the State. So it has been a difficult task to determine out of a dozen worthy demands upon us, which four or five shall receive approval at the time of enquiry. One has only to look at such places as the areas around South Perth to realise the changes that will have to be made in such schools as the Collier school, Kensington and South Como. Also, if one looks at Tuart Hill today and compares the school with the Tuart Hill school of two years ago, one realises what changes have occurred there in those years.

So, whatever may be thought by the people of some areas whose conditions are not sadly overcrowded, but whose buildings are not good, that the department has not any interest in them, that thought is far from true. It is obviously not possible, even in normal or the normal-plus circumstances of our pre-war days, to cope, in a

limited time, with the replacements of a substantial proportion of the schools of the State. Yet I have pointed out, elsewhere if not here, that the public conscience is lively in regard to this matter. Places which a decade ago would probably have worried but little over accommodation, are today expecting a mushroom growth which cannot take place. The attitude of the department, therefore, is, and I believe will be for a long time to come, that it will not rest content until the standard of school accommodation, equipment, curriculum and staffing has been raised to a level which it considers Western Australia and its people are entitled to have. But they know, just as surely as the sun will rise tomorrow, that that task can only be accomplished over a fairly lengthy period of years, and that it is one that will have to be grappled with determinedly and steadily during that period.

Therefore our task today is to try to decide what should come first. Let not those that are not in the calculation at present form the opinion that they do not exist in the scheme of affairs, because, if their case is good, they do enter into that scheme, and will. One of the important adjuncts to building is what is known as the School Sites Committee, consisting of the Director, the Principal Architect, the Town Planning Commissioner, and, I think, the land resumption officer of the Public Works Department. The committee deals with many complex problems related to sites for schools, both schools that have been erected for many years and those that are to be erected in the future.

Hon. E. Nulsen: Do members of the committee travel to the country?

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: They frequently do, though not in every case. I know of two journeys they have made in the last few weeks for the purpose of inspecting personally difficult sites. Sometimes only the Director may go and at other times it may be necessary for two or three of them to pay a visit to the centre concerned. They have done remarkably good work but they find it hard in some cases to rectify the errors of days long past. Perhaps I should not refer to "errors." Let us say "to rectify the actions of those in days long past." We find that the areas that the good people

of that day apparently thought quite sufficient for the purposes of all they could see in the future are today totally inadequate. I am not referring to 10 acres, or five acres round a fair-sized primary school, but to areas much less than that.

One is therefore called upon sometimes, and in many cases with great regret, to undertake resumptions of land. It is costly and must put somebody to inconvenience, but there are undoubtedly times when it is necessary to resume land or, alternatively, to leave the position as it is and enable the land to be built on substantially, but if that is done there will come a time in the future when pressure of circumstances will force us to extend the school areas and we will have then to create more inconvenience and incur much greater cost. The School Sites Committee has at times difficult problems to solve and, I repeat, it has done remarkably good work. I have said it is impossible to deal with the requirements of every place that considers—in many cases largely because of a livelier conscience on the subject—it requires new school accommodation, but at the same time the department endeavours, after careful consideration not only by its officers but also in many cases after personal inspection by them and by me—to arrive at a conclusion as to which places ought to receive early or first consideration.

Such situations arise sometimes through increased centralisation of school facilities and sometimes because of greatly increased population which is mainly and frequently due to the expanding activities of the State Housing Commission. Leaving out works approved prior to the 1st April, 1947, and dealing with those constructed or completed since that time, the completed new schools approved after the 1st April, 1947, are the following:—Quairading, Tuart Hill, Tambellup, Chowerup Creek and Frankland River, at a total cost of £67,577. The completed additions—substantial additions as they are in the majority of cases—in the same category, since the 1st April, 1947, are as follows:—North Inglewood, Graylands, Rivervale, Eden Hill, Claremont Infants, Bicton, Cranbrook, Newdegate, Mt. Hawthorn Infants and Boyup Brook, at a total cost of £43,845, and Bencubbin, Denmark, Brookton and Burracoppin, at a total cost of £5,200.

In addition, there have been removals of schools which, in almost every case, involved alteration and substantial renovation. A fine job has been made of some of them, such as the following:—Meekatharra, Glenorchy, Harvey, Cowaramup, Karlgarin, Brunswick, Milng, Cleomine, Wanneroo, Kellerberrin, Kojonup, Gnowangerup, Balingup, Marvel Loch, Pithara, Chadoora and Applecross, at a total cost of approximately £9,500. The following new schools are under construction:—Boyup Brook, Collie, Midland Junction Infants, Carnamah, Beverley, Wundowie, Morley Park, Perth Technical (Pharmacy)—I think there is only the contract let so far—Hilton Park, Collie Trades Block, Norseman (Manual Training), and Narrogin School of Agriculture (housemaster's residence), at a total estimated cost of £178,883.

The following additions to schools are of a substantial nature and under construction:—Jolimont, Manjimup, Kataning, Como, Carlisle, Merredin, Applecross, Waroona, Morawa, Ballidu, Mullewa, Burnbrae, Ongerup, Marble Bar, Derby and Pingelly, at a total cost of £80,663. Removals are now under way to Gleneagle, Bridgetown, Tinkurrin, Quininnup and Pickering Brook (quarters) at a total cost of £3,781. It will readily be perceived that a considerable sum of money is involved.

Hon. E. Nulsen: To whom do the schools on the trans-Australian railway belong?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: We are building a school at Haig and something is being done also at Reid. The department is responsible for the schools inside the Western Australian border, and I know there are works under contemplation at Reid, at all events. I have a list of works approved and tenders about to be called. I did not propose to deal with it at this stage but, as the hon. member might find something else of interest in it, I will go through it now. The schools I have mentioned are either constructed or in the course of construction and some are bordering on completion, such as that at Applecross. But works approved, and tenders now being called, comprise Harvey, Floreat Park, Mt. Helena, Bruce Rock, Doubleview, Lake Grace, Bolgart, Reid and Quindanning. Additions approved, and tenders now being called, are for Collier, Belmont, Corrigin—where the contract has just been let—Mt.

Barker, Darkan, Denmark, Swanbourne, Dumbleyung, Osborne Park, Buntine and a manual training premises in the old school at Quairading.

There are a number of other works in the metropolitan area and elsewhere which are now awaiting Treasury approval. They include such places as Wongan Hills, Cannington, Mosman Park, Richmond—which has, as I told the member for North-East Fremantle, received Treasury approval and is making some progress—North Cottesloe, Rivervale, Bassendean, Maida Vale, and Kellerberrin.

Hon. A. A. M. Coverley: What about Hall's Creek?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That is on the list for plans and specifications to be drawn and they are now in the course of preparation. It has not as yet gone as far as those I have just mentioned and I did not want to include it in the list. However, it is on the way.

Hon. A. A. M. Coverley: I am very disgusted with you.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It is going on all right. The hon. member has a tough problem up there, but I think he will find that he will have a school at Hall's Creek and the A.I.M. Mission looking after the accommodation and the department providing buildings for both.

Hon. A. A. M. Coverley: I did not want you to forget about it.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It is not forgotten and the Treasurer is ready to approve. It is only a question of having the papers brought before him and I do not think it will be many days before that takes place. I think I have covered fairly well the ground which I intended to cover when I set out. I feel sure that I have indicated to members that the work of the Education Department, in none of its aspects, has stood still. I have acknowledged the debt which we all owe to the officers of the department and to the teaching staff, and trust I have said enough to warrant the belief that the Government of this State has gone a long way towards carrying out its expressed intentions in regard to education, especially if members take the facts that I have given them this evening in conjunction with those I gave last year. I will do my

best to answer any queries that may be raised in the items now before the Committee.

Hon. E. Nulsen: What interest does the Education Department take in the dental treatment of children?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: A very considerable interest. I would like the hon. member to have the opportunity—and he may have it if he so wishes—of perusing the file that is now on my table. Of course, as the hon. member knows, the direct management of school dentists is under the Department of Public Health. I had contemplated that the matter could be left until the Minister for Health dealt with the subject. However, as the hon. member has asked me, I will endeavour, in broad outline, to show what has been taking place. The Government laid down a policy and it was its desire as a consequence of considerable inquiry, that children between the ages of six and ten in all country districts, and in the smaller schools between the ages of 11 and 14 also, should receive attention and treatment at least once in every two years. To do that, would require the employment of approximately 20 extra dentists, and to cover the metropolitan area as well, would require the employment of approximately 30 extra dentists.

The committee of officers of the Health Department and the Education Department came to the conclusion that for the time being—in view of the isolation from dental practitioners in the majority of cases—a number of schools could be left out of the equation. It is extremely difficult to obtain the practitioners, even for the metropolitan area, and there are few metropolitan schools not in close proximity to practitioners and the Perth Dental Hospital. Therefore we hope to find approximately 20 dentists to cover country schools. Advertisements were lodged a year or more ago—the Minister for Health could give members the exact time, but I think my recollection is fairly good—for four dentists and so far we have been able to procure one only. One of the difficulties has been the reluctance of these people to establish themselves in country areas.

Hon. E. Nulsen: That is really the reason why the Trans. line has not had one visit from them.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: There are quite a number of places that have not had visits and I am most anxious to see that wherever possible those visits do take place. Undoubtedly there is a reluctance for dentists to establish themselves in the country districts. Of course if the department concerned were compelled to employ them and have them residing in the metropolitan area and permit them to travel all over the State, obviously the matter would very shortly get out of hand because of the financial aspects. Therefore it seems that the only thing we can do, and that is what is now in the course of discussion before the vital decision is made, is to find out what means should be used to attract applicants; and failing that, or in conjunction with that, to train applicants, although that takes a considerable time. There is also the question of what remuneration should be paid and where they should, if they are to exist, be stationed and what facilities can be provided for them in those places to make their living conditions reasonably satisfactory. Those, as the member for Kanowna will know, are problems which today can be solved only one by one. I presume that the acquisition of some dentists will be the first thing. If we can do that, some progress will have been made. However, as I said, it is our desire that at least once in every two years every child should have the opportunity of examinations and, where necessary, some measure of free treatment, particularly for those in the isolated areas.

That brings to my mind the important part that Parents and Citizens' Associations play today in helping to make conditions easier both for the teaching staff and the children. It was brought to mind by this question of dental examination and treatment, because it is usually found that the active Parents and Citizens' Associations are extremely interested in this, and one frequently receives communications from them on the subject. They have done remarkably good work. To a great degree they have been encouraged to do so as much as possible, and I hope that encouragement can be extended. We have, for instance, agreed quite recently to tune and keep in reasonable order pianos that have been purchased by them and handed over to the department. We have also decided to enter into insurance cover, at the department's expense, on equipment that they

buy, thus obviating their taking out a separate policy, because we feel, both in fire and burglary insurance, that we can provide it by obtaining premiums at wholesale rates. Anything that can be done which lends itself to the idea that we appreciate their activity on behalf of education will be done. Within their own sphere, we recognise their rights, and we want them to continue their work.

HON. J. T. TONKIN (North-East Fremantle) [9.32]: It will be noticed that the Minister for Education commenced speaking at 8 o'clock and has concluded slightly after half past nine. Altogether, it has taken an hour and a half for him to give a report on the administration of his department. I do not think anybody will say that he took an unduly long time in view of the story he had to relate. Neither will anyone say that he told all that he should have told. There is a good deal about this department that he might have dealt with. It can now be seen the opportunity that I have, and that which other members of this House have, to deal with the Estimates when, because of a motion carried earlier in the day, a time limit has been fixed for discussion. There remain only five days for such discussion on the Estimates, one of those being private members' day. That leaves four days which can be devoted to the Estimates, and this is one of them. I hope the Premier will listen! The Minister for Education has used about half the time available today, and if I did justice to the subject I would use the other half. That would then leave three days for other members to discuss the Education Estimates and those of all the other departments. That is why the Opposition had to make such a protest against what has been done. It would be wrong of me to use the time that I should have at my disposal, because by so doing I would preclude other members from having any say whatever on the activities of this important department. However, that is what the Government has decided to do, and we have to put up with it.

The Minister for Lands: You have been stonewalling for days and days.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The story told by the Minister is one of progress and development in one of the most important

departments of the State. I was extremely glad that he expressed appreciation of the services being rendered by the various officers and the staff of the department. They are the same officers, and practically the same staff, as were there under the previous Administration when, according to the Minister and the Premier, nothing was right with the department and it was in a muddle. I am wondering how those marvellous transformations have occurred, when we have the same officers in charge and the same staff in the schools. It is quite right that they should be praised for their work because no better body of men and women is employed in the Government service. No more conscientious officers are to be found in any department than those in the Department of Education. But they are the same officers as were employed under the previous Government.

The Minister for Lands: Don't you think a change of Ministers has had something to do with it?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: We will see about that as we go along. I think a change of Ministers in charge of the Lands Department would be an improvement.

Mr. Marshall: You would not expect a pack of Bumbles to make any improvements!

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Minister for Lands: The member for Murchison had better keep quiet; he is not too well.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I am sorry to have disturbed the still waters, Mr. Chairman. I join with the Minister in praising these officers, because I consider that under most difficult conditions they have performed an excellent job and I expect them to continue to do so, provided ample funds are made available, and necessary accommodation provided. In order to get a proper appreciation of what has been done, we must look at the target which this Government was aiming at, and at the promises that were made. I propose to refer to one of those promises which is mentioned in the Policy Speech of the Minister for Education. This report appeared in "The West Australian," the morning—

Mr. Marshall: After the night before!

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: —after the Minister had delivered his speech—

Mr. Watts accused the Government of having failed to provide the quality of opportunity in education. The anomalies in regard to living-away-from-home allowances must be removed, and the privilege of dental and medical attention extended. "Children obliged to remain on correspondence classes," he said, "will be provided with periodical opportunity for contact with other school children. We will enter into urgent negotiations with the Federal Government to provide funds for the extension of education. All over the country additions to schools, or new schools, are necessary. Little or no progress is being made in this matter. The arrears must be overcome and more teachers, better trained, must be provided.

Size of Classes.

As speedily as possible classes must be reduced to a size conforming with modern teaching recommendations. We will set up area schools where conditions are suitable, and give greater participation to local school boards and parents and citizens' associations in the affairs of their schools. We will make provision for the actual raising of the school leaving age to 15 years, and will undertake the supply of more abundant school equipment. We will establish hostels at high school centres. No charge will be made beyond that for board, and suitable local supervision will be arranged. High school scholarships will be increased to £40 a year. Technical education and domestic science will be extended to country districts. Further assistance will be given to libraries. We definitely advocate the establishment of a medical school. An agricultural college is needed in the South-West and will be provided at the most suitable spot. We will investigate a scheme of medical and dental attention to all children attending school, to be instituted either by the State or in conjunction with the Commonwealth, and will present the proposal to Parliament."

I have seen nothing of it. That is the programme which was held out to the people. The Minister said tonight something to the effect that there is a pretty lively educational conscience in the community. That is true. Because the Minister knew that three years ago, he exploited it to the fullest extent by putting such a programme before the people.

The Minister for Education: Do you not think it has been substantially carried out?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: No.

The Minister for Education: I do.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: If the Minister thinks that, he is easily satisfied.

The Minister for Railways: You should take a trip round the country.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: It has not been carried out.

The Minister for Education: It has been substantially carried out and that would be apparent to any reasonable man.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: What about the size of classes? Take that for a start. Has that phase been substantially attended to? According to the Minister they were to be substantially reduced. Let me refer to the Liberal Party's brochure, which is the bible of the Premier.

The Minister for Railways: I thought his bible was "The West Australian."

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The brochure contains a statement regarding the necessity for training teachers so that not one of them will be required to teach more than 25 pupils. Let us see what the position is. In order to get the correct figures, I asked the Minister some questions.

The Minister for Education: About 150 per cent. more teachers have been trained during the last three years than during the five pre-war years.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I will deal with one thing at a time. At present I am drawing attention to the size of classes, which is one of the important matters, according to the Minister's own statement, that was to be attended to. At that time it was a very vexed question.

Mr. Reynolds: And still is.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Parents and teachers have been greatly concerned about the matter.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: It is still a burning question.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The Government exploited the position, and the Minister claims that there has been a substantial improvement in that respect.

The Minister for Education: I said that that applied in the majority of cases.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: We will deal with that. We will see what has been done and what has not been done, and ascertain whether there has been any substantial improvement in the position. The questions I asked the Minister were—

(1) During the last week of the first school term this year, how many teachers had—

(a) Single classes of 50 children or more, but less than 60;

Members will notice that I was not so foolish as to ask any question about classes of less than 25 children, as I was entitled to do in view of the statement in the Liberal Party's brochure. I asked the question about single classes of 50 children or more—

(b) Single classes of 60 children or more;

(c) Grouped classes of between 40 and 50 children;

(d) Grouped classes of 50 children or more, but less than 60;

(e) Grouped classes of 60 children or more.

The answers I received from the Minister were—

The figures during the last week of the school term are not available, but the following are the enrolments as at the 11th February, 1949:—

(a) 270.

(b) 33.

(c) 157.

(d) 69.

(e) 4.

Let us see how those figures compare with the position when the present Government took office. Members should recall that present-day Ministers, when in Opposition, complained about the size of classes during the time the previous Government had control, and the Minister in his statement said the Government intended to reduce them. Take the comparative figures for April, 1947, that being the month when the present Government took office. This is what the details disclose. With regard to single classes of 50 children or more, but less than 60, there were 236 under the Labour Government as against 270 this year under the present Administration.

Mr. Marshall: After three years of peace.

The Premier: There is not much peace while you are here.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: With regard to single classes of 60 children or more, there were 27 under the previous Government and this year there are 33.

The Honorary Minister for Supply and Shipping: The population has increased.

Mr. Marshall: Where did you come from?

The Honorary Minister for Supply and Shipping: At any rate, I am here.

Mr. Styants: But a little late.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Now we are getting the excuses.

The Minister for Lands: No, the reasons.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: They were not regarded as reasons before. There were all the years of the war.

Mr. Marshall: And this Government has had years of peace.

The Premier: No peace while you are here.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The claim of the Minister, who is supported by the Honorary Minister, is that the classes were to be reduced. Is that disclosed in the results? Then as regards grouped classes of between 40 and 50 children, there were 158 under the Labour Government and 157 now, an improvement of one class. Respecting grouped classes of 50 children or more but less than 60, there are 69 at present as against 60 under the previous Government, or nine classes worse off. As to grouped classes of 60 children or more, there were five classes under the Labour Government and four under the present Government, a difference of one class. With regard to that promise, has any substantial improvement been made? There is silence; I did not expect any answer.

The Honorary Minister for Supply and Shipping: You should give some consideration to the fact that the population has increased.

The Minister for Railways: Hear, hear!

Mr. Marshall: You remember—"I say to you now, it is no good."

The Minister for Railways: That is all right.

The Premier: Evidently the member for Murchison's health has improved.

Mr. Marshall: After the war years, this Government has had times of peace.

The Premier: There can be no peace while you are here.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I hope, Mr. Chairman, you are allowing time off for me, as they do at the football matches! Respecting the size of classes, unless we have the requisite number of teachers very little can be done to reduce classes. A further consideration is the number of school buildings available. We can makeshift with buildings but that does not apply in the case of teachers, for if we have not the teachers required, the reduction of classes is impossible. The shortage of teachers is a vital factor, and the Minister might well

have spent a quarter of an hour in dealing with that phase. So far as I am aware, there is nothing in the present trend that would seem to make it at all possible to reduce the size of classes or to prevent them from getting larger.

All the literature I have read on the subject points to the fact that by 1952, unless something is done, we will be in a very sorry mess with regard to the size of classes and the shortage of teachers. I have a copy of the issue of "The West Australian" for the 5th April of this year. It contains an article by the secretary of the Teachers' Union under the heading, "Gravely Undermanned Schools in Western Australia." He refers to the fact that classes are being held, on verandahs, in sheds, hatrooms and public halls. That is in 1949. This is another matter that was going to be remedied.

The Minister for Education: You left only 47 public halls behind you to be renovated. Some of them have been done.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: But children are still in hatrooms, in sheds and in public halls and they will be there for some time yet. I am not blaming the Minister for it, but I am blaming him for criticising the previous Government for circumstances over which it had no more control than he has. The article to which I have just referred reads—

Schools in this State were gravely undermanned, Mr. Thomas said. In English schools 66 per cent. of primary classes contained over 30 pupils and 29.5 per cent. contained over 40. The London "Times" had commented that this meant not education but mass production. In this State in 375 primary and secondary schools from which replies to a questionnaire had been received, of the 1,141 classes there were 784 (66 per cent.) with 35 pupils or more and 544 (47 per cent.) with from 45 to 70. There were 267 classes held in rooms containing from 2 to 6 classes of 35 and more children taught by one teacher.

Mr. Thomas said that in high schools, rooms designed for science and other special purposes were used as classrooms and crowded out. In schools of all types there were many where children were accommodated at the teachers' tables. In some cases the teacher had to move sideways. The Education Department had expected for 1949 to recruit 200 monitors (young people who had the leaving certificate and were willing to serve for twelve months in schools preparatory to entering the Teachers' College). Only 107 were forthcoming. The entry of monitors to the Teachers' College also dropped to 108. An appreciable number of young people who were

selected before Christmas had entered callings more immediately remunerative. Had it not been for 81 ex-servicemen the number of first-year students at the Teachers' College would have been quite inadequate. This year there were only 18 ex-servicemen taking the preparatory course.

That deals with the present situation, not with the situation of three years ago which this Government was going to remedy. In "The West Australian" of Friday, the 15th July, 1949, the following statement from the secretary of the Teachers' Union appears:—

Dearth of Teachers. Recruitment "On the Decline." If recruitment of teachers in this State was to be stimulated, salaries would have to be raised to put the teaching service on a more realistic competitive footing, the secretary of the W.A. Teachers' Union (Mr. W. E. Thomas) said yesterday.

The executive of the union was gravely concerned about the shortage of teachers, Mr. Thomas said. Excessive numbers in classes were common, and the prospects of recruitment to the service were on the decline.

I interpolate here that there is no cause for satisfaction in that statement. Instead of the situation having been remedied, it is becoming worse according to the secretary of the Teachers' Union, who ought to be in a position to know. Continuing—

Boys and girls from the high schools and their parents found the lure of other callings more attractive. Banks, insurance companies, industrial and commercial concerns, were offering better prospects to young people with the junior certificate than were available to those who entered the teaching service after an additional two years' high school education and three years' school and college training.

In "The W.A. Teachers' Journal" of the 2nd February this year there is an editorial headed "Recruitment of Teachers." It deals with certain statements in the McNair Committee's report with regard to the training of teachers in Great Britain, and points out that in Britain the authorities are alive to the need for doing something to recruit additional teachers to supplement the service. The whole purport of the editorial, which I do not propose to read, is to the effect that there are more attractions in other professions than are to be found in the teaching profession, and because of that fact we cannot expect to recruit to the ranks of the teachers a sufficient number even to maintain classes at the present level, let alone the level to which this Government claimed it was going

to reduce classes. Those are the facts. There is another article in "The W.A. Teachers' Journal" of Saturday, the 2nd April, 1949, headed:—"Supply of Teachers. Need for drastic action." I propose to read portion of the article—

In the report of the Executive meeting will be found a letter from the Director of Education about utilising supply teachers to relieve overcrowding. He concludes that letter with the following sentence: "The position at present is easier than it has been for years, i.e., regarding the size of classes; but as the year progresses and teachers drop out, the position will gradually get worse—until we absorb the output from Teachers' College at the beginning of 1950."

As to the position at the beginning of 1950, it is well within the bounds of possibility that the director's anticipations will turn out to be optimistic. But, putting the best face on 1950, the prospects for the years which follow are definitely gloomy.

The department, it is understood, considered the appointment of about 200 monitors was needed for 1949. Only 107 were forthcoming. Of equally grave portent was the shortage of applicants for training at the Teachers' College. In prior years the schools have usually provided about 150 applicants. This year the applicants fell short of that number. Moreover, of the applicants who were seen and approved by the College Selection Board prior to Christmas, an appreciable number of the brighter candidates did not offer themselves in February. In the meantime some had entered at the University with a view to following later more remunerative callings than the teachers', others had accepted positions which offered immediately high rates of pay. Had the Department had to depend on entrants from the schools as in normal times there would have been only 108 first year students in training in 1949. Fortunately the ranks of the first year students were swelled by the inclusion of 81 ex-servicemen who had under the Commonwealth reconstruction training scheme completed a preliminary course of training at the Perth Technical College. But this source will dry up finally at the end of this year. At present taking the C.R.T.S. course at the Technical College are only 18 ex-servicemen.

I interpolate here that although ex-Servicemen have been helping the Government out so far, from next year the Government can expect little assistance from that source. The article continues—

It is clear that with the many tempting openings offering at the present time there is a growing reluctance on the part of parents and on the part of the young people themselves to devote to a period of training on barely maintenance allowance years during which they could be making substantial earnings.

The article goes on in much the same strain; it refers to the McNair report of Great Britain and so on. Members will recall that at the commencement of the article there appeared a quotation from a letter of the Director of Education, who said that the position was easier than it had been for some time. That happened to be the Acting Director of Education, Mr. Edmondson, as Mr. Little, the Director, was away. The letter was written in March, and in May of the same year—I am quoting now from "The West Australian" of the 18th May, 1949—there appeared an article from the Acting Director of Education. He probably felt that he should have more to say about the matter, as he was in the most responsible position in respect of education in Western Australia. I propose to read the article, which is headed, "Wicked State of Affairs in Schools."

"A wicked state of affairs" is how the Deputy-Director of Education (Mr. T. S. Edmondson) yesterday described the shortage of teachers which made unavoidable a ratio of 50 scholars to one teacher.

So much for the classes which were to be reduced to 25 scholars. The position was so bad that the ratio of 50 scholars to one teacher throughout the whole service was unavoidable!

Mr. Edmondson, who was addressing the conference of high school teachers on the urgency of recruitment of teachers, said that the Education Department had been short of teachers throughout the war years and that the yearly loss over the past two years was between 150 and 160. This was due to the marriage of women teachers, retirements from the service, deaths and other causes.

Before the war there had been an annual flow of monitors for training as teachers of between 150 and 160, but there had been, decreasing numbers year by year until the total loss was about 400. That position had progressively improved by a stream of ex-Servicemen into the training college, but that source had now diminished to a total of only 19 men in the college. Unless something was done to build up the training college to its capacity the present acute position "will be worse after 1952."

It will be worse because it is getting progressively worse now. But this was the Government that was going to remedy a state of affairs which it said was unsatisfactory under the previous Government!

The present class ratio of 50 children to one teacher was unavoidable, Mr. Edmondson said, because the teaching staff in any one school could not be augmented except by robbing some other school.

Can the Minister or the Government get much satisfaction from that state of affairs, in view of the promises that were made? I think silence is golden.

The Honorary Minister for Supply and Shipping: We have had only two years; you had about 17.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: How long?

The Honorary Minister for Supply and Shipping: A long time.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I had less than 18 months after the war in which to deal with the situation.

The Honorary Minister for Supply and Shipping: I did not mean you, but the Government.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: This Government has had two years and six months, and that is the situation.

Mr. Wild: Would there have been any shifting of population in the last two or three years?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Could not the Government foresee some shifting of population when it made its promises?

The Minister for Lands: No.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The Government could not foresee any of these things which have developed, when it made its promises! It did not add any qualifications to its promises as to what might develop but made a straightout statement as to what would be done. It has not done as it said it would and the position has become progressively worse.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: The Premier has not done it either.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Here is some more of what was promised—

Children obliged to remain on correspondence classes will be provided with periodical opportunities for contact with other school children.

When the Minister for Education made that statement he was unaware that that was being done already by the previous Government. Children on correspondence lessons were being brought down to the metropolitan area so that they could have contact with other children. So the Minister promised to do something that was being done already. He said also—

We will enter into urgent negotiations with the Federal Government to provide funds for the extension of education.

What urgent negotiations have been entered into? If there have been any we should have been told about them tonight.

The Minister for Education: You might have been told about them two years ago. I think you were. I am not going to repeat myself as you do.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I know this is hard for the Minister to take. I am not repeating myself too much.

The Minister for Lands: I do not know what you would do without "The West Australian."

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I do not know what I would do without the promises the Government made and did not keep. It is not my fault that the Government made the promises.

The Minister for Lands: We are not blaming you.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: What is more, the Government should stand up to its promises.

Hon. A. H. Panton: The Minister for Lands has come in fresh after last night.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Here is another statement of the Minister—

All over the country additions to schools, or new schools, are necessary.

And they still are! All over the State—and I say it deliberately—additions to schools and new schools are necessary. The Minister said it tonight.

The Minister for Education: And now you are ridiculous if you think they could all have been built in two years.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The Minister made the statement.

The Minister for Education: Of course I did not promise to build all the schools in two years.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The Minister made that statement.

The Minister for Education: Use your commonsense!

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I am using it.

Mr. Ackland: Take a weekend trip with me and see what has been done in the country. The Government has done wonders.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: This statement which the Minister made three years ago can be made with equal truth today. I will repeat the statement—

All over the country additions to schools, or new schools, are necessary.

They were. I do not deny it. And they still are.

Mr. Marshall: They cannot deny it.

The Minister for Lands: There has been great progress.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: That statement was made with only one intention—to bring odium upon the then Government without any attempt to explain that there were difficulties, and to gain support for this Government with the inference that it would effect a remedy.

Mr. Brady: And the cobwebs have become thicker instead.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: It was a most unfair statement to make without some explanation being given. Had the Minister said that while that was the situation it had to be agreed that we had just emerged from a war, during which period it was not possible to have any building done but that he and his supporters would do their best if they were elected to office, I could not have complained. But he made that statement without qualification and I assert that I can with equal truth make the same statement today, that all over Western Australia there is need for additional rooms and schools. If a few examples are required, I will give them. Take the school at Carnamah! When the Government took office and the Minister had an opportunity of looking round, he found a number of places, as I could today, where schools were needed, and he was particularly concerned about Carnamah. He had something to say about the fact that the previous Government had not erected a new school there. There is not a new school at Carnamah yet. That is not the Minister's fault. He was anxious to put it there and it is in the course of erection; but it is not ready for occupation, and this Government has been in office for two years and six months.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: It was promised by the previous Government.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I do not care if it was promised by Methuselah. It has not been erected. I merely mention that to show the difficulties confronting any Government in trying to deal with the situation. Nothing was said to explain the situation that existed when the present Government was in office. Cobwebs were supposed to be responsible. Muddle was supposed to be responsible. What is the reason now? I assume that if there was one school in Western Australia that the Minister was anxious to have erected quickly, it was the Carnamah school because of what he had said and how he blamed the previous Government for not having provided it. But it is not up yet. Another promise which has been "substantially" met is this—"We will set up area schools where conditions are suitable." How many have been set up by the Government? The answer is, of course, exactly none.

The Minister for Education: In how many places are conditions suitable?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I should think, at least six.

The Minister for Education: I might not agree with you.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: That does not alter the fact that the Minister has not erected any. In another place the Minister said that the previous Government had been promising area schools and all it had up to that stage was the idea. That is all this Government has done after two and a half years in office. It promised to establish area schools. The Minister knows that some suitable sites were acquired for the purpose, yet there is not a single area school in Western Australia. I do not blame the Minister because there are no area schools—I know his difficulties—but what I do blame him for is for deliberately capitalising on the situation which confronted the previous Government, and which confronts this one, and drawing attention to the weaknesses without a single word of explanation. Of course we did not provide any area schools, but that was not because we did not desire to. It was intended that the first area school would be erected at Boyup Brook.

The Minister for Education: You had your right of reply to this. Why did the people listen to me and not to you?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Because it is so easy to listen to promises.

The Minister for Education: Read the speech your leader made.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The Minister and his colleagues will find when the next election comes on that they will not be in a position to make such promises.

The Minister for Lands: Are you going to make any?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I will not make any promises that I cannot carry out; and, what is more, I have never done so. Another promise was, "We will establish hostels at high school centres." Where are they? It is true there is a hostel at Bunbury which was set up by the Country Womens' Association, with assistance rendered by the previous Government.

Mr. Oliver: They have a new two-up school at Kalgoorlie.

Hon. A. H. Panton: That was only a transfer.

The Minister for Education: What about the new one at Bunbury?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: When it became necessary for the Country Women's Association to look for other premises, it was decided by the Government to purchase a building which had been used by the Fresh Air League. This building was brought under my notice, so I called for a report on it from the Principal Architect, and the advice was that the Government should not acquire it because it was only a shell. As a result of that advice, which appeared to be sound, the building was not purchased. But this Government desired to purchase it, and did so for £500. Last year when we were dealing with the Estimates I wanted to know how much it would cost to put the £500 building in order. I suggested it would be about £5000. The Minister said it would be nearer £3,000. I had no way of proving my assertion, but I have had an opportunity since. This year I asked the Minister, on the 6th July, this question—

What amount was expended by the Government on the Fresh Air League building at Bunbury for the purpose of rendering it fit for use as a boys' hostel?

The answer was—

Purchase of building, £500; renovation and alteration, £4,560.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: Everything is going up.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I suggested it would be £5,000, but the Minister said it would be nearer £3,000. Is it good business to pay £500 for a mere shell and then have to spend nearly £5,000 to put it in order?

Mr. Styants: That did not show much perspicacity, did it?

The Minister for Education: It showed a hostel, though, which is worth something.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Yes, and that is all that can be said for the proposition. There should be a limit if we have any regard for the proper expenditure of public funds.

The Minister for Housing: There is no limit when you start on new buildings today.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: This was not a new building, but an old shell.

The Minister for Lands: You can always build up an old shell. What is your opinion of it?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: My opinion is that this was bad business and the Government should have put up a new building.

The Minister for Housing: There might not have been any building.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: This building was adversely reported upon by the architect, and now nearly £5,000 has been spent on it.

The Minister for Housing: I think the Bunbury people would support it.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I suppose what actually happened at the finish was that it became practically a new building.

The Minister for Housing: It was probably much cheaper.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: No, probably much dearer.

The Minister for Housing: If I were buying a building I would purchase an existing one every time instead of erecting a new one.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The previous Government was supposed to be surrounded by cobwebs and muddle, but it apparently did have some plans in the office. In "The West Australian" of Tuesday, the 1st March of this year, there appeared a statement by the Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Mr. Watts, who said, *inter alia*,

When the present Government had come into office, there had existed a "glorious blueprint" for the erection of high schools and junior high schools, Mr. Watts said. It had been decided to postpone the erection of further secondary school accommodation and to remedy the situation of primary schools. The Government had pursued this policy with considerable success.

The Minister complained about the fact that the previous Government had a glorious blueprint of secondary schools for country districts. In the "Teachers' Journal" of the 2nd March of this year there appeared this article—

Victorian Preparations to Raise Leaving Age.

The Victorian Director of Education (Mr. A. Ramsay), addressing an Adult Education Summer School in Melbourne, said he was recommending 350 pupils as the ideal number for any secondary school with 500 as a maximum. All members of the teaching staff should know their pupils personally.

For boys of a different type of ability, Junior High Schools and Technical Schools would provide the necessary framework, but certain changes would be necessary. More crafts must be taught in the High Schools, and there must be more emphasis on academics and less on trades at Junior Technical Schools.

Mr. Ramsay revealed that Victoria was blueprinting new school buildings and preparing a reserve of teachers to prevent crowding when the school leaving age was raised to 15. He could not hazard the wildest guess when staff and buildings would be sufficient to allow the Government to raise the age.

And so the Victorian Liberal Government was blue-printing for its schools in various parts of the State, but that was something to be criticised when done by the Labour Government in this State, because we had a plan for secondary schools in country districts and wished to extend the advantages of high school education to country people in order to make good our promise of equality of opportunity for all. That was not in accordance with the Minister's ideas and it had to be criticised, and so the present Government abandoned it and was giving attention to primary schools.

The Minister for Education: It has not been abandoned.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: That is what the Minister said. His words were that it had been decided to postpone the erection of further secondary school accommodation and to remedy the situation of primary schools.

The Minister for Education: Is postponement abandonment?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: It means temporary abandonment.

The Minister for Education: All right. Have it your way.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: It means abandonment for the time being.

The Minister for Housing: That is not the way in which our children should be educated.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The result is the same.

The Minister for Housing: Do not tell any school child or teacher that "abandon" means the same as "postpone."

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I wish to be exact.

The Minister for Housing: So do I.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I will withdraw what I said about abandoning the scheme and say that, according to the statement of the Minister, it had been decided to postpone—with no mention of for how long—the erection of further secondary school accommodation, and to remedy the situation of primary schools. If the Minister postpones this until he remedies the situation for primary schools, it will result in almost complete abandonment for at least ten years.

The Minister for Education: That is not a verbatim statement of what I said.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I must accept what I read.

The Minister for Education: Not necessarily.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The Minister should correct what the newspapers say if they are wrong.

The Minister for Education: To do that I would need a special staff of correcters.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: The Minister should not reflect on the staff of "The West Australian."

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I come now to visual education, which is most important, and to which the Minister gave some attention during his speech tonight. It is an important branch of education and I am pleased with the progress that has been made with it under this Government. I hope the Government will continue to expand that work, but I am concerned at the deliberate attempt made by the Minister, in collusion with the member for Albany, to create a wrong impression in the minds of the people.

Point of Order.

The Minister for Education: I object to the statement made by the member for North-East Fremantle, Mr. Chairman. There was no deliberate attempt and no collusion with the member for Albany. The figures were given me by the chief administrative officer of the department, and I ask you, Sir, to rule that the statement is objectionable and should be withdrawn.

Committee Resumed.

The CHAIRMAN: Will the member for North-East Fremantle withdraw the statement, which I think is a reflection on the Minister?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I will withdraw the statement without hesitation, but will quote the facts and let the Committee judge for itself. I have for a moment mislaid the actual question, but I will quote it from a report in "The West Australian," and it can be checked from "Hansard." The cutting from "The West Australian" is headed "Visual Learning," and reads—

The Minister for Education, Mr. Watts, informed Mr. Hill, C.D.L. Albany, that £278 was spent on visual education in the year before the present Government came into power. During 1947-48, the expenditure was £7,857 and for the first 11 months of 1948-49, £16,522.

It will be noticed that the question was, "What was the expenditure in the year before the present Government came into office, and what was the expenditure after that?" That question, put in that way, did not convey any indication that visual education had only just been introduced when the previous Government was in office. If the member for Albany had asked what was the expenditure on visual education in 1944, the answer would have been "nil," because there was no department dealing with visual education then. But the Labour Government, seeing the benefit of establishing visual education in this State, seconded one of its manual training masters for the purpose of doing preliminary work and, because he was seconded from the department of manual training, his salary continued to be charged against that Vote, and there was no debit raised against visual education.

Mr. Uren was engaged for some time in going through the preliminaries in the establishment of visual education. During the course of those preliminaries, I received a request

from Canberra that, as he was a man who showed promise in this direction, he might be permitted to accompany an expert in visual education, who was shortly to visit Australia and do some work in the Northern Territory. So we gave Mr. Uren three months' leave of absence—from memory—and he went to the Northern Territory to gain experience in order that he might be a better-equipped officer when he came back to the service of the State. The figure of £278 gives an entirely wrong impression of what the circumstances were. It is a much lower figure than it should be, because the amounts were not being properly charged. It seems to me that the member for Albany was put up to ask the question in that way and so, on the 7th July, I asked the Minister for Education—

1. What was the expenditure on visual education in this State during the year 1945, i.e., two years before the present Government came into power?

2. What was the expenditure during the financial year 1946-47?

3. On what date was Mr. Uren first employed full-time on visual education?

4. On what date was his salary first debited to visual education?

5. Does the figure of £278 which the Minister informed the member for Albany was the amount spent on visual education in the year before the present Government came into power, represent the actual amount which this branch of education cost the State?

The Minister replied—

1 — 5. The expenditure shown in the records of the Education Department for the financial year 1945-46 was £278. On close enquiry I find that Mr. Uren was freed for one half-day a week for six months and later full time in exploring the possibilities of visual education. He was freed for this purpose from work as manual training instructor to which item his salary was still charged.

For the year ended 30/6/47 the total expenditure was £2,137, the figures for the next following two years being as previously stated, £7,857 and £16,522 (11 months). On the 10th April, 1947, Mr. Uren was notified by the Director that he had been appointed Superintendent of Visual Education as from 1st January, 1947.

Anybody reading the statement of the Minister, in answer to the question of the member for Albany, could not help but get the impression that the previous Government was dilatory and that this Government had done a wonderful job. In order further to clarify the position, other questions were

asked and I thought that "The West Australian" might do something to remove the wrong impression and put the matter right. What do you think they did, Mr. Chairman? Published for the second time the questions of the member for Albany, answered by the Minister for Education, and made no reference to the altered situation made evident from the question that I asked.

Hon. A. H. Panton: They have gone down in my estimation after that.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: So that the wrong impression was made deeper by publishing the matter twice and nothing was done by the Press to correct the situation. That I have no hesitation in saying, was an unfair position. There has to be a start with anything and the previous Government was entitled to the credit which was due to it for making a commencement. It is not to be expected that there would be a tremendous expenditure in the first year because the position was being explored. The Labour Government saw the possibility, appointed Mr. Uren temporarily, and when it was satisfied that the job ought to be done, appointed him as superintendent before it left office. Then his salary was charged to the Vote of the visual education branch instead of being charged to the manual training section as it was before.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: Your Government started it and this Government carried on

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Yes, but why create the wrong impression by asking what was spent before this Government took office and what was spent after it took office? There is a situation which was most unfair to the previous Government and which the Minister sought to capitalise to the fullest extent. That was the way it appeared to me.

The Minister for Education: Where do you suppose I would get my information from? I was not connected with the matter in any way at the time it happened. If your suggestion is that I have been deliberately misleading this House then you are placing that charge upon one of the officers to whom you referred in very glowing terms.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: No, I am not.

The Minister for Education: Yes you are. I had no personal knowledge of the matter at all.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Well, did the Minister suggest this question to the member for Albany?

The Minister for Education: No.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Very well then, I accept the Minister's statement.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: It is difficult to believe that the member for Albany could think up a question like that by himself.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Here is another question of a similar type and with similar intent. It is a question about the expenditure at the University.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Who asked this question? The member for Irwin-Moore?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: No, the member for Albany.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Good grief! Two questions in the one year.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I quote from the Votes and Proceedings of the 23rd June of this year. They state—

University—Special Grants to.—Mr. Hill, pursuant to notice, asked the Premier—

The Premier: I did not put him up to that. I have had enough questions to answer this session.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The Votes and Proceedings continue with the question—

What was the total of special grants made to the University of Western Australia—

(a) in the year before the present Government came into power;

(b) in the last financial year?

Mr. McLarty replied—

Year 1946/1947.

	£	£
Special Acts	46,845	
Additional Grants	12,812	
Faculty of Dental Science	4,000	
	—	63,657

Year 1947/1948.

Special Acts	46,845'	
Additional Grants	41,456	
Faculty of Dental Science	4,000	
	—	92,301

The member for Albany sought to take advantage of the fact that there had been a substantial increase in expenditure. What makes it funny is that the Premier replaced me by an accountant on the University Senate in order to do something towards reducing the amount being made available.

The Premier: Do you consider that rising costs, with which the University is faced, have anything to do with it?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Yes. I am glad the Premier does not attempt to deny it because I have documentary proof.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: The Premier is a wily bird.

The Minister for Education: An old dog for a hard road.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Members will recall that in the years when the previous Government was in office we were criticised because of too much consolidation of schools. It was said that schools were being closed down and other schools were being overcrowded because children were being taken into them. We were also criticised about the length of bus routes. It was claimed that we were making them too long and that something should be done about reducing the length. So, I asked some questions about the length of bus routes to see what this Government regarded as a fair maximum and to see whether there had been any change in policy. I discovered that the only change was, in many instances, to increase the length of the routes by adding some small additional parts on to them which had not been previously served. I quote from the Votes and Proceedings of the 21st June—

Education Department—School Bus Routes.—Mr. Tonkin, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Education—

(1) What distance is regarded as the reasonable maximum for school 'bus routes?

(2) How many existing services exceed this distance?

(3) How many routes exceed 40 miles?

Mr. Watts replied—

(1) (a) Terminal routes—37 miles.

(b) Circular routes—48 miles.

(2) (a) Terminal Routes—15.

(b) Circular routes—Nil.

Of course we would not want many circular routes exceeding 48 miles in length because that is quite long enough and involves a journey of considerably more than an hour, morning and afternoon. The answer to my third question was as follows:—

(3) (a) Terminal routes—1.

(b) Circular routes—7.

So it can be judged from that that if the policy has been altered from what it was before it is in the direction of making the routes longer instead of shorter. Therefore, the criticism that was levelled at the previous Government was without justification. Reverting to visual education, although substantial progress has been made in this branch of the department, the Teachers' Union is not satisfied that it is progressing as fast as it should. In "The W.A. Teachers' Journal" dated 3rd May, 1949, an article sets out a letter from the Progressive Education League to the Minister for Education which states—

2. Visual Education. My League, while fully appreciating the standard made in Visual Education by the Department, is of opinion that considerably greater expenditure will be necessary to enable this education to be given so as to be within the reach of every type of school. At present while the Department meets certain items of expenditure in connection with Visual Education it leaves other items to be met by the raising of the funds locally.

This in itself means a differentiation between the educational opportunity for children in districts where local funds can be readily raised and in districts where the raising of local funds is an extremely difficult business. My League, therefore, considers that this would form a second ground for asking for an increase in the Special Grant to this State.

One must agree with that request, because it is desirable that irregularities which must result from the fact that in some districts the parents are not as well off as in others should, as far as possible, be removed. That can only be done by providing in all districts the same opportunity. If the Minister would continue to make these urgent representations to the Commonwealth which he promised to do, and so obtain a special grant for education for which the States have been striving for the last six or seven years, then it might be possible to provide visual education on the high general level it deserves. The Minister made it extremely clear that this type of education is most useful and valuable as well as being the most pleasant way of teaching children, and the more we can extend it throughout Western Australia the greater the benefit will be. Whilst I freely acknowledge that considerable development has been made during the term of this Government with visual education I can see the need for still greater enlargement.

I want to correct, if possible, the impression that has been cast abroad because of the publication of the question by the member for Albany and the answer by the Minister for Education that the previous Government did nothing in this matter and inferentially was not interested in it, because the contrary is the case. The previous Government was most interested, and performed all the necessary preliminaries to establish the branch. If my memory serves me correctly, although we did not have an opportunity of putting it into operation, the then Treasurer, the present Leader of the Opposition, approved of the necessary expenditure for the establishment of a visual education library. I think a reference to the Treasury files will prove that that is correct. I have an idea that the amount was £11,000 but I will stand corrected on it. However, the then Treasurer approved of that amount or a like amount which proves very conclusively that, far from having little or no interest in visual education, we had a deep interest and were moving towards the proper establishment of this particular branch of the department.

In the course of my speech I found it necessary to draw attention to what the Government had not done. Not that I believe the Government was capable of doing or could have done a lot of those promised things because I know the difficulties with which it is faced. However, I know that promises were made to the people that it would carry them out, but how can they be fulfilled when the necessary requirements are not available? However, I think I am entitled, after the Government has been in office for two and a half years to say that, after all, these statements were in the main empty promises which were incapable of fulfilment. Some of them have been carried out, such as the increasing of scholarships, and the allowances for the training college, and I acknowledge that. Nevertheless nobody can truthfully say that the promises made by the Government as to what it would do for education have been substantially carried out because an examination of the position will prove a contrary state of affairs.

I do not complain because these things are not done; I do not complain because there is a shortage of teachers; because classes are still large and children are still

in batrooms and in sheds, for I know that the circumstances are such that it is not possible to effect a remedy within three or six years in view of the needs in all other directions. However, I do complain about people being given the impression that these things could be done by the Government and I blame the Government for not having done them. The Minister for Education said, "You can see the muddle all around you." Was that a fair statement to make about the Department of Education which was not in a muddle at all but was struggling against difficulties that could not be surmounted in that short period? It is still struggling, but of course with a better chance now, seeing that more years of peace have been enjoyed, than was the case previously. There is no comparison with the opportunities to make improvements when we pay attention to the fact that the previous Government could not recruit teachers on account of the large number of young people who were taken into the Forces.

Mr. Marshall: They were in the Army.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Many of the young men and women who were eligible for training as teachers joined the Air Force and other services which were attractive to them. Not only that, but applications were pouring in from teachers day after day clamouring to join those services. The building of classrooms was impossible also because of the lack of materials and manpower and other aspects. Houses and other building practically had to stand still. Was it fair to draw attention to the lack of buildings and the shortage of equipment and teachers in such a way? Was it fair to give the impression that the previous Government was to blame for the situation and that the remedy was to be effected by a change of Government? That is what was done. Events have proved that the promises made have not been fulfilled. It has been shown that it was most unfair to bring these matters up in such a way as to endeavour to shoulder the blame on to the Labour Government. No man could be more conscientious in his job than the present Minister. He is interested in it. He is interested in children. In all the circumstances, his work has been good. I quite readily admit that and praise him

for it—but he has done no more than he should have and he has done considerably less than he promised to do.

Progress reported.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL

THE PREMIER (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray-Wellington): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 3 p.m. on Tuesday next.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 10.53 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 13th September, 1949.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 3 p.m., and read prayers.

HOUSING.

(a) *As to Government's Policy, Rental Homes.*

Mr. NIMMO asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) What is the Government's present policy with regard to the sale of Commonwealth-State houses?

(2) What is the basis of valuation?

(3) Will the Government arrange finance for the sales to tenants?

(4) Will the Government state whether or not it is prepared to sell the houses at cost?