

Hon. C. B. Williams: His remarks cannot be very sincere if that is the case.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: If I hear any remarks with which I am one hundred per cent. in sympathy, no member will prevent me from rising in my place and expressing publicly my appreciation. I support the Bill.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 3.25 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 16th September, 1942.

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

QUESTIONS (4).

RAILWAYS, WHEAT HAULAGE.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is he aware that the transport of wheat from country centres to depots is so far in arrears that farmers' deliveries of the ensuing harvest are liable to be seriously disorganised, with consequent economic loss to the State? 2, Are such arrears in transport due to insufficient hauling equipment? 3, If so, how can he justify the recent transfer of locomotives and other rolling stock to an eastern State? 4, What are the details of the railway equipment so forwarded?

The MINISTER replied: 1, No. 2, No. 3 and 4, The transfer is in accord with the proclaimed policy of the Government, namely, to co-operate to the utmost with the Commonwealth Government in regard to the defence of Australia.

TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS.

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Minister representing the Minister for Police: 1, What number of accidents has occurred in which trams and motor vehicles have been concerned for the period of two months ended the 15th September, 1942? 2, Of the total, what number of motor vehicles figuring in these collisions was controlled by the Military authorities?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST (for the Minister for Police) replied: 1, 50 accidents. 2, Figures not available.

CIVIL DEFENCE.

Requisitioned Premises.

Mr. McDONALD asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Is he aware that, under the authority of the National Security Order made by the Premier, premises in West Perth have been requisitioned and wholly occupied for some months for civil defence purposes and may be so occupied for an indefinite period, the owner being the widow of a man who was killed in the R.A.A.F. and being now left with a liability for interest and rates of £100 per annum on the premises and, under the National Security Order, with no right to receive any rent? 2, Will he take up the matter with the Commonwealth Government to ensure that an injustice such as this is not allowed to continue?

The MINISTER replied: 1, Yes. The premises were requisitioned by the Perth City Council of its own initiative and in connection with its A.R.P. operations within the City of Perth area. 2, The matter has already been taken up with the Commonwealth Government.

VEGETABLE GROWING.

As to Water Rate Concession.

Mr. NEEDHAM asked the Minister for Water Supplies: 1, Has the Government yet come to a decision on the question of an allowance or concession in the water rate to householders growing vegetables in their home gardens? 2, If so, what is the nature of that decision?

The MINISTER replied: 1 and 2, No concession below the excess charge of 1s. per 1,000 gallons has been approved for the metropolitan area. In some goldfields districts where the price of excess water ranges from

4s. to 7s. per 1,000 gallons, a concession price of 2s. 6d. has been approved to bona fide domestic vegetable growers in relation to all excess water used this year over the quantity used last year. A reduction from 2s. 6d. to 2s. per 1,000 gallons has also been approved in respect of domestic services in certain towns supplied from the Mundaring reservoir.

BILL—MINING TENEMENTS (WAR TIME EXEMPTIONS).

Third Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES [2.18]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison): I have no desire to delay the passage of this measure, but I think the Minister might have given consideration to some matters not dealt with by the Bill and to which I referred on the second reading stage. If those matters are to be left as they now stand, prospectors who have volunteered or enlisted will lose their right to prospecting areas held by them. They will thus be placed at a great disadvantage when compared with other prospectors holding mining tenements in other ways. The Minister might have given effect to the wishes of those interested in prospecting areas. I have no objection to the Bill so far as it goes; my complaint is that, while some holders will be protected, others will be penalised. I do not wish to repeat what I said during the second reading stage, but I really thought the Minister would at least have given consideration to the requests I made by making the necessary additions to the Bill.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (in reply): I wish to reassure the member for Murchison that the holders of the prospecting areas to which he referred have nothing whatever to be afraid of. As the hon. member is fully aware, a prospecting area may be held only for 12 months, but the Minister has the right to extend the term for another six months. Under Section 297 of the Mining Act, the Minister has authority to make a reservation of those areas, should he consider it advisable to do so. That has been done all along. If prospectors have enlisted or been called-up, I give the House my as-

surance that, at all events, as long as I am Minister, any prospector holding a prospecting area and enlisting or being called up will, if he writes to me making the request, have his prospecting area protected for him until he returns, whenever that might be.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—WATER BOARDS ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

MOTION—LIGHTING OF MOTOR VEHICLES.

As to Reversion to State Control.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [2.23]: I move—

That this House is of opinion that the facts disclosed by the file laid upon the Table of the House by the Minister for Civil Defence show a want of appreciation of the difficulties of motor owners by his department, as well as a failure to secure the full co-operation of the Armed Forces in the masking of motor lights, and call for an immediate change of policy in the department, so that, while the safety of the State is safeguarded, the welfare and safety of the civilian population is protected; and as there is no evidence on the file to show that it was necessary at any time to abandon all control by the State Parliament in order to give effect to the desires of the Commonwealth, this House is further of opinion that immediate steps should be taken to restore State control.

I shall not detain the House long in speaking to the motion, but I consider it worth while to draw the attention of members to correspondence that has passed between the Commonwealth and State Governments. I have gone thoroughly into the files. I point out to the Minister that one of the files is missing: it must have been taken from the House back to his office.

The Minister for Mines: I did not know that.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am trying to ascertain where it has gone. It was in my room for some time, but the Minister's secretary took the files yesterday morning and apparently returned only two of them.

Mr. SPEAKER: Do I understand that a file has been removed from the House?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: One of the files is missing.

The Minister for Mines: Was it taken from your office?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes, yesterday morning, by your secretary. I understood that he took the files and returned all except one later in the day. There ought not to be a file missing.

Mr. SPEAKER: A file ought not to be taken from the House.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am not responsible for its removal. I propose to deal with a few letters appearing on the file, so that members will have some knowledge of the various views of people qualified to express an opinion on this subject. On page 31 of file 208/41 is a letter addressed to the District Naval Officer, Navy Office, Cliff-street, Fremantle, and one to the Officer Commanding Western Area, Royal Australian Air Force. It was written by the military authorities from the headquarters, Swan Barracks, and sets out fully the proposed conditions at that time. It is dated the 6th March, 1942, and is No. 31 on file No. 208/41. It is as follows:—

"In consultation with the representatives of the Civil Defence Council the following specifications for modified lighting of vehicles have been agreed:—

Head Lamps: (a) Service vehicles: The near side light (nearest to kerb) to be restricted by approved method and to give a road beam approximately 50 ft. ahead, with no rays visible above the horizontal plane. The off-side lamp to be blacked out with the exception of a central azure blue disk of 1 in. diameter which is discernible up to 50 ft.

(b) Civilian vehicles: The offside (driver's side) lamp to be as for near side lamp above, and in addition to show a dull white 1 in. disc as width marker below the slot light for road illumination. The near side lamp to be blacked out with the exception of a central dull white disc 1 in. diameter discernible up to 50 ft.

(c) Essential service (civilian) vehicles: To be as for civilian vehicles except that the 1 in. disc on both head lamps is azure blue instead of dull white.

Summarised the front view of various types will be as follows:—

- (a) Service—blue disc on offside lamp.
- (b) Civilian—dull white disc on each lamp.
- (c) Essential service (civilian)—blue disc on each lamp.

That would be the A.R.P. officers, doctors and such-like. Then the file goes on to deal with parking lights but, as members are well acquainted with the position in that regard, I will not continue reading the letter which was signed by Colonel Hoad. As we proceed with the file, we learn that the instructions were never carried out. The next letter to

which I refer is one from the Department of the Army, Yorkshire House, Perth, and signed by, I think, Captain Ednie Brown. It is very difficult to read some of these signatures. The letter is addressed to the Secretary, Civil Defence Council, Premier's Department, Perth, and states—

It is requested that all road vehicles be brought into line regarding the dimming of lights. It is pointed out that dimmed lights on Army vehicles prevent recognition of pedestrians when there is an oncoming vehicle with glaring lights. In view of this danger military transport drivers have been cautioned to drive particularly carefully at night, but it is nevertheless risky under the conditions still existing, and it is, therefore, considered that immediate action should be taken.

It is most extraordinary to find such a letter from Captain Ednie Brown. His branch of the services is probably one which has evaded the regulations as badly as has any other!

Mr. J. Hegney: What part are you quoting from now?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: From file No. 208/41.

Mr. Marshall: I thought you said it had gone?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: There are three files dealing with this matter and, unfortunately, the one that has gone contains, I think, Commodore Collins's letter.

Mr. Watts: I have a copy of it.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I find it is on this file, on page 54. This letter from the Naval Staff Office, Fremantle, to the Civil Defence Council, Perth, is dated the 6th March, 1942. Members should listen attentively to this letter because nobody possesses greater qualifications than Commodore Collins to express an opinion on the matter. He has a very wide knowledge of the subject. He was the man in charge of the "Sydney," and we remember the very good work done by that ship in the Mediterranean. No doubt the Commodore travelled from port to port and knows exactly what was being done. The letter is as follows:—

At a meeting of the Fremantle Defence Committee held on Wednesday, 25th March, 1942, concern was expressed at the present position with respect to the headlights of motor vehicles. From experience undergone elsewhere it is considered that greater casualties are caused from insufficient lighting on vehicles than are suffered from air-raids themselves. It is felt that it is far better to err on the side of too much lighting on vehicles than too little, moving lights being of little advantage for navigation of enemy ships or air-craft. In the event of an actual air-raid most vehicles would draw

into the kerb and switch out their lights altogether. In some areas wardens are directing motorists to reduce their lighting to an extent dangerous to safe driving even at slow speed. It is requested that this matter be brought to the notice of your Council.

I repeat that he made this statement—

Moving lights being of little advantage for navigation of enemy ships or air-craft.

I wish to show how lightly the Civil Defence Council treated this matter. A copy of the above letter was sent to that Council, and Mr. Edmondson, chairman of the lighting sub-committee of the Civil Defence Council, put up a reply, which I will read in a moment. I am rather surprised that a man like him should put up such a reply to a letter from so important a personage as Commodore Collins. Mr. Edmondson's reply is dated the 1st April, 1942, and is addressed to Mr. Telfer, Under Secretary, Civil Defence. The letter is on page 63 of the file. It states—

Reference your letter 208/41 of the 1st inst., re Fremantle Defence Committee. We have had in the past many communications from this Committee; I would suggest a reply at your discretion on the following lines.

I could not find any other letters dealing with this matter from the Fremantle Defence Committee on any of the files.

The Minister for Mines: That body wrote to Mr. Edmondson direct.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The letters should be on the file.

The Minister for Mines: They were not sent on, and consequently are not on the file.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: His letter continues—

First alternative reply: "I am in receipt of your letter of the 26th March, and in thanking you for the same would advise you that the contents have been noted."

We have complained in the past about the Public Service treating the public generally in a very high-handed manner, but in this case, where a man like Mr. Edmondson is writing a reply to a letter from Commodore Collins, one would expect at least something a little more in keeping with his position. The second alternative reply was certainly better, and is the one which was subsequently sent. It was—

Second alternative reply: "I am in receipt of your letter of the 26th March re motor headlights, and would advise as follows:—

- (1) Under the restrictions as promulgated by the Civil Defence Council there is adequate lighting for the conditions;

- (2) Numerous cars have not put their lighting up to the requested standard lighting which is 2.5 foot candle at 10 ft.;

- (3) The requirements of the Lighting Restriction promulgated by the Civil Defence Council are the same as the British Standard Specification Air Raid Precautions, and the suggested Australian Standard Specification. England in foggy weather and under blitz conditions is not the best place for motor vehicles, yet hundreds of thousands of vehicles move around under these conditions with the same headlamps as are used in Fremantle."

Doubtless most of us have noted from time to time the number of accidents that occurred in England at one stage. The statement was made that there were more deaths on the roads through traffic accidents than were caused in the blitz. If that was so, one would have expected Mr. Edmondson to do all in his power to avert such occurrences here and not use that as an argument in support of the letter he drafted. He states that the Civil Defence Council carried out the British standard specification and suggests an Australian standard specification. I would like members to read the file thus far and see whether they can reach any conclusion other than that I have come to, namely, that there are no specifications at all. From day to day the specifications appear to change, and there seems to be doubt as to the focussing of the lights permitted. I claim to have as much intelligence as the average man and I cannot reach any conclusion as to what has been done.

The Minister for Mines: I do not think the experts have reached a conclusion, either.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I agree with the Minister. I say of the Deputy Premier that he has a full realisation of what the civil population of the State is suffering. In yesterday's "West Australian" was published a very good letter sent by the Deputy Premier to the Prime Minister on which the writer should be commended, for it voices the opinions that have been expressed from time to time by members on this side of the House and by most members on his own side. I do not propose to go through the whole of the files, but the letters I have quoted are worth perusing.

The Minister for Mines: In explanation of the missing file, I have just got through to my office and have been informed that my clerk came up to see the file but did not take it away. He is on his way to the House now.

Point of Order.

Mr. Marshall: On a point of order, this matter of a file being missing from the House is most serious. Standing Orders provide that these documents shall be placed in the custody of the Clerk and must not be removed without the sanction of the Speaker. A file might be unimportant but it might be very important. What I should like to know is how it came about that this file was removed from the Chamber without your permission, Mr. Speaker, and what you propose to do.

Mr. Speaker: Nobody had a right to take the file from the House without my permission. My permission was not given and apparently the file has been taken. I shall have inquiries made.

Mr. Warner: Perhaps it has got into the black-out.

Hon. C. G. Latham: No doubt the file will turn up later on. It did not contain any minute having a bearing on my motion.

Mr. Speaker: But the member for Murchison raised a point of order. No file should be removed from the Table of the House. I am now informed that the file in question has been on the Table all the time.

The Minister for Mines: Then perhaps the Leader of the Opposition will apologise to my clerk, because the file was in its proper place.

Debate Resumed.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: There is a telegram on file 1087/42 sent by Mr. Welch, of the Home Security Office, Canberra, to the Under-Secretary for Civil Defence, as follows:—

Reference your telegram regarding lighting restrictions, draft order lighting of motor vehicles forwarded by air mail today. Orders regarding general lighting restrictions will go forward beginning of next week.

Then there are set out the orders issued on the 4th May, 1942. Those orders have been amended quite a lot from time to time. I do not propose to deal with all of them, but there are a few letters worth quoting. The first appears on page 95A and was written on the 14th July, 1942, by the Under-Secretary for Civil Defence to the Chairman of the Lighting Sub-Committee, as follows:—

I would refer you to extracts from the minutes of meeting of the Civil Defence Council of the 10th July, 1942, set out hereunder—

“Further to the matter of lighting, the question was raised with regard to the

masking of vehicle headlamps. It was noted that the present masking of military and Government-controlled vehicles is most unsatisfactory, and even dangerous to other vehicular traffic, and it was agreed that some consideration was required either to increasing the lighting allowed motorists or to bringing military and Government passenger-carrying vehicles into line with the existing Lighting Restrictions Order. After discussion, it was decided that the matter of motor vehicle lighting generally through the State be reviewed by the Lighting Sub-Committee in view of the present unsatisfactory position and that the sub-committee advise the council of its opinion on the subject.”

Now I want to quote a letter on page 125 from the military authorities to Mr. F. C. Edmondson, Chairman of the Lighting Sub-Committee, dated the 11th August—

Your attention is directed to Item D.1 (a) of the Civil Defence Council minutes of the meeting held on the 7th inst.—

“Item D.7. In considering this item, the Army Liaison Officer (Major Virtue) advised that he could definitely state that the proposed Army headlight masks would not be in conformity with lighting restrictions regulations. After a lengthy discussion on the subject, Major Virtue agreed to arrange with the Military Engineer for the chairman of the Lighting Committee (Mr. F. C. Edmondson) to discuss with him the new headlight masks with a view to the Lighting Committee considering the matter of the lighting restrictions at an early date.”

There is an indication that the military authorities promised faithfully to carry out those orders. In one letter Col. Hoad stated that the lamps on a considerable number of military vehicles had been fitted with masks and that the intention was to fit the rest as soon as possible. That was a remarkable statement for Col. Hoad to make, seeing that the military authorities have impressed everything they wanted, whether it was a motorear or a motortruck. There is no reason why they could not have obtained all the masks they required to mask the lights of their vehicles. Major Virtue, who is probably their legal adviser—

The Minister for Mines: He is the liaison officer on the council.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes. He, in effect, states that it does not matter what Col. Hoad says about fitting the masks, “We are not going to do it.” If we want to have our people murdered by these vehicles—and I use the word advisedly—all we have to do is leave things as they are. The public, however, cannot be expected to stand up to this sort of regulation very much longer

People using cars with dimmed lights, especially on dark nights such as we have had recently—

Mr. SPEAKER: I hope the Leader of the Opposition does not propose to enter upon a general discussion of black-out or brown-out conditions. The matter has already been discussed this session. I do not want to burke discussion and I realise his difficulty.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: As long as you realise the difficulty, as I do, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. SPEAKER: I ask the hon. member to keep as close as possible to the terms of his motion.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes, I will keep strictly to the file. In view of the advice tendered by one high military authority and the advice tendered by an authority probably under that high authority, it is impossible to give effect to the regulations. I wish to draw attention to other letters. Here is one that is highly interesting. The Minister has led members to believe that the regulations cannot be varied by the State Government.

The Minister for Mines: I have not said anything of the sort.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I do not assert that the Minister said this, but he led us to believe that these are purely Commonwealth regulations. As the result of looking through the file I should say the regulations were the outcome of a conference held in Melbourne just about the time when our Legislative Council disallowed the regulations. In order possibly to provide some defence for another place, I want to say that if the motion had been submitted here it would also have been carried.

The Minister for Mines: Then the position would have been just as chaotic.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Minister was away at the time on State business in the East. The sensible course was to disallow the regulations, there being no other way of dealing with them. What I object to is that the State Government should thereupon immediately agree to the introduction by the Commonwealth Government of regulations over which we would have no control. That is tantamount to confessing ourselves incapable of doing our own business. It is a serious matter, and the more serious because at the present time the Commonwealth Government is taking away from the State Governments powers which should not be surrendered. On page 132 of this file there

appears a letter over the initials "E.J.R.H.," reading—

Dear Sir,—You are advised that the report of the Lighting Sub-Committee of the 11th August was considered by the Executive Committee and the latter's recommendations in connection therewith were endorsed by the Civil Defence Council at its last meeting.

You are advised that the recommendations contained in your report were dealt with as follows—

With regard to headlamp masks, your recommendation that the Premier be requested to amend the regulations to allow light from motor vehicle headlights at 4 ft. candle power was deferred for fourteen days pending Parliament's consideration of this question.

Your Committee's recommendation regarding burning-off fires, etc., in country districts was amended to read: "That it be a recommendation to the Premier that burning-off on farms, burning-off waste on timber mills, lights on farm tractors, and charcoal burning be exempted from the regulations." The hon. Premier is being advised accordingly.

Included in the report is an opinion that there should be no objection to open-air picture gardens in the brown-out area. This opinion is endorsed by the Council.

On examining the matter we see that the Premier first requested that no alteration should be made with regard to headlamps until Parliament had had an opportunity to consider the subject. The letter which I have read is dated the 17th August, just after the present session opened. The Premier was perfectly right in making that request, but the views expressed by this Parliament should receive consideration. I believe that the outcome of this discussion will be that the Western Australian people will receive at least as fair a deal as has been given to the people of the Eastern States. It seems that this council, which apparently has fairly wide powers, can exclude burning-off lights, charcoal-burning lights, and lights of open-air picture shows. I contend that the council can amend any part of the regulations. But it surely is not possible to amend the regulations as indicated and leave other lights on the road.

I quite agree with the Deputy Premier that beyond 30 miles from the coast lights cannot have any effect whatever on shipping or on aircraft. What advantage would the lighting be to them? I believe that today aircraft are scientifically designed so as to be able almost to pin-point a place while taking their bearings. The lights in question, therefore, would have no effect at all. It struck me as utterly

unreasonable to believe that an enemy aircraft would travel hundreds of miles to drop a bomb at a certain spot because a motor-light had been seen on a road in that locality. All that enemy aircraft are after is points of military or political importance. As a matter of fact, Buckingham Palace was bombed, and so was the House of Commons. Those are important places. I do not know whether Whitehall was bombed.

The Minister for Mines: Practically every church in London was bombed.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Churches would be important. The effect of bombing them would be important, because they would be places of refuge. I am told that traffic proceeding in a certain direction would enable enemy aircraft to know where to go. Now, I use the roads as much as most people do, and find that one sees lights travelling in all directions. Therefore, they could not afford guidance in that respect to enemy aircraft. The House should do its utmost to support the letter put up yesterday by the Deputy Premier to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister should be given to understand that while we are prepared to do everything possible to back up action designed to protect the people, this kind of thing is actually a danger to the people and makes the regulations farcical. Therefore I hope the motion will be carried. I think members will agree with me that at no time was there any need to hand over the powers held by the State in this connection under the Civil Defence Act to the Commonwealth Government. Such action is most unwise.

If I have any complaint to make, I have opportunities to make it here. Should the House not be sitting, I can go to the office of the Minister and submit my views to him. So far I have not been refused admission to the Minister. However, while this House is sitting, Mr. Speaker, we have the opportunity, under your guidance, to express our views in the interests of the people of Western Australia. I hope that right will never be frittered away by reason of any Government of this State telling the Commonwealth Government that we are incapable of doing the work entrusted to us by the people of Western Australia. In my opinion, this is the most important House so far as those people are concerned. In this Chamber they have

50 representatives. Those 50 representatives here are as capable as are the five Western Australian members of the Federal House of Representatives. I repeat, the most important House to the people of Western Australia today is this House. We have no right to fritter away any of our powers, as to my regret has been done recently. As regards that matter, we might appeal to the Privy Council. I commend my motion to the House.

MR. SEWARD (Pingelly): In supporting the motion moved by my Leader I desire to draw attention to the first letter appearing on the file which came from the Vacuum Oil Coy. It applies to the first part of the motion. On the 10th June, 1941, the company wrote to the Civil Defence Council stating that it desired to adopt a standard type of headlight mask, and forwarding a sample of the Victorian mask. On the 30th January, 1942, just six months later, the company again wrote asking whether any decision had been arrived at and, if so, what was its nature? I maintain that to keep the firm waiting six months for a reply to a request of that kind is not showing a reasonable appreciation of the difficulties of motor-owners. On the 29th January the company had to write again for a reply, and on the 30th January it was directed to the Traffic Branch of the Police Department. That does not show a proper appreciation of the company's difficulties. I presume the Vacuum Oil people have many vehicles to mask in Western Australia and desire, if possible, that a uniform type of mask should be adopted in all the States, since the company operates throughout Australia. And it had to wait six months for a reply! The file contains other letters of a similar nature which I shall not quote, asking for guidance. From my own experience I know how difficult it has been to secure a proper mask. In fact, the reply furnished to the Vacuum Oil Company states that the then type of mask would not give sufficient light. That is one of the difficulties of the matter.

There is another point to which I desire to draw attention, because the Minister, in his reply, told us that the Government never received any co-operation from the military authorities. When the draft regulations were sent here by the Commonwealth Government, they were submitted to the local lighting committee for perusal and approval.

On the file will be found a report to Mr. Telfer dated the 11th May, 1942, in which the chairman of the Lighting Sub-Committee (Mr. Edmondson) has this to say:—

In the discussion with Mr. Panton, the Commissioner of Police, yourself and myself, I pointed out that no area was mentioned and it was decided at that meeting that General Bennett be asked to state the area in writing. . . . However, one serious matter is that vehicles of the Army Forces are exempt. Mr. Telfer and myself took this matter up with Colonel Hoad and he stated that over 3,000 military vehicles had already been masked and he was hastening masking of the others. With regard to Allied Forces he requested that a letter be sent from the C.D.C. to him drawing his attention to any bad breaches, if any, when he himself would immediately take the matter up, and he assured us of complete co-operation. Col. Hoad was well seized with the danger and did realise that civilian A.R.P. and essential services must be continued and must not be menaced by glaring headlamps of vehicles of the Forces. It was also stated by Col. Hoad, apart from the business we discussed with him, that the question of liaison of all A.R.P. and civil defence matters was now directly under his charge and administration and he would arrange for the liaison officer to attend Civil Defence meetings.

There is no evidence there of any disregard by the Army. Colonel Hoad gave an assurance that he was fully seized of the menace of glaring headlamps on vehicles belonging to the Forces and had every desire to assist the Civil Defence Council.

The Minister for Mines: You must know from your own personal knowledge what they have done.

Mr. SEWARD: Last Thursday I asked the Minister on how many occasions since the 11th May Colonel Hoad was informed by letter of breaches by the Allied Forces of the Lighting of Vehicles Order. The reply was—

A military liaison officer representing Col. Hoad attends each Civil Defence Council meeting and he has been kept verbally informed of breaches.

That is not complying with the request of Colonel Hoad, who distinctly asked to be advised by letter of any breaches by the Allied Forces, presumably because he wanted some evidence to place before those in charge of the Allied Forces. He said he was appointing a liaison officer to keep him in touch with various matters brought before the Civil Defence Council for consideration. No letter was sent to Colonel Hoad in compliance with his request. I also asked the Minister what replies to letters sent to

Colonel Hoad were received from him, and the answer was:—

Replies were generally to the effect that the Army was masking vehicles as opportunity offered.

I did not ask anything about the Army but what action had been taken to get the Allied Forces to comply with this order. Apparently no action was taken and the Minister was not justified in blaming the military authorities and saying they had not co-operated with him, particularly when the evidence on the files shows that they did.

I turn now to the letter read by the Leader of the Opposition. Writing on the 17th March, 1942, the G.O.C. Western Command asked the C.D.C. that all road vehicles be brought in line in the matter of dimming of lights, and pointed out that the dimmed lights on army vehicles prevented recognition of pedestrians when there was an oncoming vehicle with glaring lights. Yet we are told that the Army did not co-operate!

When the draft regulations that were to be discussed at a conference with the Commonwealth Government were received, the Minister immediately wired to all the States to ascertain what they were doing and whether they intended to adopt the regulations in toto. On the file, members will find replies from the other States. Queensland intimated that the Government proposed to issue its own order in language understandable by motor users. South Australia felt that it would be impossible to police car lighting while street and other lights were permitted. That was the position in Adelaide, and the South Australian Government did not issue regulations under the National Security Act but maintained the right to issue such regulations under its own Act. Victoria replied that it would make certain amendments to the Commonwealth order. Victoria did not propose to adopt the Commonwealth regulations in toto but suggested amendments, though that State was represented at the conference.

The Minister for Mines: Are you quite sure of that?

Mr. SEWARD: It is on the file. The Minister can give his version when he speaks. Tasmania replied that in view of the present trend of Commonwealth policy it would be undesirable at the moment to make drastic changes in existing restrictions. So Tasmania refused to adopt the regulations in toto. The Minister will have to

take the responsibility for the fact that this State decided to issue regulations under the Commonwealth National Security Act, so that they are entirely beyond our control. For those reasons, in addition to others mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition, I consider the House has every justification for supporting the motion.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not intend to weary the House by going over a lot of these regulations, because that appears to me to be flogging a dead horse. A motion was moved by the member for Pingelly and discussed at length. About 19 speeches were made, excluding my own, and I venture to assert that 17 of the 19 members who spoke dealt severely with the military authorities. Now I am accused of being responsible for the state of affairs! If the hon. member will take the trouble to study "Hansard" he will find that very few of the members who spoke did not complain bitterly about the attitude of the military authorities.

Mr. Watts: Because we thought then that it was their fault!

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Whose fault is it that the military authorities have not had a proper lighting system? Mine?

Mr. Warner: Yes!

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I see! I am in charge of General Blamey and General Sturdee and General MacArthur!

Mr. Patrick: You are responsible for these regulations.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am no more responsible for the regulations than is any other member of this House.

Mr. Patrick: You are responsible for not retaining State rights.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: We are flogging a dead horse. The motion moved by the member for Pingelly was carried unanimously. Not one voice was raised against it. The original regulations were disallowed, and the point has been raised by the Leader of the Opposition whether the existing regulations can be altered by the Premier. Nobody has said he could not alter them. The Solicitor General has been asked about the matter.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I always understood—

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member usually understands something wrong! He did not hear what I had to say

on this matter in the first place. The very preamble of the regulations begins—"After consultation with the military authorities and the Minister for Home Security." I took that to the Solicitor General, and said, "Can the Premier of this State cancel these regulations?" After spending a couple of days thinking it over, he said, "Personally I think he can; but it would be very wrong, and certainly very discourteous to cancel such regulations before he had consulted with the people who submitted them."

Mr. Hughes: That is not what you asked him. You only asked him could it be done.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I was not paying for the advice. If I had been, I suppose I would have got it.

Mr. Hughes: He had no right to give political advice.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member can have him brought up before the Barristers' Board.

Mr. Hughes: I will tell him personally.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have not had a chance to discuss this matter with the Premier, but I know him sufficiently well to be sure that if the Commonwealth Government is not ready to take notice of what is said in this Parliament, he will have the matter tested. If we can believe all that has been said, this country was very near to being invaded, when these regulations were disallowed.

Mr. Berry: Do you think that putting out the lights would stop an invasion?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It does not matter what I think. I have been arguing on those lines all along. It did not matter what I thought. It was only as a result of political changes that I came to occupy this position. What happened was that the people who are supposed to be protecting Australia—and I say "supposed" advisedly—the people in charge of military operations in Australia said the regulations were necessary. That is all that concerned me. I will go further and say that that is all that will concern me in the future. So long as I am in this position, unless the House wills otherwise, I am prepared to take the advice of General MacArthur and his colleagues.

Mr. Thorn: Whether they carry out these regulations themselves or not?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes. If the House decides otherwise, I am prepared to abide by the majority decision.

Mr. Warner: We have no say now.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: If I know the Premier, members will get all the say they require in the event of the Commonwealth Government not acceding to our request. When the previous regulations were disallowed, no end of chaos was caused. I arrived back from Melbourne to find a pile of letters on the subject waiting for me. Many people rang me on the 'phone. Some wanted to obey the regulations that had been disallowed.

Mr. Kelly: There was chaos before then!

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Perhaps there was in Southern Cross. I do not know that there was anywhere else. If there was, the chaos was accentuated when the regulations were disallowed. The Leader of the Opposition said the whole of the regulations had to be disallowed. Nothing of the sort was necessary. If a resolution had been carried expressing an opinion on the matter, the Government could and would have acted on it; but the whole of the regulations were disallowed. For what reason? Mr. Cornell wanted to drive around Southern Cross. That is all it was done for. Mr. Cornell complained about car lighting in Southern Cross and the country areas, and for that very reason the regulations were disallowed.

Members interjected.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Members can howl as much as they like. In order to secure the disallowance of the regulations as they applied to the country, members in another place disallowed the black-out from Fremantle to Trigg Island. The whole of the regulations had to go.

Members interjected.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: If members opposite had been in office, they would have done worse. All I can say to such members is, "You can do your worst."

Hon. C. G. Latham: Our best—not our worst!

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not propose to do anything on my own responsibility. I know what would have happened had I been responsible for the withdrawal of the regulations, and Japanese bombs had dropped and killed people. It would have been said, "What sort of a Minister for Civil Defence are you, not complying with the wishes of the military authorities?"

Mr. Thorn: Do you think the regulations will prevent an invasion?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: They will not prevent the hon. member from

slinging mud at me. I know him! He knows nothing about it.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That is a nice thing for the Minister to say.

Mr. Thorn: There should have been no mention of Mr. Cornell.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will resume his seat. The member for Toodyay will keep order.

Mr. Thorn: The Minister should also keep order.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It is my turn to speak. Jimmy Cornell said he wanted more light for motorears at Southern Cross and that influenced the position! Fancy any member suggesting that those sitting on the Government side of the House could be influenced by Jimmy Cornell!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Minister is out of order in making such references.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Fancy suggesting he could influence us!

Mr. SPEAKER: Standing Order 133 debars the Minister from referring to a member of Parliament by name.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Now let me mention the references made to the Navy. One member said there was lack of co-operation. There has been no co-operation between the Navy and the Army. Am I supposed to settle the argument?

Hon. C. G. Latham: Both Army and Navy vehicles keep their lights full on.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I know that. As I said in this Chamber before we even received the regulations from the military authorities, two days afterwards we received a letter from the Prime Minister, through the Naval Board, intimating that the Navy was unable to comply with the regulations because the navigation lights had to be retained. I will tell the Leader of the Opposition the reason for that letter. It was because some of the young naval bucks could not get round with their tabs fast enough.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That is very unfair to the Chief Naval Authority.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: There is nothing unfair about it, because I know what I am talking about.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Does the Minister suggest that the highest naval authority here is the tool of the juniors?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Never mind about that! That is where the letter came from.

Mr. Thorn: And the reason for it was that the young naval men could not take their girls about?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: They could not take them round fast enough.

Mr. Thorn: That is a nice thing to say!

The MINISTER FOR MINES: At any rate, I do not propose to flog a dead horse.

Mr. J. Hegney: It will be dead now.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It was dead when we carried the previous motion. Now we find that the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Pingelly got the file which had been placed on the Table of the House. They went through the file, and incidentally have lost a portion of it. They could not find anything wrong.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I say your secretary lost that part of the file.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: He procured it from the hon. member's room, and put the papers on the Table. However, those two members could not find anything wrong, so the motion before the House was moved. I tell members frankly that this action will relieve me of a lot of worry and opposition. If the House agrees to the motion, and someone rings me up about lighting restrictions, I shall reply, "I am sorry, but you must see Parliament about this matter. Parliament itself decided the issue."

I do not propose to do anything about the matter until we receive the Prime Minister's decision upon the letter that has been sent to him. When the Prime Minister, after consultation with the Service Chiefs, forwards his decision to us and the position is made clear, I hope members will again take up the matter with the military authorities and ascertain whether they know what they are talking about. I repeat what I have said previously in this Chamber: So long as the Premier entrusts me with the duty of administering civil defence matters, and until Parliament decides otherwise, I shall accept the advice of those authorities that are spending £1,000,000 per day on the defence of this country.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York—in reply): The Minister loses his temper very easily.

The Minister for Mines: I did not lose it at all.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Apparently he thought it necessary to talk about a member of another place, in order to illustrate the thought uppermost in his mind that the

Legislative Council had disallowed the lighting restriction regulations because the member of that Chamber wanted to go to Southern Cross.

The Minister for Mines: I did not say anything of the sort.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I do not think that has anything to do with the matter at all. The Minister introduced that phase in order to draw a red herring across the trail of the debate. The Minister's second point was that Commodore Collins had written the letter that has been referred to because he wanted to provide facilities for his junior officers so that they could take girls about. I think that remark was very unwise.

The Minister for Mines: I said that is where it came from.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I cannot believe that Commodore Collins, in view of the great responsibilities he has carried in the past—I believe that everyone is proud to be associated with him as an Australian—

The Minister for Mines: So am I!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I cannot believe that such a high-placed officer would be associated with a move to enable junior officers to take girls out at night. The Minister's statement was very unwise, and his suggestion does not affect the point under consideration. I claim there was no necessity whatever for the whole matter to be handed over to the Federal authorities, for I hold the power should have been retained by the State Parliament. The Minister said he would take his instructions from the military authorities; I hope his colleagues will do nothing of the sort.

The Minister for Mines: I said I would do so until Parliament decided otherwise.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I quoted what the Minister himself said.

The Minister for Works: Do you suggest that the Minister was responsible for drafting defence regulations?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Let the military authorities draft them and accept the responsibility, not this Parliament! That is the main thing. The Minister should remember that we have on our statute-book the Civil Defence (Emergency Powers) Act, under which the regulations were promulgated. Those regulations were well drafted.

The Minister for Mines: If the military authorities are not in a position to say what should be done, who is?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The military authorities may advise us, but we should not accept dictation from them.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Others do!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: We are responsible for administering the civil laws, and that is the important point. Let the military authorities deal with matters that are within their province! When we consider the position and have regard to the officers who have much to do with defence matters, what experience have they had? They may know all about the formation of brigades, battalions or companies, but what do they know about the civil laws? Colonel Hoad said he will have all the lights masked. Major Virtue said they are not going to carry out the regulations.

Mr. Cross: And they did not do so.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I hope Ministers of the Crown in this State at any rate will look after the civil side. If the military authorities like to do so, and they enforce the laws, we should remember that the State Ministers, through the police force, are endeavouring to administer those laws.

The Minister for Mines: They are not doing it under the orders of the State.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The police are doing the work, and police magistrates are trying cases. Let the military authorities deal with matters of military law, but let us maintain our civil laws. We can do all that is necessary quite satisfactorily. We have passed legislation providing the Minister in charge of civil defence matters with all the powers that are necessary. I certainly regretted having to listen to the statement he made this afternoon when he said he would accept dictation from the military authorities.

The Minister for Mines: If you get the motion through, you can have the powers back at any time you like.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Minister talks about giving away something it is not in his power to discard. If he and his colleagues choose to give up their positions and we accept responsibility of government, I assure him that if we cannot do better than he has in this matter we shall be prepared to forfeit our seats.

Question put and passed.

MOTION—POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION.

To Inquire by Select Committee.

MR. WATTS (Katanning) [3.23]: I move—

That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into, and submit proposals for, post-war reconstruction in Western Australia, with particular reference to ways and means of securing a greater measure of equality of opportunity, and the best possible standard of living for all the people with continuity of employment, and the necessary increase in the State's population, and as means of attaining those objectives to consider—

- (a) the possibilities of land settlement as a means of repatriation;
- (b) the reshaping of agricultural policy so as to offer prospects of success to those engaged in rural industry;
- (c) the fostering of secondary industries so as to make the best use of the State's raw materials, and provide employment;
- (d) the desirability of appointing a Minister for Reconstruction;
- (e) any other proposals considered helpful.

I do not propose to take up much time regarding this matter because I cannot conceive of there being any opposition to a motion of this nature at the present time. If, however, I am mistaken in that belief, I shall take the opportunity to deal with such objections as are made when it comes to my turn to speak in reply to the debate. I am aware that there is a movement in Federal circles to deal with at any rate some phases of the subject matter of my motion relating to reconstruction after the war, in their own way and in their own time. Included in the proposals there appears to be a suggestion that the Constitution might be amended so as to place the Federal authorities in unfettered control of all these matters, which control is to be exercised by the gentlemen associated with the Federal Executive, irrespective of what political party they may represent. I admit straight away that I am not enthusiastic about any such proposal, but as it is not yet of a concrete nature, I do not propose to discuss it except to say that whether the Federal authorities proceed along those lines or not, it will still be necessary for the people of Western Australia and the State Parliament in particular to have their case prepared to place before the Federal authorities if they act; or if they do not act to prepare that case so that the State can deal with the matter itself. Whatever may be the outcome of the proposal, it will

be essential, in my view, that this Parliament and the people of the State shall pay some regard to this question in order that they may be in a position to take action one way or another as soon as the time arrives to do so.

There are some people who hold that now is not the time to deal with matters such as are outlined in the motion. They contend that the main object of work at the present time is to do all that is possible and necessary towards winning the war. With that contention I am entirely in agreement insofar as it is possible for all sections of our people to engage themselves actively in that work. But I submit there are members of this House who are not so engaged, and who could not be so engaged, who would be very well-advised to give consideration to the matters that are referred to in the motion. They would be able to bend their undoubted energy and ability towards the solution of this problem and assist very greatly in the well-being of this country, realising that they cannot do very much actively towards the winning of the war itself. I think the point of view of a great many people in various parts of Western Australia—I know there are many in my district who hold such views—is summed up in an article written in a newspaper called "The Southern Sentinel," which was published at Mt. Barker on the 28th August. Among other comments the leader-writer of that paper wrote—

Reconstruction is one of the problems which is exciting ever-increasing interest, not only in this country, but all over the world. . . . There are, of course, two schools of thought on reconstruction. One of them subscribes to the idea in general but insists that the only job at the moment is the winning of the war; and the other school wants planned action now so that the way is open to implement the plans as soon as the war is over. There is merit in both arguments, but it does seem as though—with the important proviso that it must not interfere with the war effort—there is more to be said for planning now. One of the important things we must endeavour to avoid is the tragedy of the first three years of the last peace in which we had an artificial boom brought about by the spending of deferred pay and gratuities, the free spending of money earned during the war period and the inevitable slump when these funds were exhausted. If by planning now we can avoid that chaos, it will be well worth while. It is sometimes forgotten that just as the war will be won by long-term strategy, by the patient planning and the building-up of reserves, so will the peace. At the end of the last war

we had a muddled peace. It must be avoided this time, and some of the avoiding action must be taken now.

With that sentiment I believe that, on careful consideration of the position, the majority of the members of this House will agree. I do not approach this matter from the point of view of any "new order," as it has been referred to so often in this Chamber and elsewhere. My motion is aimed to be a small contribution towards making it possible for this State through its Parliamentary representatives, to do all that can be done after the cessation of hostilities towards the development of the State and the betterment of the conditions of the people of Western Australia. I do not propose to go any further. Pleasant as it may sound to refer to such things as new orders, you, Mr. Speaker, and I are too well acquainted with the frailties of human nature to believe that those things in the bulk will be easy of achievement. I believe it will be a question of slowly but surely feeling our way out of the morass—if I may so term it—we are in today and are likely to be in unless we take action in the future and, by slow degrees, raising the conditions of our people and the state of our country to something better than it has been in the past. As a small contribution to that end, I am putting this motion before the House, not in any party spirit, but in order that it may be debated, and in the hope that a select committee will be appointed to give consideration to the points I have raised.

We do not want to be afraid of creating a precedent. There are some people who say, "Do not do this or that because it will be establishing a precedent." That is something which I think we ought to avoid. A great many of our past enthusiasts will disappear into the discard and a great many new ideas that will be brought forward will go into the same place, but out of it all must come from the ability of our people generally some schemes that will benefit them and improve their conditions, some schemes that will cancel, as it were, the troubles that arose after the 1914-18 war and will, I fear, on this occasion be greatly magnified. We have many more people engaged in the war effort during this conflict than we had during that of years ago. I believe, therefore, that in proportion to this increase, so are our difficulties likely to increase and so

should we give very careful consideration to anything we can do, small though it be, to solve those problems and avoid a repetition of past mistakes.

I refer in the motion to a select committee making inquiries and submitting proposals with particular reference to ways and means of securing a greater measure of equality of opportunity and the best possible standard of living for all the people with continuity of employment. This is something that has never been achieved, particularly the latter part "continuity of employment," and it is something which it is only reasonable that every effort should be made to achieve. It is not conferring any great benefit on mankind, I consider, simply to ensure that everyone willing to work should have the right to it.

Mr. North: There is national insurance, also.

Mr. WATTS: Yes. In the past there have been great difficulties under the systems that have been in operation to ensure that every individual willing to work had the right to do so at reasonable remuneration. I do not think we should refuse to inquire into any proposal that may be brought forward and examine it to ascertain whether it is likely, even though it may mean the establishment of a really definite precedent, to achieve, wholly or partially, the end we have in view. Since I gave notice of this motion I have received two or three communications from citizens of the State, and I assure the House that if the proposals made in them were put before a select committee and investigated, they would provide a source of very great interest. One in particular seems rather strange and may be entirely unworkable, but it is not so high-falutin' a thing that is going to start off, as it were, condemned because it, is so high-falutin'. There is a prospect that a scheme of the kind may be made use of in a State such as this or a Commonwealth such as this. If it is to be a Commonwealth matter, the advice of the people of this State should be tendered to the Commonwealth Government.

In the motion I proceed to refer to the necessary increase in the population of the State. I do not think anyone will disagree that this is a very essential part of any system that we may put into operation. Western Australia is capable of supporting a great many more people than it has sup-

ported in the past. I am not one of those who believe that this State can support many millions. I have heard all sorts of fantastic figures quoted, but as we look around we realise that the State has its limitations, and cannot support the unlimited number of persons commensurate with its size that it could if it contained the facilities and conditions that exist elsewhere in countries of the same size. Still, it should be possible to maintain a very greatly increased population, and we should bend our energies towards ascertaining how that increase may be obtained in a way that will confer reasonable conditions, not only upon the people who are with us now, but also upon those who come hereafter, either by birth or migration. So I ask the House to regard that aspect as being worthy of consideration.

In order not to limit the select committee in its inquiry, I have placed at the end of my motion a paragraph authorising the consideration of any other proposals thought to be helpful. I have proposed that the possibilities of land settlement as a means of repatriation be investigated. I use the word "repatriation" as having reference to more than soldiers who have given service in another country and have returned to this State. I have used it as meaning the settlement of any member of the Forces, whatever his status, whatever branch he may belong to, or whether he has served oversea, who may require to be established in civil life after his release from military duty, which appears to be likely to continue over a substantial period. After the 1914-18 war a great deal of valuable work was done in the direction of land settlement for these purposes, but the net result was that in the majority of cases there had to be a substantial writing-down of the obligations assumed by the returned men. There was much heart-burning and unhappiness existing until the writing-down took place and, if that process is to be repeated, it will be a very great mistake, not only from the standpoint of the loss financially to the State itself, which may be borne with equanimity, but also because of the loss of morale and spirit on the part of the persons concerned in this settlement process, and its final result, in many cases, in the abandonment of the property.

So we should look around and see what was wrong with the scheme put into opera-

tion then. What shall we do in future to bring into operation schemes likely to be satisfactory? Can we improve the position? I think it can be improved, and inquiries should be made in that direction. Bound up with this, I submit, is paragraph (b) of my motion—

The reshaping of agricultural policy so as to offer prospects of success to those engaged in rural industry.

Nearly all this land settlement will be from a point of view of primary production. I suppose there has been substantial success in this direction, but there has not been the success to which those men who return from active service to civil life are entitled. They are entitled to the best that can be obtained for them, to everything their legislators and fellow citizens can reasonably do to assist them. I do not think that was achieved after the 1914-18 war. The intentions at the time were good, the efforts exerted were tremendous, but the results were not in all cases satisfactory, and we should make an effort to ensure that in future they will be more satisfactory.

The next item of the motion refers to the fostering of secondary industries so as to make the best possible use of the State's raw materials and provide employment. Secondary industries in Australia, I take it, will not be very easily maintained after the war. At the moment secondary industry is having rather a good time. There is a demand for its products, which can all be absorbed locally. Much secondary industry machinery has been diverted to war work. There is, therefore, ample employment. In fact, more men could be employed than are available for the purpose of carrying on our secondary industries. But after the war comes to an end there will be a cessation of a substantial portion of that business. There will be a loss of a substantial portion of the market, because there will not be the demand for products of secondary industries.

Other countries have turned from motorcars to aeroplanes. They, with their immense populations and their mass-production methods and huge local markets, will be able to turn from aeroplanes to motorcars, without, I should say, more than a reasonable amount of dislocation. But shall we be able to do that? I question it very much. Under our economic methods as they have existed up to the present, we have been in

no position to export any substantial portion of our secondary industrial products; and our home market, by virtue of the fact that our population is of a limited character, has been limited also. In the result, I believe, we shall find that a great many of these factories, small and large, will experience grave difficulty in carrying on unless we have some alternative proposals for them to exercise their ability and ingenuity upon after the cessation of hostilities. So I believe that from the point of view of Western Australia, we, realising our limitations, realising our raw material resources and knowing the best that can be made out of those raw material resources, can submit proposals which will be well worth discussion and in all probability well worth carrying into effect.

Then I have a reference to the desirability of appointing a Minister for Reconstruction. Members will realise that under the various headings raised in the motion there are a great number of departments of government whose interests will be concerned. They should, I think, be all brought under one head, so that there may be a sufficient amount of co-ordination to enable any proposals brought forward and considered as applicable to be given full effect to. I do not think there should be any doubt as to the advisability of having one Minister in charge of this matter and thus of bringing together the loose ends, as it were, after the war and putting them all into one control for the benefit of Western Australia and her people.

The Minister for Lands: That is a Federal matter now, is it not?

Mr. WATTS: I do not know whether it is or not, and I do not propose this motion in the belief that the Commonwealth Government will take complete control of repatriation.

The Minister for Lands: The Commonwealth Government will have control of the money, though.

Mr. WATTS: But it will not have control of the ideas to be submitted. If the Commonwealth Government, in fact, has control of the matter, then item (d) will be of considerably less importance. Otherwise it becomes relatively, I should say, one of the most important items of the motion. I submit the motion to the House with those observations in support, reserving to myself,

as I said at the beginning, the right to reply to any serious objections that may be raised to it.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan): In few words, but in all sincerity, I support the motion aiming to secure the appointment of a select committee to carry into effect the various points raised by the mover. The motion contains in various phases a wealth of sound commonsense which, if it is possible to achieve what is aimed at—and I do not see why it should not be possible—would offer opportunities for bringing about the new heaven and the new earth spoken of so frequently. One of the objects to which the motion might apply is insistence on utilisation of unoccupied lands along our railways. Years ago this was spoken of time after time. If there is one difficulty which Australia faces, and one difficulty which more than anything else has encouraged the effect of war to be taken against Australia, surely it is the fact that to a large extent we have not utilised the opportunities which we possess with our lands. Our unutilised lands have caused our population to remain static. I have often heard members of this Chamber urge that land which is unoccupied should be taxed into utilisation. Today, of course, it is useless to discuss the subject along those lines, because there is not the necessary manpower available; but once the war is over, the principle should be applied.

Another matter, and a very important one, contained within the scope of the motion is the training of youth, and also the training of unskilled manhood so that work of a skilled nature can be carried out here. We have a most undesirable, in fact a most disgraceful and shocking history as regards the treatment which our own youth has received. If Australia is to be the great country we believe it will be, that can only be brought about by giving to our youth the opportunity to earn a living. We do not want to go back to the old days when men received work as charity and worked intermittently. We want them to have the opportunity to work all the time, if as the result of the inquiry suggested by this motion it is practicable to end the possibility of sustenance workers—men taken out into the bush to do work more or less of a useless nature, and certainly calculated to undermine their manhood and their spirit of self-reliance. It is

possible we may revert to that old method, but I earnestly hope not. If we do, our efforts in winning the war will be futile, because victory would not be worth bothering about. The mover suggested that a Minister should be appointed to carry out this work. I have great respect for some Ministers, but Ministers are usually overworked. I would prefer the appointment of a committee of citizens of proved capacity who would be ready and willing to do what is required. A Minister's path is one beset with many difficulties. People feel that he ought to be a super-man—a genius.

I will not deny that on occasions we have had such Ministers, but it is too much to expect of a Minister that he should have the special capacity to deal with all the subjects to which the motion refers. I trust the mover will give consideration to that point. I shall certainly not attempt to amend the motion, as it is one for which I have great respect. If carried into effect it would mean a great deal to the future of Australia. Prices of primary products will need to be considered. At present, the prices of such products seem to be in the laps of the gods. One can be certain of this, however, that if we follow the principles that have been applied in the past, we will continue to have the same drift of men from our country districts. They will come into the closely-settled centres, where they have the protection of the Arbitration Court, will receive a minimum payment for their work and enjoy fixed hours. So far, country workers have never enjoyed fixed hours. I hope the motion will not meet with the fate so many motions have met. I know it will be carried, because no-one dare vote against it. If given effect to, every man, woman and child in Western Australia will reap the benefit. It will be a real contribution towards a new order.

Mr. Cross: Serve you right if we put you on the committee!

MR. SAMPSON: I would like to be appointed to it. I would certainly do my best to achieve the objects of the motion. We might then produce manhood of the same robust proportions as the member for Canning; we need such men in our country districts. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion, the results of which I am sure will be advantageous to all concerned.

On motion by Mr. North, debate adjourned.

MOTION—LICENSING ACT.*Liquor Trading Hours.*

Debate resumed from the 2nd September on the following motion by Mrs. Cardell-Oliver:—

That in the opinion of this House the Government should take immediate action to prohibit the sale of alcoholic drinks—spirits, beer and wine—on licensed premises between the hours of 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. and 4.30 p.m.

MR. THORN (Toodyay) [3.55]: I move an amendment—

That in line 3 after the word "alcoholic" the words "drinks—spirits, beer and wines—on licensed premises between the hours of 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. and 4.30 p.m." be struck out, and the words "(a) liquor on licensed premises within 25 miles of the General Post Office except during the hours between 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; (b) liquor in bottles or other containers being sold on or taken away from any licensed premises after 5 p.m., and further that the penalty for sly-grog selling shall be imprisonment without the option of a fine" inserted in lieu.

This matter is an extremely important one. We have instructions and advice upon it from our Prime Minister, and my Party feels that the motion should be considered in a commonsense manner. It proposes to take away another three hours' trading from the liquor trade. Already four hours trading has been taken away from it.

Mr. Cross: And the licensees were not given any compensation.

MR. THORN: Exactly! That is what I am leading up to. Their licenses were granted under conditions of trading from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. It was on that basis they paid for their leases. If the member for Subiaco thinks it is giving licensees a fair deal to take away an additional three hours of trading, I do not. After all, these people are entitled to the same fair consideration that Parliament extends to other sections of the trading community. My reasons for moving an alteration in the hours are these: It is not so important that hotels should be trading in the early hours of the morning.

The Minister for Mines: It depends on how much a man had the night before!

MR. THORN: I do not think we should consider that aspect. We should consider the moderate drinker, the person worthy of a drink, a working person entitled to refreshment.

The Minister for Works: Are you speaking of the man who needs a drink after the night before?

Mr. THORN: I am not concerned with him. A point I would like to bring under the notice of members is that daylight saving will be introduced on the 27th September. The effect of this will be that, under 6 o'clock closing, the hotels will in actual fact close at 5 o'clock. In summer-time, when people are knocking off and it is most desirable that they should have refreshment, the hotels will be closed in the light of day. We thought that if we could have the hours of trading extended to 7 p.m.—or longer, so far as I am concerned—we would be doing something to meet the requirements of the public. As a matter of fact, the actual closing time would still be 6 p.m. I hope this suggestion will be adopted. It is fair and reasonable, particularly when one reflects that, under daylight saving conditions, it will still be broad daylight at 8 o'clock in the evening in summer-time. There ought to be two sets of hours, one for winter and one for summer. What does the trade exist for? It exists to meet the requirements of the public in the matter of liquid refreshments which are more necessary in the summer than in the winter. Our first suggestion is that the hours be altered to extend from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

[*Mr. Withers took the Chair.*]

Mr. McLarty: All other businesses are open till 6 p.m.

MR. THORN: Exactly! Under present conditions, at 6 o'clock on a sweltering day in summer, the hotels will be closed.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: What about the austerity campaign?

MR. THORN: This sort of thing is not going to help the austerity campaign. That consideration does not influence me in the slightest degree. It is the sort of eye-wash that is submitted in connection with questions of this sort! The House has to view the question sanely, and accept the commonsense outlook. Why are we so worried about this matter? We have laws controlling the trade and, if they are applied, there is not very much to worry about. My opinion is that the black-out conditions put a very bad light on the liquor trade. I am quite sure that if our city were lit up as usual during the night, not a bit of notice would be taken of what is happening. Because everything is boarded up and lights are blacked-out, it is regarded as a shocking

(thing to see a soldier or a sailor standing in a doorway drinking out of a bottle. Present conditions make the situation look bad in the eyes of the public—worse, as a matter of fact, than it really is. London may be said to be the seat of this war, and in that city there are millions of soldiers; yet the hours of trading there are from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: I challenge that! It is not true!

Mr. THORN: The hours of trading are from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., and they are staggered between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: And so are the people!

Mr. THORN: So is the member for Subiaco, as a result of this latest information! The hours are staggered between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m.

Mr. J. Hegney: Is that the proper hour to be staggered?

Mr. THORN: The hotels are open on the Sabbath.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: That also is not true.

Mr. THORN: It is true.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: I will send a cable and find out.

Mr. THORN: So long as the hon. member pays for it, that will suit me. I was in London during the last war.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: I have been there ten times since.

Mr. THORN: I am talking about the war—

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: I am talking about conditions now.

Mr. Marshall: You have no right to be talking at all!

Mr. THORN: When I was in London during the last war, hotels were open before noon on Sundays, and also in the evening, and refreshments could be procured normally and legally.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: They are not open on Sundays now.

Mr. THORN: This is my argument. The hon. member will have the right to reply.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member need not take any notice of interjections.

Mr. THORN: The Old Country has had a wide experience of war conditions. It has made these provisions, although there are millions of troops in England.

Mr. Marshall: They are concentrated in a very small area.

Mr. THORN: Yes. If the Old Country finds these hours of trading suitable why must we keep on messing around with our hours, and continually cutting them down? I have pointed out that we have already reduced the hours of trading by four and now there is an attempt to take away another three hours. That will deprive the trade of seven out of 12 hours. It is not reasonable. I hope the House will not agree to it. I have done as much hard thinking on this subject as has the member for Subiaco, and I know the seriousness of over-indulgence. I know that a war can be lost in that way.

Mr. Marshall: You know the effects of it!

Mr. THORN: Yes. That does not prevent my exercising common-sense. I am still open to be convinced that I am wrong. Another point to which I wish to draw attention is that when workers in our offices and stores finish work they have to obtain their drinks in the city. They have not time to travel to their own suburbs and have a drink there. Quite a number of our publicans in the suburban districts have paid high in-goings and are suffering as a result of these restrictions.

Mr. Cross: Some are nearly "broke."

Mr. THORN: Exactly! They are suffering undue hardships. If we extend the hours of trading to 7 p.m., people will have time to get to their own suburbs, and will not have to remain in the city for a drink.

Mr. J. Hegney: The National Security Act will not allow us to extend the hours beyond 6 o'clock.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: Mr. Curtin has said that.

Mr. THORN: I understand that, but I am pointing out that daylight saving will soon be instituted and this matter could be submitted for further consideration. A request could be presented from this House that our hotels should be allowed to trade until 7 p.m. Even then we would not be increasing the hours. That is my idea in suggesting that the hours be from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: What about lounge lizards?

Mr. THORN: Is it not only reasonable that the city should be cleared of all those people who are quite willing to travel to their own suburbs for a drink? They can

get clear of the city and have their drink in their own suburb. That is my idea in again asking that the hours of trading be extended to 7 p.m.

The Minister for Mines: It makes for decentralisation.

Mr. THORN: I have also had brought under my notice the fact that the present trading conditions—as I have tried to illustrate—are unsatisfactory to the workers. We have in this State men working in foundries. They perform heavy, laborious work. I will bring to the notice of the House to-day one establishment which knocks off at quarter to five! It knocks off between 4.45 and 5 p.m., and the men go to the hotel to have their drink. We do not want that sort of thing to happen. Is it not better that we should make proper provision for these men? They cannot be denied their refreshment.

Mr. Marshall: Did you say between 4.45 and 5 p.m.?

Mr. THORN: Yes. From 4.45 to 5 o'clock. They are working all shifts on war work and that is the arrangement made so that they can get their drink, and they are entitled to it. That is my point, and we must be sensible over this question. We must look to next summer.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: Oh, the Nazis will have us by then.

Mr. THORN: No, I do not think they ever will; certainly not if we get our way. All through next summer we will have sweltering weather and these people will be denied their drink. I again appeal to this Chamber to adopt this amendment for the reasons I have expressed. Let us introduce some commonsense into this question and not be stampeded by one section of the people. I am just as good a liver as anybody, but the temperance people and the prohibitionists are not going to stampede me into taking extreme action. I am prepared at any time to consider their views and give them every possible consideration, but I am going to consider the other side of the question just as earnestly, and also the people employed in this trade, just as I am prepared to consider any other section of the community. If the thing is wrong why do not we pass a law to prohibit the whole business and completely wipe it out? As long as these people are engaged legally under the laws of this country they are en-

titled to consideration just as is any other section of the community.

On motion by the Minister for Works, debate adjourned.

MOTION—BETTING.

As to Closing S.P. Premises.

Debate resumed from the 2nd September, on the following motion by Mrs. Cardell-Oliver:—

That in the opinion of this House the Government should take immediate action to close all starting-price betting shops and other dwellings, shops, or places where starting-price betting is conducted.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [4.15]: This, like the previous subject, has been very fully discussed in this Chamber from time to time. The previous movers of similar motions have always advanced substantial arguments in support of their contentions. I have never known a motion so important or the subject of such great controversy to be less supported by argument than was this one when it was moved. As a matter of fact, if "Hansard" is referred to, it will be seen that scarcely any reference was made to evidence in support of it. A general statement was simply made that it had been discussed previously in the Chamber and everyone knew what it was, and the motion was lodged in that form. Not a scintilla of argument was advanced. Evidently the mover has become bankrupt of ideas or arguments.

I have come to the conclusion that some people will never profit by their own experience and never learn from observation, nor will they profit from the experience of others. They have a static form of mentality which is immovable and immobile. We have such individuals, I regret to say, as members of Parliament.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: Keep it up!

Mr. MARSHALL: They seem to suffer—

Mr. Hughes: We are suffering!

Mr. MARSHALL: —from the idea that they are right, and no matter what argument is advanced in contradistinction of the opinions they hold, they remain stationary. My opinion on this subject is pretty well known to members. There was a time when I went to a lot of trouble to elicit all the information I could in regard to it. I tra-

velled to the Eastern States and collated all the evidence I found there and made observations upon the subject, and as one who has never made a bet in his life—about the only virtue I possess, if it can be said to be a virtue—

The Minister for Mines: You should not parade it.

Mr. MARSHALL: The vice squad is about; I had better advertise myself. I do not know what accounts for it.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You are too mean.

Mr. MARSHALL: I have never had any inclination to wager on horse-racing.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: What about a bet now?

Mr. MARSHALL: Or on any other form of gambling.

Mr. McDonald: Political life is a gamble.

Mr. MARSHALL: So is life in itself. The hon. member stumbled on to this planet due to no act of his own, and has stumbled along from year to year, and good fortune has smiled on him, again due to no act of his own but merely because he had good guidance and was benevolently cared for by a good mother, and evidently steered safely from vice and he has become quite a paragon in his old age. He could have been tempted like many of us and fallen, but he has not. I do not think the hon. member bets either.

Mr. McDonald: No.

Mr. MARSHALL: He is a model of up-righteous manhood. I have nothing but admiration for him.

Mr. Fox: You are making him blush.

Mr. MARSHALL: If I could embarrass any member on the cross-benches, I would do so. I do not suggest that betting is an evil except where there is over-indulgence to the extent that the individual can ill afford. Indulged in in moderation, I see no evil in it. The evil consists in over-indulgence, spending beyond one's capacity. But this statement applies to all forms of so-called evil. There can be no ill, vice or wrong in alcoholic liquor if it is taken in moderation. Only when there is over-indulgence does it become an evil. Because a very small percentage of people over-indulges in betting, should we, in order to protect three, four or five per cent. of the population—

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: May I make an explanation?

Mr. SPEAKER: Not an explanation, but the hon. member may rise to a point of order.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: On a point of order, the hon. member's argument does not appear to have anything to do with the motion, which states that in the opinion of the House the Government should take immediate action to close all starting-price betting shops and premises where starting-price betting is conducted, because those places are illegal. The hon. member is trying to make out that it is legal to indulge in starting-price betting. The motion says it is illegal, and that is all I wish to demonstrate.

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for Murchison is quite in order in putting up his side of the case.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: That it is legal?

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for Murchison may proceed.

Mr. MARSHALL: I refuse to be stampeded. Evidence regarding betting shows clearly that about 80 per cent. of the people of Western Australia make wagers on racehorses.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The great majority of them are workers.

Mr. MARSHALL: That may be so.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It must be so.

Mr. MARSHALL: If to wager on horse-racing is an evil, those who provide the horses to create the evil are guilty of greater wrong-doing. Those are the men we ought to get at—the men who provide the wherewithal to keep the evil in existence. I do not think the hon. member who interjected is free from that accusation.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Of breeding racehorses?

Mr. Withers: There cannot be horse-racing without betting.

Mr. MARSHALL: Of course not! Wherever there is horse-racing there is betting.

Mr. Withers: Has it been so from the inception?

Mr. MARSHALL: It has been so as far back as the time of the hon. member's great-grandfather.

Mr. Withers: In those days it was the sport of Kings.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yet we are asked to insist on enforcing the law and penalising a majority of the people because a small minority over-indulges.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: "Enforcing the law" is the term.

Mr. MARSHALL: I think the hon. member moved the motion because of what she read in "The West Australian" a few days before. When she moved it, she seemed quite unprepared, and no argument was advanced in support of it. The motion implies that the hon. member has no objection to betting. All she objects to are the places where the betting is carried on. Presumably one might go to a racecourse and indulge in this evil to any extent.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: As long as Parliament allows it.

Mr. MARSHALL: The hon. member takes no exception to that. She does not object to any one entering Tattersall's Club and betting as much as he likes.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: How can you say I do not object?

Mr. MARSHALL: Racecourses are not mentioned in the motion; only S.P. premises are mentioned. In other premises used for betting, bookmakers lay the odds. Those premises, presumably, are to be allowed to remain open. The motion alludes to S.P. betting premises only; premises in which the odds are laid, that may be carried on.

Mr. McLarty: That is not the intention.

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not know what the intention is, but I can understand the substance of the motion.

Mr. Fox: It is of no use telling a court what the intention might be.

Mr. MARSHALL: The member for Subiaco seems to have a lot of sympathy for the worker, and it is remarkable that the worker has not so much sympathy for himself because, if he had, there would be no S.P. shop in existence.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Lead me not into temptation!

Mr. MARSHALL: The strong, courageous man on my right has never fallen and so can tell others how to avoid falling. In recent years it has become an obsession with some people to endeavour to plan the lives of others.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: And partly to degrade them.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is a plan for the other fellow, not for one's self.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: Especially in the matter of social credit.

Mr. MARSHALL: If the people did not demand the presence of S.P. shops, they

would not be in existence. Those who conduct betting shops do not force their business on clients. The premises would not exist if there was not a demand for them. It is the demand that has resulted in their presence. That fact indicates to me that the majority of our people do not agree with this motion. If the figures I have secured from other States conveyed to me that less than 50 per cent. of the people of those States indulged in this form of betting, I would feel inclined to suggest that the majority should have their way. But the majority do indulge in betting. The majority create the bookmakers and the S.P. shops. If a law encounters the disregard or disapproval of the majority of the people, it should go out, as happened in olden times. What I believe to be needed is suggested in evidence given before the South Australian Royal Commission by the Anglican Bishop of South Australia, "You can shut up the betting shops, but by that you do not stop betting." The effect of closing the shops is to drive their frequenters into billiard saloons and hotels and various unseemly environments, where they bet just the same. More evil is created once betting is removed from public observation, than exists when the public can see what is going on. The report of the South Australian Royal Commission was a revelation, although the anti-betting laws were stringent enough.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: Yet South Australia is the one State that has done away with S.P. betting now.

Mr. MARSHALL: Prior to the Royal Commission's recommendations being submitted, every effort had been made by the South Australian Parliament and police to stamp out S.P. betting. But the stricter the law, the more unseemly the features associated with such betting, which was driven underground. In fact, frightfully unseemly features existed in connection with shop betting at that time in South Australia. For instance, it was known to the police that just on 600 pimps were employed against them by the bookmakers. When I asked Commissioner Leane how many pimps he engaged to catch the shop bookmakers, he replied, "That is not for public information." There must have been regiments of men pimping on either side. Finally the South Australian Commissioner of Police selected 25 of the best and most reliable men in the force

and told them that he wanted them to take charge and do their very best, seize every opportunity, stopping at nothing, to stamp out this betting. In 12 months the Commissioner discovered that he had to pick out another 25 men to watch the 25 he had first picked out. There is the South Australian picture! I agree with the Anglican Bishop of South Australia in his statement, "You can close up the shops if you like, and do anything else you like, but you will never eradicate the betting evil until you create the correct moral mind." That is right. As I have argued in this Chamber, our school curriculum should be altered, certain periods of each day being set aside to educate the young regarding the evils of both drinking and gambling. The young should not be left unaware of the traps that await them. But to say that by law we can make people good—all the evidence being to the contrary—is to advocate something that is hopeless, something that positively cannot be done.

One hears much about the police here being corrupt. The South Australian Commissioner declared that his police were corrupt until the betting shops were legalised. He told me that if that legalisation was ever repealed, he would resign his position as he never could go through the same thing again, a state of affairs when a member of the police force could not walk down the street in a new suit without being accused of having obtained the price of his clothes from the bookmakers. You, Mr. Speaker, are familiar with the goldfields of this State and with many other portions of it; and I believe you will agree that though betting shops can be closed up, that will never stop betting. Other means must be adopted. I do take strong exception, however, to the preferential treatment accorded to race-courses owned by John Wren, and P. A. Connolly. All common gaming-houses should be included in anti-betting laws. If action is to be taken against S.P. betting shops, as they are termed in this motion, let us take action generally. I move an amendment—

That the following words be added:—"including Tattersall's Club, and all race-courses, proprietary and otherwise."

If that amendment is carried, the motion will accord preference to no-one; no-one will be specially catered for, but our law will apply in the same way as the South

Australian law did apply. I repeat, I entertain the strongest objection to any person, no matter who, having the right to control a gambling house in, say, this street and another person being prevented from doing so in the next street. As the result of personal observation and personal experiences gathered by me, I think it would be better to do with this so-called betting-shop industry, if it can be so termed, as we have done with the liquor industry—take control of it and wipe out the evils associated with it when uncontrolled, clean it up rather than drive it underground and introduce worse evils into it.

Amendment put and passed.

On motion by the Minister for the North-West, debate adjourned.

BILL—CRIMINAL CODE ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

MR. HUGHES (East Perth) [4.40] in moving the second reading said: This harmless little Bill has been the subject of pre-introduction discussion. Its purpose is to remove from the Criminal Code the section making it an offence to indulge in gaming. We in this State have drifted into a bad position so far as gaming is concerned. The administration of the law relating to gaming is surrounded with cant, hypocrisy and corruption. Notwithstanding that we have the most stringent laws against people conducting gaming-houses, we find that those laws are not enforced, except periodically.

I submit that if there is anything worse than bad laws, it is good laws administered unfairly and with discrimination. If we are to have respect for the law, then the law should apply equally to every citizen. Parliament should not, therefore, be a party to the enforcement of the law against one person while allowing another person to carry on a business which is contrary to the law. The member for Murchison said this afternoon he had been informed by the Commissioner of Police in South Australia that the Commissioner had picked out 25 of his most honest men.

The Minister for Mines: He said the best men.

MR. HUGHES: I might have misunderstood the member for Murchison, but I think I interpreted him correctly. By the best men, he meant the men possessed of the highest standard of integrity.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Beyond bias!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HUGHES: The Commissioner put them into the betting squad, and in 12 months he had to get another 25 men to watch the 25 best men. How the 25 second-best dealt with the 25 first best, I do not know.

Mr. Withers: Fifty-fifty, perhaps!

Mr. HUGHES: Perhaps! We have that position existing in this State in an exceedingly marked degree. Frequently we hear that the administration of our betting and liquor laws has hopelessly corrupted the police force. It has gone further—it has corrupted Cabinet Ministers.

The sections of the Code to which I shall refer are Section 209, dealing with gaming-houses; Section 211, dealing with betting-houses; Section 212, dealing with lotteries; and Section 213, dealing with the four preceding sections. Section 210 provides that any person who keeps a common gaming house is guilty of a misdemeanour and is liable to imprisonment with hard labour for three years. Nobody is ever prosecuted under that section; it is as dead as the dodo. This is the position as I view it: Numbers of houses throughout the State are kept for that purpose. Some are owned by most reputable and respectable citizens; when I say "owned" I mean that these citizens own the freehold. They obtain for these houses rents four or five times their economic value; nor do they turn a hair when they accept the rent. Those people are, of course, too respectable to run the places themselves. They would not undertake such an undignified calling, so they let the premises to someone else, who, in turn, is too honest to engage in the trade and consequently lets the premises to people who will.

A Royal Commission, consisting of members of this House, inquired into this matter, among many others. The people who owned and conducted such premises put it over the members of the Commission wholesale. The five members of this House who were members of the Commission—including two lawyers, one a King's Counsel—tried to ascertain what rents were charged for the premises. The proprietors came along with their rent books disclosing that they were paying 30s. per week as the economic rent of the premises. Thus they were able to show the members of the Royal Commission that the idea which they had had put into

their heads—that some people were drawing high rents from these premises—was all wrong. I had this experience about 18 months later: One of the witnesses who swore before the Commission that she collected 30s. per week from the proprietor of a certain house by way of rent told me, under cross-examination in the Police Court, that the rent was £4 a week, and she produced documentary evidence proving that she had committed perjury before the Royal Commission. There was a written agreement to pay £4 a week rent. I am glad to say the rent owing was not recovered, as we pleaded an illegal contract.

Nobody conducting those houses need pay rent for them, because the law will not permit the enforcement of an illegal contract. As soon as we were able to prove the owner was aware that the premises were used for an illegal purpose, of course she could not recover the rent. Therefore, all the women in that locality knew they need not pay rent for their premises. But they had to cope with another phase. They got the tip that if they did not pay the rent, the police would put them out into the street. They knew that if the court would not force them to pay the rent, the police would make them pay it, because a police officer actually advised one to do so. He said that it did not matter about the arrears, as they had gone by the board. He added, "Be a sensible girl and pay your £4 a week from now on."

Mr. Shearn: Who advised that?

Mr. HUGHES: A police officer. I have a good deal of sympathy with those unfortunate women, because they are in this position: They are carrying on an illegal business, and at any time a police officer can go along and charge them with committing an offence, and they have no defence. I have myself seen that happen. It is a mean thing for the police to do and I have told them so in court. Suppose one of those bucks, about whom we have heard earlier in the afternoon, goes to one of these places and flashes about a roll of notes, and then goes away and gets drunk! In the morning he wakes up somewhere, minus his notes. He says to the police, "I was at a certain house during last night." So the police go there and say to the girl, "You were with so-and-so last night, and you got his roll." She replies that she did not, so the police say, "We are going to arrest you and charge

you with being an idle and disorderly person, and hold you." The police arrest the girl on what they call a holding charge. They could have gone there the day before or at any time and arrested the girl on such a charge. In this instance they hold the girl because some drunk asserts she has taken his bank-roll, some drunk who deserved to have it taken from him for being such a mug as to go to such a place flashing notes about!

The woman is held and, if after investigation the police find they cannot sustain the charge, they say, "Very well. We will go on with the idle and disorderly charge." And that justifies the arrest. They proceed with the charge and she is fined £10 or sent to prison for a couple of months. I would not have any quarrel with the police if they said tomorrow to each woman there, "No more cover and protection! You are breaking the law, and if we catch you we are going to charge you. You can stop or take the risk." But they know the girls are there, go down periodically to see them, and yet when something like this happens they use the vagrancy section and arrest one of the women. I do not know whether I am taking an extreme view, but to me it seems to be a very mean thing to do. If one of these girls is charged with having stolen someone's money and the case can be proved, well and good. Let the police arrest her and charge her with stealing. But I do not think the police should have this dragnet charge up their sleeves. They should not be able to say, "If we cannot get her for stealing, we will get her on the vagrancy charge."

These people very seldom own the places, and I have never seen anybody charged under this section. Section 213 states—

Any person who appears, acts or behaves as master or mistress, or as the person having the care or management of any such house, room, set of rooms, or place as is mentioned in the four last preceding sections, is to be taken to be the keeper thereof, whether he is or is not the real keeper.

The very section itself postulates that the real person shall not be prosecuted. It is very unfair if we are going to stand by and allow people to draw £4 a week from these premises, which are only worth 25s. or 30s. a week. It is just as wrong morally to let a house, knowing that it is let for such purposes, as to keep one for such purposes.

People say, "It is good money. It is legal tender. If it is paid to us it is not for us to question where it comes from." I believe that some of the churches are not averse to taking donations of money from tainted sources. We should, however, say whether we are going to allow these things to go on; and whatever we decide should be applied uniformly to everybody. We should not allow dozens of people to run these places and periodically have one brought up and prosecuted. That is the feature to which I object. Whether we should allow this practice is a very big question, and one on which there is scope for wide differences of opinion. The fact remains that it is allowed. At present this Parliament does allow this section to be violated, but on periodical occasions there are prosecutions.

Section 210 deals with gaming houses. We know that Tattersall's Club is a gaming-house, the same as is the S.P. shop. There is no question about that. Tattersall's Club has no privileges under the law. The Western Australian Turf Club conducts a common gaming-house. The gentlemen who have been referred to as running the proprietary racecourses also conduct common gaming-houses. The only right that the Turf Club and the race club has is to run a totalisator, and that is specially provided for in one of the sections. The Western Australian Turf Club has the right to run an instrument known as the totalisator, and that is all it can do without breaking the law. The W.A. Trotting Association—not under this Act, but I think under another—has the same right. There is nothing to stop a police officer from going on to the race-course and arresting everybody there, charging the proprietors with keeping a common gaming-house, the bookmakers with assisting to keep a common gaming-house, and the public with being found in a common gaming-house. But I think there have been only two prosecutions in this State, and the magistracy practically refused to enforce the law. A private citizen launched a prosecution against a person for running a common gaming-house in those circumstances, and the same magistrate who fined offenders day after day £75, on these occasions fined the guilty party £1, thus practically refusing to enforce the law.

Mr. McDonald: It was a test case.

Mr. HUGHES: What was there to test? In 1911 the case had been tested, and the

proprietor was fined 2s. on the first offence. He was brought up again in a fortnight's time and fined 1s. for the second offence. He was not prosecuted again because the magistrate refused to enforce the law. I cannot understand a magistrate one day fining a man £75 for a breach of this law, and the next day fining another man £1 for the same breach. In other words the magistrate said, "So far as that section of the community is concerned, I will not enforce the law, and it is no use your prosecuting because I will impose only a nominal fine of £1." Have members ever heard of the police going out and arresting people on a race-course, and prosecuting them? The reverse is the position! The Police Department provides the proprietors of racecourses with police officers so that their law-breaking will be conducted in an orderly manner. When we go to the races on busy days—Cup days when the crowds are big—we find the police directing the traffic for the law-breaker and also inside the course in case anyone becomes disorderly.

The position in this State is that in the case of some law-breakers the police co-operate with them and assist them to conduct their business in an orderly way, but in other cases they enter their premises and prosecute. I agree that the question of whether we should bet is a very big one, but I am not concerned with it in this Bill. What I suggest is that, whatever we decide, every citizen should be on the same basis. I agree with the member for Murchison on the question of gaming and gambling. Wherever we turn we find that we are indulging in gambling. The greatest scandal of all, I think, is life insurance. The insurance companies get numbers of people and make a wager with each person in this manner: "We will bet you so much that you will not live to be 70 years of age. If you die before attaining 70 years, we will pay you so much; if you live to be 70 we will pay you so much." There will be a day when every insurance company in the world will default.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: And every Government!

Mr. HUGHES: I am not dealing with Governments. They do not gamble with the people. There is no gambling in the Taxation Department.

Mr. Withers: You have not an even money chance!

Mr. HUGHES: No. The insurance companies work on this basis: They contract to insure the lives of people and work on the law of averages. That is exactly what the bookmaker does if he is a good bookmaker. I do not know on what laws the punter works. More often than not he puts a pin in a card.

Mr. Fox: He uses a fork sometimes.

Mr. HUGHES: Yes, and with some experience I say it is just as good as listening to first-class information. I sometimes wonder how directors of insurance companies ever sleep, because they have taken the people's money, not in hundreds of pounds, but in millions, and they know when they insure people that if on any day every one of their insureds died they would not be able to pay. They know that if 50 per cent. died on one day they would not be able to pay.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: Nor would the banks!

Mr. HUGHES: That only goes to show that the banks are doing a bit of gambling as well as the insurance companies. I am not going to be drawn away from the aspect of the insurance companies until I have given the House a few figures, with your permission, Mr. Speaker. I am about to quote from the 1940 Official Year Book of the Commonwealth of Australia. It is No. 33 and is nearly two years old, but is suitable for the purposes of my argument as the basic principles are not altered. At page 833 a table sets out the ordinary life insurance from 1935 to 1939. At the end of the year 1939 the ordinary life insurance in force in Australia amounted to 1,243,287 policies and the amount insured was £427,290,892—in round figures £427,000,000. In the field of industrial life insurance the figures for the same year were 2,491,742 policies in force and the total amount covered £111,861,680. Adding these two together the total amount insured under the two heads, in round figures, was £538,000,000. Shortly, the position was that the insurance companies had contracted to pay collectively to these insureds £538,000,000. Of course if each one of the persons assured had died at the same time, and if the events upon which the industrial insurance became payable had happened, the insurance companies would have been obliged to pay that amount. But they did not have £538,000,000; neither did they have assets worth that sum.

On page 836 of the same volume we find that the assets of the ordinary and life insurance companies combined amounted to £231,000,000. So that although they had legally contracted to pay £538,000,000 they only had £231,000,000 with which to pay it. The best then that could be hoped for would be that they would pay 10s. in the £. But of course we know that they could not possibly pay 10s. in the £ in such a crisis because of their £231,000,000 worth of assets £115,000,000 is represented by Government and municipal securities. If these companies were called upon to find, say, £50,000,000 they would immediately have to try to sell those securities, and the very fact of their going to the market to sell would immediately depreciate the values of them. They have £59,000,000 on mortgage of real estate and that would have to be turned into money. This could not be done readily, because the mortgagors could not pay up and would not be legally entitled to pay on the spur of the moment. It is safe to say that if 20 per cent. of the insured persons died on the same day, the insurance companies would default, because they would be unable to find the money with which to meet their commitments. Surely that is gambling, not only for money, but also with the happiness and lives of people.

Mr. Marshall: Gambling with other people's money.

Mr. HUGHES: That is the best sort of gamble. It is gambling of a very risky type. The insurance companies reason, "On the law of averages we are getting so much from current premiums and paying out so much in claims each year, so we can continue until the day of judgment." On judgment day every insurance company in the world will be in default. I suppose they rely on the fact that the policy-holders on that day will not be clamouring for their money.

Thus I could proceed through industry and other avenues to show that gambling and the taking of chances play a very important part in the lives of all of us. The development of gambling on horse-racing has been frowned upon by the Legislatures, not only in this State, but also elsewhere. We have provided that any person who gathers a number of people in premises for the purpose of gambling on horse-racing, cards or other games shall be guilty of an offence.

Mr. J. Hegney: Fan-tan and two-up!

Mr. HUGHES: Yes, and there is a very harmless game played by Chinamen, the name of which I cannot recall. These Chinamen are in a strange country. They cannot speak our language. If they go to pictures, all they can do is to look at the stars; they cannot understand what is being said. Their means of recreation are very limited. Strangely enough, although we despise them—wrongfully in my opinion—they are a hard-working section of the community. I doubt whether there are any rogues and vagabonds amongst them; they work at least as hard as members of this Chamber. They work in a very useful industry. Most of them are engaged in market-gardening. They rise at 4 a.m., and cart their produce to the markets so that we may have fresh vegetables. Though they engage in a harmless game of gambling, they do not want whites there, but a few undesirable whites force their presence on them. Periodically, down swoop detectives and police officers and arrest 20 or 30 of these Chinamen and bring them before the police court, where they are fined £2 or £3 as the case may be. On the same day the police call at a betting-shop, but they do not bring in all the people they find there; they bring in only one or two men. Why this discrimination? Why do they go to the Chinamen and say, "Thirty of you are playing some game that is against the law, and we are going to prosecute all of you."

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is done for revenue purposes.

Mr. HUGHES: I do not think that is so.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The Government gets the proceeds of all the fines.

Mr. HUGHES: If revenue was the main consideration, why should not they arrest the 30 or 40 people found in an S.P. betting shop? In the Chinese gambling den, the police arrest the keeper and all the other people found there. In the S.P. betting shop, they arrest someone who is believed to be the keeper, but nobody else is prosecuted for being in a common gaming-house. Therefore I do not think it is a question of revenue. I believe there is another reason why our own people are not prosecuted as are the Chinamen, and the reason is that our own people have votes and the Chinamen have not. Further, the Chinamen have not the influence that the S.P. betting association has—an association that could distribute £2,000 at the last elections.

I endeavoured to get an inquiry made into the whole of the ramifications of horse-racing, including what happened to the £2,000 collected by the S.P. bookmakers. It would be interesting to know where that money went, because subscribers said it had gone to assist candidates at the elections.

Mr. DONEY: Have you no suspicion at all where it went?

Mr. HUGHES: I would like to know whether subscribers were telling the truth. The statement I am making is so serious that I will give the source of my information. I had the chief of the S.P. industry for an opponent. I do not believe the S.P. men contributed any money to his campaign. They assure me that they did not; that the thousand he spent was his own money. I accept that statement; he had a conventional right to spend it. Some time after the elections, two or three men who were running S.P. shops in a small way in the suburbs, complained to me that pressure was being placed on them by the police by repeated prosecutions to close up the small men in the suburbs and make a monopoly for five or six large operators in the city. I put the matter to them in this way, "Why do you come to me? It is of no use coming to me unless you are prepared to give me authority, if I get a Parliamentary inquiry, to call you as witnesses to testify that you contributed to this fund regularly over a period, and were told it was for political purposes and, when the fund was closed, the trustees refused to divulge the identity of the persons to whom the money was paid." On that understanding—these men saying, "Very well, we are quite agreeable to that"—I came to this House and moved for an inquiry which would have embraced investigation into that fund. However, the House decided otherwise. I believe that £2,000 was collected and distributed in the interests of candidates. I have no complaint on that score.

Mr. DONEY: You have not?

Mr. HUGHES: No. I consider it to be perfectly within the rights of every group of citizens in this country to say, "Certain political aspirants wish to establish here a system of government that we think will be good for the country." If they believe that, they are at liberty to spend their money in order to secure the return of candidates holding their views. It may be objected, "But these people are not trying to get the

law amended for the good of the country but for their own selfish interests." That can probably be said of many organisations and many people. They wish to have in this Chamber men who share their point of view, a point of view which is to their personal interest. I think that is true. Nevertheless they have a perfect right to act as described. Therefore I see nothing wrong with S.P. bookmakers coming out openly to do these things. It would be much better if they did them openly. The secrecy is the trouble. They should have acted openly and stated publicly, "We back Bill Smith with £500." There should have been no secret fund. I am reminded of a salutary legal maxim, "Secrecy is the badge of fraud." Moreover, those men had an obligation to inform the subscribers to the fund amongst whom the money was distributed. The small man's complaint to me was that two or three high bosses in the industry would not divulge how the fund was distributed. Parliament in its wisdom decided that that information would not be divulged to five members of this Chamber. Thus, unfortunately, we lost the opportunity to ascertain what took place in that regard.

Having, as I said before, discussed the S.P. industry and the betting industry generally from many aspects, we know the system that operates. A man is supposed to be raided periodically. In fact, a sort of convention has grown up that a man is not to be raided more than once in ten weeks. Now, what right has any junior police officer to say, "Although Parliament has made a certain thing illegal, I am going to say it is to be contrary to the law only during one week in ten"? Of course no senior police officer has the right to say that, and I do not believe that any senior police officer has said it. The one-in-ten business has, I think, been established by the Government; for if it were not so, the Minister for Police would have had the Commissioner of Police suspended long ago. He would have said to the Commissioner, "What is this about your over-riding the law, your declaring that S.P. bookmakers can bet for nine weeks without being prosecuted, and that only in the tenth week will they be prosecuted? It is your duty to carry out the law, and if you do not do that I will suspend you." So we are right in saying that this state of the law has nothing to do with junior or senior police officers, and that it is part of Government policy.

The Minister for Mines: I say that is a deliberate lie.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HUGHES: For the sake of the dignity and prestige of this House, I ought to ask that that remark be withdrawn.

The Minister for Mines: You will withdraw the other remark before I withdraw mine.

Mr. HUGHES: When a Minister of the Crown so demeans himself twice in one day as the Minister has done today, is it worth while to ask for a withdrawal by him?

The Minister for Mines: I say you are a liar, and a deliberate liar!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HUGHES: I repeat that the Minister knows. He voted against the inquiry for which I moved. Will the Minister controvert the truth by getting down to the gutter and making himself so undignified, while holding what ought to be an honourable position, as to shout, "You are a liar"? Is that an answer?

The Minister for Mines: That is right.

Mr. HUGHES: I leave it to members of this Chamber. I shall not ask the Minister to withdraw, for I know in his calmer moments he will regret that he did not use some other words. But I will tell him this: If he wants to call me a liar just let him be careful where he does it. I say publicly what I say in this Chamber. I have always done that. We see to what an extent this corruption has gripped the public life of Western Australia when a Minister of the Crown, who knows that what I describe is going on, in spite of his own knowledge tries to bluff it out by shouting, "You are a liar!" I repeat, it shows what grip this corruption has got on the public life of Western Australia, leading to endeavours to stifle the truth by insolence and bludgeoning! It is useless for any member to say that the Government is not aware that what I state is truth. Day in, day out do not the newspapers report how ten men or so were prosecuted and fined, say, £75? And then a Minister says he does not know this is going on. He underrates our intelligence if he expects us to believe that.

The Government must accept responsibility for the administration of the law. The administration of the law is one of the prime functions of Governments. If the laws of the country are not being administered, Ministers cannot say, "It is not our fault,"

for that is the Government's particular job. The position in this State is very bad, and if the Government is not at fault and not responsible, what has it done to those officers who are responsible? I am not prepared to pass the buck from the responsible authority on to a subordinate civil servant. The position has become so bad that we witness, day in, day out, a most disgusting and degrading farce. We know that only a certain number of premises will be raided each Saturday. How the number is determined I cannot say. We know also that a certain starting-price book-maker is aware on Saturday morning who is to be raided on Saturday afternoon. We also know that when the police raid these premises, arrangements are made for someone to be there who will say that he is the keeper of the premises, although he is not the keeper at all. He has been engaged for the afternoon as a dummy for the actual keeper and receives the princely remuneration of 10s. if he is not arrested, and £2 if he is arrested.

We know that when the police officer enters the premises, that gentleman comes forward and says, "I am the keeper of the place." The police officer knows he is not; he knows the man has committed no crime whatever, yet he goes through the farce of arresting the man, taking him to the station and charging him with a breach of the law. What is the effect on the morale of young policemen who go through that procedure, day in, day out? They know very well they are acting in a conspiracy to thwart the ends of justice by arresting a man and charging him with an offence when they honestly believe he has committed no offence. Anyone attending the Perth Police Court on a Monday morning will occasionally see a young man of 22 or 23 years, frequently dressed shabbily, obviously not a man of substance at all, presented to the court and pleading guilty to an offence for which he is fined £75. The saddest part of it all is that the magistrates know they are inflicting a fine upon a man not guilty of the offence with which he is charged.

What I think the magistrates should do is to protect the integrity of their court. They should take a stand against this state of affairs and say, "I am not going to fine a man for an offence which I believe and know he has not committed; I am not going to allow this court to be used for an

ulterior purpose." By so doing the magistrates would, in my opinion, be acting well within their legal rights, because the first duty of a court is to protect its integrity. No, they enter into the conspiracy also and fine the man £75. The fine is paid by the actual keeper of the premises, and the man is out of a job. There is no £2 for him next Saturday, because the keeper must get a person with a clean sheet for the following Saturday. Surely, that is a deplorable state of affairs! It has nothing to do with whether one believes in the right to gamble as an abstract proposition. What other law-breaker is allowed to come along and say, "Somebody else will be my dummy and he will be fined for the offence I have committed"? If the matter stopped there it would be deplorable enough and would warrant action by this Parliament to bring it to an end. But it does not stop there. The same laws are in force in Fremantle, but a man charged there with keeping a common gaming-house is fined only £5. Why £5 in Fremantle and £75 in Perth?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: And £20 in Midland Junction?

Mr. Tonkin: But the result is the same.

Mr. J. Hegney: Under the same law?

Mr. HUGHES: The men are charged under the same section. Perhaps I had better make that clear.

Mr. J. Hegney: There are different justices.

Mr. HUGHES: Yes. Some of the justices at Fremantle say, "It is just us!" There are two offences. Either the men are charged under the Criminal Code with keeping a common gaming house—and the penalty is very severe—or they are charged under the Police Act with obstructing the traffic, in which case the penalty is not so severe. I would like to know the principle followed by the police in deciding whether a man shall be charged with keeping a common gaming-house or charged with obstructing the traffic. There is a marked distinction in the city itself. Some starting-price bookmakers have their agents charged with obstructing the traffic, in which case the maximum fine is £20. Other men are raided in their shops. That seems to me a most improper working arrangement. One starting-price bookmaker carrying on business in a big way in a shop has a man ready outside when the police come, and that

man is charged with obstructing the traffic. He is fined £10, or £20 at the most. The other man is arrested in the shop and is fined £75. The whole thing has become a cancer in the public life of the State. On one occasion the magistrate at Fremantle said he would send the next person appearing before him on such a charge to gaol.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That was published.

Mr. HUGHES: Yes. Therefore, the next day two justices appeared on the bench. Two justices of the peace can over-rule a magistrate. When the next case was heard, the two justices over-ruled the magistrate. How curious it is that the same two justices always hear betting cases in Fremantle! Why is it that other justices do not sit occasionally? Every justice in Fremantle has the right to sit. However, two specialists have appeared. They have, by prescription, almost become members of the judiciary. When a person comes up before them, they fine him £5 or £10.

The Minister for Labour: I think one of those justices died.

Mr. HUGHES: I do not think so.

The Minister for Labour: One did die.

Mr. HUGHES: But not within the last three months. One of those justices was horrified when I told him that it was thought in Perth, amongst the starting-price betting fraternity, that the justices got a substantial part of the fine which they did not inflict—not a substantial part but some of the fines they do not inflict—and he assured me that was not so. Of course I accepted his assurance that it is just idle gossip, probably emanating from people in Perth who do not like to be fined £75 when their fellow-law-breakers are fined £1 at the Port. But I think the position is open to a very wrong inference from the general public and I say advisedly that the general public are drawing a wrong inference. They suggest openly in Perth, "It is all right in Fremantle. They have them tied up down there." Surely when the farce goes on, not for a day or a week but for months on end, it is the duty of the Government to step in and do something about it. Surely it is the Government's duty to say, "We are not going to continue this farce. We are not going to have such a discrimination between law-breakers. Whatever the law is, it is going to be administered with reasonable fairness and equity amongst the people."

Mr. J. Hegney: Is the action taken in Fremantle any less effective than action taken in Perth?

Mr. HUGHES: I think the hon. member means, "Has it tended to diminish the evil any more?" I do not think it has. The action taken in Fremantle simply means that the people who are carrying on down there are getting much more for themselves than are the people in Perth.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Would it continue if the magistrate's decision to imprison them had been given effect to?

Mr. HUGHES: Somebody in the trade told me that the Government could stop S.P. betting in three weeks, that as soon as there is any danger of a man's being sent to prison he is out of the business. I will admit that he is in the position that he does not want a business for the rest of his life but can retire and live comfortably. If imprisonment were inflicted the industry would go out in three weeks, but I am sure that no imprisonment will be inflicted anywhere because the psychology has been created that it is not a criminal offence. Neither the magistrates nor the judges regard it as an offence.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It has grown into a vested interest.

Mr. HUGHES: Yes, and a conventional right. Judges say, "We do not take any notice of S.P. offences; they are outside the pale." The time has gone when there will be an infliction of imprisonment under the present law. In my electorate it is said quite openly that one shop is owned by a member of the judiciary or the quasi-judiciary.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Not a judge?

Mr. HUGHES: No. A member of the quasi-judiciary. I have been told, "If you doubt my word, go out and see for yourself. You will see him there from a certain time to a certain time each Saturday." It seems to me that we have got to the stage when it would be better to abolish all restrictions on gaming houses. If we cannot enforce the law and if, by a method of non-enforcement, we are going to set up a cancer that will eat into the vitals of our public life and into some branches of our civil service, it is as well for us to acknowledge we are beaten.

If we take the relevant sections out of the Criminal Code, as I propose, we shall

at least be able to say that we are placing every citizen on the same footing. It would be a revelation to the public if the names of the true owners of these betting premises were disclosed. We know that it is not only the man who is running the betting premises that gets big money out of it. We know that the people who own the premises—the landed proprietors, some occupying high positions in the State—are sharing indirectly in the proceeds of the industry because they are getting excess rents for their premises. I think evidence could be produced that the rent charged for premises used as S.P. shops is much higher than would be charged for the same premises if they were used for ordinary economic purposes. Therefore the owners of the premises are sharing in this industry, but they are never prosecuted. The only one prosecuted is the unfortunate dummy who needs a couple of pounds badly enough to go into the court to say that he committed an offence which he did not.

I would like to see some inquiry made. It would be a public revelation. In fairness to everybody, including himself, the Minister for Mines should now get an independent exhaustive inquiry to see whether there is any foundation for the statements I have made, and as the result of my making which he demeaned himself by calling me a liar. He owes that to himself. If any inquiry into this matter is made I hope we shall not go outside the State for a judge. I feel sure that an independent inquiry into the enforcement of the law in this respect would disclose some very startling revelations to the public of Western Australia, and bring to light things that I have not brought to light today because I have not had the time. If the Minister for Mines wants to do the right and decent thing let him get a judge appointed to inquire into this matter, and let the judge first inquire who are the owners of the freehold of the properties in which starting-price betting is carried on and let the facts be published. Let him find out and tell the public who are the real owners of the properties. Then let him gather up all the people who have sat in as dummies in the Police Court. Let him then say what interest they have in the industry. He would not need to call anyone a liar. He would have the proof! If he is not prepared to do that, and back it up with a fair and impartial inquiry, he ought

to have the decency that other crooks have had in public life and go into the water!

The Minister for Works: In the absence of the Minister for Mines I desire that the hon. member withdraw his remarks when referring to the Minister as "other crooks." We have not got down to that level.

Mr. HUGHES: I am sorry I said that. I will withdraw.

The Minister for Works: As a member of the Government, I think the hon. member should also apologise for referring to a member of this Government as "other crooks."

Mr. HUGHES: Well, if one withdraws there is nothing like doing it handsomely, and I will do what the Minister requests. I take it that the Minister will do the decent thing and appoint a commission.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The commission has nothing to do with the Bill. I must ask the hon. member to confine his remarks to the measure before the House.

Mr. HUGHES: I withdraw! But of course, I do not withdraw the allegation that the Government is responsible for this state of affairs, and also for refusing a public inquiry to throw light on it. I regret that for the dignity and protection of this House the Deputy Premier did not do the same with his junior Minister as he did with me. When that Minister transgressed and insulted a member, did the Deputy Premier ask for a withdrawal? I think that was the time when the Deputy Premier, as Leader of the House, should have asked for a withdrawal. But I agree that two wrongs do not make a right. Surely the Deputy Premier knows, for what it is worth, that it is common gossip in certain circles that people high-placed in the government of this country are interested in the S.P. industry. How often have we heard that the chain shops run under the name of "Chris" are either owned or part-owned by a person high-placed in our public life.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Are they S.P. shops?

Mr. HUGHES: Yes.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I have not heard of them.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: I have.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HUGHES: One could show the hon. member a fair number of them without making him walk too far. As a matter of fact,

they are referred to by the people who know as "chain" shops.

Mr. J. Hegney: They always open where a new hotel opens. The last one was at Bullsbrook.

Mr. HUGHES: One opened at Searborough on the same Saturday that the hotel commenced business. There is also one in Stirling-highway.

Mr. Rodoreda: There are two in Stirling-highway.

Mr. HUGHES: If certain people who know the real owners of these shops were put on oath they would tell us who are the real or part-owners. I do not know whether the person they allege to be the owner or part-owner is or is not. That is one of the things I would have found out by my inquiry. Therefore, in this unfortunate state of affairs I suggest that the best thing we can do is to place every citizen on the same footing, and remove altogether from the Code any penalties under the Gaming Act, give the electors of East Perth the same rights as those of Fremantle, and give the person running a betting house the same rights as a man running a racecourse. We will then get to a more wholesome state of affairs and a better administration of the law. If some people are to be allowed to run betting houses at immense profits, let every citizen be placed on the same basis. Let us say to the police officers, "Get away from the betting-houses. We are placing all the citizens on the same footing." In the repealing clause of my Bill I have included the elimination of the section dealing with lotteries, but of course that section is covered by the Lotteries Control Act. It has been duplicated in that Act.

There is one other amendment in the Bill. The war has brought problems of various sorts. Every man today in the Military Forces is not a volunteer. If he is within certain age groups he is called up for military service. He is conscripted in a limited degree. The result is that a number of men—particularly young men—are dragged away from their homes; they are away on military service and their wives are unprotected. The men have to fight, and some very hard cases of infidelity on the part of the wives have become known in the last 12 months. Amongst the military officers are some of the playboy type who have no intention of getting injured in the war, but who merely want to get into uniform so as

to wear brass buttons and swank around and be in the possession of a good motorear, plenty of money and probably plenty of petrol. There is no shortage of petrol in the Fighting Forces; they have it to burn. I have known cases where this type of man has deliberately set out to seduce the young wife of a soldier who has been torn from his home and sent to defend his country in Australia, or who has gone of his own volition to fight overseas. In these cases it is frequently a girl of 18 or 19 years of age. By the aids of a big motorear, plenty of money, and the fact that her young husband is away, he has succeeded in seducing her so that when the man returns from military service he finds his home broken up.

I do not propose to set myself up as a moralist, but I do think on some of these questions on the yin yan problem, probably the sinners on the extremities of this bench are better informed than are the saints in the centre. We ought to say, in effect, to these men, "There are plenty of women for you to go after, but you must leave alone the wife of a man who is away fighting." If the husband is here to protect his interests, well and good, but when a man has been torn from his home to go away and fight, individuals of the type I have mentioned should not be permitted to act as they have done. I would make it a serious offence because, if the punishment is severe enough, it will prove a deterrent. Section 325 of the Criminal Code reads—

Any person who has carnal knowledge of a woman or girl, not his wife, without her consent, or with her consent if the consent is obtained by force, or by means of threats or intimidation of any kind, or by fear of bodily harm, or by means of false and fraudulent representations as to the nature of the act, or, in the case of a married woman, by personating her husband, is guilty of a crime which is called rape.

I propose to amend the section by inserting at the commencement the following words:—

Any person who commits adultery with the wife of any person absent from his home on military service, or.

The penalty might be considered to be very severe because of the woman being a consenting party, but these young bucks have the allure, and protection should be provided against them. The crime of rape is always associated with violence but, if we get down to basic principles, what is the difference between the act of a man who, under the in-

fluence of drink and biological emotions, uses force, and the act of the playboy who over a period, because of his money and allurements, sets out deliberately to achieve by cunning what the other man achieved by force in the stress of the moment? I think we should afford this modicum of protection, and say to these playboys, "Philander as much as you like, but there is a preserve on which you must not trespass. If you do, you act at your peril." I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by the Minister for the North-West, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.1 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Thursday, 17th September, 1912.

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

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1. Feeding Stuffs Act Amendment.
2. Dried Fruits Act Amendment.

Passed.

BILL—MINING TENEMENTS (WAR-TIME EXEMPTIONS).

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY [2.22] in moving the second reading said: This is another Bill rendered necessary by wartime conditions, and I feel sure that the need for it will be apparent to all members, more especially, perhaps, to those closely associated with the mining industry. Under the Mining Act certain conditions are prescribed to be carried out by persons who are granted what are called mining tenements. Those conditions apply very well in peace-time, but in the present circumstances are highly onerous, and in some cases cannot be carried out at all. The present situation in the industry is indeed difficult and serious. The man-