

road maintenance fund for expenditure on roads in the north. But I have not had time to ascertain what the road transport hauliers pay into the fund.

I should think that the road hauliers in that area may be contributing to a fund the moneys in which are used to repair many city roads which are affected by wet weather. Those of us in this Chamber know that we often find many potholes on city roads, but these days we do not find them on some of the roads in the north which are sealed. The road between Northampton and Carnarvon is standing up remarkably well, especially when we consider the extent of the heavy traffic that passes over that road. All the goods and machinery required for the iron ore projects are transported along that road, together with the constant haulage of goods from Carnarvon to Perth and the backloading of goods from Perth to Carnarvon.

Every town along the north-west coast, and every person who lives in that area is being penalised by increased costs and charges. If these imposts continue they will not encourage people to remain in the north but, instead, will encourage them to transfer to the city. And who could blame them? As a result people will gradually become discontented and leave the north, because they will not be prepared to put up with the arduous conditions and the high prices charged for commodities.

Amendment to Motion

Whilst I agree with the motion moved by The Hon. V. J. Ferry, I consider it needs a few words added to it. I therefore move an amendment—

That the following words be added to the motion:—

but we regret the Government has not foreshadowed any move to abolish or substantially reduce the heavy burden placed upon the costs of production and the cost of living throughout the country areas by the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act, No. 69 of 1965.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: I second the motion.

Point of Order

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: On a point of order, Mr. President, is the Leader of the Opposition, in view of the fact that he has already spoken to the motion, in order in seconding the motion for the amendment? If he is out of order, I will second the motion.

The PRESIDENT: I rule that the Leader of the Opposition is out of order in seconding the motion for the amendment, and that the motion is seconded by the Hon. F. J. S. Wise.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines).

House adjourned at 6.6 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 4th August, 1966

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The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (43): ON NOTICE**HOUSING FOR WIDOWS AND SPINSTERS***Single Units: Number, Vacancies, and Current Constructions*

1. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Housing:
 - (1) What is the total number of out-standing applications for single unit accommodation for widows, and spinsters?
 - (2) What is the approximate annual number of vacancies occurring in this type of commission accom-mo-dation?
 - (3) What number of units of this type are currently under con-struction?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) As at the 31st July, 1966—1,044.
- (2) Approximately eight per annum.
- (3) None. The commission has made financial provision to build further flats in 1966-67 and nego-tiations for a site in the Fremantle locality are now being finalised.

TAXIS*Report on Complaints of Lessees*

2. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Transport:
 - (1) Has he yet received the report of the Taxi Control Board on "all aspects of the taxi industry", in-cluding the complaint that be-

cause of high rentals for leased taxis, drivers are compelled to work long hours for little income?

- (2) If so, will he make available a copy of such report?
- (3) If not, when does he expect to receive the report?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) With the object of obtaining all the correct facts concerning conditions in the taxi industry, the Taxi Control Board sent a questionnaire to each of the 600 taxi owners and to each of the 377 taxi drivers. Of this number only 60 replies were received, 42 from taxi owners and 18 from taxi drivers.

In addition to the written re-plies, all were invited to present themselves for interview with the board. Of the 977 only five accepted the offer and at a spe-cial meeting of the board arranged for the purpose, only two presented themselves.

In view of the poor response no report has been prepared and it has been decided to take no further action at this stage.

- (2) and (3) Answered by (1).

HOUSING*Koongamia: Construction, Letting, and Finance*

3. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Have houses been built by the State Housing Commission in the Koongamia area during the past twelve months?
- (2) Are these houses being let to members of the R.A.A.F. with only recent residence in W.A.?
- (3) Are funds for building such houses being received over and above normal funds available to State Housing Commission for building houses?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) Yes. (29 Commonwealth-State Housing Act, 10 State Housing Act.)
- (2) This information is not available. The Commonwealth-State houses were made available to the Com-monwealth for accommodating serving members of the forces under the provisions of clause 13 of the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement.
- (3) Fifty per cent. of the funds used in building these houses is over and above the normal funds avail-able to the State Housing Com-mission under the provisions of clause 13 of the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement.

RENTAL AND PURCHASE HOMES**Applications: Metropolitan and Country District**

4. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Housing:

- (1) What number of applications have been received by the State Housing Commission for—
 - (a) tenancy homes;
 - (b) purchase homes,
 during the past seven months to the 31st July, 1966?
- (2) What number of homes under (a) and (b) above are for
 - (a) metropolitan area;
 - (b) country districts?
- (3) What number are waiting on an "await-turn basis" for (1) (a) and (1) (b) for metropolitan area?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) Tenancy—4,299.
Purchase—2,698.
- (2) Tenancy:

Metropolitan	.....	.....	2,580
Country	.....	.....	1,719
Total	.....	.....	4,299
- Purchase:

Metropolitan	.....	.....	2,217
Country	.....	.....	481
Total	.....	.....	2,698
- (3) Tenancy—5,475.
Purchase—4,372.
None of the above figures take into account duplication of applications or wastage.

JUNIOR AND LEAVING EXAMINATIONS
Fees: Reimbursement by Commonwealth Government

5. Mr. FLETCHER asked the Treasurer:

- (1) What were the total fees received by the Public Examinations Board from—
 - (a) candidates sitting for the Junior Examination;
 - (b) those sitting for the Leaving Examination?
- (2) If the State Government condones parents and guardians having to meet these fees to pay costs associated with these examinations, will the Federal Government not evade responsibility to this extent by not making available through the Grants Commission sufficient to meet such costs?
- (3) Will he have the Education Department accept responsibility for such fees for the purpose of having the Federal Government assume such responsibilities instead of parents and guardians having to do so?

Mr. BRAND replied:

This question was directed to the Minister for Education but is properly one for the Treasury. The answer is as follows:

- (1) Fee collections in 1965 were—
 - (a) and (b) £67,057.
- (2) No.
- (3) Answered by (2).

ROADS**Midland: Main Roads Department Plan**

6A. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) Has the Main Roads Department a plan for the building of roads through Midland?
- (2) Is the plan available for perusal by the general public?
- (3) Have plans been finalised for the building of a road through the old Midland Railway Company property as an extension of Victoria Street?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Some preliminary sketch plans for future roads in the Midland area have been prepared in conjunction with the Town Planning Department.
- (2) No, not at this stage, pending discussion with and acceptance by the appropriate authorities.
- (3) No.

RAILWAYS

Overhead Bridge at West Midland:
Commencement

6B. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Works:

Will an overhead bridge be built over the railway at West Midland? If so, when will it be commenced?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

The sketch plan incorporates a railway overbridge near West Midland. No decision on its construction has yet been made.

TOWN PLANNING

Midland Scheme: Implementation and Finalisation

7. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister representing the Minister for Town Planning:

- (1) Has the Town Planning Board drawn up a town planning scheme for Midland?
- (2) If so, is the scheme available for viewing by members of the public?
- (3) If not, why are plans for the building of factories and additions to houses being rejected by the Town Planning Board in the Midland area?
- (4) When will the town planning scheme for Midland be finalised?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) No, but the Town Planning Department is advising the Midland Town Council on certain aspects of the preparation of their town planning scheme.
- (2) No.
- (3) The Town Planning Board has no power to reject plans submitted for the building of factories or houses. Under the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act, the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority of the local authority under powers delegated by the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority is responsible for approval of development having regard to the orderly and proper planning of the locality and the preservation of amenities.
- (4) This is a matter for the Midland Town Council since the preparation of the town planning scheme is a council responsibility.

HOSPITAL AT BULL CREEK

Commencement

8. Mr. ELLIOTT asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

Because of the rapid growth of south-of-the-river suburbs, will he give consideration to hastening a start on the proposed major hospital at Bull Creek?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

Yes, but such consideration would need to be related to other hospital construction now in progress and in the course of being planned in and around the metropolitan area.

At the present time, the Medical Department is in consultation with the Lands Department regarding the finalising of the boundaries of the proposed hospital site.

SCHOOL AT LYNWOOD

Commencement of Construction

9. Mr. ELLIOTT asked the Minister for Education:

Will he advise when a start is planned on construction of a primary school at Lynwood and will consideration be given to making the school large enough to cater for all grades from the outset?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

In response to the member for Canning, tenders for the construction of a four-classroom school in Kinlock Avenue will be called in about two weeks.

So far as can be ascertained this will cater for the children in the area. However, it is against de-

partmental policy to transfer senior grades to new schools thus breaking the continuity of the upper primary schooling.

RIVERTON SCHOOL

Additional Classrooms

10. Mr. ELLIOTT asked the Minister for Education:

Will he advise when a decision will be made on the extent of additions to the Riverton school and will consideration be given to providing three additional classrooms at the school?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

In reply to the member for Canning, this matter is being currently investigated by the district superintendent and no decision can be given until the results of the investigation are known.

TEENAGE "POP" SHOWS

Police Control of Behaviour

11. Mr. ELLIOTT asked the Minister for Police:

Will he take whatever course is necessary to allow police action to prevent any repetition of scenes such as those at recent teenage "pop" shows?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

The police have limited powers as regards gatherings of persons in private buildings or on private property and, generally, have no right of entry except at the invitation of the owner of the property or the organisers of the entertainment, unless they have a search warrant or are attempting to execute a court process. The exceptions are that police may enter private property to remove any common prostitute, reputed thief, or idle and disorderly person.

MOTOR VEHICLES

Examination: Qualification of Shire Inspectors

12. Mr. DUNN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

(1) What qualifications are required by shire employees to inspect vehicles and pass them for licensing?

(2) Is there any age limit for such personnel?

(3) Are shire councils employing personnel without qualifications for this purpose?

(4) Does he consider this work should be done by properly qualified persons?

- (5) If the answer to (4) is "Yes", will he ensure that such practice is effectively instituted?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) No academic qualifications are prescribed for shire employees who inspect vehicles.
- (2) No.
- (3) Not known.
- (4) If academic qualifications are referred to—no.
- (5) Answered by (4).

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Collie: Land, and Provision of Housing for Teachers

13. Mr. MAY asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many Collie town lots are held by the Education Department?
- (2) If any, when were such lots set aside and put under the control of the Education Department?
- (3) Has the department any intention of building houses in Collie for its teachers?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) and (2) The Education Department does not hold any lots at Collie but it is understood that the Public Education Endowment Trust has some land under its control.
- (3) The provision of quarters is now the responsibility of the Government Employees' Housing Authority, which has advised that it intends to build three houses in Collie under its 1966-67 programme.

PERTH-MIDLAND AND CAVERSHAM BUS ROUTES

Bus Stops and Shelters

14. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What number of bus stops are situated along the M.T.T. bus route from Perth to Midland via Belmont?
- (2) What number have shelters for bus patrons?
- (3) What number of bus stops are situated along the bus route to Caversham via Walter Road?
- (4) What number have shelters for bus patrons?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) From the city—52.
To the city—56.
- (2) From the city—6.
To the city—19.
- (3) A service is operated to Caversham via Guildford Road and on this route the answer is:
From the city—51.
To the city—50.

- (4) On the route via Guildford Road:
From the city—1.
To the city—16.

NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINING

School Teachers: Conditions, and Release from Bond

15. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) Do any special conditions apply to schoolteachers called up for national service training?
- (2) Are they released from outstanding bonds?
- (3) If so, by what authority is this done?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No, but national service training counts towards the bond period.
- (3) It is in accordance with the policy applying to Government employees generally.

RAPID TRANSIT TERMINAL AT MIDLAND

Hills Area Service: Finalisation and Cost

16. Mr. DUNN asked the Minister for Railways:

- (1) In view of the delay in finalising the rapid transit plan for patrons of the hills area which is to be based at Midland Junction, could he advise:—
 - (a) Is it the intention of the Government to proceed with this project;
 - (b) If so, what are the reasons for the delay?
- (2) Could he advise the estimated date for the finalisation of this long awaited venture?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) (a) Yes.
- (b) Re-examination of the requirements of the standard gauge project in the Midland area.
- (2) Not at this juncture. Every effort is being made to expedite finality. It might take another two or three months, but it is hoped a decision will be reached before this, after which the rapid transit project construction will proceed as quickly as possible.

YOUTH CENTRE AT MAYLANDS

Establishment and Location

17. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) To what extent, financially and physically, was the Youth Council concerned with the establishment, in conjunction with the Perth Shire Council, of a youth centre in Maylands?

- (2) Where, precisely, is the centre located?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) \$8,000 was granted to convert an existing building.
The council is not interested physically in the control of the centre, apart from assuring itself that the Government subsidy will be properly spent.
- (2) In the old fire brigade building opposite the Maylands Town Hall.

HOUSING FOR TEACHERS

Use of Shires' Borrowing Powers, and Guarantee of Rents

18. Mr. GAYFER asked the Treasurer:

- (1) Can a shire council raise a loan to build single teacher accommodation?
- (2) Would the Education Department guarantee the rentals sufficient to amortise the loans if accommodation was erected for this purpose by a shire?
- (3) If a shire were to allow the State Government to use its borrowing powers, such as is done in the case of country town sewerage installations, could not the Government build accommodation needed for teachers and service the loan in a similar manner?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) Section 514 of the Local Government Act allows the erection of houses by shire councils for rental.
- (2) It would depend on the period of amortisation allowed for in the rental. Each case would have to be treated on its merits.
- (3) No, because this action commits future loan funds and the capacity of the State to undertake this type of financing is strictly limited.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES HOUSING AUTHORITY

Homes: Construction, Repairs, Teacher Accommodation, and Cost

19. Mr. GAYFER asked the Treasurer:

- (1) How many units of accommodation have been erected by the Government Employees Housing Authority during the last financial year?
- (2) How many of these units were for teacher accommodation in the country areas?
- (3) How much money has been expended by the Government Employees Housing Authority during the same period in:—
(a) new constructions;
(b) repairs to existing units of accommodation?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) 34 units completed.
(2) 17.

- (3) (a) \$312,400.
(b) \$11,900.

PLASTIC BAGS

Safeguards against Suffocation

20. Mr. EVANS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

What action, if any, is contemplated by his department to regulate the supplying of plastic bags to the public, having regard to the fact that a 21 month old baby was suffocated by means of such a bag on the 23rd May last?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

The plastic bag problem was discussed at great length between medical authorities and industry several years ago and the conclusion reached that education of the public was the only method considered practicable.

21. *This question was postponed.*

CENSORSHIP OF FILMS

Drive-in Theatres: Classification of Suitability

22. Mr. EVANS asked the Chief Secretary: Because of the popularity accorded to drive-in theatres as venues offering better facilities for complete family entertainment, and because of the fact that there are some films which are obviously unfit for family viewing will he give consideration to having section 12 of the Censorship of Films Act, 1947, amended to have a new classification available for use by the Chief Censor, such as "Not suitable for exhibition at drive-in theatres" and also provide the Chief Censor with further power (if this is deemed necessary) to so classify a film that has already come under the proposed sanctions as affecting films not suitable for drive-in theatre viewing, for purposes of exhibition at indoor theatres, so as to more stringently restrict such a film from being viewed by children, as a means of avoiding undue discrimination shown against proprietors of drive-in theatres as against indoor theatres?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

Steps have already been taken to inquire into the matters raised by the honourable member who will be kept advised of developments.

UNDERGROUND WATER SUPPLIES

York District: Geological Survey

23. Mr. GAYFER asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Has the proposed survey by a geologist been carried out as yet

to ascertain if there is any underground water suitable for use by market gardeners in the York district?

- (2) If not, when is it proposed that such a field examination will be done?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Within the next 2-3 months as soon as senior geologists have completed a series of urgent inspections for the Farm Water Supply Committee.

24. *This question was postponed.*

HOUSING

Exmouth: Allocation, Priority, and Collection of Rents

25. Mr. NORTON asked the Premier:

- (1) When the building of the town of Exmouth is completed who will be the responsible body for allocating the various houses to applicants?
- (2) Will it be necessary for an applicant to be employed either by the American Navy or the shire to get a priority or will priorities be governed by the date of application?
- (3) Who will be responsible for collecting the rents?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) The State Housing Commission.
- (2) The question of priorities is being examined.
- (3) The State Housing Commission.

DECENTRALISATION

Departmental Staff, and Liaison

26. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) How many officers of his department are engaged on decentralisation—
 - (a) full time;
 - (b) part time?
- (2) Has his department a close liaison with all regional councils on decentralisation; if so, by what method is the liaison achieved?
- (3) Are there any other departments working with his department on decentralisation; if so, what are the names of the departments and are the officers of the respective departments employed full-time or part time on decentralisation?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) (a) Two decentralisation officers.
- (b) This depends, from time to time, on the volume and nature of the work associated with the development of

regions outside the metropolitan area. At times there have been in excess of 8 officers (in addition to two decentralisation officers) employed for extensive periods on this type of work within the department.

- (2) Yes. By personal visit, participation in seminars, correspondence and personal communication.
- (3) A substantial part of all Government department effort is devoted to work outside the metropolitan region. This is consistent with Government policy for decentralised regional development. The success of this policy is evidenced by the current programme which covers the most widespread and diversified development in the State's History.

MARRON

Moates Lagoon: Trial Fishing and Breeding

27. Mr. HALL asked the Minister representing the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna:

- (1) Can he advise if the Fisheries Department or the C.S.I.R.O. carried out investigations by way of trial fishing in Moates Lagoon, Albany, on the possibilities of marron fishing and breeding in that area?
- (2) If not, did the Fisheries Department give sanction or authority to any person or persons to trial fish in Moates Lagoon to test the possibilities of marron fishing and breeding?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) No.

ST. JOHN'S AMBULANCE

New Quarters at Albany: Government Financial Assistance

28. Mr. HALL asked the Premier:

- (1) As representations were made to him by St. John's Ambulance, Albany, for assistance to build new quarters, can he advise if final determination has been made and the form the assistance will take?
- (2) If "Yes", when will such assistance be forthcoming?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) No. A firm proposal is still awaited from the head centre of the St. John Ambulance Association. When this is received a decision will be made.
- (2) Answered by (1).

MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS

Shortage in Country Areas

29. Mr. HALL asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

As there appears to be a shortage of doctors in country areas, what plans or suggestions has the Government in mind to overcome this shortage?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

The Government maintains a continuous liaison with hospital boards, medical agencies, and the Agent-General in London to secure the earliest possible filling of vacancies in country practices.

It is understood that the University School of Medicine will increase the intake of students when the Hollywood medical centre is established.

KING BAY

Port: Protest against Control by Hamersley Iron Pty. Ltd.

30. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for the North-West:

- (1) Has any protest been made by master mariners against the agreement which gives Hamersley Iron Pty. Ltd. complete control of the port of King Bay, Dampier Archipelago?
- (2) If "Yes", were the representations made by way of a general complaint or on specific points?
- (3) Is it intended that the Government's attitude in this case will be taken as a precedent for other ports to be established in connection with the development of iron ore deposits?
- (4) Can he name one other port in Australia which has been so completely removed from Government control as is the case with the port of King Bay?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) No protest by master mariners has been located in the time available. In any case the agreement does not give the company complete control of the port. The right is reserved to the State (subject to the provisions of the agreement) to make any proclamation at any time under the Ports and Harbours Act, 1917.
- (2) Answered by (1) above.
- (3) The Government's attitude in respect of any ports to be established in connection with the development of iron ore deposits will depend on the location of the port, its possible use by others, and any other circumstances which should be taken into account.

- (4) See answer to (1).

If I might add a general comment, Mr. Speaker, I did receive a letter from a master mariner, which was referred to me through the Premier's Department, but in this letter he was complaining not about the operation of the port, but only about his own employment.

DATRONICS ENGINEERS INC.

North West Cape Communications Centre Contract: Protection of Creditors

31. Mr. TONKIN asked the Premier:

- (1) Has the Government taken any interest in the plight of Western Australian creditors of Datronic who are owed quite large sums for goods and services supplied for the construction of the communications centre at North West Cape for the United States Navy?
- (2) If "Yes," has such interest taken practical form?
- (3) What has been the result?
- (4) Considering the authoritative assurances which were given regarding the financial stability of the major and managing partner of the contract, and the fact that the work was being performed for the United States Navy, does he not think that the situation should be regarded somewhat differently from ordinary business contracts?
- (5) Will he make representations to the Commonwealth Government with a view to having the latter Government make a move in the matter?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) and (2) Yes, the Government has kept in touch with the companies concerned with the construction of the V.L.F. Communications Centre and also with local representatives of the United States Navy. There has also been a close liaison with the W.A. Chamber of Manufactures to ensure that every reasonable practical step is taken in an effort to secure payment to local contractors who have supplied goods and services in connection with the construction at North West Cape.
- (3) Legal processes in cases of this nature are protracted. No positive results have been achieved to date beyond the value of demonstrating the Government's interest and desire for expedition.
- (4) In the final analysis the contractual arrangement between suppliers and their debtors is a matter of the legal position between the

parties. Otherwise, the position of a client undertaking a project and letting contracts—in this case the United States Navy—could be intolerable. However, it is conceded that some suppliers to contractors for the U.S. Navy might have assumed that the interest of the United States Navy was something of a guarantee. Unless they took steps to ascertain the degree of legal liability by the United States Navy, it is difficult to see how the position is different to any ordinary business transaction of this kind between a contractor and supplier.

- (5) Representations have already been made to the Commonwealth Government with the knowledge of the State Government, and the matter is being kept under review.

COPPER

Deposits: Locations and Development

32. Mr. KELLY asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

- (1) What are the significant developments regarding the discovery of deposits of copper mentioned in the speech of His Excellency the Governor on the 28th July, 1966, when declaring the second session of the twenty-fifth Parliament open?
- (2) Where are these deposits?
- (3) When were they first registered?
- (4) What stage has been reached in development of each deposit?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) Areas of copper mineralisation have been found which have warranted further investigation.
- (2) In the Kimberley, Phillips River, and Ashburton goldfields.
- (3) The 21st June, 1963, the 14th December, 1964, and the 31st March, 1966 respectively.
- (4) They are all still in the exploration stage. Some drilling has been carried out in the Kimberley and Phillips River areas.

EDUCATION AND CHILD WELFARE DEPARTMENTS

Kalgoorlie Office: Appointment of Receptionist-telephonist

33. Mr. EVANS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Child Welfare:

When will the receptionist-telephonist assistant commence such duties on a shared basis between the Superintendent of Education and the Child Welfare Officer at Kalgoorlie?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

When the necessary funds are available through the usual Budget procedure.

KALGOORLIE POLICE STATION

New Building: Commencement

34. Mr. EVANS asked the Minister for Police:

When is it expected that work will commence on the erection of a new police station and associated buildings at Kalgoorlie?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

Final sketch plans have now been approved and it is anticipated that a tender will be accepted at an early date.

35. and 36. *These questions were postponed.*

MOTOR VEHICLE DRIVERS

Blind Pedestrians: Precautions

37. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Police:

In the interests of the many people of this State who are blind, will he urgently reinstate a traffic regulation to require that the driver of a vehicle shall, if approaching a blind person carrying a white cane or walking stick, take all precautions necessary to avoid accident or injury to that person?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

Arrangements have already been made to include in the Road Traffic Code provisions relating to blind persons and the carrying of white sticks.

WESTMINSTER SCHOOL

Additional Bituminised Areas

38. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Education:

In connection with the despoliation of the grounds of the Westminster Primary School currently taking place, will he please indicate in what position it is proposed to construct additional bituminised areas to serve the extended infants school?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

The additional bituminised area at the Westminster Junior Primary School will be provided in the south-west corner of the nature strip.

The overall plan of the school was developed to preserve as much of the nature strip as possible. Virtually the school has been developed around the nature strip

BELMONT AND KEWDALE HIGH SCHOOLS

Upgrading

39. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) When was a decision made to make Belmont High School into a five-year high category?
- (2) Is it proposed to build any additional accommodation to meet the requirements of this upgrading?
- (3) In view of repeated rejection of representations made over the years for the upgrading of this school to a five-year basis and the adamant attitude of the department against such a move, would it not have been common courtesy on the part of the department to have advised parliamentary representatives of the change of policy?
- (4) In view of this change of policy, is it still intended to progress the Kewdale High School to a five-year high standard?
- (5) If not, why the change of policy?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) April, 1966.
- (2) Yes. A Commonwealth science block consisting of—
1 physics laboratory.
1 chemistry laboratory.
1 lecture theatre.
3 small research rooms.
1 storeroom.
- (3) No change of policy is involved. Previously the upgrading of schools in other areas was considered more urgent. Belmont's claim is now pressing and upper school numbers justify the establishment of a fourth-year in 1967.
- (4) Kewdale has only first and second-year students at present. It will attain full third-year status in 1967. Its enrolment will be closely watched and if and when the numbers justify it the school will be progressed to a five-year high school.
- (5) Answered by (2).

40. *This question was postponed.*

HACKETT DRIVE-STIRLING HIGHWAY JUNCTION

Aquisition of Land, Realignment, and Swan River Reclamation

41. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) Was the junction of Hackett Drive and Stirling Highway constructed on land which was not properly acquired?
- (2) On what date did the University Senate consent to the land being so used and when did work on the junction actually commence?

- (3) Who was the person who acted on behalf of the University and gave approval in anticipation of the completion of formalities?
- (4) Was the junction located in anticipation of a realignment of Hackett Drive and constructed to that of a good standard road?
- (5) How much of University land has been used for the junction and what is its estimated value?
- (6) Have plans to deviate Hackett Drive—through the surveyed area excised from Reserve A17375 and shown coloured dark brown on Lands and Surveys original plan No. 6430—been modified or abandoned?
- (7) If "Yes", what is the proposal which has been substituted?
- (8) Does the proposed realignment of Hackett Drive involve some reclamation of the Swan River, irrespective of the standard of the road to be constructed?
- (9) If the road is deviated and constructed to a standard conforming to that of the junction with Stirling Highway, what area of reclamation from the Swan River would be required?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) The junction of Hackett Drive and Stirling Highway was constructed on portion of University land, being Reserve No. 17331, held under Crown Lease, in anticipation of the completion of formalities relating to land transfers affecting the University.
- (2) The agreement of the University with certain reservations to the proposals for the construction of dual carriageways in Winthrop Avenue, Stirling Highway and Mounts Bay Road, including the junction of Hackett Drive and Mounts Bay Road, and authority to proceed with the work was signified in a letter from the Vice Chancellor dated the 15th September, 1964. Construction of this junction commenced early in July, 1965.
- (3) Answered by (2).
- (4) The location and design of the junction was related to the standards considered necessary in Stirling Highway-Mounts Bay Road.
- (5) Area used for the construction of the junction was 1a. 1r. 26p. A valuation of the land was not obtained.
- (6) Plan No. 6430 has not been modified but agreement has been reached between the University and the Government, the University undertaking to refrain from building in certain areas so

as to provide for a future realignment of Hackett Drive.

- (7) Answered by (6).
 (8) To provide a deviation of Hackett Drive commensurate with modern design and safety standards will require the reclamation of approximately four acres from the Swan River.
 (9) Answered by (4).

TOTALISATOR AGENCY BOARD

Unclaimed Wagers: Amount, and Authority for Retention and Distribution

42. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) For each year respectively since its inception, how much money has the Totalisator Agency Board derived from unclaimed refunds of investments on horses which failed to start?
 (2) What has become of this money?
 (3) What comment, if any, has been made by the board's auditors concerning its right to carry such money to form part of the board's funds?
 (4) Has the board the right to distribute this money to racing and trotting clubs?
 (5) If "Yes", under what authority?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) For the years ended the 31st July—

	\$
1962 (about)	5,000
1963 (about)	14,500
1964 (about)	16,000
1965	22,838
1966	23,832

- (2) These moneys have been paid over to the W.A. Turf Club and the W.A. Trotting Association other than part of the amount received during the year ended the 31st July, 1966, which is still to be distributed.
 (3) None.
 (4) Whilst the Totalisator Agency Board Betting Act does not specifically cover this point, the board considers that under section 28, it has the duty to distribute this money to the racing and trotting clubs.
 (5) Answered in (4) above.

43. *This question was postponed.*

QUESTIONS (12): WITHOUT NOTICE LEEDERVILLE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Excision of Grounds: Correspondence

1. Mr. W. HEGNEY asked the Minister for Education:

Last Thursday in reply to a series of questions which I asked regarding the proposed excision of a portion of the Leederville school

grounds, and as to when I might expect a reply to the letter which I sent to him on the 13th July, his answer was, "Next week." Seeing it was a week ago, and shortly we will be in the next week, when is it likely that I will receive a reply to my request; or will the Minister continue to ignore my representations?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

My reply of last week still holds. It would be surprising if the honourable member has not the reply in his mail box.

Mr. W. Hegney: Can the Minister say when the letter addressed to me was posted?

Mr. LEWIS: It was signed for posting yesterday morning.

YOUTH COUNCIL

Members, Staff, Funds, and Report

2. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) Who are the members of the Youth Council of Western Australia?
 (2) When were they appointed?
 (3) What full time staff has been appointed?
 (4) What funds have been made available to the council since it commenced operating?
 (5) What funds have been allocated for the current year?
 (6) When will the first report of the council be presented?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) Mr. N. R. Collins.
 Mr. H. T. Denny.
 Mons. E. Sullivan.
 Mr. A. M. Peebles.
 Miss P. Knight.
 Det. Sgt. P. McC. White.
 Mrs. M. Matthews.
 Mr. W. English.
 Mr. K. A. Maine.
 Rev. B. Rosier.
 Mrs. A. Doley.
 Director-General of Education or his representative.
 (2) The 9th February, 1965.
 (3) Secretary and typist.
 (4) To the 30th June, 1966—\$41,000.
 (5) \$91,200.
 (6) The report is in course of preparation and is expected to be ready for tabling early in October.

PLASTIC BAGS

Safeguards against Suffocation

3. Mr. EVANS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

Arising out of the reply given to question 20 on today's notice paper, relating to the use and

distribution of plastic bags to the public, the Minister replied that it had been considered that the only practical method was to educate the public in this regard. Would the Minister indicate—if he is not able to do so at the present time, perhaps he will obtain the information and notify me subsequently—

- (1) In what body is vested the responsibility for educating the public?
- (2) What steps have already been taken to implement this policy?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) and (2) There is a body which is constituted along the lines mentioned by the honourable member; that is, the Health Education Council of Western Australia. One of its functions is to educate people in general health matters, and it is tackling this problem. Of course the education of the public does not rest only with this organisation; education also stems from the work of the Public Health Department.

DESALINATION OF WATER

Investigation and Research

4. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister for the North-West:

Can he tell me what investigations are being made into research in connection with desalination processes which might be suitable for use in the North-West, or for that matter in any other parts of the State?

Mr. COURT replied:

This question is more appropriately addressed to the Minister for Works. I would add, so that I do not appear to be "passing the buck", the Minister for Works and his department keep me fully advised on any developments that are taking place in respect of desalination, and are currently well up with world research into the matter.

One of the iron ore companies is embarking on a desalination programme, but this is comparatively small when measured against the ultimate requirements of the project. I can assure the honourable member that the Government, through the Public Works Department, is right up on world trends in this matter.

5. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister for Works:

Could he add anything to the answer given by the Minister for the North-West in connection with this very important matter

concerning the investigations that are being conducted by the State Government into the various processes of desalination of water?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

The Public Works Department receives information and has sought information from many parts of the world in regard to desalination of water, but at the present time the conclusions that have been drawn by the department are that water can be obtained more cheaply by orthodox methods than by desalination processes.

Mr. Bickerton: This is the time to start, when there is cheap water available.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: In order to keep abreast with the times the department has sought information from all over the world in regard to improvements that could be adopted in any one of the numerous desalination methods. In addition, there are two of these plants operating in this State, one, I fancy, being outside of Northam, and the other at Rottne Island.

PASTORALISTS ASSOCIATION

Submissions to Government

6. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Police:

Has he studied the submissions which were presented on the 13th May by Mr. J. Finch and Mr. P. B. Lefroy on behalf of the Pastoralists Association?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

Yes.

NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINING

School Teachers: Conditions, and Release from Bond

7. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Education:

In reply to my question 15 on today's notice paper when he said special conditions apply to teachers who are called up for national service training, can he now tell me the special conditions?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

I would not be sure, because I do not know to just what the honourable member refers, but I do know they have deferment until the end of their training and, I believe, in the case of most until after they have had one year's experience. If that is not the information required by the honourable member I would ask him to put the question on the notice paper.

BOWELLING RAILWAY STATION

Sleepers: Crediting of Freight Charges

8. Mr. MAY asked the Minister for Railways:

With regard to my question 40 on today's notice paper is he aware of any particular difficulty in answering this question, having regard to the fact that it has been postponed twice?

Mr. COURT replied:

There is no particular difficulty beyond the fact that I understand the information has to be extracted and sent up from Bunbury. The department did hope to receive it before lunchtime; and if it is received before the House adjourns today I will seek the permission of Mr. Speaker to give it to the honourable member, otherwise he will have it as soon as it is received.

WUNDOWIE CHARCOAL IRON AND STEEL INDUSTRY

Part Disposal

9. Mr. HAWKE asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

Has any company or companies yet been formed under section 3(1) (b) of the Act of Parliament which was passed last year in connection with the Wundowie Charcoal Iron and Steel Industry?

Mr. COURT replied:

Yes. The company was registered—I forget the date—under A. N. I. (Wundowie Management) Pty. Limited.

Mr. Hawke: What date?

Mr. COURT: I forget the date, but it was to coincide with the signing of the appropriate agreement.

Mr. Hawke: Could I have the information next week?

Mr. COURT: I have given it to you.

Mr. Hawke: As to when it was formed.

Mr. COURT: Yes, certainly.

PASTORALISTS ASSOCIATION

Submissions to Government.

10. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Police:

As he has studied the submissions, has he given a written reply to the Pastoralists and Graziers Association?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

My answer is the same—Yes. If the honourable member would desire a copy of the letter, I will arrange to send it to him. I should have possibly done so in the first place.

RAILWAY FREIGHT CHARGES

Effect of Standard Gauge Railway

11. Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Railways:

As some centres on the eastern goldfields line will, with the implementation of the standard gauge, be further from Perth than they are at present, will he confirm that no freight increases will be applicable?

Mr. COURT replied:

I presume the honourable member is referring to towns that are on the main Kalgoorlie line where, because of deviations, the actual rail mileage will be different from what it is under the existing narrow gauge. As previously announced by the Government, the rail freights will be assessed on the original mileage and not on the additional mileage due to deviations. This applies to all railways affected by the system. For instance, trains which have to come down Avon Valley will have to travel a longer distance, but we made a policy decision on this some time ago and it will be adhered to. I am not suggesting there will be no freight increases for ever, but as far as the calculation is concerned it will be based on the existing narrow gauge mileage only.

MARGARINE

Revision of Quotas

12. Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Agriculture:

How long does he think the Australian Agricultural Council can continue to sweep under the carpet the question of a revision of margarine quotas?

Mr. NALDER replied:

I expect to receive some information from the Minister for Primary Industry in the next few days or within a couple of weeks.

Mr. May: A couple of years.

Mr. NALDER: No, not years. I did not say that. Then the Agricultural Council will be called together to consider this aspect.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

On motion by Mr. Cornell, leave of absence for two months granted to Mr. Hart (Roe) on the ground of ill-health.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: THIRD DAY

Amendment to Motion

Debate resumed, from the 3rd August, on the following motion by Mr. W. A. Manning:—

That the following Address be pre-

sented to His Excellency the Governor in reply to the Speech he has been pleased to deliver to Parliament:—

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

To which Mr. Norton had moved an amendment—

That the following words be added to the motion:—

But we regret the Government has not foreshadowed any move to abolish or substantially reduce the heavy burden placed upon the costs of production and the cost of living throughout all country districts by the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act, No. 69 of 1965.

MR. BICKERTON (Pilbara) [2.54 p.m.]: Members will recall that the member for Gascoyne last night moved that the following words be added to the motion:—

But we regret the Government has not foreshadowed any move to abolish or substantially reduce the heavy burden placed upon the costs of production and the cost of living throughout all country districts by the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act, No. 69 of 1965.

When this tax was introduced by the Minister last session I mentioned that I considered the tax was an ill-conceived taxing measure, and after seeing it in operation for some time, I am quite convinced that my remarks made at that time have been proved to be correct. It was an ill-conceived taxing measure.

I suppose it is fairly common for the Opposition to criticise Government measures, and it is right that they should do so; but, in all fairness, all members will admit that Opposition members, as well as those who support the Government, fully realise that taxation is necessary in the interests of running a country or a State. I believe that even if what is now the Opposition had been in power last year it is quite possible it would have had to look around to find some means of raising a tax to match the matching moneys offered by the Commonwealth in connection with road maintenance or road expenditure. Whether it would have decided to accept them or not, is purely a matter of conjecture, but I believe that for whatever Government is in power taxation is something which is necessary.

Therefore I am not criticising this particular tax purely as a member of the Opposition wishing to gain some kudos from the public on the grounds that he disagrees with a tax being raised to maintain better roads.

I believe it is an ill-conceived tax because it hits one section of Western Australia, and an industry on which we are extremely dependent on account of our geographical position and size. When introducing the measure last session the Minister placed great importance on a comparison of the rates and taxes and the method of levying the tax in this State and other States, and particularly in Victoria.

I think we would be very unwise if we were in any way to view the situation operating in the other States in connection with this particular taxing measure. The Eastern States, excluding South Australia for the moment, are much more heavily populated. All of them have much less area to control than Western Australia and all of them have a much larger railway system in proportion to the size of their States, than has Western Australia; and they do have methods of transport other than road. I think it is reasonable to say there would be two-thirds of Western Australia which is not serviced by rail. It is solely reliant on heavy haulage, or, to a lesser degree, on shipping as far as the coastal towns are concerned.

Therefore when this tax on heavy haulage was introduced it meant we were placing a tax on a system of transportation which was the only system operating in some two-thirds of Western Australia. Members may want to bring Victoria into it. Well, we know Victoria is a small State. It is well serviced by a railway system, and whatever taxation had to be paid on haulage it would in the main be from the rail siding to the point of destination which in most cases, comparing it with Western Australia, would be a very short distance.

Another matter was that heavy haulage was becoming in the Eastern States very much a competitor of the railways. Heavy haulage was operating from Victoria through New South Wales to the north of Queensland and was denying the railways in those States much of the freight they required if they were to keep their deficits as low as possible. One can picture not hundreds, but thousands of vehicles pouring across the border of New South Wales and Victoria each year, and I have no doubt that the administrators in Victoria thought to themselves, "Why should these vehicles, registered in New South Wales, be pounding away at our roads, and we receive nothing by way of registration fees?"

The people in New South Wales—the administrative group—would be thinking along the same lines: "Why should we supply roads for vehicles whose owners pay registration taxation in Victoria?" Consequently, in order to obtain some compensation for the damage being done, the Government there conceived the idea of this road maintenance taxation. Of course, once one State introduced it, it would spread right through the Eastern

States because they would want "their little share of the pudding", as it were.

However, here in Western Australia we can hardly use interstate haulage as an excuse for introducing a heavier haulage taxation, because the amount of heavy haulage would in no way compare with that in the Eastern States as far as interstate traffic is concerned. I think the Minister's figures show that, up to date, only 223 State hauliers have been involved in this taxation since the Act has been in operation.

Mr. O'Connor: That is the number who have paid the tax.

Mr. BICKERTON: Yes. As a great number of them have avoided paying the taxation, I can only conclude that the inspection staff is inadequate at this stage. I think the staff complement is somewhere round about 29 and I understand that they utilise approximately 20 tape recorders.

If there is anyone escaping the taxation. I am sure the Minister would intend to improve the administration by increasing both the staff and the conditions of policing it. This is a matter with which I intend to deal briefly a little later on.

However, Mr. Speaker, it does sound to me as if we are "cutting off our noses to spite our faces"—to use an adage—if, in order to pick up 223 heavy hauliers from the Eastern States, we have to tax everyone who has a truck weighing more than eight tons—irrespective of whether he is carting commercially or whether it is part of his business by which he makes his living—right from Wyndham down to Esperance and right throughout the entire length and breadth of Western Australia.

It seems quite wrong to impose this tax just to have the satisfaction of saying that a few—and a comparatively "small" few when one is talking in terms of only 200—have not escaped it. If it has been imposed to catch the few, then surely it is wrong that the State should carry this heavy burden of road maintenance tax to the extent of bringing it up to where it will give the State sufficient money for the matching moneys from the Commonwealth. From the figures supplied by the Minister, even at this stage it would appear that Western Australia has raised money far in excess of the amount required for matching moneys.

We all know that the north-west—and I naturally dwell on this particular part of the State because I represent that area—entirely depends on heavy road transport. It has always been the desire of the State—and I am sure of this Government—to keep down as much as possible costs in the north-west, but the Government could not have thought of a better method of raising those costs than by the introduction of this road maintenance taxation on heavy hauliers.

There is one matter which worries me considerably and that is in connection with the report by Mr. Wayne on the State transport problem. As there were only a few copies of this report tabled, I have read it only briefly. On page 14 of his report under the subheading of "Rationalising the State Shipping Service", Mr. Wayne refers to road transport. He says—

Road transport is steadily pushing its way into the northern areas, particularly the North-West, along the Coastal and Great Northern Highways and although road freight charges are generally much higher than shipping, an increasing quantity of freight traffic is moving by road.

A little further on, he says—

In the present environment then, it is my view that State Ships could to advantage, restrict their regular ports of call north of Fremantle to the deepwater ports of Dampier, Port Hedland, Broome and Wyndham and as the demand arises, any other major iron ore port which may in the future come into being.

In a later section of the report, Mr. Wayne suggests that the ports of Onslow, Point Samson, and Derby would be ports at which, at the earliest opportunity, ships would not call. There is one reference made here to Onslow; Mr. Wayne says—

There seems little reason therefore why Onslow's transport requirements should not be catered for by road from Geraldton, the overall distance being 552 miles.

When the Government, on the one hand, talks of cutting off shipping to certain areas in the north-west and of utilising more and more road transport, and, on the other hand, says that it is going to raise the entire matching moneys from a tax placed upon these heavy hauliers, the answer surely can only be one thing: that is, not just increased costs, but greatly increased costs.

The member for Gascoyne when speaking last night on this matter, prior to moving the amendment, mentioned that he felt a more equitable system of raising the tax for this matching money could have been introduced by the Government. During the passage of this Bill last session, I, too, brought this matter to the notice of the Minister. I felt that, if we must have this tax—and if the matching money was of such great importance to the State—then a more equitable system of raising it would surely be the fairest way to go about it.

I mentioned an overall increase in registration fees. This seemed to me to be a much fairer method. I know registration is being taxed fairly heavily but I have discussed this matter with road hauliers. During these discussions, I put forward the proposition of whether they would prefer to have this heavy haulage tax, as we

know it—the road maintenance tax—or an increase in registration. Admittedly, they would prefer neither, but if additional tax is necessary, the road hauliers would prefer it to be included in the registration.

Obviously, from their point of view, this is the easier method, and I would think that the Government could take this point of view, too. This road maintenance tax has increased the road hauliers' administration greatly because they have to keep records of trips, loadings, mileages, and all of those things which would normally be unnecessary to record if this tax was an increase in registration.

Some of the drivers are people who have had little or no schooling. It is not always easy for them to keep accurate records which would enable the owner of the fleet to compile his return for the Government. Many of the drivers have fallen down completely in the matter of keeping accurate records. If this was a tax which came on to their registration, this problem would not arise, as the owners would pass it on. As I have said previously in this House, the problem is not so much that they are paying a tax—whether on registration or on heavy haulage—because the owners pass it on to the consumer. However, through this road maintenance tax, administrative costs have been increased and, as a result, again we have something being passed on to the consumer.

There is also one other point which I consider is very important. Whenever a tax is imposed, we always find people who are trying to discover loopholes in that tax. Wherever there is a loophole, I suggest it is human nature that people should try to utilise it to their own advantage.

This happens, naturally, when a measure of this kind is adopted. To prevent this from taking place, and to ensure that the law is being obeyed, the Government, on the other hand, has to create an organisation for this purpose. So there is one fighting against the other all the time. What administrative body the Government will ultimately have to set up to ensure that the law in this regard is obeyed I do not know, but I consider it will be quite large. Even today, as we have discovered from questions asked of the Minister, half a dozen clerical staff and some 10 inspectors have been appointed. I should imagine that very shortly another 10 to 12 males will be appointed to deal with the administrative work, and two vehicles have already been purchased.

Mr. O'Connor: No, 10.

Mr. BICKERTON: I thank the Minister for that correction. Ten vehicles have been purchased and they cannot be operated for nothing. They have to be serviced; they require fuelling, new tyres and so on. The money for this has to come out of the taxpayers' bin. It is reflected in the overall cost and it is money the Government is not getting for its use.

Again, a good deal of the tax which is

paid by the heavy haulage operators is paid out by the Treasury to cover the effects of increased charges brought about by the tax. In many towns, particularly in the north-west, the workers are predominantly Government-employed, and if their cost of living increases—as it must do because of the heavy haulage tax—naturally they, through their industrial organisations, obtain increases in salary or wages to cover those costs. So the money is just going around and around.

I realise, of course, that even if the scheme of increased registrations were adopted there would be an increase in haulage costs. But that increase would be spread over all the people in Western Australia who use our roads, whether they ride motor scooters, drive Mini Minors, or cattle trains. Surely that is a more equitable system of raising matching money than placing the burden on one section of vehicle owners, particularly when it is a section upon which, in the main, the State relies for its livelihood.

Naturally it is suggested as an argument in favour of the heavy haulage tax that it is the heavier vehicles which do the most damage to our roads. We cannot argue on this point; however, if it were not for the heavier vehicles which cart the produce and keep the people in the outback, I venture to suggest there would be no necessity for these roads. The fellow who wishes to travel to Carnarvon on a motor scooter would not be able to use a bitumen road were it not for the heavy haulage which has created the need for such a road. Had we not progressed from the days of the horse and cart there would be no bitumen roads; our roads would simply be horse and cart tracks.

So it is only reasonable that the person who tows a caravan to Exmouth Gulf—and I understand the Premier once said that even if that area is not used for defence purposes it can be turned into a tourist resort—should contribute towards the cost if he wishes to use a bitumen road. I see no reason why such people should not contribute to the tax which enables us to get the matching moneys which are used for the provision of bitumen roads. There is no unfairness in this tax being spread over all forms of transport in Western Australia.

I hope members do not think I am harping on this, but I would like to mention briefly, once more, the fact that the collection of this tax will create another huge department, and that will be a liability on the taxpayer. By that I do not mean the employees of this department will not be earning their wages; but further taxation will have to be levied to meet the costs involved. I am sure it will not be long before the Minister will be able to prove that the system which now operates is not good enough, and that the department concerned has not the number of vehicles required properly to police the Act. Recommendations will be made to

him to the effect that the department cannot police the Act properly with only 10 motorcars and 10 inspectors, and therefore another 10 of each are required. And so it will go on and on, year after year.

From what I have seen of these things, in order to get co-ordination these people will eventually want annual meetings of inspectors, and so the department will bring someone down from Wyndham by air, and someone up from Esperance by air, so that they can all be lectured by the Minister on how to enforce the Act. And so it will go on and on.

The other method, proposed by the member for Gascoyne, seems to me to be quite simple. We already have a collection authority and there is no need to increase its size. No additional staff would be required. If a clerk handles so many returns per day now, he can handle the same number of returns whether the words "Five Pounds" are written on each return, or whether the words "Five Thousand Pounds" are written on it.

We already have a department which collects fees for the registration of vehicles and we have our police to administer it, and eventually, I hope, that will apply throughout Western Australia; and in saying that I do not want to offend any of my Country Party friends. However, one day, I feel sure, the police will be administering the whole thing, and it seems logical to me that if this matching money is so important, as apparently it is to the Premier, we should endeavour, as much as possible, to cut down on the administrative costs of collection.

I think the member for Gascoyne covered quite clearly the question of the additional costs involved and, while I have the same set of figures in front of me, I see no good purpose in my covering ground that he has already so adequately covered, and, in my view, in an effective way. Therefore I simply support the amendment and hope it will be carried.

MR. BURT (Murchison) [3.19 p.m.]: I rise to oppose the amendment because I do not consider the imposition of this road maintenance tax is the tremendous burden on the community, or on certain sections of it, that Opposition members would have us believe. It is interesting to note that the two members on the Opposition side who have spoken in support of the amendment both agree that some sort of tax is necessary if we are to obtain the matching money from the Commonwealth which is required to upgrade our roads—mainly those in the outback parts of this State. Their concern seems to be about the method adopted to obtain this extra money, which, I think, from memory is roughly about \$7,600,000 during the next four years; and we will obtain the same amount from the Commonwealth.

Is it not only reasonable to say that the people who use these roads should pay for their upkeep and improvement, and that

we should not bring the impost on to every motorist in the State? I understand that legally money collected from this tax, or any money collected which affects interstate and intrastate vehicles, must be spent on the roads where the tax is collected. In other words the vehicle paying this tax must have the money spent on the roads it uses.

We have had it suggested to us by the two previous speakers that this tax should be spent over the whole of the road system of Western Australia, which, to me, is quite farcical, because it is the roads in the outback of this State which require the improvement so necessary to maintain road transport where this is in operation.

I do not think it is quite right to just wipe off the taxing methods adopted by the other States. We in Western Australia should consider ourselves fortunate that we have only just had to bear a tax such as this. New South Wales and Victoria have been paying it for many years. Queensland—which I venture to state has just as much territory not served by railway lines as has Western Australia—has had some of its outback areas paying this tax for quite a long time.

It is interesting to note that the previous Labor Government in New South Wales found it necessary to impose a tax of 3d. a ton per mile in addition on all vehicles plying alongside railway lines. I think that we in Western Australia are extremely fortunate. Whilst we have to bear the tax it is only effective on vehicles of over eight tons. Is it such a considerable burden when we find that a 13-ton vehicle pays a tax of only 3.08c a mile, or 30s. per 100 miles on a load of 13 tons or more?

When the tax is considered in proportion to the actual nature of the goods carried by the individual carters, whether they are a number of clients of a transport company, or whether they are hirers of vehicles, I do not think this tax would come under the category of a heavy burden. Despite what the member for Gascoyne has said, I can say in all truthfulness I have had no concerted approach made to me by the various committees of the Pastoralists Association concerning this tax.

Mr. Bickerton: I can show you a few letters if you would like to read them.

Mr. BURT: I have had letters on other features of road haulage, but they do not refer to the matter with which I am dealing. On no occasion have the various committees of the Pastoralists Association made an approach to me concerning this particular tax.

Mr. Bickerton: They probably sent their protests to the Minister for the North-West or to the Minister for Transport.

Mr. BURT: The member for Gascoyne referred to the different types of carting. He mentioned prospectors.

Mr. Bickerton: Don't you remember Roebourne?

Mr. Court: Your electors are not unhappy.

Mr. BURT: As most members know I have a great interest in the goldmining industry. Here again the question of the prospectors' loads of ore being carted was referred to. I do not know of any prospectors who cart their ore in vehicles of eight tons or over. There is one mine, admittedly, in Kalgoorlie which carts its ore two and a half miles in a 25-ton truck.

Mr. Norton: Is it exempt?

Mr. BURT: This mine will be faced with an additional charge of \$6,000 per annum because of this maintenance tax. Is that such a tremendous burden when we are considering quantities of 30,000 tons a month? I do not think it is.

It is possible, and permissible, for the company I mentioned to make a track on mine leases which will come within a private category and it will not have to pay any tax at all.

Mr. Bickerton: That will not help the matching money.

Mr. BURT: No, but it will help the goldmining industry. Another company which is carting ore—the North Kalgurli—luckily has a distance of just under one mile to cart its ore from the shaft to the Croesus plant, and therefore it is exempt from this tax. Despite what my friends on the Opposition benches have said, if we could improve the roads used in the main by the hauliers in the outback, we would be going a long way towards improving our cartage costs rather than having an increased burden resulting from the imposition of this tax.

Mr. Bickerton: You are lucky to have a railway line running through your electorate.

Mr. BURT: And I hope I always will have this line. Reference has been made to the Carnarvon-Geraldton road. This is a very good example of what sealing a road will do to reduce costs. We know that what cost £20 per ton 20 years ago, when the road was not sealed, has now been reduced to £10 per ton despite the tremendous increase in wages, fuel costs, and so on.

If we could improve the roads in the outback—and I do not necessarily say that we should seal them; that would be impossible in the case of some roads—and if they could be upgraded sufficiently to carry an increased quantity of goods, the imposition of this tax would not be felt. The big thing of course in adding an additional percentage to the registration of vehicles is that nothing will be obtained from the interstate carters. I understand they pay no registration fee whatever.

Mr. Norton: The administration costs would be twice what would be collected.

Mr. BURT: I doubt that, because with the improvement to the Eyre Highway we will have a greatly increased road cartage system. We will still have greatly increased road traffic over the better road that will connect Adelaide with Perth. Although we hear the Opposition say that the tax was brought in as an impost on interstate hauliers, actually they will get off scot free.

Mr. Bickerton: They will use the lines of the Minister for Railways.

Mr. Brand: They will still use the roads; at least the Commonwealth is using that argument.

Mr. BURT: I do go along with the previous speakers and agree that it would be extremely distasteful if bureaucracy were to take over the collecting of this tax, because we have heard of the attitude displayed by some of the collectors towards certain hauliers. That is something none of us would like to see happen, and I feel certain that the control exercised by the department will obviate that in the future.

Mr. Brand: Human nature being what it is I suppose we must recognise the fact that there is a little blame on both sides.

Mr. BURT: I quite agree with the Premier in that regard, but sometimes a uniform is put on a man and he thinks he is a dictator of the highest order.

Mr. W. Hegney: An ordinary suit with some people.

Mr. BURT: I have nothing further to say, but would stress that I oppose the motion because I do not think the burden will be as heavy as stated by the previous speakers.

MR. HALL (Albany) [3.31 p.m.]: I support the amendment in the full confidence that members of the Country Party must be sitting back and holding their tongues in their cheeks on this occasion.

Mr. Kelly: As usual!

Mr. HALL: There is no doubt in my mind whatsoever that the burden of this road maintenance tax will be added to costs and borne by the primary industries right throughout the State of Western Australia. In regard to the north-west, our recent trip by plane over several thousands of miles made us conscious of the long treks that have to be taken by road.

I can easily see that the imposition of this tax will be most devastating and damaging to a particular industry in the electorate represented by the member for Gascoyne. I refer to that area of Carnarvon, the development of which is quite lucrative and which the Premier and the Minister for Industrial Development are always trying to advance. Yet we have placed a terrific imposition on our primary industries in the form of this tax.

In the Great Southern areas, I find hauliers are having to load this cost on

to commodities such as grain and super-phosphate and the farmers are so perturbed and disturbed they are registering protests and making representations to have super placed on a more economical basis, and deliveries made easier. I can see no alternative other than the cost of the road maintenance tax being loaded on to the primary industries, which are facing tremendous freight rises today. There is an article in today's issue of *The West Australian* which points out that farmers are up in arms about these increased costs and shipping charges. Ultimately, the costs have to be borne by the primary industries.

Although we have the glamour of the north-west before us in the processing of iron ore and the exodus of iron ore from our shores, we find there is an equivalent, or perhaps greater, value in our primary industries. The southern portion of the State represents well over £1,000,000 turnover profit.

We must realise this area is not a hole in the ground for a Japanese quarry as is the north-west. When I say this I do not condemn the Government for its attitude towards the north-west, but nevertheless we are fostering the iron ore industry in the north, and our primary industries in other portions of the State and the north-west are having to carry this burdensome road maintenance tax.

Here I would like to quote from the report of the District and Population Committee of Victoria, which was presented in 1963, as in Victoria some of the same problems in regard to transport costs are being experienced. I quote—

Your present Committee has made a special study of the effect upon the distribution of population of the existing system of transport regulation. It heartily agrees with its predecessor that—

If the problems of transport costs and transport regulation can be solved by Government action on an equitable basis—

I repeat: on an equitable basis—

—with full regard to the national interest, and with some guarantee of continuity of policy, then a very great step forward will have been made in removing the present difficulties of some country industries.—

These are country industries, primary industries, decentralised industries—

—and in removing the apathy or opposition toward decentralization from the minds of industrialists generally.

That, I would say, would be applicable to the primary industries as well as to secondary industries as they would have to pass on any burdensome transport costs. Looking at things in their true perspective, we find the following article was published last year under the heading

"Country Petrol Rates." It reads as follows:—

Country road transport will be significantly cheapened after October 1 by the Federal subsidy for reduction of the price of petrol and other petroleum fuels. It is a step towards alleviation of rural disabilities and will assist development.

On the one hand we find the Federal Government is trying to assist to bring this about in the interests of decentralisation in the far-flung areas, yet on the other we impose a tax which must hit the primary industries in Western Australia. The following is from a leading article which appeared in *The Albany Advertiser*:—

Farmers Pay More for Transport

The introduction of the Road Maintenance Contribution Act combined with the restriction of farmers' vehicle concession licences has increased farmers transport costs, according to a spokesman for the Farmers' Union.

Surely that must strike hard at the hearts of members here who represent country electorates. Our primary industries, particularly those in the north-west, need as much assistance as they can get and they should not be hampered or hindered in their progress by this burdensome tax.

This road maintenance tax will be felt in the more closely settled areas; and here I should make reference to the method of transport that is used in other parts of the world—in Europe and America. I can well visualise that the policing of this tax will become so costly that in the closer settled areas people will turn to the pipeline form of transportation. This will eliminate the observance of the by-laws of local governments. I can visualise that pipeline transportation within a distance of 250 miles will be sound economically and will do away with the maintenance tax. The imposition of this tax will drive people to adopt the pipeline form of transportation.

Grain is already being transported by that means, as is superphosphate and rock phosphate from the ship's side. Pipeline transportation will eliminate maintenance costs and the humbug and frustration of police action; and this form of transportation will eventually come about because of the imposition of the road maintenance tax.

The long hauliers in the north-west will be left with the burden of meeting the maintenance tax. So segregated and individualised will the tax be, that it will be impossible for them to carry on. Other areas with closer settlement will devise means of transportation to avoid or dodge this tax imposition.

I feel that the measure should be completely examined. The amendment to the Address-in-Reply motion has been moved with good intent and is designed to give

us an opportunity to speak against this imposition on the primary production needs of Western Australia.

MR. EVANS (Kalgoorlie) [3.41 p.m.]: The legislation at present the subject of this amendment to the Address-in-Reply debate is another instance showing that the relationship between the citizens and the present Government is one that is ill-wed. I would say that the offspring which we have seen develop over these last few years—this road maintenance tax—is ill-conceived.

If we examined the legislation and tried to determine what sponsored the Government to give birth to this creature, we could look at the situation as one required to add to the funds of the road maintenance concern. If this is the purpose, then we are only participating in a vicious circle as has been pointed out so effectively by the member for Gascoyne and the member for Pilbara. It is a situation which, in turn, is causing an increase in the cost of living, and that in turn demands the injustice that there shall be a subsequent increase in wages and salaries to be commensurate—or at least endeavour to be commensurate—with the increase in transport costs.

If, however, we decide that the main purpose of the legislation is to curb the road hauliers, I feel that we must have second thoughts on the issue. I understand that Western Australia was the last State to introduce this legislation, excluding Tasmania, of course, which is not concerned with interstate road hauliers.

Initial legislation was introduced in Queensland and a very litigious company, Hughes and Vale Pty. Ltd., I think, was the first to challenge that legislation in Queensland. That company challenged similar legislation in New South Wales, and the matter finally went as far as the Privy Council in dispute. However, a change of form was adopted in regard to this legislation in Victoria. It seems that an Act was brought forward called the Victorian Commercial Goods Act. That Act was able to run the gauntlet of the High Court by using the brief which had been laid down by the Privy Council in the New South Wales case, Hughes and Vale v. the Commissioner of Transport. The Victorian Act contains several exemptions, and these exemptions were approved by the High Court.

If the Government were sincere in its belief that this legislation was primarily to curb interstate road hauliers and not so much to raise money for this road maintenance fund—which in turn only creates the vicious circle of rising costs—the Government would have paid very careful attention to the effect of this legislation and would have been able to adopt, or insert into the legislation, certain exemptions which at the same time would not have excluded the larger type of transport, or traffic carried on by road hauliers, but which would have diminished,

to a great extent, the burden now being borne by the outback citizens of Western Australia. At present, there is no exclusion whatsoever.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.5 p.m.

Mr. EVANS: Before the suspension I was trying to outline the history of this type of legislation, and I was referring to the Western Australian Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act by pointing out that the State Governments of Queensland and New South Wales, in the first instance, in order to curb interstate road hauliers, framed legislation which was based on a system of licensing which was separate from the normal licensing of the vehicle; and in the case of Hughes and Vale v. The Commissioner of Transport, I understand that when an appeal was taken before the Privy Council that type of legislation was declared invalid and *ultra vires* in accordance with section 92 of the Constitution.

Using the judgment of the Privy Council as a guide, the Victorian parliamentary draftsmen were able to devise a piece of legislation which, although challenged by the interests representing the road hauliers, was able to run the gauntlet of the High Court and was declared valid. This legislation is known as the Victorian Commercial Goods Act and, largely, it would appear that the Western Australian Statute is based on that Act. However, one very important feature in the Victorian Act is missing from our legislation; that is, the exemptions which are granted under the Victorian Statute.

Certain types of goods are exempt from the provisions of that Act. I am unable to tell members what those goods are because I do not have a copy of the Victorian Commercial Goods Act with me at the moment. However, certain primary products are exempted. Although the exemptions would apply if these goods were carted by road hauliers in this State, I do not think the road hauliers would gain any great benefit from them.

Mr. O'Connor: They would with livestock.

Mr. EVANS: I do not know; but certain items of primary products are exempted, and I cannot visualise road hauliers bringing certain lines of primary products into this State, or taking them out of the State; but, at the same time, if they were exempted when applying to people in the outback areas, there would be a diminution of the present burden on those people.

Section 12 of the Western Australian Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act provides—

12. (1) All moneys received by the Commissioner by way of charges under this Act shall be paid by him to the credit of an account which shall be opened and kept at the Treasury by

the Treasurer and shall be called the "Roads Maintenance Trust Fund".

(2) Money standing to the credit of that Fund shall be applied only on the maintenance of roads in the State including grants to the Councils of Municipalities constituted under the Local Government Act, 1960.

That is not in accordance with the opinion expressed by the member for Murchison that moneys collected from road users in a certain area shall be devoted to, or used for, the maintenance of roads in that particular area. It is quite clear that the moneys collected can be used only for road maintenance of all roads throughout the State.

In commencing my remarks this afternoon, I mentioned that one had to decide the purpose of the legislation. What was the prime factor behind the Government's action in introducing this legislation? Was it to garnishee more funds for this road maintenance scheme; or was it primarily to ask road hauliers to contribute something to the upkeep of roads in Western Australia?

I am not in a position to read the corporate mind of Cabinet, but if it is a fact that the prime intention of the Government was to have road hauliers make some contribution to the upkeep of the roads which they use often in unfair competition with our railways, I would then say the Government has been lacking in not adopting the scheme which was devised and which successfully became part of the Victorian legislation, because this would have had the effect of diminishing, to some extent, the burden on our people in the outback who depend on intrastate road transport.

If, however, the primary intention of the Government was to build up this road maintenance fund, why is it so eager to introduce this type of legislation at this stage when the density of intrastate road transport does not warrant the imposition of a tax which must be applied at the same rate as that which is applied to interstate road hauliers?

The member for Murchison interjected earlier, I understand, that such legislation had operated for years in other States. That is quite true. The case of Hughes and Vale Pty. Ltd. v. Gair who was then the Premier of Queensland, came before the High Court in 1954. That merely suggests, and commonsense indicates, to us it would be correct to assume that in 1954 the density of traffic in the major States, they being closer to each other, was sufficient to justify such legislation. But in Western Australia, does the density of traffic now warrant such legislation, particularly as the member for Gascoyne has quoted the current figures which prove that the income obtained from intrastate road hauliers shows up in a poor light when compared with the administration costs of collecting the charges?

I therefore ask the Government to examine again the wording of the amend-

ment moved by the member for Gascoyne, which states we regret the Government has not manifested any intention to abolish or diminish this road maintenance tax. One would have to be a real optimist to expect the Government to abolish this tax, but one could be regarded as being reasonable in asking the Government to have another look at the Act with a view to its being amended to diminish the burden that is at present borne by people who are solely dependent on road transport for the cartage of their necessities.

Up till this stage, I have not indicated how I will vote on the amendment, so I now intimate that I will support the member for Gascoyne.

MR. O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Minister for Transport) [4.15 p.m.]: In moving this amendment, the member for Gascoyne has for his purpose the ventilating of two points before the members of this House. Firstly, he is asking for the abolition or the reduction of the road maintenance tax; and, secondly, in its place he is asking for a surcharge to be made on the license fees for motor vehicles throughout the State. His intention is that this surcharge shall be imposed on all motor vehicles. I would like to take some little time to speak on these points at a later stage.

Many mis-statements have been made this afternoon in connection with the legislation. Personally I have not received a great number of complaints regarding the legislation, although I have received some, as I would expect when a charge is levied. As a matter of fact a large number of people have indicated that they accept this charge, because it is being applied in the other States and they expected it to be implemented here in Western Australia.

There are some misgivings on the implementation of the legislation, because it was said by some members that the only reason for introducing the tax was to catch up with the interstate hauliers. This was never intended to be so. If members were to go through the debate last year I am quite sure they would find that was not the only reason. Other reasons were given, and I shall say something about them later on.

Firstly, I wish to mention the reasons for the introduction of the legislation, and to refer to the position that exists today. As we all know, Western Australia receives very favourable consideration from the Commonwealth in regard to road funds. The other States are very envious of Western Australia and would like the method of distribution to be altered. We must endeavour to retain the existing system, because in Western Australia we have more problems in this regard than any other State, in view of the large amount of territory and the small population in Western Australia. We have about 7.8 per cent. of the population of Australia

living in Western Australia, but we receive 17.6 per cent. of the road funds. Just imagine the plight of the Premier at the next Premiers' Conference if the Commonwealth Government were to offer us \$8,000,000 over the next five years as road funds, provided Western Australia raised a similar amount, and we did nothing to raise this amount!

Mr. Bickerton: I did not say we should not take the money.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I agree. Generally members have agreed that it was necessary to implement a tax of some sort in order to obtain matching money from the Commonwealth. In introducing the tax we had to comply with a number of rulings given by the High Court. One is that no discrimination can be made between one road user and another. Another ruling is that vehicles in excess of four tons can be taxed. However, in Western Australia we have adopted the South Australian method and applied the tax to vehicles over eight tons, instead of the Victorian or New South Wales basis of four tons.

The member for Kalgoorlie stated that one important feature was the exemption given to certain primary produce in the Victorian legislation, but not in the Western Australian legislation. This brings forward a number of complications; and if the Victorian legislation were followed here the cost of administration would be considerably greater, because in Victoria and New South Wales it is necessary for inspectors to stop vehicles to make sure they are carrying primary produce.

A couple of the provisions in our legislation have been left out of the Victorian Act. Where we apply the tax to vehicles over eight tons, Victoria applies it to vehicles over four tons. In Victoria there is no reduction in the license fee, whereas in Western Australia a 50 per cent. reduction in license fees is given in respect of vehicles which pay the road maintenance charges.

At some stage during this debate it was said that vehicles carting goods to the north-west often return empty. The High Court took into consideration that point when it gave a ruling that a State charging a road maintenance tax could give a reduction of 37d. to 41d. per ton mile. In giving that ruling the court considered that vehicles over four tons caused a disproportionate amount of damage to the roads, and in assessing the tare weight plus 40 per cent. it covered the back-loading of these vehicles. The question of back-loading was dealt with by the High Court when it gave a ruling in the *Armstrong v. Victorian Government* case.

I am aware that most of us recently went to the north by plane, but I am quite sure many of us have also gone by road. When travelling by road we can see the damage which is being done by the trucks in the north-west—in many other parts of the State, too. The High Court ruled that

these vehicles caused a disproportionate amount of damage. Surely if they do they should be compelled to pay something towards maintenance. It is very doubtful whether the charge imposed on heavy haulage trucks is anywhere near sufficient to compensate for the damage they cause to the roads.

Mr. Bickerton: Do we have to pay for the roads we use?

Mr. O'CONNOR: The honourable member should be the last to say that. He should be very grateful for the funds which are raised to improve the roads in his electorate.

Mr. Bickerton: Not if the position is such that they cannot afford to use them.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The member for Gascoyne said that when this legislation was implemented it was designed to catch up with the interstate hauliers. This was not the case at all, although it was one of the reasons. There are several others, the main one being to raise sufficient funds to match the money from the Commonwealth Government for the maintenance of the roads throughout the State. In considering the legislation the Government took into account other sources of raising the required money, but it finally decided that the road maintenance tax was the best method to obtain it, because the vehicles which are damaging the roads should be the ones to pay the cost.

Further, the Commonwealth Grants Commission pointed out that as a claimant State Western Australia was not imposing a road maintenance tax, while both New South Wales and Victoria were. This was another reason why consideration was given to imposing the charge. The member for Gascoyne gave some figures relating to interstate hauliers. He said that the amount which interstate hauliers would pay to Western Australia was \$82,842 per year.

Mr. Norton: That was the figure you supplied.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The figures which I gave were juggled by the honourable member, and for that reason I wish to put the record straight. During the week the member for Gascoyne asked a question as to what was the amount of road maintenance tax obtained during the operation of the first three months of the Act. I supplied him with the figure that had been obtained for the first three months, but the honourable member knows that in the first month's operations no moneys were received, and none would be due until the 14th of the month following the commencement of the levy. Therefore the figure he received of \$20,000-odd applied not to three months; but he simply multiplied that figure by four to obtain a figure for the year's operation.

He should have multiplied that figure by seven or eight to give him the total for the year. He did not take into account

that no funds were received during the first month, or that delay was experienced in receiving the charges from interstate hauliers. The money commenced to flow in from the 14th May last, but the Act was put into operation on the 1st April. Surely the honourable member does not expect the road hauliers to pay in the money before they start to carry the goods!

Mr. Bickerton: He was making a comparison with the amount raised locally from the tax.

Mr. O'CONNOR: He gave a figure of \$82,000, and that figure was arrived at by multiplying by four the figure which I gave him.

Mr. Norton: That is correct.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The figure which I gave him should have been multiplied by at least six. Apparently he did not take into consideration the information given in the answer to his question that we had not received payment up to that stage from 110 operators. Surely he knows we will receive payment from them! Where sufficient notice has been given we intend to take the necessary action against interstate hauliers who fail to pay.

Mr. Bickerton: If you can find them.

Mr. O'CONNOR: In this respect we are receiving the assistance of the authorities in the Eastern States who have implemented similar legislation in order to determine the ownership of the vehicles involved.

Mr. Bickerton: What is the situation in respect of a toll on the east-west road?

Mr. O'CONNOR: That question is not related to the amendment before us. If I were to refer to it I would be diverting too far from the subject matter. We are now dealing with the road maintenance tax, and I shall continue to do so. The figures given by the member for Gascoyne were not correct. The figure of \$82,000-odd given by him as the total amount that will be raised this year is at least 100 per cent. below the estimate. In the initial stages it is not easy to assess how much will be raised, because we have to take into account seasonal conditions and other factors. These could alter quite considerably the amount which will be eventually raised from the tax.

The member for Gascoyne said the administration costs would be hard to estimate. He said—

As a matter of fact, last session I estimated they would be in the vicinity of £75,000, or \$150,000, and the member for Mt. Marshall interjected and said my figure was far too low. I now agree that that is so when I see the number of people who have to be employed in respect of this tax and the number of vehicles and other things that have to be supplied.

During the debate on the Bill on the 28th October, 1965, when the member for Gascoyne made the comment to which I have just referred, I indicated

that I thought the cost of administration in the Eastern States was in the vicinity of 7½ per cent. The honourable member said that in his opinion it would be between 10 and 15 per cent. The member for Mt. Marshall then said it could be a bit higher, and the member for Gascoyne agreed.

I have made a check on this and it appears that the administration costs in connection with this Act are not 15 per cent., 10 per cent., or 7½ per cent. At this stage it appears that the annual cost will be in the vicinity of 5 per cent. of the collections from this particular charge. If so, and it appears quite likely that it is so, this will be the best of any State in Australia.

I would just like to say also that in going through *Hansard* I was unable to find where the Premier or I made any quote as to the exact figure which would be gained from this road maintenance charge.

Mr. Brand: Something was said in the Budget speech I think.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Mention was made of what we expected to achieve in the first two or three months, but nothing was said as to what we thought we would obtain in the first 12 months.

Mr. Bickerton: You must have thought it would be in excess of £700,000, surely?

Mr. O'CONNOR: I will quote a couple of statements made and a couple of other figures which will indicate that at this early stage it is not easy to indicate what we will get.

Mr. Norton: Have you looked at the Premier's Estimates speech?

Mr. O'CONNOR: Yes. The member for Gascoyne has indicated that what we should do in connection with this particular charge is to make it a further charge on the license fees of vehicles. This is a rather startling statement from a member of the Opposition who is always saying they are looking after the little man and that they want big companies to pay their fair share.

Mr. Bickerton interjected.

Mr. O'CONNOR: If we do what the member for Gascoyne suggested and take this charge from the hauliers and put it on the licensees, the charge will be taken from the iron ore companies and those other companies carting goods to the north.

In those circumstances we would have the little man, who has a car perhaps on hire purchase and who would be battling along from week to week paying the extra \$4.00, or whatever it is. The honourable member said that was not very much. It might not be to him but to some of those whom I have mentioned it might be quite a lot.

Mr. Norton: What about the extra cost of living for the little man in the north?

Mr. O'CONNOR: That is a good question. In the north-west, as the member for Gascoyne knows, people are treated better than those in any other part of the State. There is a bitumen road right

through to Carnarvon. Last year I quoted figures that applied prior to the bituminisation of that particular road—figures of the cost of carting a ton of goods from Carnarvon to Perth and it was considerably higher than it is now.

Mr. Bickerton interjected.

Mr. O'CONNOR: It was still higher than it is now.

Mr. Bickerton: It is not only the road that contributes to that.

Mr. Brand: The road enables bigger vehicles to be used.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The member for Pilbara said it is not only the road which contributes to this. I would like to quote from a book I have here, called *The Cost of Operating Buses and Trucks on Roads with Different Surfaces in Africa*. These people tested vehicles over 7,000,000 miles to find out the cost of operations on bitumen and unsurfaced roads.

Mr. Hawke: Was that in South Africa?

Mr. O'CONNOR: Yes.

Mr. Hawke: That is a pretty big place.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Yes. The names of the places where the testing was done are Zambia, Rhodesia, Malawi, Kenya and Uganda. This book is available for any member who would like to look at it. It gives the cost of operations on unsurfaced roads in those places and it was exactly twice as much on an unsurfaced road as on a bitumen road, yet the member for Pilbara says that bituminisation does not make such a vast difference.

Mr. Bickerton: If trucks are made for good roads, of course the cost will be higher on bad roads.

Mr. O'CONNOR: As I said previously we have already had proof of this in connection with the transport of goods to Carnarvon where because of bituminisation—and I repeat, because of bituminisation—

Mr. Bickerton: And because of increased population and productivity!

Mr. O'CONNOR: —the cost of carting to that area is considerably less today than it was 15 years ago. We must bear in mind that since 1950 we have had increases in almost everything—in the cost of motor vehicles, fuel, labour, repairs, maintenance, and everything else. Yet the honourable member says it does not make any difference! I do not know what could convince him. He could have a look at this book to see if that will convince him. If that doesn't, I don't know what will.

Mr. Bickerton: The honourable member did not say it did not make any difference. Stick to the facts!

Mr. Brand: You said something like that!

Mr. O'CONNOR: The member for Gascoyne quoted certain details regarding bananas and various vegetables being carted from Carnarvon and then went on

to say that because of the road maintenance charge, the prices had gone up quite a lot. I will not quote him, but I checked this morning in connection with this point. What the member for Gascoyne did not tell us was that the cost of carting bananas and the various other goods from Carnarvon to Perth is less now than it was in December last year. Tenders have been called for that contract and the tenders are less than they were last year.

I have some information in connection with this, and in the case of beans the rate prior to the 14th February, 1966 was the equivalent of 1.04c per lb. With the advent of road maintenance charges the rate is 1.01c per lb., which is a reduction of 0.03c per lb. I know this is not a great reduction, but the position is exactly the same on various other items.

Another point I said I would return to later is in connection with the estimate of what we would receive. We are not in a position to know what we will get for a year, and anyone who tries to make an estimate is only guessing. All sorts of figures can be worked out, but we do not know at this stage what we will achieve. In connection with this I would like to say that in this State over the last three years, and particularly over the last three months, the ton miles operated have increased.

In 1963-64 the total ton miles operated under permit amounted to 13,535,551. There was a very steep increase in 1964-65 when the figure was 24,984,994. For the last three months—April, May, June—which represent the first three months of the implementation of this legislation, already 14,686,716 ton miles have been operated under permit in this State by road hauliers. In other words, for the last three months there have been more ton miles operated under permit for this State than there were for 1963-64.

Naturally part of this could have been brought about because there has been a large wheat haulage, and because other seasonal conditions and movements in the north-west have also had their effect. I am sure no member here would say that would be a normal figure and that it will be the rate from now on.

The member for Gascoyne asked what the Premier said in his speech and I will read a little from his speech because I think it is quite relevant at this stage.

Mr. Hawke: The Minister had better read the lot.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I would have thought the Deputy Leader of the Opposition would have read the speech as he is so interested in the legislation. I realise I have just demoted the member for Northam. From the Budget speech which appears in *Hansard* on the 5th October, 1965, I quote the following:—

In fact, it has been calculated that the short-fall will approximate no less a sum than £3,800,000 between the 1st July, 1965, and the 30th June, 1969, when the current agreement expires.

The Government has therefore decided to introduce certain measures in order to increase the volume of money available for road works.

The estimated additional yield for 1965-66 from the proposed measures is given on page 1165, column 1. There was no indication of what was to be received for the full year.

It has been stated that some local authorities would suffer very largely. This is not the case. I feel that not one local authority will suffer financially through the implementation of this legislation and the Traffic Act amendments which were made at the same time. It is interesting to note from figures I received today that the average amount received by local authorities for license fees throughout Western Australia for this last year was up 17 per cent. on the previous year.

Once again, if a local authority received less for road funds because of this particular legislation and the Traffic Act combined, than it had the previous year, I am quite sure the Government would be prepared to study the matter to see what could be done about it. It is interesting also to know that in 1963 we received £1,060,000 from the Commonwealth for matching money for road funds. In 1965-66 it was £2,120,000, and in the following year—this year—we will receive \$3,180,000.

In 1963-64 the local authorities received 127 per cent. of this fund. In other words, because of the amount we received and because of the arrangement with the Commonwealth, we paid out all that money to the local authorities plus 27 per cent. of our own funds. In 1964-65 they received a further 23 per cent. increase, and for this year the local authorities will receive approximately 75 per cent. more money than they did in 1963-64 from this particular source.

I do not think anyone here will disagree on the importance of attracting necessary money for matching funds, because if any State needs road funds, Western Australia is that State. I think from the figures given there is a clear indication that the establishment of better roads in any area does reduce the cost of transport. Anyone who has a motorcar and who moves around the country will know that if his car travels over an unsurfaced road and goes over a decent sized bump he wonders how much has gone out of his pocket.

Mr. Bickerton: That is a good argument as to why they should help pay for this.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Another point I would like to make before concluding concerns the fact that a lot of people maintain that the metropolitan area is getting a lot of this fund. I made a further check on this, and of the road funds collected about 60 to 65 per cent. of the fuel tax and other funds are paid by the metropolitan area, but in the last

two years approximately 90 per cent. of the funds have gone to country areas and, last year, approximately 28 per cent. went to the north-west.

I do not disagree with this, because surely we must endeavour to give better facilities to those people in the remote areas of the State. It is up to us to endeavour wherever possible to make more money available to improve the roads to provide better conditions.

I do not agree with the amendment of the member for Gascoyne for several reasons. I do not think the private motorist should be made to pay this particular charge when the money will benefit the heavy hauliers. Therefore I oppose the amendment.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes—16

Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Brady	Mr. Moir
Mr. Davies	Mr. Norton
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Graham	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Hall	Mr. Toms
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. May

(Teller)

Noes—25

Mr. Bovell	Mr. Lewis
Mr. Brand	Mr. W. A. Manning
Mr. Burt	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Court	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Craig	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Crommelin	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Dunn	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Durack	Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Elliott	Mr. Runciman
Mr. Gayfer	Mr. Rushton
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Williams
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. I. W. Manning
Mr. Hutchinson	

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr. Rowberry	Mr. Hart
Mr. J. Hegney	Dr. Henn

Amendment thus negatived.

The SPEAKER: I should like to suggest to the House that, during divisions, the seat which is normally occupied by the member for Cockburn should be left unoccupied, if possible, in order to consider his convenience.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [4.50 p.m.]: I regret it was not possible for me to be present to hear His Excellency the Governor deliver the speech which it is his function to make at the opening of Parliament.

I take this opportunity of congratulating the officers of the House who have, since the last session, been promoted. I have no doubt whatever that they will carry out their duties with credit to themselves and satisfaction to the members of this House.

There are some matters with which I desire to deal on this debate, the first being the matter of the exchange of land between the Government and the University to make possible the construction of a new training college which is very urgently needed. In *The West Australian* of the

30th March of this year, I was astonished to read—I repeat, astonished—that the Premier had said that the Government was not committed on reclamation. I propose to read this statement because I think I can prove that it is false. The statement reads—

**Brand Says Govt. Not Committed
On Reclamation**

The land exchange agreed on between the university and the Education Department did not commit the government to any reclamation of the Swan River, Premier Brand said yesterday.

The exchange—to enable construction of a new teacher's training college at Hollywood—neither depended on nor involved reclamation of the river.

Construction of the new college, on a nine-acre site at the corner of Stirling-highway and Hampden-road, was scheduled to begin in a few weeks.

Mr Brand said the reclamation issue was related purely to the future realignment of Hackett-drive, which would eventually be necessary whether the university held the extra land or not.

The realignment of Hackett-drive could require some reclamation and this would be considered in due course.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: That is right.

Mr. TONKIN: The article continues—

The amount of reclamation necessary would be determined by the standard proposed for the new road.

It now seemed possible to get a reasonable realignment for the road by reclaiming from the river much less than the 18½ acres proposed.

Mr Brand said the government still intended to present to parliament this year legislation reducing the amount of river reclamation that could be done without parliament's consent.

Because I could not possibly see how this statement could be factual, I, myself, made a statement to the Press about the matter and I propose to read it to the House in order to show that what I said then was completely right. I quote—

Deputy Opposition Leader J. T. Tonkin said today that he was astonished—in view of known facts—at Premier Brand's latest statement on river reclamation at Nedlands.

The Premier said yesterday that the land exchange agreed on between the University and the Education Department “neither depended on nor involved reclamation” of the Swan.

Mr Tonkin said that under the date of March 15, 1961 the University Registrar (in acknowledging a letter from the Education Minister dated February 22, 1961) had expressed the University's appreciation of Cabinet's decision in agreeing to an exchange of land.

The Registrar's letter re-stated the conditions laid down by the Government as follows:

The Government agreed it would, on request by the University, when the University was ready to develop the Crawley site—

- Return the three acres of land south of the Crawley site.

- Proceed with the proposed reclamation of at least 9.5 acres from south of the University campus and transfer not less than nine acres to the University.

- Re-align Hackett-drive to the south of this land.

Mr Tonkin said that on September 8 last year, Works Minister Hutchinson informed Premier Brand in Cabinet that:

“The key to the finalisation of land exchange areas involves the re-alignment of Hackett-drive between Mounts Bay-rd. and Broadway, and the southern boundary of this alignment determines the area of land required to be reclaimed from the river.”

Mr Tonkin asked today: “Has the Government repudiated its assurance to the University?”

I took advantage of the first opportunity available to me to question both the Premier and the Minister for Works regarding this land exchange. In order that the position may be properly understood, I refer to the fact that there was a clause in the Reserves Bill, 1957, which made provision for the excision from Reserve No. 17375 of a certain area of land under the control of the National Parks Board and this land was to be included in the area to be utilised for a training college. The Road Closure Bill of the same year also provided for the closure of that part of Hackett Drive which separated the 3 acres 3 roods and 23 perches of University land which had been taken for the training college site and the additional land from Reserve No. 17375, which would make a total area with Hackett Drive of 11 acres 3 roods and 28 perches.

That was an accomplished fact and, at the time, the area to be required for the deviation of Hackett Drive was also surveyed and was to be seen on plan No. 6430; it involved an area of 2 acres 2 roods and 6 perches. Now, all of the foregoing was arranged and provided for in the legislation of 1957. It has been admitted today that that proposed realignment has not been modified or altered. Consequently this is where it is intended the new Hackett Drive is to go.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Yes, if it is going to be built at the standard at which the Main Roads Department engineers think it should be.

Mr. TONKIN: I am referring to what is shown in plan No. 6430 which, accord-

ing to the Minister today, has not been altered. Perhaps we should get the record straight. Today I asked a question of the Minister for Works which was No. 41 on the notice paper. This question was in several parts and I quote section (6) for the purpose of getting the record straight—

Have plans to deviate Hackett Drive—through the surveyed area excised from Reserve A17375 and shown coloured dark brown on Lands and Surveys original plan No. 6430—been modified or abandoned?

The Minister's answer was—

Plan No. 6430 has not been modified but agreement has been reached between the University and the Government, the University undertaking to refrain from building in certain areas so as to provide for a future re-alignment of Hackett Drive.

All that verbiage has nothing whatever to do with the road as shown in plan No. 6430, which plan was drawn up in 1957. I asked this further question—

Does the proposed re-alignment of Hackett Drive involve some reclamation of the Swan River, irrespective of the standard of the road to be constructed?

It will be noted that the Minister adroitly dodged the question. The question I now pose is: As this proposed deviation is on land already existing, and it is not to be modified, why is any reclamation of the river involved?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Do you want me to answer it now?

Mr. TONKIN: If the Minister would be so good, and the Acting Speaker (Mr. Crommelin) will permit him to do so.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: If I am brief enough he will allow me. It was to allow some play room between the river and the road.

Mr. Hawke: Play room?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Grass verge.

Mr. TONKIN: Through the courtesy of the Premier I have a plan showing the location of this deviation and there seems to me to be acres of play room available on the river side of the drive—acres of it. Have a look at it! So that does not seem to be a feasible explanation.

I am wondering whether the National Parks Board which, when the Labor Government was in office, insisted that it had to be compensated for any land taken from its reserves, has adopted a similar attitude with regard to this Government on this matter; or whether it has been browbeaten into submission. It has been recreant to its trust if it allowed this recreational area—this "A"-class reserve—to be taken from it and given to the University without having it replaced in some way by the Government.

There was a clear understanding, when this matter was previously dealt with by the Labor Government and the necessary amendment to the Act made in order to give effect to this proposal, that the reclamation of the Swan River, which was involved in the proposition, was in order to give back to the National Parks Board an area of land equivalent to that taken from it.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: So you did approve of the reclamation of 11 acres.

Mr. TONKIN: No, I would not say that is literally true.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You approved it.

Mr. TONKIN: What I did approve of at the time was a proposal which envisaged that if certain land which was to be set aside were required for a training college—and in order to give effect to that proposal some five acres odd were taken from this recreation reserve—then a reclamation of the river would take place in order to provide the requisite land to compensate the National Parks Board.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Actually—

Mr. TONKIN: That is as far as I went.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Actually far more—

Mr. TONKIN: Never mind about that "actually far more"! This Government is going ahead with a proposition which, if it did the decent thing by the National Parks Board, as we proposed to do, would involve the Government in a considerably greater area of reclamation than is now contemplated; but apparently the Government is reducing the amount of reclamation of the Swan River because it is taking—

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You can't win with you.

Mr. TONKIN: —without recompense, this area from an "A"-class reserve under the control of the National Parks Board. This is something which I have never heard of being done previously, and I very much doubt whether it was done without a very strong protest from the National Parks Board.

Mr. Bovell: What does it matter? The Chairman of the National Parks Board and the Chairman of the Swan River Conservation Board are one and the same person. So I am quite sure he is in agreement with everything the Government is doing.

Mr. TONKIN: Of course!

Mr. Hawke: He would probably get the sack if he was not.

Mr. TONKIN: If he is—

Mr. Brand: Things have not altered, anyway.

Mr. TONKIN: —I say, without the slightest hesitation, it is time he was replaced.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: What nonsense!

Mr. TONKIN: Because the National Parks Board is the custodian of the "A"-class reserves in this State and we expect—

Mr. Bovell: No it is not. Parliament is.

Mr. TONKIN: Subject to Parliament. We expect that board will jealously safeguard the recreational areas under its control.

Mr. Hawke: Hear, hear!

Mr. TONKIN: And when we were the Government so it did, because it insisted that if we were to excise this area from its recreational reserves it would have to be compensated.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: By reclamation of the river.

Mr. TONKIN: That is so; by additional land.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: By more than was required—something about which you criticised this Government.

Mr. TONKIN: Since the Liberal Government has been in office it has been noted on the file, in response to a request from the University, that the Government agreed to the reclamation of nine acres from the river. Does the Minister deny that? Because when he signed his minute to Cabinet he pointed out to his Cabinet that this nine acres was somewhat short of the 10 acres mentioned in the law, and, if he took this to Parliament, Parliament might not agree. Therefore he recommended to Cabinet, and Cabinet accepted his recommendation, that the University should be told that the Government would reclaim this area from the river in order that this deal could go through. That is all recorded.

Mr. Brand: The same as the 11 acres is on the file.

Mr. TONKIN: That settles that. I now come back to the Premier's statement which, it must be acknowledged, was made in order to mislead.

Mr. Brand: It was nothing of the sort.

Mr. TONKIN: We will see.

Mr. Brand: It was a factual statement which will be carried out.

Mr. TONKIN: It was not a factual statement at all.

Mr. Brand: It was.

Mr. TONKIN: The land exchanged with the University includes the area of Hackett Drive which is to be closed; so there will then be no Hackett Drive at all. It has already been agreed, in accordance with the answer given, that the total of 11 acres 3 roods 28 perches includes 2 acres 2 roods 6 perches of what is now Hackett Drive. So that has been ceded to the University.

The Premier said, "If you are content with some low-standard road then reclamation won't be necessary. But if you want a good standard road it will be."

That is not the position at all, because the deviation proposed in 1957 is still to be the deviation. It has been admitted today that the plan has not been modified, and so when one brings forward this suggestion that, "it is only if you want a good standard road that reclamation is necessary" then obviously one is doing it only in order to mislead.

Mr. Brand: That is not so at all. It is nothing of the sort.

Mr. TONKIN: That is so because no land at all remains for Hackett Drive; it has all been given to the University.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Why did you suggest 11 acres to your Cabinet?

Mr. TONKIN: That has nothing to do with this point—the point whether the Premier told the truth or not.

Mr. Brand: Come off it!

Mr. TONKIN: The Premier said—

Mr. Brand: The Premier told the truth.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You shift from point to point as it suits you.

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister can interject as much as the Acting Speaker (Mr. Crommelin) will permit him to do and it will not worry me.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I don't think you worry anybody except that you shift about so much.

Mr. TONKIN: To come back to this matter, if one looks at the plan and reads the answers given by the Premier and the Minister one can see straightaway that what is now a portion of Hackett Drive has been given to the University. That involves the provision of some additional land somewhere for Hackett Drive, the plan for which has not been modified. When I asked the question—

Does the proposed realignment of Hackett Drive involve some reclamation of the Swan River irrespective of the standard of the road to be constructed?

the answer was—

To provide a deviation of Hackett Drive commensurate with modern design and safety standards will require the reclamation of approximately four acres from the Swan River.

As the existing part of Hackett Drive is being given to the University a deviation of any size will require a reclamation of the Swan River; but the deviation is to be in accordance with the plan of 1957. Therefore, when the Premier says that the Government is not committed on reclamation, he is not telling the true position at all.

Mr. Brand: That is not so.

MR. TONKIN: I object to anyone in the position of Premier of the State deliberately misleading the people on the issue.

Mr. Brand: Mr. Acting Speaker, that is a straightout lie.

Mr. TONKIN: Well there it is!

Mr. Graham: That was nice language.

Mr. TONKIN: If the Premier will not—

Mr. Brand: I will prove it.

Mr. TONKIN: That will be most interesting. This afternoon we had the Minister answering a question and saying that reclamation of the river will be involved and the Premier saying he will prove it will not.

Mr. Brand: I am saying that reclamation is not involved in the exchange of land with the University in respect of the Teachers' Training College.

Mr. TONKIN: I will read it again. It says—

The land exchange agreed on between the University and the Education Department did not commit the Government to any reclamation of the Swan River. The exchange—to enable construction of a new teachers' training college at Hollywood—neither depended on nor involved reclamation of the river.

I say it does.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: It is the standard of the road.

Mr. TONKIN: It has nothing whatever to do with the standard of the road, because the existing road is to be closed and given to the University. That leaves no land.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: It does. A road can be put around. You just do not know what you are talking about.

Mr. TONKIN: We will see.

Mr. Brand: All right. We will see.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I feel sorry for you for having to put up such a story.

Mr. Hawke: You have quietened the Minister for Works anyway.

Mr. TONKIN: Those are the facts. It is just a play upon words to try to prove otherwise.

Now, I propose to deal with another question to show how much reliance one can place upon the word of Ministers. You will recall, Mr. Acting Speaker (Mr. Crommelin), that in 1964 the Minister for Industrial Development brought a Bill to this House for the purpose of allowing Broken Hill Pty. Coy. Ltd. to export iron ore from Yampi Sound. In order properly to appreciate this situation, it is necessary to go into the history of it a little. In 1952 a Bill was brought to this House to give to Broken Hill Pty. Coy. Ltd. these very rich deposits of iron ore in Yampi Sound. When there was considerable opposition to it the then Minister for Industrial Development said, "The agreement provides that the company will not export iron ore from Australia."

The then Premier, a very honourable gentleman—Sir Ross McLarty—said, "We

are not giving away any birthright. The ore will be used in Western Australia." That situation was accepted; B.H.P. got the very valuable deposits, and made no attempt to export. Then we came to 1964, and the Minister for Industrial Development introduced a Bill to enable Broken Hill Pty. Coy. Ltd. to export. I want members carefully to note the choice of words of the Minister for Industrial Development, and I quote from page 2937 of *Hansard*, vol. 3, of 1964 as follows:—

The prime purpose of the agreement is to arrive at an arrangement which will mean the development of the major limonite iron ore deposits in the Deepdale area.

That was the prime purpose, and on that prime purpose Parliament was asked to lift the embargo on the export of iron ore from Yampi and permit B.H.P. to carry out the development of Deepdale.

But the Minister pointed out that the company was very concerned about the situation and the fact that it might be said it was getting an unfair advantage over other companies which were endeavouring to sell iron ore at the time. Accordingly I now quote from page 2938—

Subsequently, B.H.P. agreed that, in an effort to remove any suggestion that the limited exports from Yampi might prejudice the interests of other companies which have iron ore deposits in the north, and are negotiating for contracts with the Japanese, it would ask for no exports during the period that Deepdale is being developed and ready for production.

As previously stated, this will be a minimum period of four years, because it is a major engineering undertaking. It is reasonable to assume that, by that time, other companies will have established themselves.

Parliament agreed to that in the belief that in a matter of some three or four years export from Yampi would proceed after B. H. P. had carried out its obligations in connection with Deepdale, which was the prime purpose of the Bill. The prime purpose of the Bill was not to let B.H.P. export iron ore—not so far as the Minister told the House anyhow—the prime purpose of the legislation was the development of Deepdale, in order to ensure that B.H.P. would be encouraged by being allowed to export iron ore from Yampi. To emphasise that point I again quote the Minister's words on page 2938 when he said—

In considering this question it should be realised that there is little, if any, prospect of unprocessed Deepdale ore being exportable direct to overseas countries by B.H.P. It requires processing before it will find a market as a blast furnace feed.

Then the Minister said—still from the same page—

It was thought reasonable to discuss with the company ways in which the

Yampi deposits might be made to assist to a limited degree.

That is to assist in the development of Deepdale, which was the primary purpose of the legislation. I now quote from page 2939, and it is still the Minister for Industrial Development speaking—

It could be that when it has developed Deepdale, the Commonwealth will persist with its policy in respect of Yampi, Koolyanobbing, and Middle Back Range, and the provisions of our agreement, which take the State restrictions off Yampi and Koolyanobbing, would be of no practical advantage to B.H.P. This is a risk it has to take.

I again emphasise that its commitment to go on with large-scale processing in this State would continue, even though the Commonwealth persisted with its ban on the deposits I have mentioned.

On page 2940 we find the following:—

It is more important to concentrate the development on Deepdale rather than have dispersed activities.

Further on page 2940 we find the following:—

It is desirable that such a company be established in our northern iron ore area.

And finally he said—

It is on a firmer basis than any other agreement we have brought forward because they always meet their commitments.

What were these commitments? To go on with the mining of low grade ore at Deepdale?

Mr. Court: Are you not prejudging an issue? Why do you always assume an Australian company will not meet its commitments? It has always done better than it has promised, and this is an Australian company.

Mr. TONKIN: I do not think I claimed anything else.

Mr. Court: I do not know why you have such a perpetual hate of Australian companies.

Mr. TONKIN: I believe when Parliament is told something it is entitled to accept it in good faith, and Ministers have no right to put confidence tricks over Parliament.

Mr. Court: You are being insulting. There has been no confidence trick there. This matter has been clearly stated and accepted.

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister is entitled to get up and say whether I am wrong. The prime purpose of the 1964 Bill was to establish something at Deepdale.

Mr. Court: That is true. It is clearly stated.

Mr. TONKIN: Now we come to 1965. I quote from *Hansard*, vol. 3 of 1965 where the Minister said—

It is pertinent to point out—and I want to emphasise this in view of the interjection by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, who has apparently overlooked this point—that under clause 20 of the 1964 agreement it was foreshadowed in that agreement that when the Deepdale development was completed by B.H.P. the ban on export so far as State approval is concerned would be lifted.

We must not lose sight of that fact, because later on the Minister for Industrial Development will try to tell us something different. He said it is pertinent to point out, and he wanted to emphasise this, that under clause 20 of the 1964 agreement it was foreshadowed in that agreement that when the Deepdale development was completed by B.H.P. the ban on export so far as State approval was concerned would be lifted.

Whatever adjective one might be tempted to apply to the Minister for Industrial Development—and I know several which would be most appropriate—naïve is not one of them.

I refuse to believe that the Minister is so naïve as to believe that the Broken Hill Pty. Coy. Ltd. has any intention of meeting, within the time specified, its commitments with regard to Deepdale. I very much doubt whether there is, in this Legislative Assembly, anybody so naïve as to believe that, in view of the announcements which have been made, one of which was that the companies which are now formed into a consortium to develop Mt. Whaleback, told the Japanese it cannot be done lower than 18.8c per ferrous unit because the price quoted with regard to pellets at Robe River was an uneconomic price.

If the Broken Hill Pty. Coy. Ltd. is permitted to export iron ore from Yampi, and continues to do so, would it be interested in this low-grade stuff from Deepdale? In this morning's paper, this appeared under the heading "Japanese Want Yampi Ore"—

Tokyo, Wednesday.—Six Japanese steel firms today offered to buy 600,000 tons of Yampi Sound iron ore from Broken Hill Pty. Co. Ltd. over 3½ years.

The price—12.75 U.S. cents for each per cent of iron content in a ton of ore—is the same as that received by B.H.P. for its trial shipments to Japan of 100,000 tons of ore earlier this year.

The offer, announced by the Fuji Iron and Steel Co., was in reply to an offer by B.H.P. to supply the Japanese steel mills with annual shipments rising from 500,000 tons to 1,000,000 tons of ore over five years.

It is incredible that a company which has now gained the right to export this readily accessible iron ore from Yampi will commit itself to the expenditure involved in meeting its obligations under the Deepdale agreement.

Mr. Court: Do you ever stop to think that its commitments under Mt. Newman might be greater?

Mr. TONKIN: This company must be pretty certain that whatever it does it will get the concurrence of the Government, because I want to remind you, Mr. Acting Speaker (Mr. Crommelin) that under the Deepdale agreement the company is under an obligation, by December 1969, to present its plans for the development of Deepdale, which, of course, it will not do.

Mr. Court: You are assuming that, of course.

Mr. TONKIN: I have to assume it under the existing circumstances, but I say it is a fair assumption. When a company has already declared that its previous contract is uneconomic, and when we consider it was dealing with low-grade ore, and it has now the right to sell its high-grade hematite, it is not at all logical that it will undertake this heavy expenditure at Deepdale.

Mr. Court: The company never had a contract for the sale of pellets from Deepdale.

Mr. TONKIN: This House was told—

Mr. Court: Cleveland Cliffs had the contract from Robe River.

Mr. TONKIN: —that it was intended that the Broken Hill Pty. Co. Ltd. would join with Cleveland Cliffs and establish a joint pelletising plant and sell 5,000,000 tons of pellets.

Mr. Court: You are reading lots of things into this that are not correct.

Mr. TONKIN: I am reading what has been said in statements from the Government and in the legislation.

Mr. Court: They were to do one exercise in ports, towns, railways, and also in the pellet plants, but they kept their identity under the contracts.

Mr. TONKIN: The Premier, at the time, made an announcement which the Minister said he wanted to emphasise; and to refresh his memory, I will read it. I quote from page 2633 of the 1965 *Hansard*, and this is what the Minister for Industrial Development said—

I wish to invite the attention of members to the announcement recently made by the Premier in respect of the agreement reached between, B.H.P. and Cleveland-Cliffs over the joint development of a large proportion of the facilities required in the Ashburton area. In this announcement it is made known that they

had agreed to undertake joint development of towns so far as practicable and of the railway and the port. They are also going to have joint development of the pellet plant. This is good business from the State's point of view. It would have been completely illogical for them to have two separate railways and ports. It would make the two propositions uneconomical, and quite apart from any benefit to the companies themselves it would make them uneconomical in world competition if they were to operate separately rather than together.

The point is this: that whilst the agreements were separate agreements and each company had its obligations under these agreements, nobody would complain if they had decided to combine and, instead of proceeding with two ports, two separate railways, and two separate towns, they were to make one. I would have considered, if they had gone on with that proposal, they would have met their obligations under the agreement; but who is there who will believe they will.

Although they have not said it has been abandoned—they have only said it has been deferred, in view of their financial obligations with regard to Mt. Newman—and because they have already made a public statement that the price they were going to get from these pellets from Cape Preston was an uneconomic price, is it likely they are going to proceed? To be honest with this House, the Government should ask the company straightout whether it is its intention to establish these works in accordance with the obligation on it under the Statute.

Mr. Court: Say it accepts a better and more important obligation in the interests of the State, are you going to oppose it?

Mr. TONKIN: The prime purpose of this legislation, said the Minister, is the development of Deepdale and, to achieve that prime purpose, let us give the company the right to export.

Mr. Court: Say you get something better in its place?

Mr. TONKIN: And now the Minister says: Having given it the right to export, let it keep it irrespective of what it does.

Mr. Court: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. TONKIN: The fair thing for the Government to do is to say to the company, "You had the right to export on the understanding you were going to develop at Deepdale and now you are not, so we will take to Parliament another proposition to see if it will agree you should continue to enjoy this right to export from Yampi Sound in consideration of your doing something else instead of developing Deepdale." But no; we are not to be consulted and the Minister for Industrial De-

velopment says that the question is not relevant.

In the short time left to me, I want to endeavour to show how this company anticipates Government concurrence.

Mr. Court: You will not answer my question.

Mr. TONKIN: I am not here to answer the Minister's question. Put it on the notice paper.

Mr. Court: You expect us to answer yours, even though some are foolish.

Mr. TONKIN: I do not always take as gospel what I read in the paper, but the article was well clarified to the extent that it said the company would supply the Japanese steel mills with annual shipments rising from 500,000 tons to 1,000,000 tons of ore over five years. It is not five years from now. According to the Statute the company will lose its right to export after 1969, if, by that date, it has not presented to the Government plans for the establishment of these works at Deepdale. I would say that, in my view, the company has no intention of presenting such plans by that date.

Mr. Court: I give up trying to reason with you because you will not be logical. You will not have any regard for alternative proposals which could be better for the State.

Mr. TONKIN: That has nothing to do with it. That reminds me—

Mr. Court: It has everything to do with it.

Mr. TONKIN: —of the man who comes along and says he is selling you a first-class motorcar. It will do this, do that, do so many miles per gallon; and after you have bought it, and you find it does nothing of the sort, he says, "Do not worry, you have a motorcar, anyway."

Mr. Hawke: If it is not suitable he will sell you a bigger one.

Mr. TONKIN: That is the position in which we are placed. We are told the prime purpose of allowing B.H.P. to export iron ore from Yampi is to establish the company at Deepdale where it has to build a port, build a railway, and build houses. Listen to what the Minister said. He said that the company had to commit itself, without an export order for a single ton, to build towns, quarries, railways, a port, and to be in production. Now we are told it does not matter if the company does not do any of these things so long as it can come up with some other proposition—and I am asked to be logical!

Mr. Court: I do not know why you have such a hate for this particular company.

Mr. TONKIN: I want to insist on anybody acting in accordance with an agreement; and that includes the Minister.

Mr. Court: Regardless of the circumstances?

Mr. TONKIN: Regardless of anything else. One cannot go into a court if somebody is suing one for breach of contract and tell the judge that one wants to do something ever so much better, but one does not want to keep to one's contract. One would not get far if one attempted that. In this court the Government gets away with that because it has a majority and can do what it likes; but one would not get away with it in a court of law. One could argue till one was blue in the face.

Mr. Bovell: This is the highest court in the land.

Mr. TONKIN: Yes, and the worst, I am sorry to say—

Mr. Court: You are part of it.

Mr. TONKIN: —because justice does not prevail. Make no mistake about that; but I hope it does in the courts. This is a contract with Parliament that in consideration of the company meeting this primary purpose of establishing itself at Deepdale, building the port, building the railway, and going into production, it is allowed to export iron ore from Yampi.

Now we are told it has no intention of meeting its obligations under the law. We are told that the Government is satisfied that it will unless the Government lets it off the hook; which, I have no doubt it intends to do.

Mr. Court: No; a Bill will have to come to Parliament and Parliament be advised.

Mr. TONKIN: I say, in conclusion, I would consider the honest and decent thing would be for the Minister to say to the company, "Is there any intention of your honouring your obligations under this? If not, I must inform Parliament." But no. What the Minister will do is say that it has done nothing up to date, or, has not failed up to date to do anything which has been required—and a requirement cannot arise until 1969—so let matters rest until December, 1969, to see if it has done these things. In the meantime, let it enjoy this privilege which it only got because we were told that it was assuming these obligations. And remember what the Minister said: It always meets its commitments.

Mr. Court: That is very true.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Burt.

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION

Council Personnel

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

SUPPLY BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

House adjourned at 5.48 p.m.