

The Hon. R. Thompson: The meeting was over by ten to nine and it did not start until eight o'clock.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I apologise to Mr. Lavery for using the word "threat." I probably used the word in the wrong context.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: It was not a threat.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Then I apologise to the honourable member.

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

Ayes—16

Hon. C. R. Abbey	Hon. A. R. Jones
Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. L. A. Logan
Hon. G. E. D. Brand	Hon. G. C. MacKinnon
Hon. A. F. Griffiths	Hon. N. McNeill
Hon. C. E. Griffiths	Hon. S. T. J. Thompson
Hon. J. Heltman	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. J. G. Hilelop	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. E. C. House	Hon. H. R. Robinson

(Teller)

Noes—8

Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. R. Thompson
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. F. R. H. Lavery	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs	Hon. J. Dolan

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Hon. T. O. Perry	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. V. J. Ferry	Hon. J. J. Garrigan

Majority for—8.

Clause thus passed.

Clause 6: Section 11 amended—

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: This clause gives a discretionary power to the board. It refers to the sales of onions by any grower whose total crop does not exceed three tons. The intention of the amendment, which deals with onions at this time of the year, was to give the board discretionary power when the main crop of onions had been sold, and when the lighter crop of onions came in. The board could say, "Give us notice of the quantity that will be available," after which the board could give permission for the onions to be marketed on a free market instead of being put through the board. The board will have to act very judiciously in handling the sale of onions. If it does not use its discretionary powers, it will have to use two pools, otherwise the growers will not get a fair deal.

Clause put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 11.6 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 12th October, 1965

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The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman) took
the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (15): ON NOTICE

FORREST STREET-EAST STREET
INTERSECTION, FREMANTLE

Crosswalks: Installation

1. Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister
for Transport:

Adverting to the answer to my
question of the 23rd September,
1965, which shows that 1,506
pupils attend John Curtin High
School and that 390 pupils attend
Plympton State School (Fre-
mantle, East) immediately oppo-
site—will he install light-con-
trolled or other crosswalks at
intersections of Forrest Street and
East Street, East Fremantle, for
reasons including—

- M.T.T. buses put down pupils
at these intersections;
- the number of pupils multi-
plied by the present and
rapidly increasing number of
vehicles using East Street
must surely justify either
crosswalks or police super-
vision during appropriate
periods?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

Although this question was ad-
dressed to the Minister for Trans-
port, it should more properly have
been addressed to me. The reply
is as follows:—

The Main Roads Department
will arrange for a count of
pedestrians and traffic to be
made by the Fremantle City
Council. When this informa-
tion is available consideration
can be given to the need for
protective measures.

2. This question was postponed.

TRAFFIC OFFENCES

Courtesy Police Officers: Appointment

3. Mr. DUNN asked the Minister for
Police:

- Has any consideration been given
to the use of courtesy police offi-
cers who traverse the roads with
a view to stopping people who are
contravening the Traffic Act by
minor offences and who draw at-
tention to their particular mis-
deemeanours and advise them of
the penalty involved, other than
prosecuting?
- Does he agree that a campaign of
co-operation between the Police
Department and the public could
lead to better courtesy on the
roads?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- Yes. Prior to taking up traffic
duties, all traffic personnel are
schooled in the necessity for cour-
tesy to motorists and a great num-
ber of motorists are advised by
having their attention drawn to
particular breaches of traffic regu-
lations.

In addition, many are cautioned
by being handed a written notice
at the time of the offence. As
an example, during the six months
prior to August, 1965, there were
18,136 briefs submitted for prose-
cution and 10,618 persons were
cautioned. In addition to those
cautioned in writing, advice would
be given to possibly another 500.

Of the 18,136 persons briefed for
prosecution, 1,526 were given the
opportunity of attending a traffic
education lecture; while a further
404 juveniles also attended lec-
tures.

It is not necessary that a special
courtesy squad be formed; it is
far better that all patrol officers
should act in this capacity.

- It is apparent from experience
that the majority of the public
readily co-operate with the police

and obey traffic laws, and it is hoped this attitude will continue. The honourable member can rest assured the Police Department will see that every courtesy is extended to the public and advice given on all occasions when this course is justified.

NORTHCLIFFE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Generating Plant: Installation

4. Mr. ROWBERRY asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) What progress, if any, has been made with the installation of an electrical generating plant at the Northcliffe Primary School?
- (2) When will this work be completed?

Teachers' Quarters: Wiring and Financial Arrangements with State Housing Commission

- (3) When will financial arrangements for the wiring of teachers' quarters be completed with the State Housing Commission?
- (4) What factors are delaying these arrangements with the State Housing Commission?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Tenders have been called and the electrical plant has been purchased. Installation will be done immediately the site works and erection of the plant room are completed.
- (2) Installation of the plant and wiring of the school will be completed in approximately three to four weeks.
- (3) and (4) The Government Employees' Housing Authority has authorised the Public Works Department Architectural Division to proceed with wiring and connecting the school quarters to the electrical plant.

This will be done in conjunction with the installation of the plant and wiring of the school and will be completed in approximately four to five weeks.

FIRE BRIGADE AT ALBANY

Staff: Adequacy

5. Mr. HALL asked the Chief Secretary: In view of the increased population to 14,000 of the Shire and Municipality of Albany and increased oil bunkering through the Port of Albany (17,632 tons per year June, 1965), can he advise if the permanent fire brigade personnel is at sufficient strength to meet all emergencies, including ships' fires?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

Fire protection at Albany is provided by permanent and volunteer brigades. The combined strength is considered sufficient to meet emergencies arising from the known risks involved.

GAS SUPPLIES: MONTHLY SERVICE CHARGE

Fremantle Gas & Coke Co. Ltd.: Imposition

6. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Electricity:

- (1) Have the requirements of the Gas Undertakings Act in so far as they relate to the Fremantle Gas & Coke Co. and its recent imposition of a monthly service charge of three shillings, been fully observed?
- (2) On what date was the proposal approved?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) and (2) The Gas Undertakings Act does not require the Fremantle Gas and Coke Company Limited to obtain approval to impose the monthly service charge.

PARLIAMENTS OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Terms: Number not Completed

7. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

- (1) How many Parliaments since the advent of responsible government have failed to run a normal constitutional time?
- (2) When did this occur?

Members: Changes in Number

- (3) When was the number of members of the Parliament last changed?
- (4) Since responsible government, what have been the respective numbers of members in each House of Parliament and at what date or dates were these varied?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) 1.
- (2) Fifth Parliament—elected 1904.
- (3) 1899.
- (4) Legislative Council: After the establishment of responsible government, the Legislative Council was in the first instance nominated by the Governor and consisted of 15 members. Soon after 1893, Parliament passed an Act (57 Victoria, No. 14) amending the Constitution and fixing the elective number of members of the Legislative Council at 21. By the Constitution Act Amendment Act, 1896, the colony was divided

into eight electoral provinces returning 24 members. The Constitution Act Amendment Act, 1899, divided the colony into 10 provinces each returning three members. The Constitution Act Amendment Act, 1963, divided the State into 15 provinces each returning two members.

Legislative Assembly: 30 members formed the first Legislative Assembly, this number being increased to 33 by the Constitution Act Amendment Act, 1893, Part 2. The number was further increased to 44 by an amendment of the Constitution in 1896 and raised to 50 by the Constitution Act Amendment Act, 1899, at which it remains.

TOTALISATOR AGENCY BOARD: CREDIT BETTING

Accounts: Establishment

8. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) What particular steps did the Chairman of the Totalisator Agency Board take in order to place himself in the position, in March and June last, to enable the Premier to give an assurance to the Leader of the Opposition that "all clients of T.A.B. agents have established proper accounts and that the procedures laid down in regulations 21, 22, and 23 are being properly carried out"?
- (2) As the person referred to in questions to the Premier and answered by him on the 7th October, is alleged to have been making bets on credit during the period the 1st July, 1963, to the 31st July, 1965, without having established a credit account, why was the chairman of the T.A.B. not aware of this when it appears that proper inquiry could hardly have failed to elicit such information?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) The chairman arranged for all agents to be interviewed by inspectors to ascertain that, where necessary, proper credit accounts had been established on behalf of all persons engaged in telephone betting and that the procedures laid down in regulations 21, 22, and 23 were being properly carried out.
- (2) Because the particular agent concerned on several occasions confirmed that the bets were in fact cash bets and all of the records maintained showed that the bets had been accepted as cash bets.

RAPID TRANSIT TERMINAL AT MIDLAND

Commencement and Cost

9. Mr. DUNN asked the Minister for Railways:

- (1) Has approval been given to commence building the rapid transit terminal at Midland Junction?
- (2) When is it expected work will commence?
- (3) What will be the overall cost?

Bellevue Line: Discontinuance and Alternative Transport Arrangements

- (4) Will adequate transport facilities be arranged for residents of the Koongamia, Helena Valley areas when the Bellevue line is discontinued?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Ancillary work has already commenced. Work on buildings will commence early in the new year.
- (3) It is estimated that this work will cost approximately £300,000 made up of the following components:

Terminal building
Platforms
Platform and bus bay roofing
Bus and car parks
Temporary facilities for C.T.M.
Permanent way
Signalling
Communications

- (4) Yes.

STANDARD GAUGE RAILWAY

Deviation through Spencer's Brook, Northam, and Bellevue

10. Dr. HENN asked the Minister for Railways:

- (1) Is it correct that almost £10,000,000 is being expended to deviate the narrow gauge railway line from near Spencer's Brook through Northam out to Toodyay and down to Bellevue?
- (2) If so, what are the reasons?
- (3) Would it have been practicable and economic to continue the narrow gauge operations Spencer's Brook through Chidlow to Bellevue with standard gauge running independently Northam to Toodyay and Bellevue down Avon Valley?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) No. The narrow gauge down the Avon Valley is only in the form of a third rail superimposed on standard gauge (4 ft. 8½ in.) tracks to give dual gauge. This project cannot properly be referred to as a project to deviate

narrow gauge operations. Superimposing of a third rail to permit narrow gauge traffic is the lesser part of and incidental to the standard gauge route down the Avon Valley.

- (2) Answered by (1).
 (3) No. One of the main reasons favoured for many years for the standard gauge route to traverse the Avon Valley is the greatly improved grade thus available.

Grades are critical in the economics of railway operation and will mean a saving of over £500,000 a year by using the Avon Valley route for the remaining 3 ft. 6 in. gauge traffic as against operating the Northam-Spencer's Brook-Chidlow-Bellevue route.

Also it should not be overlooked that had the old route been retained for narrow gauge, expenditure in excess of £1,500,000 would have been essential for rehabilitation of the old track and it would have still been subject to the old disabilities of uneconomic operation.

LAND SUBDIVISIONS: INCLUSION OF RECREATION RESERVES

Town Planning Board's Requirements

11. Mr. HALL asked the Minister representing the Minister for Town Planning:

- (1) Is it a fact that the Town Planning Department is now imposing conditions on proposed subdivisions, demanding that portion of land in proposed subdivisions be set aside for recreational purposes?
 (2) If so, is he aware that when the parcel of land in the proposed subdivision is too small for recreational purposes the department is insisting that proceeds from the sale of one block of land in the proposed subdivision be paid into a fund for recreational purposes before the subdivision will be agreed to?
 (3) If the answer to (2) is "Yes," does he approve of such action?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) The Town Planning Board, not the Town Planning Department, is responsible for conditions of subdivision.

Provision of areas to be set aside for recreation purposes has always been a condition of subdivision.

- (2) No. Such conditions are suggested as an alternative and in some cases the subdivider and local

authority agree to the payment of money into a fund for the purchase of recreational land in the vicinity, or when payment is required as a provision of an approved town planning scheme.

- (3) See answer to (2).

CITY OF PERTH PARKING FUND

Method of Accounting

12. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Traffic:

- (1) Are there regulations or any other requirements setting out the form in which the financial transactions of the City of Perth Parking Fund should be presented?
 (2) Does the method of accounting fall under the purview of the Department of Local Government?
 (3) Is it possible to determine the surpluses and/or losses in each of the financial years since the inception of the fund?
 (4) If so, what are they?
 (5) Does the auditor's report on the fund in respect of the year ended the 30th June, 1964, in so far as paragraph (2) is concerned, require consideration in view of the fact that the surplus for the year is £109,870, whereas they express the opinion that the surplus is £16,825?
 (6) If not, what is the explanation?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) There are no regulations under the City of Perth Parking Facilities Act. The accountancy directions under the Local Government Act apply.
 (2) Yes.
 (3) Yes, from 1/11/61 when the accounts came under the local government accountancy directions.
 (4) Surpluses of income over expenditure.

1/11/61 to 30/6/62	£10,778
1/7/62 to 30/6/63	£16,702
1/7/63 to 30/6/64	£16,825
Balance of parking fund (excess of assets over liabilities).	
at 30/6/62	£303,427
at 30/6/63	£389,545
at 30/6/64	£492,188

- (5) No.
 (6) On the financial reports available, the figure of £109,870 quoted by the honourable member cannot be reconciled with the surplus given for the year 1964.

TOURISM IN THE NORTH-WEST*Complaints Received*

13. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister for Tourists:

- (1) Has he received complaints from tourists or those concerned with tourism regarding conditions, etc., in the north-west and, if so, what was the nature of the complaints?
- (2) Will he table correspondence in connection with this matter?

Bus Schedules: Maintenance

- (3) Were the tourist bus schedules maintained during the season; if not, what was the main factor causing the breaking of schedules?

Roads in Pilbara Area: Complaints of Condition

- (4) Has he received complaints from any of the tourist companies concerning the state of the roads in the Pilbara area and, if so, what was the nature of the complaints and what action, if any, has been taken to rectify the matter?

Pilbara Area: Anticipated Result in 1966

- (5) Does he expect an increase or decrease in organised tourism to the Pilbara area next season?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) Yes. Complaints related mainly to the mechanical condition of coaches used; unsuitability of coaches used; omission of sightseeing because of delays caused by coach breakdowns and road closures due to weather; and the standard of accommodation in certain towns.
- (2) No good purpose would be served by making this correspondence public.
- (3) No. The principal causes for the breaking of schedules were mechanical breakdowns of coaches and road closures due to weather.
- (4) No.
- (5) This is a matter for private coach tour operators and will depend to some extent on the availability of acceptable accommodation in key centres. Subject to the availability of accommodation, organised tourism to the Pilbara area next winter should at least be equal to that of the past winter.

CRAYFISHING*Convicted Fisherman: Retention of License*

14. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Fisheries:

Relative to his reply to questions asked on Tuesday, the 5th October, that if more precise information were given the matter would be thoroughly investigated, will he refer to the *Daily News*, of the 9th August, 1963, read the report headed "Deeper Trouble", and reply to the following questions?

- (1) Is it a fact that a certain fisherman who has several times been convicted for selling undersized crayfish and was known to the department to have struck an inspector whilst the latter was carrying out his duties, still retains his license to take crayfish despite the fact that an inspector recommended that it be withdrawn?
- (2) If "Yes," what is the explanation for this extraordinary state of affairs?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) The fisherman referred to in the newspaper paragraph did not, according to the inspector's report, strike the officer but obstructed him in the course of his duty by tipping into the water certain crayfish which the inspector desired and, in accordance with the Fisheries Act, had power to measure. The inspector did not specifically recommend cancellation of the offender's license, but merely expressed the opinion that "fishermen of his calibre" should not have a license.
- (2) Although this was the fisherman's third conviction, neither this nor the two previous convictions related directly to undersized crayfish. All were for obstructing an inspector. At the time the third conviction was recorded (August 9, 1963) it was not common practice for the Minister to cancel licenses. More recently, however, in view of the worsened situation concerning enforcement of the crayfish conservation laws, a stronger line has been taken. If this man is again convicted under the Fisheries Act it is probable all licenses held by him will be cancelled without further ado.

TIMBER FROM DWELLINGUP*Quantity Milled*

15. Dr. HENN asked the Minister for Forests:

- (1) What is the total quantity of timber being supplied to Hawker Siddeley and forestry mills in the Dwellingup area?

Haulage

- (2) What proportion of this timber is hauled—
 (a) by the Forests Department;
 (b) by private contractors?

Concessions

- (3) Have the timber concessions been contracted to Hawker Siddeley and private contractors; if so, what is the proportion to each?

Supply by Forests Department

- (4) Does the Forests Department tender for the supply of timber to private mills in competition with private hauliers?

Mr. NALDER (for Mr. Bovell) replied:

- (1) For the year ended the 30th June, 1965, the Hawker Siddeley and the Forests Department mills at Dwellingup used a total of 44,290 loads.
 (2) (a) By the Forests Department—61%
 (b) private contractor—39%.
 (3) Hawker Siddeley holds a sawmilling permit for its Dwellingup mill. A private contractor does part of its log hauling from the permit area.
 (4) No.

BILLS (3): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Jennacubbine Sports Council (Incorporated) Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Lewis (Minister for Education), and read a first time.

2. Government Railways Act Amendment Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Court (Minister for Railways), and read a first time.

3. Taxi-cars (Co-ordination and Control) Act Amendment Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. O'Connor (Minister for Transport), and read a first time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

On motion by Mr. Norton, leave of absence for eight weeks granted to Mr. May (Collie) on the ground of urgent private business.

SUPPLY BILL (No. 2), £23,000,000*Standing Orders Suspension*

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer) [4.50 p.m.]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable resolutions from the Committees of Supply and of Ways and Means to be reported and adopted on the same day on which they shall have passed those Committees; and also the passing of a Supply Bill through all its stages in one day.

Question put and passed.

Message: Appropriations

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriations for the purposes of the Bill.

In Committee of Supply

The House resolved itself into a Committee of Supply, the Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair.

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer) [4.52 p.m.]: I move—

That there be granted to Her Majesty on account of the services of the year ending the 30th June, 1966, a sum not exceeding £23,000,000.

Supply of £28,000,000 has already been granted for the current financial year, made up as follows:—

	£
Consolidated Revenue Fund	20,000,000
General Loan Fund	6,000,000
Advance to Treasurer	2,000,000

The House may be interested in a few details in regard to the position at the moment. As members know, this is usually a formal measure, particularly as we have before us two lots of Estimates, those dealing with the general revenue fund and those dealing with the loan accounts; and I should imagine there would be many other opportunities for members to discuss this matter.

Expenditure incurred on services financed from the Consolidated Revenue Fund amounted to £23,947,000 for the period of three months ended the 30th September, 1965. Of this total, payments of £5,641,000 were authorised by appropriations under Special Acts and the balance of £18,306,000 was expended under the authority granted by the first Supply Bill, 1965.

Revenue collected in the three months to the 30th September totalled £21,544,000 and fell short of expenditure in the same period by £2,403,000. The result for the first quarter of this financial year does not indicate any variation from the estimated deficit of £823,000 provided in the Budget. It is normal for the accumulated deficit to build up in the early months of the

year and be reduced later in the year when large amounts of revenue are brought to account.

The second Supply Bill really seeks the approval of the House to a further overdraft, or an advance, until such time as the Estimates have been approved, and the necessary legislation has been passed by Parliament.

MR. HAWKE (Northam—Leader of the Opposition) [4.54 p.m.]: I do not propose to say very much in connection with this matter. The Budget Estimates are before us and I, at least, will have an opportunity, I think, of saying something in connection with those Estimates during today's sitting.

The only question I would like to ask the Treasurer at this Stage is: Which of the taxation proposals as outlined in his Budget speech will require legislation, and when is such legislation likely to be introduced into this House?

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer) [4.55 p.m.]: The amendments to the Stamp Act such as those referring to stamp duty on cheques, *ad valorem* stamp duty, duty on share transfers, and such other matters as those dealing with transport and license fees and also a changed system of licensing are being prepared now, and legislation will be introduced as soon as possible.

Question put and passed.

Report

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

In Committee of Ways and Means

The House resolved itself into a Committee of Ways and Means, the Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair.

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer) [4.57 p.m.]: I move—

That towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty for the services of the year ending the 30th June, 1966, a sum not exceeding £18,000,000 be granted from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, and £5,000,000 from the General Loan Fund.

Question put and passed.

Report

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

Introduction and First Reading

In accordance with the foregoing resolutions, Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Brand (Treasurer), and read a first time.

Second Reading

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer) [5 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Brand (Treasurer), and transmitted to the Council.

MENTAL HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Minister for Works), and passed.

STATE HOUSING DEATH BENEFIT SCHEME BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed, from the 7th October, on the following motion by Mr. O'Neil (Minister for Housing):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. GRAHAM (Balcatta) [5.4 p.m.]: Might I first of all take advantage of this opportunity of congratulating the Minister for Housing on his appointment. From my point of view it is very definitely a move in the right direction that in a matter such as housing, which is so close and intimate in the lives of the people, the Minister in charge of that important establishment should be in the people's House; in other words, in the Legislative Assembly. Might I add that the present incumbent has shown himself interested in the subject; he has been readily available; and he has been most understanding when problems have been submitted to him. That is my experience; and I hope and trust he will continue in that vein, because from my experience we have very largely been without a Minister for Housing over the last six years.

That is not to be construed necessarily as an unfair dig at the Minister's predecessor, but he was fully occupied with the portfolios of Mining and Justice, and other matters. I feel the change has definitely been one for the better; and long may it continue—or until there is a change of Government, which, from our point of view cannot come soon enough.

Mr. Lewis: You spoilt a good speech.

Mr. GRAHAM: I change now to the realities of the situation. However good the present Minister for Housing might be, he could not be as good as a Minister for Housing in a Labor Government.

There is in other parts of Australia—I think in Victoria, Queensland, and South Australia—legislation with intent and general effect somewhat similar to that which we are considering at the present moment; namely, to make provision for some lessening of the burden in the matter of payment for a house when the breadwinner dies. Strangely enough, without any consultation, I can say that very definitely the Leader of the Government and the Leader of the Opposition found in this year 1965, I think for the first time in Western Australian politics, need to make reference in their policy speeches to the necessity that steps along these lines be taken.

It is true that the proposals of the Opposition differed from those embodied in this Bill. My summary of the situation is that this would have been a far better Bill and fairer in its application had it been based on the proposals which were submitted to the people by the Opposition a few short months ago when the elections were held. The Opposition proposed that the widows and the families, on the passing of the breadwinner, should have the outstanding liability in respect of the purchase of their homes reduced to one-half. That would have resulted in a far greater benefit in the great majority of cases than is envisaged now.

Under the State Housing Act there can be a loan of up to £3,000 and the house can be built on land worth up to, shall we say, £1,000. In other words, there can be a total liability of £4,000. If the death of the breadwinner occurred early after occupation, then it will be seen the best part of £4,000 would be owing; and under the Labor proposals, £2,000 would have been remitted. But under what the Government proposes, if we had a young couple with the average of two children—which is the position in this State—then the amount of benefit would be limited to £700 only.

Of course, if the parents are a little older, then the limit is less than that again. Nevertheless, it is pleasing to see that in and beyond that rough exterior there beats a heart, and that this Government has some compassion for those who are unfortunately circumstanced by the passing of the breadwinner.

This Bill seeks to make the provisions retrospective to the 20th February this year when the elections were held. Retrospective application is somewhat rare in our legislation, but this is no discredit to the Government. Of course, the Premier, in his policy speech, indicated it was the intention that polling day should be the starting date.

Before dealing more specifically with the Bill and whilst realising it is a little too late to do anything about it now, I put the question to the Minister for Housing as to why he has deemed it necessary there should be a separate Act to deal with this matter. There is a State Housing Act which is most comprehensive so far as State matters are concerned. It dovetails quite successfully with the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement, and it enables the Housing Commission to operate as agent for the War Service Homes Commission. There are a number of completely separate and distinct activities of the State Housing Commission, and this is one which is closely related to its normal activities.

Indeed, the commission's normal activities as the old Workers' Homes Board were to provide houses for sale on small deposits to persons of humble circumstances. I am wondering, therefore, why there should be a separate Statute contemplated as against a new section or division of the State Housing Act. Apropos of that and something I have expressed on previous occasions—I fancy even to the present Minister for Housing—if I were challenged I think I could prepare a sufficiently comprehensive Bill to allow the Housing Commission to function as freely as it does now but perhaps with less irritation than now. It would be a Bill occupying about two pages. The State Housing Act, in my view, is far too voluminous, and if a few essential principles were stated, then that would suffice in exactly the same way, instead of writing into an Act of Parliament a formula which may meet the situation today, but with changed circumstances and money values could be hopelessly outmoded in a few short years' time, requiring the legislation to come back to this Parliament.

If the principles were laid down in the parent legislation, then it would be left to the Housing Commission to do its best within the authority it was given subject, of course, to the policy of the Government and the Minister, from time to time. I think perhaps some thought and attention should be given to many pieces of legislation to allow that procedure to be followed. Here, I hasten to correct what could be regarded as a misconception that I am in favour of more and still more power being given to the Executive. However, I think it is the function of Parliament to lay down the broad principles; and within that framework the Executive, because that is its responsibility, should vary the amounts—as to whether, for instance, the maximum to be advanced to any person desiring to purchase a home under the State Housing Act, should be £2,000, £2,500, £3,000, or any other figure. Let that be left to the Government of the day.

If the Government of the day goes to excess in any one direction or another, there will be a parliamentary Opposition to draw attention to the fact; and, of course, periodically there are elections when an appeal can be made to the public if the spirit and intention are lost.

Anyhow, I make those general comments. It does seem to me to be not in conformity with reason that a measure so closely allied with the ordinary working operations of the State Housing Commission, and to be administered by the commission should be contained in a separate Act of Parliament. Here let me anticipate a remark the Minister might make. He might point to the Housing Loan Guarantee Act, of which I happened to be the sponsor. The reason for that being a separate Statute was that the Treasury wanted to keep a watchful eye on the overall amount guaranteed, and was not disposed to leave it entirely to the State Housing Commission, probably fearing that guarantees of all sorts of amounts, based irresponsibly, would become a burden on the Crown.

Mr. Brand: Doesn't the same apply in this case?

Mr. GRAHAM: No, because in this case the formula is laid down. If what the Premier interjected were reasonably valid superficially, the fears of anyone and everyone in connection with the Housing Loan Guarantee Act were completely without foundation, because even the one-quarter of one per cent. to meet any deficiency has been found unnecessary and the scheme is going merrily along giving assistance to very many hundreds of people seeking to acquire homes for themselves.

I have indicated already that in my view the proposals of the Opposition as outlined in broad principle at the general election were more fairly based than what is encompassed by this Bill. By and large the benefit to be accrued, or the extent of the reduction of liability, will be based on the age of the breadwinner at the time of death. If members ponder on that they will come to the same conclusion as I: that that has very little to do with the situation. I should say the age of the dependent widow would be a factor of more account. The ages of the children should be a determining factor, and the extent of the liability.

If £4,000 is owing and the maximum which is going to be given by way of assistance is only £700, then there is still a considerable burden to be borne by a young mother with a couple of young children, including, perhaps, a baby in arms. If the situation cannot be met, there is no alternative but for the home to be sold. There is no proposition to allow the liability to carry on with a payment of anything less than is requisite to meet all of the contingencies minus that £700, or whatever the benefit might be.

For a widow living on the widow's pension, with a couple of small kiddies, and having £3,000 or thereabouts in the ultimate—that is, £3,000 for the house; and the land still to be paid for, but in the interim a land rental to be paid—that would still be a fair amount and would, no doubt, be far beyond the means of the widow to meet. But in such a case a reduction of one-half would be a real contribution.

It is not unknown that men have become fathers late in life or that men on in years have married widows who have young children—widows considerably younger than themselves. Despite this, we find that in the case of a breadwinner who is over 65 years of age no concession at all is granted to his widow. The only benefit that can accrue to that family is £100 in respect of each child. It is conceivable that a man of 65 would marry a widow of 45 or 50 who had a couple of young children aged six and 10, or something of that nature. Indeed, they could be natural-born children; that is, children of that union. However, so far as that woman being a widow is concerned, not one penny of consideration is expended by the Government under this Bill; and I think that is wrong.

In my view we have a peculiar situation. Where the husband is the purchaser, and he dies, the wife benefits in accordance with the formula. If the husband and wife are joint tenants—and that is the customary arrangement, or is in a large proportion of cases—and the husband dies, there again the wife benefits by the reduction of liability. We find, too, that where the wife is the purchaser and she dies, the husband benefits. I do not know how necessary that is. However, where the husband and wife are joint tenants and the wife dies, then there is no benefit to the husband.

The upshot of this is that in respect of exactly the same circumstances, except that at the time of signing the purchase agreement the property was put in joint names, which is the usual thing, instead of in the wife's name, which is rare, those having a joint tenancy—the great majority—are ineligible for a benefit in the event of the death of the wife.

I hope I have not misread the provisions of the Bill, but to me that does not make commonsense. Overall it seems that in one or two instances people who do not need the benefit will be beneficiaries; whereas, on the other hand, people who are in need will not be receiving any concession.

This is not dependent upon there being children in the family. It could be a husband and wife only. In the event of the wife dying in those circumstances, and the property being in her name, what financial loss or burden is there to the husband? There is none whatever. No doubt he would receive the house in the will and he

has one less mouth to feed; so economically he is better off than before. Yet if the wife has not exceeded the age of 35, the amount owing to the Housing Commission will be reduced by £500. I think, therefore, that some of these benefits—and I have no objection to anyone receiving benefits—could be better applied to people whose circumstances warrant them.

Mr. O'Neil: If in those circumstances there was one child, you could not object?

Mr. GRAHAM: No; but the burden is not nearly as great in respect of a husband being left with a child, because he still has a capacity to earn his £20 or £25 a week, but the woman into whose home the £20 or £25 was coming, is now on the widow's pension. Therefore her position is immeasurably worse than that of the husband because, even if he had to pay for some special attention for his child, he would still be far better off.

I wonder whether the Minister could enlighten me in regard to clause 11 of the Bill which sets out that the commission may delegate to any person all or any of its powers. If the Deputy Leader of the Opposition were here I could almost hear his hackles rise and imagine his visions of an executive officer of the Employers Federation, or someone of that ilk, being given this Bill when it becomes law and being told, "Say, John old boy, get on with the job of administering this." Surely there is no need of such a provision; and, unless the Minister can satisfy me in respect of it, it is my intention to move for its deletion.

The State Housing Commission is the proper authority to handle all matters in connection with this, because State Housing Commission homes are being purchased and the amount of outstanding liability is owing to the commission. Surely if it is set down that the commission has authority to do certain things, that would mean and be construed as meaning that certain officers would have the authority to do those things and not necessarily the board of the commission!

Mr. O'Neil: This is to make that very thing perfectly clear.

Mr. GRAHAM: I think the Minister had better check on that, because if he has a look at the parent Act he will see that by and large—I know there are several qualifications—all of these things for which the State Housing Commission as such is responsible, that the board of the Housing Commission is—

Mr. O'Neil: This will be the parent Act in regard to this particular piece of legislation. It is not amending the State Housing Act.

Mr. GRAHAM: I am aware of that; but the "Commission" means the State Housing Commission constituted by the State Housing Act of 1946. I do not want to argue this point, because we are a couple

of amateurs having an argument on a legal point. I merely ask the Minister to check on it to ascertain what that clause means and whether there is any real need for it. I feel there could perhaps be some doubt as to its wisdom.

Finally, I wish to make a comment on a remark of the Minister, made when he introduced the Bill. He said that the needs of the surviving family are greatest when the family is young and that the scale of deductions is therefore arranged to give the greatest benefit at the time of greatest need. Worthy are those sentiments; but I doubt whether this Bill does that. Indeed, I say it does nothing of the sort.

I have already given some examples. But if we imagine a case of a woman being left with three little children, aged from one to eight years, surely she is more tied down than another woman left a widow with three children whose ages might be 12, 14, and 16! They are at school and at least one of them could be completely off her hands. However, the other one with three little tots is tied down to the house and would not be able to obtain casual work to assist her to meet her commitments, including the paying off of the house in which they live.

I welcome the measure as being a step in the right direction. It does something in the way of assisting those who are struck by misfortune. I think the legislation could be improved. Who knows?—if the Minister lives up to the reputation which in my book he has established for himself in his first few months of office, he may refer to the pages of *Hansard* and see, perchance, some merit in what was uttered by the member for Balcatta in discussing this Bill.

MR. O'NEIL (East Melville—Minister for Housing) [5.30 p.m.]: I cannot let the opportunity pass without thanking the honourable member for his complimentary remarks and for his appreciation of the Bill. We do recognise that this is a new piece of legislation, and I suppose to a degree it is experimental in its effect.

I found there to be a great complexity of situations with regard to families in the event of the death of the breadwinner. The legislation therefore provides that the breadwinner does not necessarily have to be the purchaser or the joint purchaser of the house.

I agree with some of the remarks passed by the honourable member that there could still be some anomalies in the legislation; but rest assured that I have at heart the interests of the purchasers of State houses; and should it be discovered that anomalous situations arise, this legislation will be brought into line so as to carry out the intentions behind the Government's action.

It is, perhaps, of interest to the House to have some report on the effect of this policy to date. As I have already indicated, this has been made retrospective to the 21st February of this year; and, in fact, by administrative action the commission has been putting into effect the law, although it has not yet been enacted.

Mr. Graham: Have you tried to rob the people concerned of a day? The Bill says the 20th February, not the 21st.

Mr. O'NEIL: Maybe there was some legal problem there. I am not sure whether we became the Government at 8 p.m. on that day or not. It is significant that the first two people to benefit from our decision did so within two days of the election.

There have been 10 beneficiaries up to the 21st September, 1965—a period of seven months. The total amount so far credited to the account of these people by way of reduction of outstanding liability is £5,500, and benefits have ranged from £200, the lowest, to £1,000, the highest.

I did ask the officers of the commission to get me out some samples of the types, sizes, ages, and so on of the families that have benefited, and he provided me with a chart, which I have here, dealing with four cases. Whilst I did not ask the commission to give me the cause of death, it is, perhaps, significant, with regard to our very great road toll, to learn that two of these people died as a result of traffic accidents; and these four cases were just picked at random.

In case A, the age at death was 32; the purchaser had six dependants, and the benefit by way of reduction in the outstanding liability amounted to £1,000. Prior to death his instalments were £15 1s. a month, and under the new arrangement they dropped to £10 1s. per month, a reduction of £5 a month.

In case B, the age at death was 34; the purchaser died of natural causes and had four dependants; the total benefit was £800; and the reduction per month was £3 19s.

In case C, the age at death was 41; the purchaser also died in a traffic accident; he had four dependants; the benefit amounted to £700; and again the reduction in the monthly payments amounted to £3 19s.

In case D, the age at death was 55; the purchaser died from natural causes; the benefit was £300; and the reduction per month was £1 6s.

It may be that the commission can bear a little more in the way of the benefits. This matter is very difficult to ascertain at the moment. It must be remembered that in regard to this legislation in other States, in every case except Tasmania, there is a component of the repayment figure which is, in fact, a premium for what is virtually a death benefit insurance.

It must be remembered that these benefits are granted without any additional cost to the purchaser.

Mr. Davies: In this State will the rebate be a dead loss to the commission?

Mr. O'NEIL: This is so; but by the same token the State Housing Commission does grant rebates to people—people who are renting its homes—because of difficult circumstances, social problems, sickness, and so on.

Mr. Sewell: Family income.

Mr. O'NEIL: Yes. It is fair enough, I think, that if people who rent State homes are entitled to some relief because of difficult circumstances, then those who purchase State homes should also be entitled to some relief. I think, too, it should be made quite clear that this particular reduction in outstanding liability does not apply to the house alone. It could be that two families occupy the one house on different occasions, and both could benefit from this scheme. In other words, a house to which the benefits of this scheme would apply, could be sold by the purchaser to another person, and if the new purchaser were buying it through the State Housing Commission scheme, he would be entitled to the same benefits if, unfortunately, the breadwinner in that case died; so the scheme is applicable to families and not buildings.

The honourable member wanted to know why it was decided that this should be a separate Act, and he did say that if he were challenged he could possibly reduce the State Housing Act to two pages.

I agree with his comments about the State Housing Act, and I hope to get an opportunity to see whether that legislation can be streamlined and put into a briefer form. But let us assume we have already done that: that we have a State Housing Act which consists of two pages, and then we amend it by including a new death benefit provision—but this Bill comprises eight pages, anyhow—

Mr. Graham: You could cover this in one paragraph.

Mr. O'NEIL: It is possible that if a real endeavour were made to consolidate the legislation applicable to State housing, this provision could be incorporated in it.

Mr. Brand: But you would still leave many important decisions to the Executive.

Mr. Graham: Within the framework.

Mr. Brand: That is, if you had it in three pages.

Mr. Graham: Yes.

Mr. Brand: I was all for it, but I thought there was some opposition to the idea.

Mr. Graham: No, not so long as the principles are laid down.

Mr. Brand: I wanted to make sure that the principles applied in one case as well as in another.

Mr. O'NEIL: It is pleasing to see that we all seem to want this. Whilst I do not think we could really reduce the Act to two pages we could, perhaps, do something a little better than we have done. It was the opinion of the Crown Law Department and the Parliamentary Draftsman that in order to enact this legislation it would be easier to produce an entirely separate Act, because the legislation is completely new and the existing Act would not be cluttered up with amendments.

The member for Balcatta asked about the delegation of authority. I, too, queried this matter, and on the 18th August last the general manager reported to me that it would be preferable that the State Housing Commission—when we talk about the commission, we mean the actual board of the commission—should delegate this authority to officers of the commission. His note, in fact, reads—

It is also thought that there should be included in the Bill a power for the Commission—

that is, the board—

to delegate its responsibilities under this legislation, so that decision can be made promptly and rapidly, in the event of the Commission not meeting at the same frequency as at present, or during a vacation period.

The board of the State Housing Commission meets weekly, but it may not be necessary for it to meet as frequently as that. Therefore it was decided that the board should be able to delegate to an officer of the commission—the sales and tenancies officer perhaps—the powers under this Act. I point out that clause 3 says—

Subject to the Minister, this Act shall be administered by the Commission.

The reading of clause 11 by the member for Balcatta indicated that the commission could delegate the administration of the Act to persons other than employees of the State Housing Commission. I will undertake to have this matter checked; but I am sure it does not extend beyond what was my understanding of it.

I think what I have said pretty well covers the points raised by the honourable member; and, as I mentioned earlier, I will be particular to ensure that those people whom it is intended shall benefit from this legislation will, in fact, do so; and if it is found that the legislation does not extend to the extent I imagine it will, I shall have no hesitation in ensuring that it does so.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair; Mr. O'Neill (Minister for Housing) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 10 put and passed.

Progress

Progress reported and leave given to sit again, on motion by Mr. Graham.

TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1965-66

In Committee of Supply

Resumed from the 5th October, the Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair.

Vote: Legislative Council, £20,039—

MR. HAWKE (Northam—Leader of the Opposition) [5.45 p.m.]: The Treasurer when introducing the Budget Estimates told us a deficit of £823,000 was expected during the current financial year. On the basis of our population of approximately 800,000, this will represent slightly over £1 per head which, I suppose, in point of a finance deficit, is not anything unduly to worry about in these days, although it does mean that, in due course, unless the Commonwealth Grants Commission makes a larger grant than anticipated the deficit would have to be financed from the General Loan Fund.

The increase in population during the financial year ended the 30th June last was 14,000 according to the information which the Treasurer gave us in his speech. This represented an increase of 1.8 per cent., as against an increase in the population in the previous financial year of 2.34 per cent. I must admit I was very surprised to hear these figures quoted officially to us by the Treasurer. I had been misled into believing the population of the State was increasing at a great rate and that instead of there being a reduction in the percentage increase in the last financial year as against the previous one, there would have been quite an increase. I am necessarily moved to wonder how it comes about that this great leap forward in all directions did not materialise in relation to the growth of our population.

The only explanation the Treasurer gave to the Committee was that the gain from migration into Western Australia was proportionately lower than the average net gain from migration into Australia as a whole. This information was also very surprising, Mr. Chairman, and I am sure to you and your colleagues in the Parliament, very disappointing. From what one had been able to read for weeks and months before, the migration programme

of the Government in this State was proceeding reasonably well—not 100 per cent. satisfactorily, but reasonably well—and therefore it was something of a shock to learn from the Treasurer that our net gain from migration in Western Australia was proportionately lower than the average figure for the whole of Australia during that year.

Whether we can hope for better results under the management of the new Agent-General in London is, I think, open to question. All I hope is that the quality of migrants coming to Western Australia from Britain in future years will be maintained and not fall, and I hope members have some idea of what I am hinting at in that direction. I would not be able to blame the migrants individually or collectively.

Mr. Brand: The Government has continually pressed for more and more migrants because of there being an obvious shortage.

Mr. HAWKE: Yes; the Government has pressed continually to obtain a greater number of migrants into Western Australia. But the angle of the situation which puzzles me is why the net gain for Western Australia for the last financial year is proportionately lower than the net gain for the whole of Australia. Judging by newspaper reports made by the Premier and other Ministers of the Government, I had been led to believe that Western Australia's name would, like the name of Abou Ben Adhem on the angel's list, have been at the top of the migration list of all the States of Australia. Yet we find, when the actual result for the last financial year was made public, Western Australia did not have the highest migration intake and was apparently fairly well down the list. However, I would have hoped the list for this financial year would have shown the result for Western Australia to have been much better—

Mr. Brand: The indications are that it is.

Mr. HAWKE: —and at least up to the average figure for Australia as a whole. I did not want to go back to discuss the possible results from the work of the present Agent-General in this matter. I have said what I wanted to say and I will leave it at that.

The Treasurer told us the employment position in Western Australia was satisfactory during the last financial year and was continuing on that basis. I think I could agree with him on that. He did mention that a considerable number of those who are still registered for employment and who are receiving Commonwealth social service unemployment benefit are not capable, physically, or in some other way, of accepting normal employment which might be available. Many of them, certainly, are not capable, physically, of accepting hard manual labour. Because

of health reasons most of them, I imagine, would not be able to go to the north-west to accept work there, especially during the trying climate which develops in that region in the summer months.

We were told the wheat harvest last year was 63,000,000 bushels. I have forgotten the exact figure as between the end of the last wheat season and the delivery of the Treasurer's speech. I did have it in mind just before the Treasurer made his speech that our total wheat harvest last year was much above the figure of 63,000,000 bushels. Presumably the total figure last year did not rise higher than the estimated total of 63,000,000 bushels because of the excessive rainfall which occurred in several major wheatgrowing areas. The result from all the excessive rainfall in those districts was, of course, lower yields of wheat; and the effect of that was, quite obviously, more severe than many of us had anticipated during last year's wheatgrowing season.

The estimate for the current season is at least 80,000,000 bushels. I should think this estimate was worked out by the 1st October of this year. During the first week of that month, as we all know, there was an amazingly good rainfall. It was somewhere near four inches in the metropolitan area and quite substantial through most, if not all, of the wheatgrowing areas. Therefore we can, with confidence, look forward to a total wheat yield this season well over the figure of 80,000,000 bushels referred to in the speech made by the Treasurer.

The Treasurer gave us some figures relating to the total wool clip and the value of it last year and the year immediately preceding that one. These figures were, I am sure, surprising to all members who had not known of them previously. The total value of the wool clip in the 1964-65 season was £47,791,000; and for the financial year immediately preceding, £58,165,000. In other words, there was a reduction in the value of the total wool clip in the last financial year, as compared with the previous one, of £10,374,000.

I think the average citizen would not have believed that and perhaps would not believe it now if he were told. The average citizen would have gone along—as I had gone along—thinking the sheep population was increasing fairly rapidly; and, consequently, unless there had been quite a fall in the price of wool, the total value of the wool clip for the 1964-65 year would have been well above the total for the 1963-64 year. The Treasurer, however, in giving us the official figures, made us surprisingly and acutely aware of the fact that the reverse had been the case, and the total value of the wool clip for the 1963-64 year was over £10,000,000 higher than the total value for 1964-65.

In his speech the Treasurer did not talk about wool prices, and therefore we have no official basis upon which to judge how the fluctuation of prices in 1964-65, as compared with 1963-64, affected the total value in each of the two years to which I have referred. The only reason the Treasurer gave to us for the very substantial decline in the total value of the wool clip was that there had been a reduction in the average weight of fleeces. We were not given any explanation as to how this decline in the weight of the average fleece occurred. This might also have been due to the excessively wet winter in many areas. Maybe the effect of heavy rainfall and the long period of rainfall on grasses had been to reduce their food value, and consequently the weight of the fleeces. The average weight of the fleece of all the sheep in Western Australia had declined, as compared with the average weight in the previous 12 months.

I would be very interested indeed to hear the member for Roe talk on these Estimates and give us the benefit of his practical and expert advice on this point. I would also appreciate the opportunity to hear one of the members who represents a sheep-growing district of some magnitude telling us whether he is in possession of the information as to what effect the fluctuation in prices in 1964-65 had, as compared with the year 1963-64, in connection with the total wool clip in each of those two years.

The Treasurer told us there are now approximately 56,500 persons employed in secondary industry in Western Australia, and this figure as recorded for the last financial year increased by 5.4 per cent. over that for the previous year. There is still great scope and great need for a larger increase in the number of people who are employed in manufacturing industries in Western Australia. I shall have a little more to say about that when I deal with the interstate trade deficit which Western Australia has with the other States.

I am sure it was disappointing to most, if not all, members to learn from the Treasurer there had been another decline in the production of gold in Western Australia in the last financial year. There was a decline of 47,000 fine oz. in the last financial year as compared with the previous one. The Treasurer obtained some satisfaction by telling us this decline was only half as large as the decline of the previous year compared with the immediately preceding year. In other words, the production of gold in Western Australia, although declining, is not declining now at the same rate as it did a year or so ago! It is a great pity this important industry should be declining in production and activity.

We all know the iron ore industry has now become the glamour industry and is given no end of publicity and attention. The worth and the value of the goldmining industry to this State seems to be partly—if not largely—forgotten, because it is not ranked high any more as news, when compared with news regarding our iron ore deposits and their exploitation.

I hope the Government will make even greater efforts during the current financial year to encourage increased goldmining activity, including more encouragement to prospectors, and will do whatever is possible to engender within this industry greater production and more employment for all those who are associated with the industry.

There is no doubt the goldmining industry is a great one for the building up of decentralisation. The towns of Kalgoorlie, Boulder, and Norseman are indeed a great credit to the local authorities concerned and to their citizens. It would be a marvellous thing for that part of the State and for the State as a whole if other towns of like size could be developed out on the Murchison, in particular, where only ghost towns now exist for the most part. It is true Mt. Magnet is still quite a good goldmining area, and it is quite a good-sized town. However, it is depressing when travelling between Kalgoorlie and Meekatharra to see the ghost goldmining towns on the way. It is amazing how quickly a town will spring up around a good goldmine, and how quickly the citizens develop very fine qualities of citizenship by taking a pride in the town and everything associated with it.

The Treasurer told us there had been an increase in savings bank deposits within the State in the last financial year to the extent of 9.1 per cent. He further told us this compared with an average increase of approximately 15 per cent. over the previous two years. He made no attempt to tell us why there had been this substantial falling-off in the percentage increase in savings bank deposits during last financial year. This falling-off is quite substantial, and I think it requires an explanation. I intend to have something more to say about it later on when I deal with another subject.

The external trade of the State was not nearly as satisfactory as in the previous financial year, and this is surprising. It is true the total value of the wool clip has fallen by some £10,000,000, but the value of the wheat exported must surely have risen. The surplus of exports to overseas countries over the imports of goods from those countries was £48,800,000 in the last financial year, compared with a surplus of £87,100,000 in 1963-64. It is somewhat of a shock to learn from the figures supplied by the Treasurer covering those two financial years there has been a falling-off in our export surplus

amounting to £38,300,000. The only explanation which the Treasurer gave in connection with this very large decline or deterioration in our overseas trading activities was to the effect that imports had risen by £15,800,000, whereas exports had fallen by £22,500,000.

I hope the Treasurer in his reply to this debate will give us more detailed information, so we may know with reasonable exactitude how the falling-off of £38,300,000 in the surplus in the last financial year as compared with the experience in 1963-64 came about. The interstate trade in the last financial year produced a deficit for the State of £110,200,000 which is, from any point of view, a shocking result for a State with a small population of approximately 800,000. I say very frankly a population of 800,000 cannot afford to go on having an interstate trade deficit of £110,000,000 or anything like it in each financial year.

The only crumb of consolation the Treasurer was able to offer us was to the effect that exports from Western Australia to the Eastern States had risen by £10,000,000; therefore the imports into the State from the Eastern States must have gone up very considerably.

Taking the overall trade situation, the deficit for the State in the last financial year was £61,400,000, and that is a fairly drastic result for a State with a small population, in connection with its total trading operations, both interstate and overseas. This deficit of £61,400,000 for the last financial year was worse by £37,000,000 than the result experienced in 1963-64 when the total overall trade deficit for the State was only £24,400,000. I would like the Treasurer when he replies to the debate to tell us what is proposed by the Government to try to deal more effectively with this situation. It is obvious that a State which is still largely primary producing cannot go on year after year sustaining a total overall trade deficit with the outside world and the other States of £61,400,000.

It means that in essence we are keeping the Eastern States more prosperous than they should be. Whilst it gives us an argument to counter some of the claims and assertions made by Eastern States authorities, nevertheless it is a situation which, in my judgment, has within it a great deal of gravity. I see no sense, nor have I ever been able to see any, in the small population of Western Australia keeping the factories in the Eastern States working overtime, keeping the people there more fully employed, and building up their prosperity, their profits, and their incomes, while keeping ourselves not as well off as we should be.

The Treasurer told us retail sales in this State in the last financial year on a basis of expenditure per head of population were up by 6.3 per cent. over the figure of the previous financial year. He

became rather oratorical and declared this was a striking indication of our prosperity. Well, is it, when we consider most of the goods we were buying in the retail trade operations were made in the Eastern States of Australia or in other countries of the world?

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. HAWKE: I was dealing with the volume and value of retail sales within the State during the last financial year and I pointed out the expenditure per head of population in connection with retail sales was up 6.3 per cent. The Treasurer did tell us retail prices were up 3.2 per cent. during the year, which reduces the volume of sales as apart from value by that 3.2 per cent.

The increase in savings bank deposits was 6 per cent. less than in the previous year, so beyond any shadow of doubt the increased expenditure per head of population in retail buying was more than covered by the increases in prices and the far lesser increases in savings bank deposits.

Therefore it seems to me that under this heading of retail sales and increased expenditure per head of population which took place in connection with the sales, there is nothing to prate about; nothing upon which solidly to base the claim that the increase is a striking indication of our prosperity. I am not sure whether motor vehicle sales would be included in retail sales, but I take it for granted they would be. I do not know whether the motorcar, having been sold, and having a sale value of £1,000 with a deposit of only £100 paid on it, would be calculated as a retail sale at £1,000 or £100. So that is another aspect of this subject upon which we would require considerably more information before we could go anywhere near as far as the Treasurer in declaring this increased expenditure per head of population on retail sales to have been a striking indication of our prosperity.

We were told the registration of new cars and station wagons during the last financial year was 6.6 per cent. less than in the previous year; and for other new motor vehicles, 1.7 per cent. less. So in this area of trade there was a slump—not a very big one or a serious one, but one of some consequence in a detrimental sense to those who are engaged in the sale and distribution of new motor vehicles in Western Australia.

I have already pointed out retail prices were up 3.2 per cent. during the year. This would not cover the total cost of living by any means because many other costs and charges come into the total cost of living, in any community, than those in the retail price index. Taxation was up, of course, last year as compared with the previous year, and this resulted, in some degree, from Federal and State taxation activities.

Those are additional factors which would lead me to believe retail sales on the basis of expenditure per head of population are not a foundation upon which one could claim, with any logic or any strength, that there has been a striking indication of our prosperity within them.

The Treasurer did go on to say a sign of our growing prosperity and rising living standards was to be found in the effective motor vehicle registrations for the year. The total of motor vehicle registrations within the State last financial year represents 35.7 per hundred of the population with motorcars. The figure five years before was, we were told, only 28.7 per hundred of the population with motorcars.

Those figures do indicate there is more money available now than five years ago for the purchase of motorcars. However, I think it is reasonable to say in connection with this that motorcars are available today on much easier terms than they were available five years ago. Whether the quantity of these effective motor vehicle registrations would include the field of secondhand cars, including bombs, I am not in a position to say. I think it is open to argument, too, whether a large sale of motorcars is a sign of growing prosperity and rising living standards.

Mr. Brand: Those figures did not include motorcars, or petrol, or parts. That was stated in my speech.

Mr. HAWKE: The figures I am talking about deal with effective motorcar registrations.

Mr. Court: I think the Premier was referring to your earlier observation as to whether increased retail sales included motor vehicles.

Mr. HAWKE: If the Premier was referring to that matter his interjection was four or five minutes too late. When he did interject I was dealing with the subject of effective motorcar registration for 1964-65 as against the year five years previously.

Mr. Court: You asked earlier if the Premier could give you some information as to whether the retail figure included motor vehicles. It does not. It excludes motor vehicles, petrol, and parts.

Mr. HAWKE: I am grateful to the Treasurer for his interjection, and to the Minister for Industrial Development for so clearly interpreting it. We know that in these days there are two or three cars in some families. The father has a car, the mother has a car, the son has a car, and the daughter can have a car. They can all be living within the one home. Whether that is a sign of growing prosperity and rising living standards, I am not sure. It is certainly a sign that some families have increasing prosperity and a rising living standard, if we take the

possession of a motorcar as a legitimate measure of prosperity and rising living standards.

Even if we agree with what the Treasurer claimed in that regard, there is another side to the picture, is there not? It seems to me the possession of motorcars in increasing numbers means the community, as such, is becoming increasingly debt-ridden because of the increasing sale and registration of motor vehicles. I wish someone could produce reliable figures to indicate the extent of ownership of vehicles within the community on the basis of how much the person possessing the car and running it has already paid on the vehicle, and how much remains to be paid. As far as I can find out the field of motor vehicle finance, in regard to the sale and resale on a time-payment basis, is a very lucrative field for those who do the financing, and a very different field for most of those who have to be financed in this field. We all know, especially in regard to younger people, the degree of deprivation they are prepared to suffer to have a motorcar and to run it. Whether this is a sign of growing prosperity and a rising living standard, I think is open to argument.

You, Sir, were in the retail business in a country town some years ago—and you might, for all I know, still have a substantial interest in that business. Many storekeepers who sell essential goods are not being paid for some of those goods, and some of them are even prepared to name the people concerned. When they do name the persons, one will find those named are, in all probability, almost certainly hopelessly involved in payments on a motorcar; and, of course, in the payment of the associated registration and running of it. So this claim of growing prosperity and rising living standards based upon the total effective car registrations in any particular year is a claim which is not 100 per cent. valid, and one which I have tried to show has another side to it altogether.

The Treasurer also made a claim, and I quote, that in many respects these are more challenging times than when our State's foundations were being laid. Statements such as that sound more like a glamorous portion of an election policy speech than a legitimate claim to be included in a Budget speech.

We all know there are challenges today, and I do not know a year when there were not challenges of one kind or another to the community and to citizens within it. I think it is not one scrap legitimate or logical to try to compare the challenges of today with the challenges of 140 years, or even 100 years, or even 65 years ago. I think there is nothing in Western Australia today to compare in achievement with the development, the

establishment, and the subsequent successful operation of the goldfields water supply scheme—nothing to compare favourably with that for challenge and achievement. Then, of course, in these days we have such marvellous machines and inventions of all kinds to assist us in meeting whatever challenge might develop; whereas even 50 or 60 years ago the same means were not available. There was nothing to compare with what we have today.

So it seems to me that making a claim that these are more challenging times, in many respects, than when the State's foundations were being laid is stretching it beyond the point of any possibility of the claim being accepted by anyone who is prepared to make a careful and close analysis of the conditions today as compared with 60, 100, or 130 years ago.

The Treasurer then went on to claim it was the joint responsibility of Government, management, and labour, to ride the boom intelligently and with foresight. That statement would go very well in an election policy speech at Armadale, for instance. I see the member for Dale smiling knowingly.

Mr. Brand: Isn't that so?

Mr. HAWKE: Yes.

Mr. Brand: Of course it is!

Mr. HAWKE: Let us take the Treasurer's claim at its face value. Let us agree wholeheartedly and unanimously there is a joint responsibility on Government, management, and labour, to ride the boom intelligently and with foresight, and let us not cloud the issue by trying to argue whether there is a boom, and, if there is, the size of it; who is benefitting from it; and who is failing to get any benefit from it. Immediately after the Treasurer had talked about riding the boom intelligently he had this to say—

But it would be wrong indeed and would undo much of what has been achieved, if the prosperity which we now enjoy were used as an opportunity to make unreal demands for higher wages or to take out unduly high profits, while the going is good.

Mr. Brand: What is wrong with that?

Mr. HAWKE: This is the crux of the whole situation.

Mr. Brand: What is wrong with it?

Mr. HAWKE: I shall endeavour to show the Treasurer what is wrong with it.

Mr. Brand: There is nothing wrong with it.

Mr. HAWKE: In the first place the greatest thing wrong with it is that it applies to one of the parties or groups concerned and not to the other. That is the first and greatest thing wrong with it. This situation which the Treasurer talks

about, and this joint responsibility which he prates about, are very much akin to the attitude of his Government when the trade union movement in Western Australia, a year or so ago, approached the Arbitration Commission for an increase in the State basic wage. Up to the time the application by the unions was lodged, and for years before—certainly for many months before—the members of this Government were talking in the same way as the Treasurer talked in his Budget speech about rising standards of living; abounding prosperity; the State leaping forward; possibilities unlimited—

Mr. Brand: Isn't that so?

Mr. HAWKE: Yes; it is so.

Mr. Brand: Well, what are you talking about?

Mr. HAWKE: I am pleased the Treasurer agrees. However, soon after the trade union movement made its approach to the Arbitration Commission for a substantial increase in the State basic wage the State Government began to cry poverty, especially through its then Minister for Works who now, for good or whatever else it might be, is the State's Agent-General in London.

Mr. Brand: We have never cried poverty.

Mr. HAWKE: You did on that occasion.

Mr. Brand: No.

Mr. HAWKE: You most certainly cried poverty.

Mr. Brand: We most certainly did not cry poverty.

Mr. HAWKE: You most certainly cried poverty; and it was a miraculous change in attitude which occurred overnight.

Mr. Brand: That is not so.

Mr. HAWKE: There was no sudden alteration in the economic field, or in the industrial field. Nothing had gone wrong overnight in the field of finance, Government or private; yet as soon as the trade unions had made their official approach to the Arbitration Commission, and had announced publicly the amount of increase they were seeking in the basic wage, the Government, through its then Minister for Works, began to cry poverty; and, in fact, intervened in the case. Surely the Treasurer remembers that!

Mr. Brand: We didn't cry poverty, and you know it.

Mr. Fletcher: Then what was it?

Mr. HAWKE: What did the Treasurer's Government, through its agent in the court, offer as an increase in the State basic wage?

Mr. Brand: We simply set out the economic facts of the day.

Mr. HAWKE: The Government offered a particular figure; it submitted a particular figure and argued in favour of it. Would the Treasurer be good enough—

Mr. Brand: It was in accordance with the standards of the States throughout the Federation.

Mr. HAWKE: Will the Treasurer tell us the exact figure his Government offered or argued in favour of in that case?

Mr. Brand: I have forgotten what it was now.

Mr. HAWKE: I would not blame the Treasurer for forgetting. If I were in his position I would have forgotten about it, too.

Mr. Brand: This was a decision made by the tribunal.

Mr. HAWKE: I am not talking about the decision subsequently made by the tribunal; I am talking about the figure—the specific figure—which the Government offered as an increase per week in the State basic wage.

Mr. Court: The Government only stated a case based on the general industrial approach at that time and the decision was left to the tribunal.

Mr. HAWKE: The Minister for Industrial Development remembers the figure.

Mr. Court: I remember the circumstances of the case.

Mr. HAWKE: He remembers the figure, but he is too ashamed to mention it.

Mr. Court: No; it was months back. This matter was right on the top line.

Mr. HAWKE: Anything which would shame the Minister for Industrial Development into not mentioning something he knows must be shameful indeed.

Mr. Court: If you like to think you can read my mind that is up to you.

Mr. HAWKE: I would not—

Mr. Court: I know the particulars involved and they were very sound.

Mr. HAWKE: I would not accept the responsibility of trying to read the Ministers' mind, but I know some of his methods.

Mr. Court: Get personal if you like.

Mr. HAWKE: However, the amount which the Government offered was 3s. 8d. a week, as I remember it, although it might have been 3s. 4d.; and in that amount there was an accumulated increase in the cost of living which had occurred previously. I think the net amount which the Government was offering was 1s. 2d. a week. Even the Arbitration Commission could not stomach that; it was too lousy even for the members of the commission and they went a bit above that.

Mr. Court: They made the decision as they were intended to make it.

Mr. HAWKE: I concede that. There is no doubt about that, as I have said before!

Mr. Court: We have always left it to their own initiative to make their own decision, and we abide by it.

Mr. HAWKE: That is not the point we have been discussing. The point we have been discussing is that the Government, overnight, and after the unions had made their application, suddenly changed its tune. The trumpet which had been blowing out joyful tunes suddenly began to blow out gloom and semi-despair and semi-poverty.

Mr. Court: I well remember one person by the name of Hawke saying before the Industrial Commission that the prosperity we were enjoying under this Government was fantastic.

Mr. HAWKE: That might have been so, too.

Mr. Court: As a matter of fact, we could have used it at election time.

Mr. HAWKE: I would not have minded the Minister, when he was member for Nedlands—if he was at the time—standing up and analysing that statement and criticising it. However, the Minister for Industrial Development cannot escape from the present situation by going back 10 or 15 years and referring to something I might have said.

Mr. Court: I am not referring to anything you said 10 or 15 years ago; I am referring to something that was said in this particular case when one by the name of Hawke—and I was not referring to you—spoke in the most eulogistic terms of what this Government had done and the great prosperity we were enjoying in this State.

Mr. HAWKE: I am not arguing about that.

Mr. Court: Then I have made my point.

Mr. HAWKE: I am analysing the attitude of the Government after the unions had lodged their application, and I am comparing the attitude which the Government suddenly adopted with the attitude it had been adopting for many months—and even years—before. I am saying there was a spectacular change in the Government's outlook and attitude; and, of course, it was an assumed attitude; it was not real, dinkum, or genuine. It was an assumed attitude for the purpose of influencing the members of the newly-appointed commission to refrain from giving the workers of this State any reasonable increase or a share in all this abounding prosperity.

Mr. Brand: We have never cried poverty and the State basic wage is 9s. 10d. above the Federal wage for Perth now.

Mr. HAWKE: Now, is it?

Mr. Brand: Doesn't this indicate—

Mr. HAWKE: Now, is it?

Mr. Brand: Those are the figures that I have been given.

Mr. HAWKE: As it happens the Treasurer has been given the correct figures. But why is the State basic wage in Western Australia today 9s. 7d. a week above the Federal basic wage?

Mr. Brand: Because the court has decided from time to time in respect of this matter.

Mr. HAWKE: Because the State Arbitration Commission has decided, from quarter to quarter, to grant to the workers of Western Australia the increased cost-of-living figures as translated into shillings and pence. That is quite true. But why is the Federal basic wage as low as it is?

Mr. Brand: I could not say.

Mr. Fletcher: Doesn't know or care!

Mr. Brand: Because it was decided on by the commission set up for the purpose.

Mr. HAWKE: That is a rather wonderful admission from the Treasurer! He could not say.

Mr. Brand: You tell us why.

Mr. HAWKE: I will.

Mr. Brand: Well, go on!

Mr. HAWKE: In the first instance because the Federal Arbitration Commission has refused to grant quarterly cost-of-living adjustments; and, in the second place, because it has refused to give the workers of Australia any increase in the extra prosperity which is in existence in Australia and which has come into existence in more recent years.

Mr. Brand: Don't you accept the decision of the tribunal set up for this purpose?

Mr. HAWKE: How can anyone do otherwise than accept its decision?

Mr. Brand: There are no quarterly adjustments.

Mr. HAWKE: The decision is made and it is legally binding. Everyone has to accept it.

Mr. Brand: Of course, as they did in New South Wales when the Labor Government took the quarterly adjustments away.

Mr. HAWKE: Yes; it did at a later stage. But that Government had granted them for many years and there was a definite understanding that, in the event of the cost of living increasing to any worth-while extent in New South Wales, they would come back.

Mr. Brand: My word there wasn't!

Mr. HAWKE: There was indeed.

Mr. Brand: No there wasn't!

Mr. HAWKE: As a matter of fact, at the time the quarterly cost-of-living payments were abolished in New South Wales an additional payment of, I think, 7s. was given as a compensation.

Mr. Brand: That is so, to bring it up to the decision of the Federal court. Quarterly adjustments were done away with.

Mr. HAWKE: Yes, but—

Mr. Brand: By a Labor Government.

Mr. HAWKE: —the Government gave a strong undertaking—

Mr. Brand: No fear!

Mr. HAWKE: —to the trade union movement that in the event of the cost of living increasing substantially it would revert to the previous position.

Mr. Brand: You show me where that was said, and undertaken.

Mr. HAWKE: It was.

Mr. Brand: You show me where it was said.

Mr. HAWKE: I have not imagined it. It was a clear-cut understanding, and a clear-cut undertaking between the then Premier of New South Wales and the trade union movement.

Mr. Brand: The principle remains: that he did not think it had any great value, or he would not have moved for it. It was not easy for him to do that, either.

Mr. HAWKE: Of course it was not easy for him to do it; but in any event what has that to do with the principle?

Mr. Brand: It was a clear-cut principle that the quarterly cost-of-living adjustments do not achieve what you say they do.

Mr. HAWKE: I do not say it is achieving anything marvellous. All it does is to maintain the purchasing power of the wage earner on its true level. That is all.

Mr. Brand: Are you saying that Mr. Renshaw, as a Labor Premier of the day, did not believe this? Because he took it away.

Mr. HAWKE: I am not speaking for Mr. Renshaw. I am saying that at the time quarterly cost-of-living adjustments were suspended in New South Wales, an increase of 7s. a week was made, as was a clear-cut undertaking that in the event of the cost of living increasing to any worth-while extent the quarterly cost-of-living adjustments would be reintroduced. I repeat what the Treasurer said. He said—

But it would be wrong indeed and would undo much of what has been achieved, if the prosperity which we now enjoy were used as an opportunity to make unreal demands for higher wages or to take out unduly high profits while the going is good.

The essential point about all this is that the wages and salaries of working people are controlled by legally established tribunals. The only way the working people can get an increase in wages or salaries is to make an application to the Arbitration Commission, or to one of the commissioners. A case has then to be prepared

which must be argued in court. The representatives of the employers are in the court arguing the other way. When the case has been fully put forward by each side the single commissioner, or the full commission, as the case might be, assesses the whole of the evidence which has been submitted and finally makes a decision. Do the employers have to do the same thing before they increase profits?

Mr. J. Hegney: Of course they don't!

Mr. HAWKE: Do those engaged in banking, or insurance, or in manufacturing, or in wholesale or retail activities have to do that before they can impose an increase in prices upon the community for the same service or for the same commodity? Of course not!

So it is unreal for the Treasurer to appeal as he did in his speech to management, Government, and labour, to ride the boom intelligently, and to refrain from making requests and demands. It is unreal for the Treasurer to say, as he did, that it would be wrong indeed, and would undo much of what has been achieved for the prosperity we now enjoy if it were used as an opportunity to make undue demands for higher wages, or to take out unduly high profits while the going is good.

We saw a statement published in this morning's issue of *The West Australian* setting out the very substantial profits which have been made over the last few years by some of the companies in this State. They did not respond to any appeal by the Treasurer to refrain from making higher profits while the going is good. They are getting the utmost possible out of the situation in the way of increased profits.

Mr. J. Hegney: They are riding the wave.

Mr. HAWKE: They are riding the boom for all they are worth. So the whole situation on the basis of the Treasurer's approach is unreal; it is illogical; there is no merit, or fairness, or justice in it at all; because one group in the community—those who depend upon wages and salaries for their income and standard of living—have to prepare a case; they have to argue before the commissioners; they have to put in witnesses; and the employers concerned have the opportunity of going before the Arbitration Commission and of putting forward every effort to break down the case, or most of the case, as presented on behalf of the employees concerned.

So it is a very tough job—a very tough job indeed—for wage and salary earners to get any increase in wages. When they do get such increases, they must substantiate their claims right up to the last word. On the other side, as I have tried to indicate briefly, the people in the banking world, and insurance world; those in the

manufacturing field, the wholesale field, and the retail field, themselves decide, individually, whether the price of this service or that commodity is to go up, and up it goes once they make their decision.

I do not want to quote, this evening, the names of the firms which appeared in this morning's special supplement to *The West Australian* newspaper. I do not want to quote the profits they have made, or the dividends they have returned. They are in the newspaper for anyone who wishes to see them to have a look. We also know there are hidden profits in the business world.

We all know about the issue of bonus shares. I noticed only in recent days where a timber company has decided to issue bonus shares—one bonus share for every four shares held by any shareholder. When bonus shares are issued by a company the company is immediately under the necessity to earn greater profits in the forthcoming year so that it might maintain the same rate of dividends in the previous years for the greater number of shares. Obviously that can only be achieved by gaining greater profits, and most profits in the business world, most increased profits, are made by increasing prices. No banker, no insurance head, no warehouse owner, or factory owner has to go before a tribunal, or put up a case and argue it. He does not have to prove it is not against the public interest to increase prices and charges. He just goes ahead at his own will.

The only factor which might restrain him is the factor of real, genuine, dinkum, competition in his field, if there be any. That is the only factor which restrains him. If there is real, effective, competition in his field he cannot increase his own prices unless he can get the agreement of the others in the same field to do the same. We all know, and frankly admit, there is real competition in some fields of business, just as there is no competition whatever in other fields; and, indeed, no competition at all in the major fields of business in this State, or in other States of Australia at the present time.

Until the Treasurer puts wages and salary earners and the business community upon the same basis and under the same necessity to prove their case before they can take an increased prosperity from the community, his appeal has no logic and no fairness in it.

In his Budget speech the Treasurer tells us that by way of income tax reimbursement from the Commonwealth Government we will receive this year £35,877,000, this representing an increase of £3,628,000 over the same amount received last financial year. He told us the special grant from the Commonwealth for this year, as apart from income tax reimbursements, would be £10,500,000, this being £2,000,000 more than the same amount granted under the same heading last financial year.

The Treasurer then turned to the subject of increased taxation and, quite wisely, I think, said he did not propose to go into any detail in regard to some of the increased burdens to be put upon the people of Western Australia during this year. These, of course, will be continuing burdens upon them for many years to come, I should imagine. The Treasurer told us freights and fares on the railways had already increased. He gave us no figure at that stage as to the total increased revenue the department would receive, but later in his speech he did tell us that for the period the 1st October this year to the 30th June next year it was estimated an increased amount of £812,000 would be received from this impost.

It is not disturbing to say the Railways Department will receive an increased income of £812,000 during the balance of this financial year. That is not a bit disturbing. But it is a bit disturbing for those who will have to provide this additional £812,000 during the current financial year. That, of course, is the other side of the picture.

The total increase in railway freights and fares for a full year will be over £1,000,000. The Treasurer, representing as he does a country district, would agree, I think, that is a fairly heavy additional impost to place upon the railway users, nearly all of whom are located in the country areas.

The Treasurer told us freights and fares had been increased on the State ships commencing from the 1st October this year. He gave us no figure as to the total additional income which the State ships were expected to receive from this additional impost upon the passengers who use these ships, and upon the people who have freight and stock carried on the ships.

The M.T.T. bus fares went up as from the 1st October this year. Here again we were given no figure as to the anticipated increase in revenue which the Metropolitan Passenger Transport Trust will receive as a result of this additional heavy impost upon those who use the M.T.T. buses. I think it is reasonable for the Treasurer to give us the fullest possible information in regard to this matter, because these increased charges to which I have referred are charges put upon the people with no reference to Parliament at all. The appropriate legislation in each instance gives the Government, through its executive powers, the right to levy these additional charges without having them brought to Parliament for consideration and approval, or otherwise.

I hope, therefore, the Treasurer will, in his reply to this debate, give us at least the total amount expected to be received from the increases in freights and fares on State ships, and from the increases in fares on the M.T.T. buses.

The Treasurer then went on to tell us that fees for the licensing of motor vehicles are to go up; the cost of licenses for drivers of motor vehicles is to go up from £1 to £1 10s. per year. He told us a new road maintenance charge was to be imposed upon commercial vehicles engaged in the transport of goods for profit. He told us also of reductions in concessions relating to certain types of motor vehicles used by primary producers, mainly upon their own properties and not very much upon the public roads. He then went on to tell us of additional stamp duties to be imposed.

At this stage, one need not offer any criticism of these proposals at any length because each of them will come to Parliament by way of legislation, and every member in this Chamber and in another place will have an opportunity at that time of studying in detail the legislative proposals to implement these increases, and we will be able to criticise them or otherwise as we then see fit.

I was not able to work out with any certainty the total amount of increased income which the Government will receive from its increased charges. The main reason for not being able to work out the total was that the Treasurer did not give us any figures covering the State Shipping Service or the Metropolitan Transport Trust. However, the Treasurer gave us figures in connection with some of the items. I think it is worth referring to them briefly so they might find a place in the current week's *Hansard* as well as finding a place in last week's *Hansard*. Bills of Exchange, £234,000, as a result of higher stamp duty; motor vehicles, £90,000; conveyances on transfers of property, £76,000; share transfers, £13,000-£413,000 under these headings. Vehicle license fees £325,000, as a result of the increased registration fees; drivers' license fees, £95,000; reduced concessions for primary producers' vehicles, £95,000; the road charge tax, £55,000; and in addition—as I have already mentioned—£825,000 for the increase in railway freights and fares for the balance of this financial year.

I was very interested to hear the Treasurer say in his speech that the receipts from Commonwealth sources this year into the Consolidated Revenue Fund of this State were expected to reach £51,369,000, which is slightly more than half of the total income expected to be received into the Consolidated Revenue Fund from all sources. Obviously this underlines the still very great dependence of Western Australia in relation to governmental finance upon decisions of the Commonwealth Government in the first place, and of the Commonwealth Parliament, subsequently. It is a bit frightening to realise we depend upon the Commonwealth authority for more than

50 per cent. of our total income into the Consolidated Revenue Fund. It means, among other things, the Commonwealth has a terrific influence upon the State and upon State policy if it wishes to try to exercise that influence in a way which may not be completely legitimate.

I do not know of any Commonwealth Government up to this date which has tried to use such an influence. However, it is clear our destiny as a people for the time being and our destiny as a State Government for the time being is undoubtedly, to the extent of 50 per cent., in the hands of the Commonwealth authority.

Mr. Brand: The situation is, of course, one that has been brought about by uniform taxation. This general situation stems from the Commonwealth Government collecting personal income and leaving a very small field for the State.

Mr. HAWKE: Yes; it is quite true, as the Treasurer has said and as has been said in this Parliament many times. The Commonwealth Government, by virtue of its monopoly control of the income taxation field naturally receives a tremendous total income from that source and, quite properly, has to make a reasonable reimbursement payment each financial year to each State from the total income taxation which the Commonwealth Government collects. As far as I am able to see into the future, I would think this system of monopoly taxation by the Commonwealth authority would continue for quite a long time.

During my experience at Premiers' Conferences, the only State of the six States which was really anxious, genuine, and determined to get its income-taxing powers back from the Commonwealth was the State of Victoria. I suppose if we had anything to do with the Government of Victoria, or if we had anything to do with the Parliament of Victoria, or if we were citizens in Victoria, we would favour that policy, too—

Mr. Brand: We certainly would.

Mr. HAWKE: —because Victoria is a very fortunately situated State. It has a very small area in point of square miles and a big population. It has great industries, and clearly is in a very fortunate position compared with larger States like New South Wales, South Australia, Queensland, and Western Australia. However, as I said earlier, other States in other ways greatly assist Victoria.

I should think most of the manufactured goods which we buy each year from the Eastern States are bought from Victoria. So, indirectly, we make a very big contribution to the industrial activity of Victoria and to the employment opportunities for its people and to its general prosperity as one of the Australian States.

I listened with considerable interest the other evening to the portion of the speech by the member for Subiaco in connection with the public debt and interest payment thereon. I do not propose tonight to say very much on the subject, as there may be other opportunities before the session finishes. This has been a subject of prime interest to me ever since I went into public life way back in 1924. I have always had the idea the financial system is very cruel—if I might put it that way—in the terrific burden of debt and interest it imposes upon governments which have to borrow and upon those citizens in the community who have to borrow, particularly if they have to borrow in difficult circumstances and consequently are plundered—if I might put it that way—by virtue of their desperate situation in signing agreements to repay the amounts periodically and to pay interest on very harsh terms.

However, if one started to go fully into this subject, one would have to continue for quite a long time to deal at all adequately with it. So I resist the temptation at this period. Our public debt as a State, and Western Australians as a people, carry this financial year an interest burden of £18,864,000, which, as I work it out, is £23 10s. per head of the population. In other words, 800,000 people in Western Australia have on the average to provide in taxation to the State Government £23 10s. this year under this heading alone; and as each year comes and goes this amount will, of course, increase unless our population increases faster than the increase per head of the total public debt.

I think our present total public debt is well over £360,000,000. Talking that way in this Chamber does not seem very important, but if we were to sit down and study that figure seriously it would frighten us. It should, anyway; but I am afraid we have developed an outlook and attitude—a state of mind—in connection with this problem which sort of makes us either ignore the subject as one for serious debate, or to feel, "Well, the previous generation left us with a very hefty public debt and heavy annual interest bill and in return for that we will leave to the next generation an even greater public debt and even heavier interest bill per head of population."

I know quite well that, in addition to leaving a greater public debt and a much greater interest bill per head of population to the rising generation or to the one after that, we are also passing to them far greater assets than we inherited, say, 20, 30, or 50 years ago. We also know and admit State Governments in Australia have no other method open to them to finance public works programmes than the policy of borrowing money at interest. Much of this money has to be borrowed from the public and interest of fairly reasonable proportions has to be offered

to the investor and the public generally to get them to subscribe to these public works loans; otherwise the people concerned would put their money into profitable private investment and the State Government would be left with only very small amounts of capital moneys to use in the building of additional schools, hospitals, water supplies, and all of the other essential undertakings required in a growing State such as we have in Western Australia. Having said so much—and I hope not too much—I now leave it to others to take up the debate.

Progress

Progress reported and leave given to sit again, on motion by Mr. Hart.

THE CITY CLUB (PRIVATE) BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed, from the 7th October, on the following motion by Mr. Durack:—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Minister for Industrial Development) [8.32 p.m.]: On behalf of the Government I support this Bill. The subject matter has been studied by the companies registration office, the Treasury, and the Licensing Court, all of which raise no objection to its passage.

The Bill aims at achieving the same objectives as the one of last year in respect of the Fremantle Buffalo Club, and is very similar in content to that measure. Under the circumstances I have no further comment to make, but I do support the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

EDUCATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

Debate resumed, from the 7th October, on the following motion by Mr. Lewis (Minister for Education):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. W. HEGNEY (Mt. Hawthorn) [8.37 p.m.]: This is a very brief and comparatively unimportant Bill, consisting of two amendments to one section of the Education Act in connection with powers of the State School Teachers' Tribunal.

The first amendment is to make it clear that temporary or supply teachers shall not be entitled to appeal to the tribunal when their applications for permanent positions have not been successful. The second amendment provides that teachers

will be required to state an order of preference in cases where they apply for more than one advertised position. This order of preference will be binding on them should they elect to appeal to the tribunal in any particular case.

I am satisfied the Bill will remove a cause of considerable inconvenience to the departmental administration and I support it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

VERMIN ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed, from the 7th October, on the following motion by Mr. Nalder (Minister for Agriculture):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. SEWELL (Geraldton) [8.41 p.m.]: When we look at the reasons for the introduction of this Bill and go through the principal Act, we realise more and more the importance of such an Act and the need for amending it from time to time. We realise from year to year the damage done in this country by various types of vermin which abound in it. A friend of mine who was on the Agriculture Protection Board—a man who had a wealth of experience in farming in the drier and outer areas—said at a board meeting that we had every type of vermin and pest that was known, except lions and tigers; and I think that the majority of primary producers would agree with him.

The Bill intends to amend sections 98 and 99 of the principal Act, and section 98 deals mostly with the destruction of eggs; and we understand that these are mainly emu eggs. Anyone who has had experience in the outer wheatbelt knows the havoc emus can cause, and would agree also that this section of the Act does need amending. It would appear that the Crown Law Department has found various loopholes in the Act under which persons could appeal against convictions recorded against them and could win cases submitted by the department in connection with their neglect to carry out the provisions of the Act.

The amendment to section 99 deals mainly with the protection of what we know as the rabbit-proof fences or vermin-proof fences. There is no doubt that hunters, and farmers themselves while shifting stock from place to place and when driving vehicles along the fences, have caused damage to the fences and thereby nullified the good effect the fences have had. It is no good having 100 miles of first-class vermin-proof fencing if there

is a couple of chains with big holes through which emus and rabbits can get when going on migratory trails, because then they can do untold damage on the coastal side of the fence.

It would seem to me that the amendments are quite in order and I have pleasure in supporting the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

STREET PHOTOGRAPHERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed, from the 7th October, on the following motion by Mr. Nalder (Minister for Agriculture):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. DAVIES (Victoria Park) [8.47 p.m.]: The original legislation was introduced in 1947, at a time when this phase of photographing the public was becoming very popular and many people were, apparently, making quite a deal of money out of it. It seems to have started in Sydney and it later spread to Western Australia, and by 1947 the position in regard to it had become quite chaotic.

A Bill was introduced to try to control the activities of the street photographers, and one of its main purposes was to license them. I wondered whether, as well as trying to bring some control to the industry, the Bill was also introduced as another taxing measure, another method whereby the Perth City Council could obtain additional revenue. However, on looking at the original Act, I find that the number of street photographers that can be licensed is one for every 10,000 persons shown to be in a local government or city council area according to the *Pocket Year Book* which, as members know, is published each year.

In 1947 the population of the City of Perth Municipality was 98,890 according to the statistical register. Unfortunately I was not able to get a copy of the *Pocket Year Book* for 1947. The current *Pocket Year Book* shows that the estimated population of the City of Perth, as at the 30th June, 1964, has dropped to 95,600 people. So members can see that since 1947 there has been a drop of some 300 in the number of residents of the City of Perth area. However, this has not effected the position to any great extent, because the formula laid down in section 6 of the Act says there shall be one street photographer license for every 10,000 persons.

In 1947 the number that could be licensed was nine, and in 1965 the number that can be licensed is nine. So obviously a license fee of £1 is not a very great revenue producer for the Perth City Council.

It appeared to me that it was a formality to charge a license fee and that the increase to £5 was rather steep. So once again I had a look at the year book, and the basic wage as at the 1st July, 1947, was £5 7s. 3d. The latest figure shown for the State is the figure as at the 26th April, 1965, when it was £15 14s. 8d. So, over the years, the basic wage has increased something like three times.

I imagined that three times £1 might have been a more realistic figure for the license fee, so I made some further research into the position in order to find out from the Perth City Council what is involved. The officers of the City Council told me that the license fee of £5 would not cover the work that had to be carried out. There are still only nine persons licensed; the number of licenses is fully taken up. Because there are only nine licenses issued annually it is not worth printing a license form or an application form, with the result that each license has to be typed.

I was also told that early in January of each year the Perth City Council delegates one of its assistants—usually one of the juniors—to get in touch with these people to remind them that their license should be renewed; and at a later stage of the year, if they have not acted on that advice, another reminder is sent out; so some work is involved in doing that.

One of the reasons the city council would like to see the fee increased to £5 is that there is a suspicion that some people are renewing their licenses each year, but are not taking part in the industry; they probably do not take one photograph, although they are licensed to do so. The Perth City Council officials feel that if the license fee is £5 it will keep out some of those who are not genuinely following the game and will let in some others who would like to enter this field. Although I was told they did not have any evidence that this is so, they have a suspicion that it is happening, and that is one of the reasons why they feel £5 is a more realistic figure.

So we are bowing to the wishes of the City of Perth. It has asked for this amendment; and, of course, the most the increase will produce is £45 per year. The city council authorities claim this will hardly cover their expenses; and I might point out that £45 probably would not cover the cost of printing the Bill and bringing it before the House, plus the time of members debating it. Perhaps we should have a look at the position to see

whether it is possible to charge our expenses to the Perth City Council. With those few words, and for the reasons enunciated, I support the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

Debate resumed, from the 7th October, on the following motion by Mr. Craig (Minister for Traffic):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. GRAHAM (Balcatta) [8.55 p.m.]: We are confronted with the situation to-day under which the scene on the streets and roads is becoming increasingly worse with crashes both serious and minor, and unfortunately with death and injury being the result to many hundreds, in the first instance, and thousands in the second, of the drivers, and passengers, and road users generally in Western Australia.

Judging by the enormous increase this year in the number of road deaths, one would be entitled to conclude that the situation is getting out of hand, and that the Minister and those associated with him are at panic stations, which situation is reflected largely in the tone of the measure before us; because, apart from several of the provisions, the intent of the Bill seems to be to step-up fines, imprisonment, and terms of suspension.

I appreciate that it is necessary to inflict penalties to serve as a deterrent and a warning, generally, to those who show a tendency to be irresponsible and anti-social, but we are all aware of the change in outlook in what one might roughly term British justice and its concept of penalties over the last 100 or 200 years. The tendency has been in the direction of diminishing the severity of penalties. It has been quoted here that not so long ago there were some 200 offences for which the penalty of death could be inflicted.

We are aware that many of our antecedents were forcibly transported to Australia and some, until comparatively recent times, for very minor offences. We also know that floggings, torture, and such things were the order of the day. With a more enlightened civilisation and authority, however, the tendency has been in the direction of lightening penalties—not always, but that has been the general trend.

Because of the shocking record of motor vehicle crashes between vehicle and vehicle, and vehicle and person, and because of the Government appearing powerless to do anything to stem the tide, it has now submitted this legislation in desperation. It has done that with the idea of using the big stick, left, right, and centre.

This measure is being represented as an effective way of dealing with the situation. I beg to differ. The Bill, in my view, is doing nothing whatever to tackle the causes of the carnage on the roads: the irresponsibility of so many who are drivers of motor vehicles, and the unsuitability of many who are in charge of vehicles.

This Bill does nothing to promote patrolling of the roads or supervision of the traffic by endeavouring to instil compliance and conformity with the rules of the road and the dictates of commonsense into the minds of motorists. It merely seeks to hit harder those who have committed offences and I suggest that many of those who are involved in serious traffic breaches—many of which, unfortunately, result in disaster to the person or to property—are able to commit such offences against the traffic code without any thought or regard to penalty.

If the penalty were to be shot at dawn it would not make any difference to their behaviour. In some cases, this is because of sheer mental irresponsibility; in others, because of their incapacity to be entrusted with the powerful, heavy, speedy machines which are the modern motor vehicles, and with others because they are so confused with our traffic regulations and the enforcement of them.

I suggest that apart from the Minister himself there would scarcely be a member of this Parliament who would know the rights and the wrongs in relation to what transpires at an intersection in all circumstances when two vehicles are approaching. Nobody knows who has the right of the road and who has not at such times and the complete defiance of the rule of give way to the right is commonplace in metropolitan traffic at least. Members of the motoring public have themselves declared—not the law—which roads have priority over others, and the motorists who proceed along those roads decline to give way to the left or to the right in any circumstances.

The unfortunate part of it is when the interpretation of one motorist is that route A represents a privileged road and when another driver considers that route B is a privileged road, and both continue gloriously on their way until there is a collision. I regard the rule of giving way to the right as a cardinal rule of the road and I have spoken on this to many people on a number of occasions. I know, too, that not a great deal of attention has been paid to my remarks.

I trust I am at liberty to mention that I have been in the company of not one but many of the highest executives of the Police Department—retired, of course—and also persons who have sat on the bench—whose names are well known and respected by everybody—and they have unanimously agreed that of all the rules of the road the rule of give way to the right should never be broken; it should always predominate.

I have indicated *ad nauseam* that much of our traffic behaviour is a matter of habit. Which one of us who has been driving a vehicle for many years is conscious of going through the motions of changing gears, using the clutch, the gear lever, and every other motion that one goes through in driving a car? We gear up and we gear down automatically and so much of our traffic behaviour follows along the same line. Accordingly, it should be part and parcel of the very nature of the driver that he defers to traffic approaching from his right. If that were done in every instance collisions at intersections would become practically non-existent.

I will here and now prophesy that with the passing of this measure and the stepping-up of the penalties, the crash and the accident—I do not know that there is much accident about it, but that is the term used in the Bill—pattern will continue to be only in one direction, and that is upwards. Therefore, this much-publicised Bill will have done nothing in the way of getting down to basic causes.

Those who are associated with, and bear responsibility for, the majority of these crashes, include some people who have had a few drinks of alcoholic liquor, as a consequence of which there are certain reactions. I know, as I stand here, that none of those people will be concerned with a certain section of the Traffic Act and the penalty which might be inflicted under it if they are apprehended.

On the other hand, some drivers are over-confident as to their ability, and they behave accordingly. That is the nature of that particular type of driver and this Bill will not affect him. There are some who suffer from a natural sense of ego or desire to display bravado. It is the very nature of those people to act in this way and I do not care what the penalties are, they will continue to drive in their usual manner because they are people of that type.

There are many motorists who are not aware that they have developed bad driving habits and sooner or later those bad habits will cause them to be involved in a collision when damage, perhaps in the extreme, will be done. There are also some drivers who are psychologically unfitted to be in charge of a motor vehicle at any time. I suppose not too many

people have sat down and endeavoured to calculate the tremendous propelling force which is at their command when driving a vehicle, and by comparison, have considered how helpless are the very old and the very young human beings, whether they are surrounded by the frame of another car or are pedestrians on the street.

There are other groups of motorists who have, perhaps, fallen victims to the propaganda that they see on the TV screen and in other areas of the zip and zoom of a certain brand of petrol or vehicle to encourage those who are fancy-free to see how much speed they can get from their vehicles. The words "zip and zoom" and other words that are employed present a certain type of picture in their minds, but certainly not the regulations under the Traffic Code.

So I repeat that, in my opinion, the severity of penalties is not likely to have an appreciable effect on the types of motorists I have enumerated. Indeed, I can visualise that the pendulum will still swing in the direction abhorred by every one of us.

In my view it is too easy for one to obtain a driver's license. In Western Australia this year there will be the best part of 250 people killed on the roads as a result of accidents, and many thousands will be maimed to a major or minor degree. Some of the victims will carry the burden of their injuries for the rest of their lives; they will be hopeless cripples. Yet there seems to be a comparative lack of concern in the community generally. Regret is expressed, and those who do not conform are remonstrated with. However, it is so easy for one to obtain a license. I have suggested before that as we have a National Safety Council there should be a course of training prescribed for the person who is seeking a driver's license.

A candidate for a driver's license should not, first of all, be permitted to drive around his uncle's paddocks for a time and then, as his confidence improves, drive along a road that is fairly free of traffic, and then finally appear before a police officer to convince him that he can reverse up a lane or accomplish other driving achievements. Members are aware that it is possible for persons who regard themselves as competent drivers and who have been sitting behind the wheel for many years to go to the National Safety Council centre to obtain advanced driving instruction and checks. In most cases the people who attend such classes get the shock of their lives when they realise the number of driving faults they have been unwittingly committing every time they have sat behind the steering wheel of a car.

Surely, with the tremendous budgets we have these days, some thousands of pounds could be devoted to the establishment of

schools of training where people could take courses in driving during which they could be observed and examined to discover whether they have a psychological weakness or are prone to certain faults or bad habits. In other words, they should go through a course of training, at the expiration of which they should be given a certificate of competency to handle a motor vehicle. At present it is a hit-and-miss method. The police themselves will inform anybody that it is a simple matter for the most irresponsible person in the world to be on his best behaviour for five or 10 minutes driving along a certain route during which time it is necessary for him to drive with sufficient proficiency to enable him to be issued with a driver's license. However, to keep up the pretence over a training course may be an entirely different matter for the person who is seeking a driver's license.

So once again I suggest that it might be more profitable to attend to these basic features rather than set about the erring motorist with a big stick, which is what this Bill does. Here and now, before it escapes my mind, let me say that in this Bill there is one provision, for instance, which reads—

Every person who wilfully drives a vehicle at a speed, or in a manner, that is inherently dangerous . . .

and for that offence, in the first instance, a person can be fined a sum not exceeding £100 or be imprisoned for a period not exceeding three months.

From there we move to the next provision, which deals with a person who drives under the influence of liquor and for a first offence the penalty is a fine of not less than £100 or more than £150, with, of course, the accompanying cancellation of the driver's license. I submit this is grossly unfair.

To a person of some substance it is only a matter of writing out a cheque; for instance, the residents in Dalkeith will experience no hardship in this respect; but the people of, say, South Fremantle would not have that sort of money, and there would be no alternative but for them to go to gaol. In other words, it is gaol for the ordinary person, and it is writing out a cheque to pay the fine for people who are better circumstanced. To that extent the proposition is not fair. It is loaded in favour of the person of means.

Let the Government make up its mind whether there is to be a fine which should have some sort of impact upon the offender, or whether there is to be a gaol sentence if it considers the misconduct to be sufficiently serious to warrant a term as a guest of Her Majesty. This proposition allows the wealthy man to buy himself out of gaol.

Mr. Court: What sentence is this?

Mr. GRAHAM: This is the penalty for driving while under the influence of liquor. I am not expressing compassion for a person who drives under those circumstances. What I am discussing is the inequitable way in which these penalties operate.

Mr. Craig: Do the penalties in any Act distinguish between the rich and the poor?

Mr. GRAHAM: I think they should.

Mr. Craig: That would be unique.

Mr. GRAHAM: It might have the essence of fairness. A person on an income of £5,000 a year should receive a much heavier fine, if it is to be a penalty, than a person who is in receipt of £15 a week.

Mr. Craig: We could apply this to any Act.

Mr. GRAHAM: I agree. It would be more equitable on the basis of a penalty of a week's income. A wealthy person who commits any breach of the law and is fined £50 or £100 is not sufficiently penalised.

Mr. Craig: Would not a more wealthy person bear a greater stigma by being fined?

Mr. GRAHAM: There is a bit of class consciousness in that suggestion. I say that those who are in public office and who depend on good public relations might be penalised by being fined, and perhaps that might be sufficient cause for a parliamentarian to lose his seat. I am not concerned so much with that version as with the degree of pain to be inflicted.

Mr. Craig: I follow you.

Mr. GRAHAM: With the stepping up of fines it would be increasingly difficult for the man in the street to meet them, but these fines would not present any difficulty to the person who was comfortably placed; therefore there is a great weakness in the Bill. It is not a very simple proposition to deal with. But who is there amongst us who enjoys a drink stronger than lemonade, and who perhaps by misadventure is apprehended and is compelled to undergo a test—under either the old or the new form—who can avoid being charged with being in control of a motor vehicle whilst under the influence of liquor, perhaps to only a minor extent?

For the first offender the high penalty, which it will be impossible for many first offenders to meet, will inevitably mean gaol; and gaol will mean deprivation for their wives and children, and perhaps the repossession of very many of their household items, because in these days so many of these items are acquired under hire purchase. In other words, to the ordinary citizen one drink too many at a party could mean disaster to him and his family, but to someone better placed financially it is regarded as just one of those things. I would ask the Minister to look into this situation.

I have suggested there are many things which can be done with the object of improving the behaviour of the motorist, to reduce the possibility of so many crashes occurring. I have already stated that instead of a brief driving test there should be a course of training. The fact that it would cost a few thousand pounds or even £50,000 to institute such a course should not deter the Government from taking the step.

I have made reference to the failure of drivers to give way to traffic on their right. I have found that in my experience fewer and fewer motorists are giving traffic signals, and very many of those who do, instead of giving a signal with the indicating lights as a warning to other motorists of their intention to undertake a certain movement, wait until they are in the process of making the movement before giving the signal. This serves no purpose at all.

Mr. Tonkin: Some do not even do that.

Mr. GRAHAM: Some do not give any signals at all. Since the 1st January, 1960, it has been an obligation that all motor vehicles being licensed for the first time should have approved flicker lights at the rear and front, in order to indicate proposed turns. Why is there a need for this regulation, as there is no necessity under the traffic regulations for a motorist under any circumstances to give a signal indicating that he intends to turn to the left? I think that there would be a better spirit created, that motorists would have a better idea of what was going on; and that many of those who lose their patience now would have it preserved, if it were equally an obligation to signal an indication to turn to the left.

Let me give an example: A motorist is poised at the entrance to a main road, where there are not many opportunities for entering. Traffic is approaching from his right, and being a good motorist he defers. He finds that the first, second, and third vehicles to which he has given way are not proceeding up the street, but are turning in the very street out of which he has signalled to leave. He could, with the utmost safety had signals been given, have proceeded on his way into the highway.

I know it is a matter of courtesy at the present moment, but it should be an obligation. The more this practice is instilled into us that when we intend to turn right we automatically give a signal with the flicker light—and do likewise when we turn to the left—the better will our driving habits become. It would become automatic, like so many of the other driving processes.

It is compulsory for all motor vehicles to have installed a workable horn, yet there is a traffic regulation which provides that the horn shall not be used other

than to avoid a circumstance that could result in damage to a person or to property. Personally I have had no occasion to use the horn in my car in the last five years. All that is required is for a driver to exercise a little care. By and large, those who do use the horns on their cars are the bright young teenagers who play a tune with them as they leave their friends at 2 a.m., and by those drivers who are impatient. To the ordinary driver with a sense of responsibility there is very little occasion, unless he is driving through a flock of sheep, to use the horn. More emphasis should be given to the left and right turn signalling equipment.

Many accidents take place at intersections; yet we find that vehicles are permitted—notwithstanding the regulations to the contrary which provide that no vehicles shall park within 20 feet of the building alignment—to park on the verges right to the edge of the road. We have to go no further than across the road at the corner of Harvest Terrace and Parliament Place. There are “No Parking” and “No Standing” signs in both streets, in order to keep the intersection reasonably clear to enable the motorist to see a vehicle approaching from the other street; yet cars are parked right to the very corner itself. The City of Perth traffic inspectors and the Police Department are aware of this, but in the very shadows of Parliament House the motorist has become accustomed to thumb his nose at this particular traffic regulation. It is, of course, a safety regulation.

I could indicate very many other places where this is a regular feature in ill-lit places, at intersections and junctions in the metropolitan area. Everybody is aware of the position but nothing is done about the matter. In the first place, it is a matter of allowing the motorists to ignore the traffic regulation, and in the second place it is creating a traffic hazard.

On several occasions I have referred to giving way to traffic on the right. I couple with it once more a subject for which the Minister has a fetish; namely, the erection of “Stop” signs. I have viewed the statistics from the Main Roads Department and the Police Department; and I have also seen the figures which the Minister has been good enough to make available to me. Notwithstanding the almost unbelievable multiplication of “Stop” signs in the metropolitan area, the number of accidents has increased rapidly.

I say that “Stop” signs are essential ingredients in educating motorists to ignore the cardinal rule in driving. On this intersection or that intersection, because motorists are protected by “Stop” signs, having got into a bad habit they unfortunately continue to fail to stop at the following intersection and the one after.

Those are the places where we should be giving way to the traffic on the right, and the inevitable happens. I say that traffic accidents increase notwithstanding this because there has been a tremendous increase in the number of "Stop" signs; and whilst it may be true that the number of accidents or crashes at those intersections have been reduced, they have been increased in other places at other intersections to a degree that more than offsets what has been avoided at those protected by the "Stop" signs. The figures will prove that.

Strangely enough, the pattern of accidents at intersections where there are "Stop" signs is worse than where there are none. I would ask the Minister to consult the statistics issued by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics. He will find that in the metropolitan area, for instance, during the year ended December, 1964, at intersections controlled by "Stop" signs or "Give Way" signs, there were 874 accidents. At uncontrolled intersections, with an open view, there were 3,527 accidents in the period of 12 months; in other words, slightly more than four times as many. However, there are 40 times as many intersections without "Stop" signs. Yet the number of accidents at those intersections is only four times as many.

These figures have not been concocted by me but they are in the official statistics for everybody to see. The year I have quoted is the last available, but it is not an isolated case. I could give other examples which give the same result. I have quoted figures for the year ended December, 1964, for the metropolitan area. For the quarter ended March, 1965, there were 221 accidents at intersections controlled by "Stop" and "Give Way" signs and 828 at open-view, uncontrolled intersections: only four times as many; indeed, slightly less than four times as many, when—I again repeat—there would be 40 times as many of this type of intersection as against those with "Stop" signs.

So if there is any validity in the Minister's viewpoint, to which he adheres, that the erection of "Stop" signs does something to reduce the number of accidents at particular intersections, then I say, and the evidence is with me, that the accidents are projected to other intersections, because it is playing the part of teaching the motorist bad habits.

There are so many accidents—and understandably serious ones—in the country, and also in the metropolitan area, where head-on collisions occur. Why, I know not. There seems to be some vital attraction about that central white line, or the crown of the road; and motorists, instead of keeping to the extreme left of the road, as is their obligation, choose to get approximately in the centre, albeit a few inches or a few feet to the left of the centre line.

Some of the roads which could, with the greatest ease, take two lines of traffic—indeed some of them three lines of traffic—are now roadways on which there is a single file of traffic in both directions. The capacity of the roads is reduced, and all sorts of hazards are created which make other motorists impatient. Somebody who wants to get somewhere by a certain time with a disposition to trust his luck has to move over the centre line in order to get past, and he is head-on to the traffic coming from the opposite direction. This is serious enough, but those motorists are allowed to continue their way of travelling approximately in the centre of the road. Their judgment errs a little, too, where there is no white line, and especially when going around corners; and so we have, with increasing frequency, head-on collisions between vehicles, where there is ample room for them to pass with complete safety.

I am asking the Minister some questions about the next matter I wish to mention. I refer to the matter as "dangling dolls"; that is, figures and skeletons suspended inside the car at the windscreen or rear window.

Mr. Craig: Before you deal with dangling dolls, you don't believe in the abolition of the white line?

Mr. GRAHAM: I believe in the motorist keeping to the extreme left.

Mr. Craig: I just wanted to clear that point. Now you can get on with your dangling dolls.

Mr. GRAHAM: I wish the Minister would get on with them. I do not know what has happened, but over the past few months there has been a scourge of these things, and I have even seen responsible members of Parliament with them in their cars. They are usually suspended either at the windscreen or at the rear window and naturally enough their movement tends to impair one's sight and tends to distract one's attention. It was for that reason that a traffic regulation was promulgated making it an offence for any moving object to be attached inside the car or at the rear window. There are enough distractions without them. Yet we see vehicles—I would guess thousands of them—at the present moment with these objects; and members can confirm that for themselves.

Let me make a couple of additional suggestions with regard to what it might be possible to do, and my first observation will be without any intended disrespect to anyone. I see some of our police officers and constables doing the beat in the heart of the city of Perth. I do not know how many calls they have other than to give directions to people who are lost. I suggest in all seriousness that there is a more vital and important work which requires

to be undertaken in attending to some of the things I have mentioned and many more I do not intend to mention.

I am not suggesting that every man on beat should be stripped from those duties; some are necessary. But surely more of them could be spared in order to devote time to the education of the public. We should not have constables falling over one another walking along footpaths; they should be employed in reducing the crushing of metal against human flesh. If we become accustomed to minor breaches, it is only a matter of time to the committing of major ones.

Someone who is a greater student than I am, from the replies to certain questions which I addressed to the Minister earlier this session and from other data available is able to show that some of the worst periods for traffic accidents—both fatal and casualty—occur mostly when there is a reduction in the number of patrolmen on duty. I would ask the Minister to give attention to that. I have a graph in my office, and the worthy whom I have mentioned wanted me to ask questions based on the graph. Unfortunately, we can only put our questions in words and not pictorially, and therefore I was unable to oblige. However, if the Minister cares, I will supply him with a copy of what has been compiled and he will see that this is so. In other words, some adjustment is necessary in order to meet the situation.

I suppose members have had the experience, particularly when travelling in streets or suburbs with which they are not familiar, of not being able to tell where an intersection is. This applies especially when visibility is not good—when it is raining, or something of that nature. It is difficult to see where there is an intersection or where there is a drive-in to a garage or private dwelling.

Mr. Gayfer: It will cost you £11 if you do not know.

Mr. GRAHAM: That could be so: I am not so concerned with pounds as with vehicles having collisions. I wonder whether there would be a possibility of having lights at intersections coloured, perhaps yellow. Some street lights are white and some are blue vapour. Members will recall that quite a number of the streets, on occasions, were yellow or amber. A yellow light at an intersection would indicate where the intersection was. In any event, there could be some feature to draw motorists' attention to the intersection.

I suggest to members that they try themselves, when in a foreign territory—that is, an area not familiar to them—and check to see how difficult it is to see with the low candle-power or wattage of the lamps that are placed on all street lights including intersections. I think they will agree with me that there should be some feature

to indicate that there is an intersection. Of course, every intersection is a potential hazard.

The Government, in this Bill, has taken steps to grant the Queen's pardon, virtually, to youthful offenders who have helped themselves to other people's property. I am one who believes that the human subject is of a far greater importance and more worthy of consideration than property, or money. However, at the same time there should be a proper perspective. It is a long time since I was a Minister, and I endeavoured to find out why, if I helped myself to somebody's mink coat, it was stealing, even if I intended to give it back after somebody had worn it; but if I helped myself to £1,000 worth of motor vehicle that was merely unlawful using. It was not stealing at all. The Crown Law Department endeavoured to explain the difference, but I am afraid it did not register with me.

It is a problem with young people. They cannot be fined tremendous sums, because they do not have the money. If the large fines were paid, undoubtedly it would be by father. It is unthinkable that these youngsters in their early teens should be sent to gaol. How can they be hurt? How can they be taught a lesson? It was the experience of South Australia that there was a considerable diminution of theft—if I might use that term—of motor vehicles by those of tender age when there was a prospect of their losing the right to drive a car, because to a youth today that is almost like losing his right arm. Now the Government has apparently decided that with this offence, even when a couple of cars have been taken one night and, a few months later, several more cars have been taken, and this performance could be repeated time and time again, the offender is to be given a clean sheet. Apparently it does not matter what happens to the poor victims who have had their vehicles stolen, or what sort of hardships and inconvenience they suffer, with perhaps a financial loss and the destruction of their cars, these youngsters must be treated lightly.

I know it is a difficult problem but I think the Government has gone from one extreme to the other. Opportunity is taken, of course, to increase charges on the motorists. Scarcely a year goes by without the Commonwealth Government, or the State Government, or both, imposing further burdens on the motorist. I think it is significant that every increase in the driver's license, which used to be five shillings a year, has been made by a Liberal Party Government. No increase in the driver's license has ever been made by a Labor Government; indeed, when the previous Liberal Party Government increased the license fee from five shillings

to ten shillings, the next Labor Government gave something back in that it decided that every motorist should be notified a few weeks before his license expired and, of course, that service costs money.

The Government talks of matching money. I wonder when we will reach the stage, if ever, where we can govern in our own right? It appears we must impose further penalties on the motorist, and I can recall our doing the same thing only a few short years ago when the same argument was used—we must not lose the matching Commonwealth money. Why should we be compelled to do things that we do not want to do? I wonder if we are reaching the stage where we are becoming like the little dancing dolls that we see on the front and rear windscreens of motor vehicles—when some authority elsewhere is dictating the terms and we spend half our time passing legislation to conform with the requirements of some outside authority?

Mr. Brand: In the case of the matching money we need not match it if we do not want to do so. It has nothing to do with the Grants Commission.

Mr. GRAHAM: I know that is so in regard to the matching money, but we go through the same processes in other instances—it is desirable to do certain things lest we be penalised by the Grants Commission.

Mr. Brand: But the case is different as regards the matching money. If we do not match it it goes back to the source—the Commonwealth Treasury. I have no doubt you put up cases for better and wider roads and they all represent money and we cannot afford to let it go back.

Mr. GRAHAM: That is so; but we are still supposed to be a sovereign State and I hope the Premier would deplore as much as I do the fact that much of what we do in the legislative field is in order to conform with what somebody else wants lest we suffer.

Mr. Brand: That is so; but these are the circumstances in which we find ourselves and in the case of the matching money it is there for us to refuse if we wish, but we cannot afford to do that.

Mr. GRAHAM: Exactly. The State would lose the money. In the same way we can do what we like with our social services. That is up to us, too. We would lose there but in a different way; we would lose because of the penalty imposed by the Grants Commission. I think this is a bad state of affairs because we pretend we are, and we like to believe we are a sovereign State when, in fact, we are not. Let us have it one way or the other.

Mr. Brand: It is not our fault that we have uniform taxation. This was decided for us quite a while ago.

Mr. GRAHAM: That is so; but this is more than a question of uniform taxation.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order! I think the honourable member should get back to the Bill, because we have had a sufficient passing reference.

Mr. GRAHAM: I think you have been quite tolerant, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Very tolerant.

Mr. GRAHAM: I have not gone through all the features of the Bill; but, if I might summarise, I think the Government should give more consideration to steps that lie within its power to encourage and induce the better behaviour of motorists on the road. I do not accept the view that the stepping up of penalties will of itself achieve anything.

When people were being deported for stealing half a loaf of bread, or things of that nature, it did not stop others from doing it because the people were hungry. In other words, the penalty had nothing to do with it and I endeavoured to show earlier that because of certain circumstances, including not dereliction of duty but insufficient application of the rules of the road, those in authority were not doing all that they should do, and all that we have a right to expect in order to ensure that motorists comply to a greater degree than they do with the rules of the road, commonsense, and courtesy to other motorists.

The Government has the numbers and, therefore, it is in a position to do what it likes about the matter; but I ask the Minister and the Premier to give some consideration to this question of a first offence where a heavy fine and a prison sentence is proposed; because in my view that is one-way traffic. It is catering for the person who has means and it is inflicting a body blow upon others. At least so far as the first offender is concerned I think the prison term could be dropped.

I do not know whether it is possible to introduce the time payment system in the matter of fines, although I am aware that this has been done on occasions, because we hear where magistrates give people time in which to pay. Anyway, broadly those are my comments on the situation. I know all of us feel the position very keenly; we are desperate to know what to do to reduce this savage conflict which occurs. However, I think if the Minister paid a little more attention to some of the basic requirements he could forget some of the severe penalties which are contemplated in this Bill.

MR. CROMMELIN (Claremont) [9.54 p.m.]: I want to speak on only one aspect of the Bill and that is in regard to the proposed increase in penalties for drunken driving. I do not remember how many

years it is since there has been an attempt made to increase these penalties, but I do know that up to 12 months ago magistrates were not fining a first offender more than £40 with a suspension of his license for three months.

Mr. Graham: That was the law.

Mr. CROMMELIN: It is only in the last few months that we have read of an occasional fine of £50. The member for Balcatta said that a man in Dalkeith could more easily pay a fine of £100 than the person who lives in Fremantle. With that statement I would agree, but I do not think it is any reason for taking exception to the Bill and the penalties proposed in it.

It is up to every individual to control himself so that he does not come under the influence of liquor. That is the purpose of the amendments we have before us. If one realises that on occasions one is apt to imbibe more than one should then, surely, if one has any commonsense one will ask somebody else to drive the motorcar; or, if one has one's wife with one, and perhaps she does not drink as much, she could be asked to drive the car.

We have reached the stage now where at times one fears to drive on the roads. One can go to any suburban hotel on a Friday night, or to some of the hotels beyond the 20-mile limit on Sunday mornings, and what one sees is an absolute scandal. It is disgusting, to put it mildly. One sees men sitting around in beer gardens wearing shorts and sandals, and they do nothing else but consume liquor. If one travels on the highway from Rockingham to Fremantle on any Sunday morning one sees a sight worth seeing. I do not say that everybody one sees is drunk, but a great percentage of them are under the influence of liquor and, of course, they do not know it. That is the danger which faces the average pedestrian and motorcar driver.

Personally, I do not like minimum penalties; I do not think anyone does. However, we have reached the stage where unless the Government introduces minimum penalties the magistrates will continue to inflict maximum fines of £50, and that is not enough. The member for Balcatta thinks that these penalties will not be a deterrent. I think they will be. They will certainly be a deterrent if a man is fined £100 for a first offence and £200 for a second offence because he will think twice before he puts himself in the position of committing the offence for the third time.

If anybody wants to see the results of drunken and reckless driving one has only to go to the Shenton Park or Royal Perth Hospitals. There one will see many young people crippled for life—they will never walk again, not through their own fault

but because their bodies have been smashed and maimed as a result of some drunken or reckless driver.

I am sure the more severe penalties will be a deterrent and I would go so far as to say we should have imposed them years ago. Had that been done perhaps we would not have had the loss of life and maiming that is occurring on our roads today. A man can be educated to drive in a decent manner. Families can go out to the Safety Council—young people with their mothers and fathers—and they can be taught to drive properly. However, we cannot stop a fool from drinking too much, and there are too many fools on our roads who are prepared to drive while drunk without giving a hang what happens to anybody else. It is for that type of person that we have to introduce heavier penalties.

The day after the Bill had been introduced I read in the Press where the secretary of the Law Society said that his society did not like the penalties proposed. I was surprised to see this person issue such a statement because I held the view that most lawyers were members of this society and it did not seem possible that the secretary of the society could get his executive, or a representative number of lawyers together to decide on the matter overnight. I do not think this person should have issued a statement before he had consulted with his members or a representative number of them. However, that is his concern and he has the right, apparently, to say what he did say.

I will support the heavier penalties proposed in the Bill because I think they will be a deterrent; but, if they are not, I will go along with the member for Balcatta and say that the first offender should be put in gaol, as happens in many States in America. It would not be for three months straight but, if the offence occurred on Friday afternoon, the offender could be put in gaol on Friday and remain there until seven o'clock on Monday morning. If some of these people had to suffer that punishment for three months they would not be likely to commit the same offence again. If they saw their names in the Press the stigma would be such that it would be an effective deterrent. I do not care whether a man is a millionaire or a coalminer—it has an effect if he has broken the law and he sees his name in print. I support the second reading.

MR. ROYCE (Warren) 11.0 p.m.: I, too, would like to make a few observations on this measure. I agree that anything that can be done to mitigate the slaughter, the destruction, and the damage to property which occur on our roads should have the approbation of right-thinking and reasonable persons. I would like to comment on one or two provisions in the Bill, particularly that which prescribes a minimum age for the issuance of

a license subject to section 23 of the Act and the appropriate class of vehicle to be driven. Why do we want to prescribe an age? Why should it be a minimum age? Is it because with age comes discretion? Or do we assume that a person having reached a certain age should then have reached a certain degree of discretion, a certain degree of consideration, and a certain degree of appreciation for his position in society, and for his position in traffic when he is driving a vehicle?

It does not really follow that discretion comes with age. So we defeat the purpose for which we set a minimum age, unless we have set out other considerations. I say there are more considerations than driving skill and age to be viewed when a person is issued with a driver's license, which enables him to go on the road and permits him to commit destruction if he feels so inclined.

I am in favour of persons being subject to a series of psychological tests, to see whether they are mentally and psychologically fit to drive a vehicle. I am convinced it is not a question of age or a question of skill, but a question of a person's attitude to his driving. It is a question of concentration which, of course, stems from the attitude of the driver which brings about many of the accidents that occur on our roads. The greatest number of accidents on the roads have been driver-caused. They have been caused by some fault in the driver's approach to his task, mostly through lack of concentration and, to a great degree, through a lack of consideration of the other fellow on the road.

I think it is, therefore, possible to get some standard with which we can judge whether a person is really in fact qualified to drive. It should be possible through a series of psychological tests to see from a driver's attitude to his driving whether he is entitled to drive a vehicle on the road. After all, the driving of a vehicle on a road is a privilege; it is not a right. It is a privilege that is given to us on condition that we do not interfere with the privileges of other road users: of other citizens on the road.

I would suggest, therefore—and I think the Commissioner of Police who has just retired thinks along the same lines—that psychological tests for aspirants for drivers' licenses are most important. I agree with those members who put up the case that by increasing the penalties we will not lessen the number of accidents. People must learn to appreciate what will in fact happen to them if they commit an offence. Most people get into a motorcar, and they have no thought whatever except to get past the person ahead; to drive according to their own standards. Such people are not deterred by probable penalties, or by the fact that they might be put in gaol.

I would agree partly with the member for Claremont that instead of putting in gaol a driver who has committed an offence, we should put him through a school of correction for three months; we should make him do something under supervision; we should subject him to the series of psychological tests I have suggested. When trying a person who had been charged with a breach of the Traffic Act a magistrate said recently that he was convinced most of the people who came before him were ignorant of the fundamental regulations and rules governing the control of a vehicle on the road. I think that is quite true, from my experience.

If it is true, how do these people get on to the roads in the first place? Who allows them to get on to the roads? Who gives them the license, and what standards are imposed on them before they receive a license to drive a vehicle—a vehicle which, with them, is likely to cause so much trouble? Is there any point in giving a driver such tests as making him remember the number of one-way streets there are in Perth? What good would that do? How many accidents would it avoid?

The fact that a driver can rattle off the number of one-way streets in the metropolitan area does not make him a careful driver. I could not tell members the name of one such street, and I possibly would not be given a driver's license under such circumstances; yet I have not been involved in an accident in my life. If a driver is observant, and approaches his task with the right attitude, he will see that the streets are marked "No Entry". His mind should be occupied with more important things when he is driving: such things as the position of his vehicle in relation to the other drivers on the road.

The member for Balcatta talked about keeping to the left as far as possible, and I agree with him. Failure to do that could be one of the main causes of head-on collision, both in the metropolitan area and in the country. Instead of the centre line being a guide and an added adjunct to the safety of a driver, it is more of a danger than anything else. I do not blame the public absolutely for this, because I know an inspector in charge of traffic who made a pronouncement in the *Daily News* of the 16th September, 1964, and who said that he takes it to mean the correct side of the centre. That is how he was reported in the paper. He referred to the correct side of the centre, and not necessarily the left-hand side.

Here we have a highly placed police official, in charge of traffic in the State, advising people to break two regulations. He also advises people to indulge in dangerous driving practices, because the fundamental idea behind regulation 180 is

the safety factor. It is a safety regulation. The reason for keeping to the left-hand side of the road as far as possible, is to leave the rest of the road for the remaining traffic. As the member for Balcatta pointed out, we see roads split with a centre line, roads which could take four vehicles abreast being occupied with one vehicle right down the centre line. Such a driver is not only a danger to the vehicle approaching him, but also a source of irritation to the drivers of vehicles following him. This is where the atmosphere and the potentialities of an accident are built up. It builds up irritation, resentment, and a desire to get past the man in front. This means that drivers move over too far in order to overtake the person on the centre line and they could be involved in a head-on collision.

More attention should be paid to this aspect of traffic regulations. This can be seen daily both in the metropolitan area and in the country. Vehicles can be seen occupying the lane adjacent to the double line from Perth to Premantle. They never move from that position. When there are two laneways marked out for traffic it is permissible to overtake on the left provided one can do so with safety; but it is an offence for the vehicle in front to force the other vehicle to overtake on the left unless the driver of the first vehicle is making a right-hand turn off the road. If attention were paid to this aspect I am sure it would bring about a diminution of accidents.

The member for Balcatta also spoke about "Stop" signs. If I had my way there would be no "Stop" signs erected.

Mr. Graham: Me, too.

Mr. ROWBERRY: Those signs are a source of danger. When one is approaching a "Stop" sign there may be no vehicle within 150 or 200 yards, but by the time one reaches the "Stop" sign a vehicle might be approaching on one's left, or right, in dangerous proximity. The driver of that vehicle sees the other vehicle has stopped and feels that he need not stop. The driver of the first vehicle thinks that because he has stopped he now has the right to go ahead. This invariably results in an accident.

I would do away with these signs, and reduce the speed at all dangerous intersections to 20 miles an hour. I am convinced that 35 miles an hour is a dangerous speed to drive over any intersection whether it be in the city or in the country.

If the Minister is thinking of reviewing the question of the speed of vehicles at intersections—and I could imagine he would be—I would agree with him fully, if he brought the speed back to 20 miles an hour over any section that is dangerous. "Stop" signs should be removed and replaced by "Give Way" signs. This would mean that a vehicle would be travelling

at 15 miles an hour, and at that speed one would have complete control of the vehicle and be able to stop it within a yard, particularly if there were any likelihood of a dangerous situation being created.

Some say that if a "Stop" sign were put up people would just ignore it. We can make the speed 15 miles per hour and some will drive at 20 miles per hour. It is the same in football: Players are allowed to run 10 yards before disposing of the ball, but in many cases they run 20 yards. I know this is not in the Bill, Mr. Acting Speaker (Mr. Mitchell), but I am trying to illustrate the psychological approach.

At 15 miles per hour one has a vehicle under control as it is just rolling; and the situation I have just described which could happen while a vehicle is stationary at a "Stop" sign would not occur as the vehicle would be moving. Another point is this: When a driver stops on the line after the "Stop" sign it is not always possible for him to get a good view of the roadway on either side. I know the lines are positioned as far forward as possible to give a driver good vision on both sides so that he can see the road is clear before he moves off from the spot, but that is not always so. If a vehicle is rolling into an intersection, the driver is in complete control and can stop if he has to.

We have the spectacle in the country where "Stop" signs are placed at junctions where a driver can see right and left for a mile. That is sheer stupidity. The incidence of vehicles passing would be about half a dozen an hour and every one of these half a dozen vehicles per hour has to stop at the junction. People simply do not do it and it brings the whole system of "Stop" signs into disrepute. People say, "The law is an ass," and they do not pay any attention to it at all.

I do not know whether the "Stop" signs are used on account of the International Traffic Code or whether it is because they are used on dangerous intersections in the Eastern States; but, from my own experience—and you have had experience, too, Mr. Acting Speaker (Mr. Mitchell)—"Stop" signs do not do the job they are expected to. Because of that, we should discard them and look for something more efficient.

I cannot understand the provisions with regard to youthful car stealers. Apparently they are all going to be male offenders; one never hears of girls stealing cars! The paragraph I refer to reads as follows:—

(3) Where, before the coming into operation of the Traffic Act Amendment Act (No. 2), 1965, a person was under the provisions of this section as they then existed, disqualified from holding or obtaining a license to drive a motor vehicle or was so disqualified and his license to drive a motor vehicle

was suspended, by reason of his conviction of an offence or offences against subsection (1) of this section committed before he attained the age of eighteen years, the disqualification or the disqualification and suspension suffered in respect of that offence or those offences is, by force of this subsection, removed and discontinued.

I think this is wrong; it is letting the fish off the hook. Once a person knows he will be relieved from this suspension when he reaches the age of 18 it will have less deterrent effect upon him when he is under 18 than if he were not sure whether this disqualification or suspension would be lifted. I would advise the Minister to have a look at this and leave the decision to the magistrate.

Mr. Craig: That is what it will be.

Mr. ROWBERRY: No; it says—

is, by force of this subsection, removed and discontinued.

There is no option for the magistrate; he has to do it. If that is not the position, I cannot understand English. I still persist in saying that this should be left to the option of the magistrate. It would still have the same deterrent effect upon the probable offender. The idea of imposing penalties is to prevent people breaking the law. Their best use is if they prevent an action from happening.

Mr. Hall: Wouldn't they be in the Children's Court if under the age of 18?

Mr. ROWBERRY: That is not the point I am trying to make. It is this: The suspension is going to be lifted as soon as these offenders reach the age of 18. The disqualification and suspension is going to be lifted willy-nilly as soon as a person reaches 18.

Mr. J. Hegney: He then starts a new book.

Mr. ROWBERRY: If the punishment is to fit the crime and if it is to have any deterrent effect, it will be more effective for a person who is about to commit an offence to know that the matter will still be subject to a magistrate's decision and that his sins will not be washed away as soon as he reaches the age of 18. He should have to do something to earn the washing away of his sins.

There is provision in the Bill which I welcome. It is as follows:—

Every person who, not being a member of the Police Force or an inspector, acting in the execution of his duty, drives or uses a vehicle that is not a motor vehicle, without previously obtaining the consent of the owner or person lawfully in charge of the vehicle commits an offence.

I take it that means a traffic inspector. I wonder why it is not so designated. I wonder why the word "traffic" was not inserted to put the issue beyond doubt?

Mr. Graham: In the parent Act, "Inspector" means a "traffic inspector" appointed under this Act. That is one of the definitions.

Mr. ROWBERRY: Thank you. Anyhow, I am pleased this provision is included because any traffic inspector will know that vehicles left in streets or in positions where they obstruct the traffic can be removed. Hitherto there has been no provision for a traffic inspector to shift a vehicle in those circumstances and he may have been liable for interfering with the vehicle. I know from practical experience that a vehicle could be parked where it should not be; and another vehicle could be causing a dangerous obstruction to traffic. In order to save the driver from being charged with a traffic offence and going before a magistrate a traffic inspector might shift the vehicle and the owner would immediately take action against him because hitherto, under the Traffic Act, no provision was made for a traffic inspector to move a vehicle in a situation such as I have described. Again I say I am pleased this provision has been inserted.

I would add that I am against the administration of traffic in the country by shire councils and local governments, but I am not against the employment of traffic inspectors. I want to emphasise that point.

These things considered, I would indicate to the Minister that I support the Bill which, in my opinion, goes part of the way towards trying to reduce the incidence of accidents on our roads. Nevertheless, I am convinced that unless we have a more rigid system of issuing licenses and require a better standard of qualification by applicants for driving licenses we will not go much further along the road towards reducing the accident rate. It has to be a question of education; and to implement that education, it is necessary to discover whether the person concerned is capable of benefiting from the education.

If the Minister bears this in mind we may, in the future, come up with something that will cause a diminution of the accidents upon our roads, something to which we all subscribe; and we would gladly do anything to assist towards its implementation.

MR. FLETCHER (Fremantle) [10.27 p.m.]: Before the Minister replies I would like my mind clarified on at least one aspect of this Bill. I refer to the clause which repeals section 31 and substitutes other sections. One paragraph provides for a first offence a fine not exceeding £100 or imprisonment for a period not exceeding three months for an offence of driving at speed, in a manner that is inherently dangerous which, in the general opinion, is dangerous driving. Like the member for Balcatta, I think this penalty is discriminatory to some extent.

Presently, to illustrate my point, I will use a case where I assisted a truck driver. Let us assume a truck driver is driving his own or another person's modest vehicle. I suggest that on a truck driver's inadequate wage he would not have £100 and, as a consequence, he would be likely to go to gaol. The provision contained in section 33A which could be used to his advantage when subject to, say, a suspension would not be appropriate, say, if a person were in gaol for three months as he does not get the opportunity to drive.

Members will realise that under section 33A one can appeal for the purpose of having a license to drive between certain hours where that period is associated with one's employment. If a person is employed for eight hours a day, leniency is shown to the extent of half an hour before his starting time and after his finishing time. Section 33A does provide that, but it is of no assistance to him if he is in gaol. In addition, if he has to go to gaol as a consequence of not having £100, then several penalties are inflicted on him. There is the penalty of stigma associated with going to gaol; and there is the prospect—it is almost a certainty—that he will lose his job, because no employer would keep him on for that three months unless the person concerned was fortunate enough to be in an occupation where he could have long service leave for that period.

I think I have shown that in this particular case there is a penalty on a penalty, which is not inflicted on the more fortunate person who has £100. I think I have shown that section 33A could assist in preventing such a penalty on a penalty. I mentioned a case which I would use to illustrate my point. A truck driver in Fremantle was driving his own modest car, and he wanted to turn into Carrington Street. In doing so, with the oncoming traffic, he fumbled the situation. He was conscious of a traffic constable in close proximity; and this, to some extent, did make him nervous. Immediately he got from Canning Highway into Carrington Street the traffic constable stopped him. I point out that there is a distinct rise in Carrington Street. The driver parked his vehicle and the traffic constable parked his motorcycle immediately in front of the parked vehicle. When parking the vehicle, the driver apparently did not apply the hand brake sufficiently, or else the ratchet slipped, and the vehicle rolled forward and knocked the constable's bike over, which, of course, caused damage to it.

The constable immediately put his head inside the car which had been closed because it was cold. Undoubtedly he could smell liquor because the fellow admitted, quite frankly, that he had had a couple of beers, but definitely was not drunk. However, the traffic constable,

having seen the fumbled situation previously, and having had his motorcycle pushed over by the vehicle, naturally hit this fellow—as they say—with the book.

The driver came to me as a consequence of having had his license suspended and I appealed on his behalf under section 33A. His license was restored for the period of his working day plus half an hour on either side. This Bill does not give the prospect of that if, as I say, the alternative is gaol. As a consequence, such a person would lose his job, and a penalty would be inflicted on a penalty as a consequence of the man suffering the loss of his job and the loss of pay during the period of his incarceration. As a result, his family would also suffer. I would like the Minister to make some comment on my remarks at a later stage.

There is one other point I would like to make, and it refers to the provision which alters the situation relating to those under a certain age—in effect, those who suffer a suspension of their license for three, five, 10, or even 100 years. I did think this was a ridiculous situation and one which inflicted a penalty on a penalty. I might be at cross purposes with the member for Balcatta on this point, but to be consistent I must say I object to penalties on penalties. Young people have a habit of growing up; and if, five years after the offence, an individual finds he still has another 50 years' suspension, this could jeopardise his whole future. He could be living quite a good life and might wish to become a commercial traveller or indulge in that type of occupation where it is necessary to drive a vehicle. I do think it is sensible that the provision should be removed, at least for an experimental period to ensure that the youth of this State do not take advantage of it. With the reservations I have mentioned, I support the Bill.

MR. CRAIG (Toodyay—Minister for Police) [10.35 p.m.]: I would like to thank members who have contributed to this debate. I think their comments worth while indeed and I have not looked upon them as being at all critical. To me it shows that they have an awareness of this problem which faces us; and although other members have not taken the opportunity to participate in the debate, nevertheless I feel that their thoughts have been expressed by the speakers to whom I have referred.

I said this is a problem. It is not common to Western Australia alone; it is common throughout Australia and the world. The only consolation we have possibly—if I can call it a consolation—is the fact that in this State our fatalities and accidents are fewer per 10,000 vehicles than the average for the States of the Commonwealth. Even though we have a good record, if I can call it good, there is no reason why the

Government and the people of the State should not do their utmost to reduce the number of fatalities and accidents to the barest minimum. I say we should endeavour to eliminate them, but I think that the sanest persons realise this would be an impossibility.

There is much on which I could talk in reply to the points made by members, but at this stage I will restrict my contribution to one of a general nature. We will have an opportunity of dealing in the Committee stage with the points raised by some of the members. I feel that my view is summed up in an editorial in the July issue of the *Australian Road Safety Council Report*. I will not quote the full report but will read the pertinent parts, which are as follows:—

Throughout Australia, in recent weeks, daily newspapers in both capital cities and country areas have published editorials about the nation's road accident problem.

There is an obvious suspicion on the part of editorial writers that the problem is getting out of hand; that existing measures designed to combat death on the highway are ineffective.

The editorials have, in many cases, been followed by a spate of letters from readers giving evidence of some increase in public concern about the problem.

But its frustrating nature is brought into focus when it comes to a discussion of the cures. The proposals for abating the road accident problem are legion. Everyone, more or less, seems to have a pat solution.

This of course, sums up my view and the views of each and every one of us who drives a motor vehicle. We all feel that certain things could be done towards improving the behaviour of motorists on the road. We have experts who are fully occupied in this particular field to guide us and the Government as to what should be done. Naturally, we have to take the commonsense of their views. Nevertheless it does not stop any individual from making suggestions, in the same way as members have done tonight, and submitting ways and means of improving the road problem. The article goes on to say—

Many solutions to important aspects of the road accident problem are known, but they await full scale implementation.

Further on it states—

But in today's critical circumstances, where road death has become a major cause of all death in our society, selection of the worst features and concentration on their elimination is obviously a primary necessity.

That is exactly what the Government is doing. We know that from time to time different people, or different authorities,

or different organisations suggest ways and means of overcoming deaths which occur on our roads. It is suggested that we should set up a more efficient research organisation into the causes of the fatalities and into the causes of accidents.

While it is obvious to the Government that certain features cause so many of the deaths on our roads it is also obvious to the Government that it is its responsibility to introduce amending legislation to try to overcome the problem.

This brings me to the question of drunken driving, which is one of the main features of the Bill. Some criticism has been levelled at the penalties suggested. As was pointed out last week, as a result of the limited research that is available to us we found that approximately half of the deaths on our roads were caused by excess alcohol. Is it not obvious that we should take some strong measure to remove this menace from our roads? It has been said that the penalty is too high; that it is all right for the rich man who can write out a cheque, but no good for the poor man who has to go to gaol. But what consolation is it to the dependants of the victim who has been killed by a drunken driver, whether he has been killed by a rich man or a poor man? The purpose of the Bill is to provide the severest deterrent for the first offence. We feel sure there will not be a further offence.

I quoted figures to show that drunken driving is ever on the increase. The number of third offences is on the increase and averaging one a week. This is not right. We have to impose a deterring penalty; and to be a deterrent, it has to be severe. This could be debated at length, and I suppose it will be during the Committee stage. I support fully the views expressed by the member for Claremont in this regard.

This is only one of the causes of accidents and deaths on our roads. We know that there are so many people who treat the law with contempt; though, as I said the other evening, I consider that 85 per cent. or more of our drivers are responsible drivers. It is the other 15 per cent. who are not responsible and who have no consideration or courtesy for their fellow motorist. It is those persons we think the severe penalty will affect. Having committed the offence once they will not do so a second time.

We must also realise that we are getting 30,000 new drivers on the roads each year, and as years go by the numbers will increase. I agree with the observation made by some speakers that our driving tests should be more severe; and they will be in the near future. We are training the police who are responsible for the issuing of new licenses. They are going through a special course for that particular purpose of making the tests more severe.

The member for Balcatta suggested we should avail ourselves more of the National Safety school so far as that type of instruction is concerned. We are doing that. The Government provides something like £40,000 a year to the National Safety Council. Anyone can go there and have a driving assessment course costing £1. I suggest that the member for Balcatta take a course—I will even pay his £1—and find out how good he is. The National Safety instructor will point out his faults, and I can assure him that they will be many. I will express that opinion of any good driver. The National Safety Council has family seminars and there are many other features for the benefit of motorists as a whole. We are not neglecting this at all. I know the member for Balcatta is very interested in this matter, because he was Minister at the time the National Safety Council school was established.

Before the introduction of the Bill we did take the opportunity of tidying up the Act somewhat. I think all members will appreciate that it has been in a mess for some years. At the same time we have been able to introduce a new code of regulations which the average motorist will interpret more readily.

Mr. Graham: When is that likely to be published?

Mr. CRAIG: It was tabled on the night I introduced the Bill and it has to lay on the Table for 14 days.

Mr. Graham: I mean in a form that will be made available to the public.

Mr. CRAIG: We are planning for this now. As soon as we know the code is acceptable to Parliament we will go ahead with its publication. In this publication there will be suitable diagrams explaining various points, such as the rule of giving way to the right, on which the member for Balcatta is so emphatic—and other similar traffic features.

I do not care much for quoting extracts from newspapers, although I have noted a good deal of it is done in this Chamber, because no doubt it is one way of making up time; but in yesterday's issue of the *Daily News* appeared a letter from a contributor which I thought was one of the best I have read so far. I therefore intend to quote it to the House, and it reads as follows:—

To Road User . . .

Most road accidents are the result of a complete lack of courtesy from one motorist to another, ignorance of traffic regulations, lack of driving sense and disregard for the convenience of others. Most articles written by experts emphasise high speed and drunk driving, but their reports are so filled with technical terms that the seriousness of the position doesn't hit the reader.

Traffic regulations have been framed to cover most conditions likely to occur on any road and all road users should obey them without putting their own interpretation on them. The police should enforce these regulations without any protest from the public. The general public, which means YOU, are the people responsible for all the death, maiming, financial loss and misery caused through road accidents. Unless you are on a freeway you have no more right to expect unobstructed travel to your destination than any other road user.

And so the letter continues. This comes back to the main point that the solution of this problem is in the hands of each and every motorist. It can be overcome by the behaviour of each individual motorist.

The member for Balcatta and other speakers referred to various aspects briefly, but I suggest that the hour is late and I do not know whether the Premier is anxious to deal with other business, and therefore these matters could be dealt with in Committee. Nevertheless the member for Balcatta referred to the use of trafficators for a left-hand turn. At present it is obligatory to use the trafficator for a right-hand turn, but not for a left-hand turn. The member for Balcatta pointed out that one might be waiting in the centre of the roadway to turn to the right, and it should be a matter of courtesy for an oncoming motorist, approaching on one's right and who is desirous of turning to the left to use his trafficator giving indication that he intends to turn left.

This question presents some problems because, as most motorists know full well, many trafficators are not entirely satisfactory. One often sees a motorcar approaching with its trafficator still blinking as a result of faulty mechanism or the carelessness of the driver through not cancelling the trafficator after making a turn. Therefore, if one is waiting to turn to the right and a vehicle is approaching with a faulty trafficator, which is blinking to give an indication that the vehicle is to turn left and then, when one is about to make the right-hand turn the vehicle continues straight on, this will result in a collision, and the motorist turning to the right would be in the wrong. However, this is a matter for the National Road Traffic Code Committee to consider.

Another point referred to by the member for Balcatta was that constables on beat around the city should take a more active part in traffic matters. They are instructed to do this, but most of the police constables in the city come from the central station where there is a pool of officers to deal not only with traffic matters but with other various duties around the

city. Nevertheless, they are continually instructed to take part in traffic matters when necessary.

The honourable member also suggested that more patrolmen should be actively engaged on the roads. In reply to that, I point out that we have appointed an extra 25 patrolmen this year. Another suggestion was that the lighting at intersections could possibly be of a different colour, or that there should be some distinctive feature to indicate to a motorist that he was approaching an intersection, particularly in a district that was strange to him. In this regard we are experimenting with a type of lighting of a different colour to be installed at crosswalks, which would give some notice to an approaching motorist that a crosswalk was ahead.

Another suggestion made by the honourable member which he said should be submitted to the department for consideration was that a motorist who was apprehended should be shown a little more courtesy by police officers. He will be interested in the reply I gave to question No. 3 asked by the member for Darling Range this evening; that is, it is the rule of all police officers that they do show courtesy to an offending motorist.

Mr. Graham: I do not think I made any reference to courtesy or the lack of courtesy by police to offending motorists.

Mr. CRAIG: Another question, relating to the lifting of suspensions of licenses of drivers who have committed the offence of the unlawful use of a motorcar, I can leave until the Committee stage, and the same applies to the minimum age provision referred to by the member for Warren. This is because the present regulations are *ultra vires* the Act. The psychological test which was suggested, and which was also referred to by the Commissioner of police last year, is under investigation, but we have not reached any decision as yet.

Mr. Brand: Have you anything to say of dangling dolls in cars?

Mr. CRAIG: Dangling dolls in cars are definitely contrary to traffic regulations, and every now and again the police conduct a blitz on breaches of this kind. Admittedly they are only of a minor nature, but such offences could cause accidents. I have made arrangements for greater concentration to be given to this matter immediately.

Another matter referred to was the fitting of blinds and curtains to the rear windows of station wagons in particular which completely obscure the view of the driver when looking into his rear vision mirror.

Mr. Rowberry: Not if he had an outside mirror fitted to his vehicle.

Mr. CRAIG: Not necessarily. Those are merely my thoughts. Again I express my appreciation of the contributions to the debate that have been made by various

members. As I said a moment ago, the greatest contribution that can be made is by watching our behaviour on the road and by being considerate at all times. If more courtesy were shown by motorists to their fellow motorists I am of the opinion that the road toll would be much less than it is today. I know it is sometimes frustrating—and I speak for every motorist—when we are trying to show these courtesies and observe all the regulations only to see some other motorist doing something which is glaringly wrong. One then feels frustrated that this motorist is able to get away with it and we cannot. However, that should act as a deterrent against any similar action by oneself. I commend the Bill to the House for its second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair; Mr. Craig (Minister for Police) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 14 put and passed.

Clause 15: Section 31 repealed and section substituted—

Mr. FLETCHER: The section to which this clause refers was one to which I made reference earlier, and I asked the Minister to comment on it in the light of my remarks. I pointed out that I had been successful in obtaining the restoration of a person's license for his working life as a consequence of his not being imprisoned for a particular type of traffic offence. I further mentioned that this section now definitely provides that such an offender will go to gaol for three months and that the provisions of section 33A could not apply in these circumstances. I further pointed out that being in gaol for three months could be a very severe penalty on a person employed as, say, a truck driver at £20 a week or less. Such a penalty could cause great hardship to fall on his dependants.

I ask the Minister if he has any comment to make in the light of my remarks to ensure that such a person would not be penalised to the degree I have outlined.

Mr. CRAIG: Quite frankly, I just could not understand the point made by the member for Fremantle. I think his concern is that if a person has to serve a sentence of imprisonment he is also debarred from holding a license, but that under section 33A he could apply for his driver's license to be returned to him on a restricted basis. To the honourable member it is a double penalty if the man has to serve three months' imprisonment; but what use is a license to him in prison? On his discharge he can take advantage of this provision and apply for a license.

Mr. GRAHAM: Instead of the three offences being grouped together the clause provides that they be treated separately, and different penalties are prescribed. In many cases it is a matter of luck as to which category an offender is charged under. The existing provision might be much better, because when a charge is made the magistrate can determine whether it is the more serious or the less serious one, and he can impose a penalty accordingly. It is proposed in the clause to segregate under separate sections the charges of reckless driving, dangerous driving, and careless driving.

My view is that for a first offence for dangerous driving and careless driving there should be a fine of a certain amount, but for any subsequent offence there should be a fine or a term of imprisonment. Will the Minister agree to the deletion of the penalty of imprisonment in respect of the first offence for reckless driving where a heavy fine and a suspension of license have been provided?

Mr. CRAIG: Attention has been drawn by the Crown Law Department and by the Police Department from time to time to the inadequacy of section 31. In respect of reckless driving, which is the most serious of the three offences referred to, even though a fine of £100 and imprisonment for three months have been prescribed for a first offence, the magistrate will have the discretion to impose a fine or imprisonment. The Police Department defines reckless driving as—

Driving which involves the implication that the possible consequences that may ensue from a person's act are adverted to by him and he is indifferent whether they ensue or not. For example, a person, knowing himself to be pursued by a police vehicle and putting the object of escape above all consequences, is certainly reckless. So, too, is a person who, through anger or other cause, decides to teach another a lesson by frightening him or by slightly damaging his vehicle, property or person. In such cases, the state of the offender's mind is relevant, but this may be deduced from his actions.

Cases have occurred where a reckless driver has deliberately tried to frighten a pedestrian or motorist by charging with his vehicle. I would prefer to leave the penalty for reckless driving as it is in the Bill.

Mr. GRAHAM: Dangerous driving could be very serious, and for a first offence a penalty not exceeding £50 is prescribed.

Mr. CRAIG: There is no mandatory disqualification, and that is left to the discretion of the court.

Mr. GRAHAM: For the more serious offence of reckless driving I suggest for a first offence a penalty not exceeding

£100 and suspension of the driver's license for a period not less than six months. There could be a measure of doubt whether a charge was dangerous driving or reckless driving. A great injustice could be done by the penalty prescribed in the Bill, and for that reason I move an amendment.

Page 8, lines 8 to 10—Delete the words "or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding three months."

For the second or any subsequent offence the Minister can have his way. What I have proposed is a reasonable compromise and will make the position much fairer.

Mr. ROWBERRY: Page 8 of the Bill states—

(2) A person charged with an offence against this section may, instead of being convicted of that offence, be convicted of an offence against section thirty-one A or thirty-one B of this Act.

Proposed new section 31B reads as follows:—

31B. (1) Every person who drives a vehicle without due care and attention commits an offence known as careless driving.

(2) A person convicted of an offence against this section is liable,—

(a) for a first offence, to a penalty not exceeding twenty-five pounds;

So we have the position where a person can be charged with dangerous or reckless driving in the first place and convicted and sentenced in accordance with new section 31B. I wonder if the Minister has taken that into consideration.

Mr. CRAIG: That is the intention. In other words, a person charged with reckless driving may be convicted of dangerous driving or careless driving. That is the statutory provision in the Bill.

The member for Balcatta would have the imprisonment term deleted from the first offence for reckless driving, which is the most serious of the three types of dangerous driving; yet, for a second offence for dangerous driving—that is the lesser offence—or a subsequent offence there is provision for a term of imprisonment. To be consistent, it is necessary to apply the same thinking in regard to imprisonment to the other reckless or dangerous driving.

Mr. Graham: I think the law is usually generous to first offenders.

Mr. CRAIG: If the law is generous it would apply to the pecuniary penalty.

Mr. Graham: They might be as guilty as they possibly can be of reckless driving.

Mr. CRAIG: If so, all the more reason why they should suffer the same penalty.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 16: Section 32 amended—

Mr. JAMIESON: Unless I am mistaken this clause deals with the new penalties in connection with drunken driving. While nobody would condone drunken driving, there is danger in imposing such a severe penalty as this. I would say that many members of this Chamber could be involved after attending certain functions, if they were subjected to certain kinds of tests available to the police. If the Minister for Police wanted to balance the Treasurer's Budget he would need only to have the police be present at any hotel that runs a beer garden at closing time on a Friday night. If the police tested everybody as he left, the Minister would get £100 from each person. There is no doubt about that; and if the Minister were there they would get £100 from him, too. That is the position.

While we do not condone lawbreaking, I do not think these people should be put in the position of being criminals with definite intent, as provided here. A person could be a model citizen up to that time and then be caught for an offence under this section for the first time. His offence might be only that he entered a vehicle to drive it away. No damage is done and he has done nobody any harm. He has not done any reckless or dangerous driving; but because of his condition he is subject to this terrific penalty. He may lose his job; and because he is unable to pay the fine he has to suffer the alternative. The problem is not going to be solved by that means.

I am of the opinion the Minister should have another look at this clause and institute the suggestion made by the member for Claremont and deprive a first offender of his leisure time at the weekends. People do not think about the penalty when they commit this offence; and they will not. They may not hurt anybody, and may not look like doing any damage, but because of their condition they are taken to task under this section.

The Minister will probably recall an incident that happened a few years ago where a fellow was severely dealt with as a drunken driver. No doubt when he left the hotel he did so after considerable alcoholic indulgence and two chaps on a motorbike skidded underneath his vehicle and were killed. This particular person did not do any wrong, but because of the misdemeanour of the other two chaps, he was charged with drunken driving and convicted. We must temper justice with mercy at all times.

A magistrate should be allowed a certain amount of scope. It is all very well to say that the magistrates do not impose the maximum. I think they could do if given a greater penalty. I suggest that if a person, particularly a breadwinner, is

deprived of his weekends in order to serve out a sentence far greater justice will be done to the community than by sending him to gaol. As the member for Claremont pointed out, one person could be a worker at Fremantle, Belmont, and so on, but another person could be a company director living in Nedlands who has money. All types of persons are involved in this offence at various times.

A lot of people are inclined to laugh at the position of a person who is charged with what is commonly known as a D.D. charge. I do not think this should be so. People should be made to realise they have a greater responsibility to their fellow human beings. But then I do not think it is necessary unless a person has also, together with his condition, indicated very clearly that his offence is one of careless, dangerous, or reckless driving. Then of course he should be dealt with accordingly. I would hate to see a fellow confronted by a policeman merely because he stumbled before he got into his car.

The Minister must realise that if he had a policeman at a hotel on a Friday or Saturday night at closing time, it would be pounds to peanuts that 90 per cent. of those people could be charged with drunken driving. One of the things the Minister could do is to prevail on the Licensing Court not to insist on such large parking areas. People used to have to walk from the hotel to their cars, but now they go out of the hotel straight into their cars and on to the street.

This is one of our problems, and it is a social one. I would go so far as to say that 75 per cent. of those charged with drunken driving have never demonstrated any other degree of lawlessness in the community. They are decent people. They should be discouraged from such activities that might hurt other people, but at the same time they are in the position where they cannot help themselves.

Therefore I would say that the penalty appears to be far too severe. There should be some other alternative such as that suggested by the member for Claremont. The magistrate should be able to take all the weekends off an offender for six months, but the fellow should be able to maintain his family. I am dealing of course with a first offender. I have not a great amount of sympathy for a man once he commits a second or a third offence. With regard to first offenders the magistrates should have some alternative. The majority of those who are charged with drunken driving, even a lot of those who live at Floreat Park or who have grandiose property elsewhere, might find it a bit hard to immediately lay hands on £100. As a consequence they will have to spend a considerable time in the prisons of this State. I would hate to see that occur. The first offender should have a

second chance and the Minister should give some consideration to another alternative.

Mr. CRAIG: The penalty, I will agree, is severe. It was intended to be severe for the reasons explained. The member for Beeloo has brought in social problems associated with alcohol, and one of them, we know, is drunken driving. It is the aim of the Government, by the deterring influence of a heavy penalty, to reduce the incidence of that type of offence which is now averaging about 15 a week. People who want to commit this offence must realise beforehand the consequences they face. Although the penalty of £100 minimum for a first offence might be considered severe, it is intended it should be, because by being severe it is offering a strong deterrent against the repetition of the offence. I cannot agree to the suggestion of the member for Beeloo.

Mr. GRAHAM: I think the Minister ought to give some consideration to what has been said. If the fine is made sufficiently heavy it is a fine only to those who can meet it. For those who cannot it certainly means imprisonment because that is the alternative. By being insistent on this provision, the Minister is saying to some people, "You are not well off, so you go to gaol"; and others who are better circumstanced have the alternative of paying a fine. Under the circumstances outlined by the member for Beeloo, I do not think that is good law.

It is true, as the Minister has told us, that quite a large percentage of the accidents—or the major ones and particularly those involving death—occur because the driver or the victim is under the influence of liquor. Let us say one half of them are. I wonder what that proves—that 50 per cent. of the deaths are caused by people under the influence of liquor? What about the 50 per cent. who are perfectly sober? The victims are just as dead.

If I run into a pedestrian tonight and kill him, there will be a funeral in a couple of days, whether I am perfectly sober or whether I have had one over the eight. I know it is possible to get a little hysterical over this—the drunken drivers do this and the drunken drivers do that, and so on. However, as I have said, a terrific number of accidents occur which should never take place, and they are at the hands of people who have not even had one drink. They are certainly not under the influence.

The point made by the honourable member is valid. If the Minister is really so emphatic on this point he would accept the challenge offered to him and policemen would be placed outside every club, ball, 21st birthday, wedding, or any other anniversary that is celebrated. What would be the result?

Mr. Tonkin: A change of Government.

Mr. GRAHAM: The budget would be over-balanced. There would not be sufficient policemen to deal with the situation. It could be a misfortune that of the thousands of people who could come under the category of being under the influence, only perhaps one or two would be charged and the man who has not much in this world would be faced with the certainty of gaol. I think it is unreasonable. I do not know whether the member for Beeloo intends to move an amendment.

Mr. Jamieson: The Minister does not usually accept anything, so what is the use of moving it?

Mr. GRAHAM: I know it is easy to score politically on this, because here am I, it could be alleged, about to show sympathy for the person under the influence. It could be alleged also that I care not for the person who suffers as a consequence of his misdeeds. I am not proposing that he should receive a Queen's pardon or anything of that nature. I move an amendment—

Page 10, lines 19 to 25—Delete paragraph (1).

This would mean the Government would have had its way by increasing the period of suspension in respect of the first offence from three months to six months. It would mean there was a fine of £50, a sum which most people can either pay or make some arrangement to meet. If the proposed figure of £100 to £150 were passed it would place the fine beyond the bounds of realisation in so many cases. Where there is a repetition of the offence the penalties will be substantially increased in all phases: even the term of imprisonment and the term of suspension.

Mr. CRAIG: I have to be consistent too, and oppose this amendment. This is the whole crux of the Bill and it deals with the drunken driving offence. It is all right to say that police can gather thousands of drunken drivers outside of hotels.

Mr. Jamieson: You know that to be a fact.

Mr. CRAIG: I do not know.

Mr. Jamieson: You should not be the Minister for Police.

Mr. CRAIG: You should not be a member of Parliament. It all depends on the assessment of whether a person is under the influence of drink or not.

Mr. Jamieson: That is the argument.

Mr. CRAIG: It will not be a case of charging thousands of drunken drivers who congregate outside hotels every night. The whole purpose of the minimum for the first offence is that it shall be a deterrent against a repetition of the offence. It will make a lot of people think twice about having that extra drink before driving home. If it has that effect it will be doing something. I am opposed to any alteration.

Mr. CROMMELIN: Has the magistrate any discretion in the matter of fining an offender £100 or ordering a gaol sentence?

Mr. Craig: The Act reads "fine or imprisonment."

Mr. JAMIESON: The Minister's attitude to this amendment leaves me no alternative but to support the member for Balcatta despite the fact that by his attitude, the Minister will sing from the housetop that I favour drunken driving or some such rot. That is not the case. With a first offence, whatever the offence, some consideration should be given to the circumstances associated with the case. If the offence is one which is diabolic, then the person deserves the full recourse of the law. However, if not, surely the Minister is not going to say that that person deserves as great a banishment as the other person! That is what he is saying.

The Minister is not prepared to listen to any argument. He is sold on the one idea. One could give the same amount of beverage to all the members in this Chamber and get a different reaction from each of them. If one took a blood test or some mechanical test, a similar result would be got from each person. Yet the visible result on the individual and the control of the individual is not always the same. That is the point that worries me. I suggest the Minister is doing the community an injustice in not giving thought to allowing the magistrates greater powers. I support the amendment.

Mr. GRAHAM: I want to emphasise that we are with the Government in stepping-up the penalties for this offence. However, an offence could be a technical one where no damage has been done by way of accident and no harm has been caused to personal property—it is merely that that person is not drunk but is under the influence of liquor or drugs to the extent that he is incapable of exercising full and proper control over a vehicle. If he has caused some damage, whether minor or major, then he can be charged separately for that. But the person who has not committed an offence, but is in a condition where it is thought he is likely to, has to be discouraged.

The Government seeks to do that under several headings. The fines and suspensions are to be stepped-up. We are all men of the world and the situation could arise where we have had three glasses of beer or two whiskies, or a small amount of liquor. There could be a police officer, a little over officious, who questions one. In one's own defence one could undergo a test and find one is above the percentage set out. Then one incurs this displeasure of the law.

I think that is going to excess. We agree with 95 per cent. of what the Government seeks to do; but, having regard for all laws, and in particular the first offender, surely we are not asking for

anything that is unreal. This is a class of discriminatory legislation, because while it provides for an alternative of a fine or imprisonment, if a person cannot find the money he has to go to gaol. It has been difficult enough in many cases to find £50 but it would be impossible to find £100 or £150. Therefore, as the first offender does not do any great harm I think the amendment should be agreed to.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 17 to 20 put and passed.

Clause 21: Section 60 amended—

Mr. HALL: I wish to raise a point after hearing what the member for Warren had to say, and I would like the Minister to clarify it. I refer to a case which happened recently where a junior in Albany was put in gaol for a month and also fined for his first traffic offence. I refer the Minister to new subsections (3) and (4) and I would like him to interpret them for me. Any offence that occurred before a person was 18 years of age would have been heard in the Children's Court and therefore I believe it is not permissible for that evidence to be published in a police court. The case I mentioned has been referred to the Minister for Justice and I would like the Minister to clarify the point for me.

Mr. CRAIG: What the honourable member has said is correct to a certain extent, but I understand amending legislation will be introduced this session which will provide that evidence on traffic offences heard in the Children's Court will be made available to the senior court.

Mr. GRAHAM: I am unable to understand the approach of the Government in this matter and, in this regard, I refer to new subsection (1a). The Minister and the Government have shown us that they are prepared to be very severe inasmuch as they have stepped up penalties for various offences under the Act, but in this instance the Government has gone to the other extreme. If I steal a car worth £1,000, or £3,000, the fine is £25 if it is a first offence; but it is usually made one-fifth of the amount set down, which is £5. This will be an encouragement for people because it will be cheaper than hiring a car. I am certain a mistake has been made unless I have misread the proposition. Yes, I am sorry; this refers to horses and carts, bicycles, and the like.

However, there is one other point I would like to raise and I do not know whether the Minister and other Country Party members are aware of it. If a farmer has had one over the eight and is driving a flock of sheep he can incur a fine of a minimum of £100 and lose his driver's license. If he is convicted for the third time for walking behind his sheep after having had a drop too much he can be prevented from driving a motor

vehicle for the rest of his life, and go to gaol! However, I still think the fines are too low for the offence compared with the fine for selling a few potatoes when one should not sell them.

I would like some further information from the Minister on giving a complete whitewashing to young people under the age of 18 years who have unlawfully taken control of a motor vehicle. A lad of 17 years and nine months although he has stolen, perhaps, a dozen vehicles, could get off scot-free under this proposal; but if he has reached the age of 18 he is regarded as being responsible, and he could have this accumulation of suspended periods held against him, during which time he is debarred from holding a driver's license. I would like some further information from the Minister.

What steps does the Minister propose to take to deter these young people from committing such offences? I understand this provision was borrowed from South Australia where it was found that it did have a definite effect, because when the law was amended to take away this precious right in the eyes of the young people there was a falling-off of this type of offence as compared with its commission in other parts of the Commonwealth. The Government now proposes to lift the lid; or, in other words, it is saying that it is not regarded as a serious offence.

Only a few years ago the majority of the offences of stealing cars, or the unlawful use of them was committed by adults, but at present the youngsters outdo the adults and the ratio is increasing every year. Does the Government propose to ignore this offence being committed by a young person even up to a dozen times? This is a growing problem and it is among the particular categories the Minister is whitewashing with this amendment.

Mr. ROWBERRY: Having drawn the Minister's attention to the provision in this clause, I hope he will listen to reason. It is a little late to propose making amendments to it at this stage. Nevertheless, there should be inserted in this clause a provision for magisterial discretion to be exercised and the offender would then have to prove to the magistrate that he had turned over a new leaf and was again a fit person to hold a driver's license.

Mr. CRAIG: The point made by the member for Warren is worthy of consideration. I do not know what number would be involved, but it would be considerable; and if the offence were to be the subject of inquiry in the first place, as suggested by the honourable member, this would take considerable time. Nevertheless, some consideration will be given to the suggestion, and an amendment could be made in another place. It was

intended to lift the suspension immediately because of the number that was involved.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 22 to 28 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 11.56 p.m.

Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 13th October, 1965

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The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.