

# Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 2nd September, 1912.

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

## QUESTIONS (5).

### CO-OPERATIVE BULK HANDLING, LTD.

#### *As to Trust Deed.*

Mr. DONEY asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Has he received a request from any person or organisation for an alteration to the deed of trust governing Co-operative Bulk Handling, Ltd.? 2, If so, what are the details of the request? 3, Can he name the person or organisation that made such a request?

The MINISTER replied: 1, Yes. 2 (a) Amend the Act to make voting by postal ballot acceptable. (b) Directors to be elected on the following zone system:—Bunbury zone and Albany, 2; Fremantle zone, 4; Geraldton zone, 2; nominee Minister for Railways, 1; nominee Minister for Agriculture, 1; total, 10. 3, Yes.

## EDUCATION.

### *East Perth Girls' School.*

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER asked the Minister representing the Minister for Education: 1, Is he aware that classes of approximately 80 girls, totalling about 240 daily, are held in the East Perth Girls' School? 2, Is he satisfied that the safety of the lives of these girls is not endangered? 3, If so, why cannot the school resume its normal course?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST (for the Minister for Education) replied: 1, The domestic science centres at the Perth Girls' School are being used for this special form of instruction. Only four

classes of 20 each receive instruction at the one time. 2, In view of the fact that not more than 80 pupils, who are senior girls, are in attendance at the one time, and also that no other centres are available, this is considered satisfactory. 3, The re-opening of the school is under constant review, but the enrolment of 600 is an important factor in this matter.

## TIMBER EXPORTS.

### *Effects of Coal Shortage.*

Mr. WITHERS asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is he aware that ships have not been able to take cargoes of timber from Bunbury owing to shortage of coal for railways? 2, That these ships have returned to the Eastern States empty or partly loaded? 3, That the timber to be shipped is for military purposes, and is needed in the Eastern States? 4, That the waterside workers are a reserved occupation and cannot go elsewhere for employment? 5, If so, have any efforts been made or are they being made to prevent a repetition, by seeing that sufficient coal supplies are provided to meet future requirements of shipping and that employment is not denied to those who have to depend on such work for a living?

The MINISTER replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes. 3, Yes. 4, Yes. Unless with permission of Deputy Director of Manpower. 5, Every effort is being made and will continue to be made to obtain sufficient coal for railway purposes.

## POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION.

### *As to Development of South-West.*

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister for Industrial Development: 1, As a contribution to post-war reconstruction, does the Government intend to appoint a commissioner to ascertain the population capacity of the South-West of this State? 2, Having regard to the rainfall, climate, soil and minerals in this area, is the Government favourable to seeking assistance from Britain and U.S.A. in its development as soon as hostilities cease?

The MINISTER replied: 1, It is not intended to appoint a commissioner, as a committee of highly qualified men is examining this proposal and other proposals associated with post-war reconstruction, and is preparing valuable data in connection therewith. 2, The methods to be adopted to

finance post-war reconstruction activities are a subject for consultation between the Commonwealth and State Governments. Great Britain and the United States of America are likely to be deeply interested in Australia's post-war development.

### CHILD WELFARE RELIEF.

#### *As to Widows' Pensions.*

Mr. BOYLE asked the Minister for Industrial Development: 1, In the case of destitute widows with children receiving relief from the Child Welfare Department is it the practice of the department to deduct an amount equal to the Federal widows' pension from the Child Welfare Department allotment? 2, If so, what financial benefit has accrued to the widows concerned from the Federal Widows' Pensions Act?

The MINISTER replied: 1, The general rule is as stated, but special cases of hardship receive consideration. No reduction of any kind is made in Child Welfare Department allowances because of child endowment payments. 2, The benefit accruing generally to widows under the Commonwealth Scheme is that their legal right to a pension has been established for the first time and established on a permanent basis. The assistance previously given to them by Child Welfare Departments in the different States was given voluntarily and could have been reduced, or withdrawn, at any time.

### MOTION—STATE CIVIL REQUIREMENTS.

#### *As to Postponement of Consideration.*

MR. McDONALD (West Perth) [2.21]: I ask that the following motion standing on the notice paper in my name be postponed till after consideration of motion No. 11:—

That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into any existing or threatened shortages in the supply of essential requirements for civil consumption in this State, and as to the allocation to this State of a fair quota of the Australian production of such requirements and as to the shipping and other transport services for the carriage of such supplies to this State, and to report thereon to this House.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Standing Orders provide that consideration of notices of motion may be postponed to a subsequent sitting, but not to a later stage of a current sitting.

Mr. McDONALD: I move—

That consideration of the motion standing in my name be postponed to the next sitting of the House.

Mr. North: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I should like your ruling whether, after motion No. 11 is dealt with, the Standing Orders may be suspended to enable notices of motion previously postponed to be dealt with at this sitting.

Mr. SPEAKER: No.

Question put and passed.

### MOTION—NATIONAL SECURITY ACT.

#### *Lighting of Motor Vehicles Order.*

MR. SEWARD (Pingelly) [2.24]: I move—

That this House is of opinion that the Lighting of Motor Vehicles Order published in the "Government Gazette" of the 22nd May last constitutes a menace to public safety, is imposing unnecessary hardship on drivers of both public and private motor vehicles, and is particularly impracticable in country districts, and that this House asks: (a) that the Government through the Premier (as Federal Delegate) amend such regulation so as to make conditions reasonable, and (b) that all papers relative to the advice of military authorities and to the consultations between the Government of this State, the Minister for Home Security, and the Military Commandant, both prior to and later than the 22nd day of May, 1942, be laid on the Table of the House.

When the session opened, I had a motion ready to place upon the notice paper, but in view of the fact that the member for Canning and the member for Guildford-Midland both gave notice of motions dealing with the same subject, I did not deem it necessary to clutter up the notice paper with a third motion. Unfortunately, the member for Canning is in the Eastern States and the member for Guildford-Midland is laid aside with illness, and as a consequence neither is able to take his place in the House and move his motion today. In view of the amount of inconvenience caused to the public, and to the fact that the Standing Orders precluded reference to this matter on the Address-in-reply, I have brought this motion forward with the object of giving members the earliest possible opportunity to discuss it.

During the last session of Parliament, I think in May last, I gave notice to disallow certain regulations applying to the lighting of motor vehicles. A similar motion, however, was already on the notice paper of the Legislative Council, and it was

debated and carried by that House. Consequently, it seemed unnecessary to ask the Assembly to debate the motion which had been carried in another place, the effect of which was to disallow the regulations about which I was complaining. After that was done I went to the Acting Premier, and told him I had no desire unduly to delay the session by asking that the motion be debated. I said I had heard statements made that the motion had only been carried in another place by some disgruntled or dissatisfied members, and that the Government would simply re-impose these regulations. I asked the Acting Premier whether that was the case. He replied: No, not only had it been debated in the Council, but the matter had also been raised in this House, and many members on the Government side of the House had criticised the regulations, with the result that the Government would have to take notice.

In view of that advice I did not proceed further in asking this House to debate the regulations. But in view of what has taken place since, I am inclined to think I was entirely misled, as I will show later. To put the matter in proper perspective, I will explain to the House the reason why, in the main, I have included paragraph (b) relating to the tabling of all papers in connection with the negotiations which have taken place in the passing of these regulations. When the Chief Secretary was replying in the Legislative Council to the debate on the motion to disallow these regulations he made, *inter alia*, the following comments:—

The military authorities had requested that there should be a black-out three miles from the coast and right around the coast.

He further stated—

The original black-out was from Woodman Point to Trigg Island. That was requested by the military authorities. That area was then extended to include that portion of the coast between Trigg Island and Little Island. That extension was made by the Civil Defence Council, and not the military authorities.

Then again, he stated that the Albany black-out had also been requested by the military authorities. We can realise that that would have been the case. He also said that the original brown-out order was not issued by the military authorities but was promulgated following a telegram from the Prime Minister. The motor lighting restrictions were imposed as a result of the three-mile black-

out to Trigg Island. This was one of the measures adopted by the conference of State Premiers at Canberra on the 4th February, 1942. I emphasise that. The inference to be drawn from it is that there was uniformity, or some uniformity, in regard to these regulations, and that they had been adopted or drawn up, or perhaps both, by this conference of State Premiers.

Recently the Under Secretary for Civil Defence, Mr. Telfer, returned to this State, and in "The West Australian" a day or two after he returned he made the following statement:—

The Commonwealth considers that the position has not altered sufficiently to enable any relaxation of lighting restrictions here.

He further stated—

Restrictions mainly in regard to lighting were being relaxed to some extent in South Australia and Victoria.

From all that the inference is that there is throughout Australia uniformity of lighting restrictions imposed on motor vehicles. That, however, is very far from being the position, as I shall show later. Members will note that some of the regulations have been imposed at the request of the military authorities, others by the Civil Defence Council and some as the result of a telegram received from the Prime Minister. When members are asked to explain to inquiring taxpayers and others the position regarding the regulations and they endeavour to justify them—I claim that people are entitled to ask for such an explanation and justification—I do not regard it as sufficient, nor do I think any other member would do so, merely to say that the imposition of the regulations has been requested by the military authorities or by the Prime Minister, or that they have been imposed by the Civil Defence Council or by someone else. Our constituents naturally assume that we, being responsible persons sent to Parliament to look after the affairs of State, should be able to provide a reasonable explanation of the reasons prompting the enforcement of the regulations.

We should be in a position to contradict any rumours regarding the application of the regulations or statements made to the effect that their application here is much more harsh than elsewhere. We boast of our free educational system and free university; yet, when we are asked a simple question regarding the lighting regulations, we are forced to give a reply that even a child would resent.

For that reason, I am asking in my motion that the papers be laid on the Table of the House so that members may have a clear idea of the negotiations that took place and the reasons advanced for the imposition of the regulations and so forth, thereby being in a position to provide a reasonable explanation to inquiring taxpayers. There may be reasons why the papers should not be made public property. In the Federal Parliament—I do not know whether any such precautionary measure is embodied in our Standing Orders—there is provision for papers that should not become public property to be made available to members in the Parliamentary Library, and therefore not open to perusal by the Press. If for national security reasons the Minister does not wish the contents of the file to be made public, it could be placed in the—

Hon. C. G. Latham: Clerk's room.

Mr. SEWARD: Yes, that would do. If that were done, then members could look through the papers and become acquainted with the reasons that actuated the imposition of the regulations restricting lighting. Before dealing with the regulations themselves, I wish to refer to an interjection by the Minister for Mines last week when the member for Beverley was speaking. That hon. member made passing mention of the lighting restrictions and the Minister interjected, "Well, you are not going to alter them."

The Minister for Mines: I did not say anything of the sort! When do you say I said that? Last week?

Mr. SEWARD: Yes, I understood the Minister to make that interjection.

The Minister for Mines: If I said that I must have just awakened from a very sound sleep.

Mr. SEWARD: Other members will bear out what I say.

The Minister for Mines: I certainly did not make that statement.

Mr. SEWARD: I freely acknowledge that it does not appear in "Hansard."

The Minister for Mines: Then I certainly did not make the statement.

Mr. SEWARD: I am glad I was mistaken, and withdraw the statement unreservedly. I shall now pass to a review of the motor vehicle lighting regulations in general. I have copies of those in force at the end of July in New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria, South Australia, and,

of course, Western Australia. At the outset I shall contrast them from the point of view of exemptions allowed. In Western Australia I find that the regulations do not apply to any member of the Armed Forces acting in the course of his duty. They do not impose any disability regarding lights displayed with the consent of the Naval Board, being a light for the guidance of shipping or navigation lights on ships allowed by the Naval Board, nor do they apply to any aircraft or aerodrome, the lighting of which is shown under instructions by the Minister of State for Air. Almost identical exemptions apply in Queensland, although I was interested to notice that the regulations in that State make provision for the installation of lights in air-raid shelters and conveniences that must be attached to those shelters. That is not done in Western Australia.

In New South Wales the only exemption permitted applies to members of the Police Force in the execution of their duties. That is rather an extraordinary difference. In Victoria the exemptions from the application of the regulations are practically the same as those prevailing in Western Australia. Again, there is a difference in regard to the South Australian regulations. In that State vehicles are exempted, the headlamps of which comply with Regulation 8 dealing with the provision of masks. Thus any motor vehicle in South Australia that has masks attached to its headlamps may be driven about by members of the Civil Defence Force during a black-out as well as by other persons acting under the Commissioner of Civil Defence, at such speed and in such circumstances as the Commissioner may order. It is necessary, of course, for the required identification label to be attached to such vehicle. Although the Western Australian, Queensland and Victorian exemptions are much the same, those applying in South Australia and New South Wales differ materially from them. In Western Australia the regulations have been imposed by the Premier acting under the powers conferred upon him by the National Security Regulations.

In Victoria and Queensland the regulations were promulgated similarly, but in New South Wales and South Australia they were imposed by the respective Ministers acting under the provisions of their

State Acts. In New South Wales the Minister works under the local National Security Act of 1941, and in South Australia the power is exercised under the Emergency Powers Act, 1941. As to the operation of the regulations, in Western Australia they apply throughout the State. In South Australia, however, they operate only when the Minister declares a black-out period and the area through which the regulations shall be enforced. When that is done there by signals given by sound the regulations apply wherever the sound can be heard, or, if the signal is given by a light, wherever such light can be seen. In that State there is no provision at all for a brown-out. In Victoria the regulations operate in the area that is defined as a brown-out area, which is all that portion of the State within 100 miles of the coast from the boundary of South Australia round to the boundary of New South Wales. The regulations also apply to such inland towns as Bendigo, Benalla, Eaglehawk, Horsbarn, Shepparton, Wangaratta and Wodonga, and also to an area within five miles of the Benalla-Wodonga railway. Some of these country towns I have mentioned are much larger than any provincial town in Western Australia except, perhaps, Albany and Geraldton. Members will see that in Victoria such large areas as the Winmerra and Mallee country are excluded covering towns like Nhill, Stawell, Echuca, Ararat and St. Arnaud. So there is a vast difference between the application of the regulations in Victoria and their application in Western Australia.

As regards New South Wales, there is no provision for a brown-out but only a black-out. The regulations are only enforced when the Minister concerned by notice in the "Government Gazette" declares that a state of emergency exists and that he is satisfied there is a danger of a war-like attack being made on the country. Only then do the regulations take effect. In Queensland the regulations apply only to certain cities and towns specified in a schedule embodied in the notice published in the "Government Gazette" and to certain shires. It is not easy for anyone not familiar with Queensland conditions to ascertain exactly where those shires are located, more particularly as the shires are not always named after any particular town that may be in the area concerned. I procured a

reliable map of Queensland that has helped me in my investigations. By the way, if any member should wish to peruse the regulations to which I am referring as well as to the map, I shall be glad to make them available for that purpose. I have examined the position of all the shires in Queensland, and have found that the regulations there apply only within 100 miles of the coast with the exception of Brisbane. In the case of that capital they apply 130 miles inland. Thus all the huge portion of the State of Queensland outside the area is excluded from the operation of the regulations.

The Minister for Mines: Are you speaking of motor vehicle lights now?

Mr. SEWARD: Yes. Such places as Cloncurry with a population of 6,000 people, Roma with 3,300 and Charleville with 3,200 are not affected at all by the regulations. There we have an instance of the glaring difference between what operates in the other States and what is being enforced in Western Australia.

I do not wish to deal with indicator-lamps, tail-lamps, and stop-lamps, because they do not affect the position. The regulations concerning them are mainly the same as in the other States. What I am principally interested in is the head-lamp, because that regulates the driving of a car at night and is causing the difficulties that are being experienced in this State. In Victoria the head-lamp mask is much the same as the one we have in this State. Authorised head-lamps provide for more than one aperture, except for omnibuses from which no light may be nearer than 10 feet of the lamp, no light may be above the horizontal and the intensity of the light is not to exceed 2.5 foot candles 10 feet from the lamp. No mask may be put on that has not been approved, and essential service vehicles are bound by the lighting regulations except that they carry a coloured lamp and also a distinguishing sign. In Queensland the other regulations as regards the mask are much the same as here, except that they provide that the intensity of the light 10 feet from the lamp shall not exceed 0.3 foot candles on a level with the filament. Our regulation provides for 2.5 foot candles on the ground 10 feet from the car, so that may be roughly the same thing. Omnibuses have to carry two white lights in front, the centres not more than five feet above the ground and

the aperture not more than 2 square inches. The speed limit there is 20 miles an hour—I should have mentioned that there is no speed limit in Victoria—and essential service vehicles are bound by regulations practically the same as ours.

The Minister for Lands: There are only two sorts of people, too, the quick and the dead.

Mr. SEWARD: Since the opening of Parliament hardly a day has passed without my having seen the remains of some vehicle being towed in by a service waggon after having been damaged in a smash.

The Minister for Works: And very often damaged in daylight.

Mr. SEWARD: There have always been collisions in daylight; I am referring to those occurring during the night, which unfortunately have increased in number. The first thing that struck me about the South Australian regulations was the fact that not more than four paragraphs in the "Gazette" cover the lighting restrictions for vehicles. The masks have to give light through a horizontal slit  $3\frac{3}{4}$  inches long and  $5/16$ ths inch wide and no light above the horizontal. The speed limit is 15 miles an hour. In South Australia there is only a black-out, and it is restricted to an area in which the signals can be heard or the lights seen. In New South Wales the regulations are much the same with one exception; vehicles may have lights from more than one aperture, no light above the horizontal, and the intensity of the light shall be not less than 1.25 foot candles or greater than 2.5 foot candles at 10 feet from the lamp. There is another provision in the New South Wales regulations to which I wish to direct particular attention. Except during a black-out or trial black-out any masked headlight or auxiliary headlamp may have an additional aperture not exceeding  $1\frac{1}{2}$  square inches giving a light not greater than four foot candles at 10 feet from the lamp, this aperture to be fitted with a device that can be closed instantaneously. That is a marked departure from the other regulations because the maximum light provided by other regulations is 2.5 foot candles. This additional aperture in New South Wales gives a light of 4 foot candles, which is over double the intensity of our lights. I can imagine that that would be a very valuable provision for drivers in country districts.

Those, briefly, are the regulations dealing with head-lamps in the other States. As I have mentioned, the other regulations regarding other lamps are much the same. A point I wish to stress is that the regulations throughout Australia are not uniform. The Minister may give as one of the reasons for the re-imposition of the regulations here that there is a desire for uniformity throughout Australia and he may say that the military authorities, for the sake of uniformity, have given us the same regulations as apply in the other States. But that is not so and, what is more, our regulations seem to be the most stringent of all. Again I wish to recall the fact that the regulations under which our people are using cars at night were disallowed by the Legislative Council in May last. Those regulations were imposed under the Civil Defence (Emergency Powers) Act, which is a State statute. After the regulations had been disallowed by the Legislative Council, I think it was quite wrong of the Minister or the Government to go behind the back of Parliament and re-impose the disallowed regulations under powers obtained from the Commonwealth Government, thus depriving this Parliament of the power to disallow the regulations.

Mr. Stubbs: It was a rotten thing to do.

Mr. SEWARD: When the Civil Defence (Emergency Powers) Bill was before the House, it conferred upon the Minister the power to make certain regulations. That power was given to the Minister by Parliament and in the full knowledge that any regulations made from time to time could be reviewed and, if thought excessive or beyond what Parliament was willing to grant, could be disallowed. The regulations having been disallowed by the Legislative Council, it was a flagrant dereliction of duty and an excess exercise of powers for the Government or the Minister or whoever was responsible to go behind the decision of Parliament, re-impose the disallowed regulations by authority obtained from the Commonwealth Parliament and so deprive this Parliament of the power of reviewing them.

I wish to draw particular attention to the regulations in force in Queensland. I do so because Queensland is undoubtedly the part of Australia that is nearest to the major operations of the enemy today. True, we have been bombed in this State as the people of Queensland and New South Wales

have been; but it is an extraordinary fact that in Queensland and New South Wales, the closest points to the enemy, the regulations apply only within a distance of 120 miles of the coast, with the exception I mentioned before, as regards Cape York Peninsula, right across which the regulations do apply. But the main parts of those States do not come under these regulations. New South Wales, indeed, has had submarine attacks in addition to bombing, but there is no provision for brown-out, only for a black-out and that when the Minister orders it. Yet here the brown-out applies to all parts of the State, even away inland! Again, in Victoria, a closely settled State where there are large inland towns such as Stawell, St. Arnaud, Nhill, and Echuca, where a fair amount of light glare would exist, these regulations do not apply. Therefore I am justified in saying that Western Australia is being unduly penalised.

Now I will deal briefly with a few of the complaints against Western Australian regulations. I am not referring to the metropolitan area, about which other members of this Chamber know considerably more than I do. I will leave them to speak on its behalf, and shall confine my remarks to the country districts. The first regulation to which I draw special attention is that no mask which has not been approved by the approving authority is allowed to be fitted to a headlamp. I recently asked the Minister for Civil Defence whether he was aware that masks were being sold which could not give the prescribed amount of light allowed by the regulation. The Minister replied in the affirmative, but added that the regulation prescribed only the maximum amount of light. That I consider is no answer to my question. I also asked whether there was no power to prevent the public being exploited in such a manner. The Minister replied that there was no exploitation.

First of all a motor owner is compelled to have a mask fitted if he uses his car between sunset and sunrise. He is prevented from making his own mask because the manufacturer's name and the date of manufacture have to be stamped on the mask before it can be sold. Why should this regulation exist if it does not carry any guarantee that the mask gives the amount of light permitted by the regulations? The regulation can only be justified by reason of its being a protection to the purchaser.

Hundreds of masks are being sold that are worthless for driving a car at night. Having purchased useless masks at any price that he may be charged, the car owner finds them useless and is forced to purchase others if he uses his car at night. No attempt is made to protect the public against over-charges; any price whatever can be charged. Why did not the Government call tenders for the manufacture of masks after the most suitable type had been decided on? We do not care what the Police Department does in the matter of inspecting lights, or more particularly with a view to instructing car owners as to what particular masks they should have on their vehicles, and how they are to be fitted, so long as the maximum amount of light is obtainable.

Sergeant Gray, of the Traffic Police, told me that in no circumstances can the masks, which most people have on their cars, give the maximum amount of light allowed. If motorists complain that they cannot drive their cars with the prescribed lights, because with those lights they cannot see anything, they are told they can have the three-slotted masks with a circular aperture. By the by, I was rather interested to receive, a few days ago, a letter from the Civil Defence Council stating that the three-slotted masks are now being sold by Sandover and Co. at the price of 18s. 7d. per pair. That is all right but I protest that, when there is a regulation prescribing a certain mask, the Civil Defence Council should have called tenders for the manufacture of masks giving the maximum amount of light, not leaving it to anybody to exploit the public. Prices up to £2 and £3 per pair were being charged, and when masks thus priced were found to be ineffective the motorist had to pay a further sum of £2 to get another type of mask fitted. I repeat, even these latter masks do not give the maximum amount of light.

Recently in a country town I went out with a friend whose car had masked lights. We got in, and he said, "Switch the lights on." I replied, "They are on." He exclaimed, "If that is the maximum amount of light I shall not drive you far." At the next corner I said to him, "You had better turn round here," and the next thing I knew was that I was on a vacant allotment. It is absolutely risking people's lives to travel by car under such lighting conditions. I was in Pingelly on last Monday week and

saw the car of a Perth business establishment in the street. I looked for the driver of that car, to tell him he would have to be very careful that I did not mention the matter in the House. The reason was that his car showed more light than he was entitled to have. He had a spot-light on the front bumper bar. I met him the next day on Chidlow Station and said I had seen him in Pingelly. He told me that he had had a smash and landed his car in a ditch, and been compelled to continue his journey to Perth by rail.

These regulations are justifiable only if they give protection to motorists, for people are not allowed to make their own masks. About a week ago I met a young motorist who had a home-made mask on his lamp. It gave nearly as much light as was allowed. However, he was told he would have to take that mask off because the regulations provided that no mask could be used unless the name of the manufacturer and the date of manufacture were stamped on the mask, which moreover must be an approved mask. With regulations of that kind we cannot get any contentment amongst the people. Then there is the other regulation that one must not drive one's car at above 20 miles per hour. Would members risk their lives on a country road—and some of our country roads are among the best in Australia—driving at 20 miles per hour under such lighting conditions? If a man tried to do so on a corrugated road, he would not take out his car a second time. I have no hesitation in saying that under the existing regulations it is impossible to avoid accidents. On any country road that does a bit of winding about, it is impossible to follow the road. What is the result of imposing regulations of that kind? Members know of a car that can be seen within 100 yards of this Chamber. It has two spot-lights on the bumper boards and a black cover over them. We can well imagine what happens in that case. As soon as the driver of a car thus fitted gets outside the city area, off come those covers and he proceeds with a couple of spotlights. If one meets such a car all one can do is to pull in to the side of the road and stop, if one desires to avoid a collision.

If a motor car is not fitted with spot-lights, the first thing the driver does when he gets out of town is to remove one of the masks. That is only bringing the regu-

lations and Parliament itself into the utmost contempt. The regulations should either be sensible and be enforced, or abolished altogether. I have frequently seen cars travelling along the city streets with one lamp alight; that is against the regulations. If the regulations cannot be properly enforced in the city area, what will happen in the far-back areas? Another point to which I draw attention is that some vehicles, such as ambulances which are bound by the regulations—except that they must have a distinctive colour and/or sign showing that they are ambulances and that such sign must be legible at about 50 yards—are fitted with lamps that show up city buildings three and four storeys high. That is an infringement of the regulations. Military vehicles can be driven without masked lights. Surely, if we are afraid that enemy aeroplanes will follow civilian cars, we should be equally afraid of their following military vehicles. Consequently, the whole thing is a farce. The regulations impose unnecessary restrictions on country people.

Several requests have been made to me by doctors and clergymen, who are called out at night-time, to secure some relaxation of the restrictions. Most of our young medical practitioners are in the Forces, and those practising in country districts are beyond middle age. Some of them may be getting elderly. How could one ask an elderly doctor to drive a motor car with masked lamps at night along a country road? A request made to the Civil Defence Council to exempt doctors from the regulations was refused. The doctor at Pingelly told me he would not take the risk of travelling along country roads at night-time in his motor car; although, if the matter were one of life and death, I think he would do so.

In times such as we are passing through I always think that womenfolk, especially mothers and wives, feel the strain of warfare most. Undoubtedly, the soldier is facing perils, but he has his periods of relaxation when on leave. There is no relaxation for wives and mothers, and I consider it to be our duty to afford them every facility we can for entertainment. In country districts there are patriotic entertainments and picture shows, but the womenfolk are denied those amusements because the father will say, "I am not going to drive my car at night-time, because of the risk." Those are my reasons for bringing this motion for-



ward. As I said, I am not dealing with the city area, because other members, who know the facts better than I do, can voice their opinions on the effect of the regulations in the metropolitan area. I commend the motion to the House and sincerely hope members will support it.

**MR. STUBBS (Wagin):** The importance of the motion now before the Chamber is my sole excuse for asking members to give their time and attention to the facts so carefully placed before them by the member for Pingelly. I often wonder whether the vast majority of the people living in comfort in our cities and towns realise what they owe to the country people, who produce the wealth that enables them to live in luxury. Recently I traversed a few hundred miles through my electorate in company with an officer of the Police Department. On some portions of the journey we could scarcely see a hand in front of us on account of the black-out regulations. The Minister is laughing; but I want him to pay attention to what I am saying, because I think he does not realise that he is in control of the Civil Defence Department. Unfortunately, these regulations apply to country districts 100 and 200 miles distant from the metropolitan area. I want the Minister to wake up and take notice that these regulations, as they affect country districts, are unwarranted. Whoever framed them and is responsible for their continuance deserves the censure of this House. I am not beating about the bush in saying that.

I ask every member to consider this matter in the right spirit, because I am endeavouring to explain the conditions prevailing 100 to 200 miles inland. I agree that regulations are required, especially since Australia has been bombed; but they should not apply to country districts where, in my judgment, not the slightest danger exists of penetration by the enemy. On the journey I mentioned, it was impossible to see more than five yards ahead on some of the country roads. I trust this matter will be considered seriously by all members of this Chamber, irrespective of the shade of their politics. I ask members to accept my assurance that country people are just as law-abiding and just as prepared to do their bit to keep the Empire intact as is any Minister of the Crown, especially the Minister controlling civil defence. Letters of pro-

test have come from local governing bodies asking that the restrictions be reviewed, but they have fallen on deaf ears. The member for Pingelly referred to the discrimination that is found in the various States on this question.

When the Minister is replying I want him to justify the position that exists in Western Australia, and to say why he persists in compelling the people in the country to work under these restrictions. Those people get very little sympathy from the Minister and very little sympathy from residents of the metropolitan area. Every road board in my electorate has asked me to raise this question in the House in the hope that the regulations that apply to the metropolitan area will be relaxed in the case of the country districts. I am speaking principally on behalf of those who live in country areas, those who are compelled to comply with regulations that are said by the Civil Defence Council to be absolutely unnecessary. If people in the Eastern States had been forced to do that which the Minister is forcing country citizens in this State to do, I would not so much mind, but that is not the position. The member for Pingelly explained fully that people in Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia are not compelled to do what the Minister for Civil Defence is compelling people to do in this State. That is the justification for my asking the House to carry this motion.

**MR. McLARTY (Murray-Wollington):** The member for Pingelly is deserving of congratulation for the manner in which he has presented his case for the passing of the motion. He must have done a great deal of work and spent a great deal of time in collating the information he has given to the House. I feel that the lighting restrictions that apply to motoring generally are not necessary. In the event of an emergency there is little doubt that motorists would have enough sense to put out their lights without being told by regulation to do so. What the member for Pingelly has stated is true. The present lighting restrictions are dangerous as applied to country areas, and are bound to cause loss of life.

**Mr. Seward:** They have already done so.

**Mr. McLARTY:** Yes. Motorists travelling along country roads never know when they will strike some obstacle. Farmers to-

day are short of labour and fences are getting into a state of disrepair, and for that reason roving or straying stock are constantly being met with on the roads. Owing to the lighting restrictions on motor cars a driver has no chance of seeing any animal that may have strayed on to the road, and would not know of its presence until he felt the bump. The hon. member said that most of the country roads were good. I presume he referred to main roads and perhaps the roads in the towns. Many of the other roads are little better than bush tracks, over which farmers and other people are expected to drive with their headlights masked. Their task is an exceedingly difficult and dangerous one. Great hardship is imposed upon those who are compelled to drive at night-time under such conditions. In my electorate truck drivers have to visit various farms to pick up milk and take it to the factories. Those men, too, have to drive under the present regulations. It is not safe for them to do that and imposes a great hardship upon them. In the case of the roads that are surfaced with bitumen cyclists become a menace to motorists.

The Minister for Labour: And vice versa!

Mr. McLARTY: I admit that the workers must have cycles in order to reach their places of employment. They have as much right to the roads as have the motorists but they constitute a danger under present conditions. I am surprised that fatal accidents have not been more numerous. The member for Pingelly referred to the position in New South Wales. I think he said that people there have twice as much light as have people in this State. I do not know why the lighting restrictions that apply to motorists have not been made uniform throughout the Commonwealth. It seems extraordinary that residents of New South Wales should have twice as much light as we have here.

The hon. member also voiced a genuine complaint concerning the expense to which motorists have been put when complying with the regulations. I know they have had to pay to have masks attached to their headlights, and have afterwards been told that they are not suitable and must provide themselves with more modern equipment. Now we are told that a new mask is available. One would have thought that at the outset the authorities would have seen that

motorists were able to obtain the regulation masks that would give them the maximum light available. That was not done. I hope as a result of this motion some relief will be given to motorists, and I do not think that the country would be endangered in any way thereby. It is absurd to expect drivers of motor vehicles passing through the hills or along outback roads to control their cars at night under present conditions. I believe if the restrictions were applied to a radius of 10 miles from the coast that would cover the position, and would not endanger the country in any way. I support the motion.

MR. THORN (Toodyay): I am glad an opportunity has been given to members to discuss this motion.

Mr. Marshall: You have been bursting to do it for a long time.

Mr. THORN: I am also pleased that notices of motion on the notice paper have been postponed so that the matter could be debated. We on this side of the House considered the question was of such importance to the interests and safety of the people that it was our duty to initiate a debate upon it. As I said last week, it appeared that two of the motions dealing with these restrictions would lapse, as they have done, but fortunately we are now able to discuss this one. The first disappointment I have to voice is that the Government saw fit to hand its powers over to the Commonwealth Government. I gathered from the previous attitude of the Government that it desired to preserve the rights of the State and did not wish to give away any powers to the Federal authorities. If we go on at the present rate and do not preserve our State rights and fight for them, we will become a nonentity. I stand for the preservation of our State Parliament and make no bones about it. We hear fanatics expressing their views or read in the Press every day what they have to say—

Mr. SPEAKER: I think the hon. member is getting away from the motion.

Mr. THORN: I intend to link up my remarks with the motion. The public state of mind today is such that by their comments in the Press the fanatics to whom I have referred secure converts, and if we do not fight for the rights of our State Parliament the day will arrive when we shall regret it. I will not pursue that question any further although I could say a lot more about it. Here is an instance in which we had control

over a matter but suddenly woke up, and found that the control had been handed over to the Commonwealth.

Mr. Needham: Had we control?

Mr. THORN: We did have control. I do not know whether I am right in my opinion about the matter, but I have been wondering whether the Government was disgruntled because another place had disallowed these regulations. I know the Government does not like another place interfering with its legislation, but this matter is of such importance and means so much to us I hope that was not the reason why the Commonwealth was approached to assume this responsibility. I hope it was not done to teach another place a lesson not to interfere with this Chamber.

The Minister for Mines: I will give you that guarantee. That was not the reason.

Mr. THORN: Whatever the reason, the fact remains that there have been too many deaths altogether as a result of these regulations. What is the use of making regulations of this description when we know that the public cannot drive under them with safety? Why not debar the public altogether from going on the roads instead of making regulations like these under which no motorist can drive with safety? I defy anyone with the regulation masks fitted to his car to drive with safety at night.

Mr. J. H. Smith: It cannot be done on a bush road.

Mr. THORN: It cannot be done anywhere. Insufficient vision is given to permit of a motorist driving to the safety of the public. The member for Murray-Wellington mentioned cyclists. They have as much right to the road as any one else but the member was quite right in what he said. The lives of cyclists are in danger all the time they are on the road. I have noticed repeatedly that cycles are not properly lighted. Often there are no tail-lights at all and attention should be given to that matter. Regularly motorists are fined in the police court for breaking these regulations and for not leaving on their tail-lights in the city. It is very hard on them. After the control of this matter was handed over to the Commonwealth authorities an announcement was made in the Press by the Chairman of the Civil Defence Council of Western Australia to the effect that after serious consideration and consul-

tation with the G.O.C. in Australia, General Blamey, it had been decided to re-instate in their entirety the regulations that had been disallowed. Who is breaking the regulations to-day?

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: The military authorities!

Mr. THORN: Yes. The regulations are being broken by people under the control of General Blamey. We were informed that after serious consultation with General Blamey it was decided to do so and so, yet the very people breaking the regulations are the drivers of army vehicles. What is the result? The civilian motorist complies with the regulations, but immediately he is faced with an army vehicle not complying with them he is blacked-out. He is blinded and cannot see to drive his car.

Mr. North: By Government trams, too!

Mr. THORN: All that he can do is to ease up to the side of the road and trust to luck. According to all reports the military authorities imposed these regulations, yet through their action the difficulties of civilian motorists are increased. Would it not be commonsense, and was it not the idea of those in another place when they disallowed the regulations, to persuade those in authority to liberalise them to the extent that people could drive cars with some margin of safety? That was the idea behind the action of another place. Why did we not take notice? Had we done so many lives would have been saved. To me it appears ridiculous to say that motorists may go on the road if they comply with regulations when we know perfectly well that these regulations cannot be observed with safety. If the situation is not altered many more innocent people will be killed. I was particularly struck with one accident that occurred. A taxi-cab was approaching the Brighton Hotel at Cottesloe. An American sailor stepped out to hail the driver, who failed to see him and killed him on the spot. That sort of thing is constantly occurring. Only a week or two ago in my electorate a young soldier named Trew was scraped off a bus and crushed to death against one of the poles in the Terrace. That is a matter to which we should give serious attention.

The Minister for Mines: The lighting restrictions cannot be blamed for that. The driver was not even aware that men were hanging on to the bus. Be a little fair!

**MR. THORN:** If the lights had been on properly the driver would have seen the post. The point to which I draw attention is that transport is in such great demand today that buses are being overloaded. People cannot move in them, and frequently men hang on to the bus outside. Some action should be taken in the matter. On account of the present bad lighting and poor visibility at night something should be done to protect the lives of people. I am in deepest sympathy with the views of members from the back country. It is bad enough to drive on roads that are almost as perfect as a billiard table—we can be proud of our main roads in this State—but how our farmers and settlers in the country fare when driving at night puzzles me.

I hope action will be taken to introduce better and safer provisions. If the Government is not prepared to do that, let it put motorists off the road altogether. We have no right to allow anybody to drive on the roads at night when we know they cannot do so with safety, and are likely to kill people. The matter is serious and important enough for us to take the strongest possible action, and I sincerely hope it will be taken. Surely we can set up some system whereby if there is danger of a raid the alarm can be given, and then if anyone does not obey it and switch out his lights and get to the side of the road he should be sent to prison. If we organised the matter properly we could drive about our cities, and in the country, without danger to the travelling public.

**MR. J. H. SMITH (Nelson):** I support the motion. All members realise what a calamity this matter is to the community at present. Many deaths and tragedies occur. We appear to be living in an atmosphere of regulations. This Parliament should formulate some regulation under our present black-out and masked headlight system to prevent motorists from driving on the roads between sunset and sunrise. More deaths and tragedies have occurred since these regulations have been in force than would ever occur from air-raids. Something should be done. The present restrictions should be lifted, and that should be done in my electorate where no danger from air-raids is likely to arise. The same thing strikes me as was remarked on by the member for Toodyay. The military authorities demand these regulations and yet

every night we can see them committing breaches. I saw two instances of glaring headlights last night. One was, I think, vehicle No. 9 U.S.A. Just the tops of that motor's headlights were painted over for a distance of about three inches and the remainder gave off a glaring light. If the principle applies to the goose, it should apply to the gander.

**MR. SAMPSON (Swan):** If the regulations would assist the war effort everyone would endeavour to carry them out, no matter how great the inconvenience. But when the position is as we know it to be, that every night the Rottnest lighthouse flashes out its message, can anyone believe that the non-showing of lights in Perth can possibly mislead the enemy as to the location of the capital? It would be a simple matter to find Fremantle by the Rottnest lighthouse and then, with the immense amount of water around Perth, there would be no difficulty, even on the darkest night, for anyone to know exactly his position. I agree with the members for Pingelly and Wagin, and the country members in particular, that there is equal if not more danger in the country than in Perth. It is an exceedingly difficult matter to move about the city and how tram drivers manage to get through their duties without killing even more people than are now being killed, is difficult to understand. We will not trick the enemy by cutting out some lights. That cannot be effected. It is a fact, unfortunately, that, although there are regulations and efforts are made for them to be carried out, they are not being observed 100 per cent. Further, even if the lights were all full on, I do not believe it would have any effect.

**Mr. North:** They often bomb in the daytime!

**Mr. SAMPSON:** That is my firm conviction. I say that because of my previous remarks concerning the Rottnest lighthouse. That beacon must continue to flash out the information regarding the port of Fremantle. We should come back to earth and not expect or wish that, because great inconvenience is caused and a long death roll is being created, success will follow the regulations covering the brown-out or black-out conditions. It is my firm conviction that they are futile and pathetic!

**MR. BERRY** (Irwin-Moore): I support the motion. We have had many reasons given to show that the black-out is a constant danger. We are given to understand that by a process of black-out we will prevent enemy planes from coming over Perth, or over the country. It will do nothing of the sort. So long as we have the river there will always be the danger, black-out or no black-out. Further, what is the use of endangering and destroying life for the purpose of doing something which cannot be achieved? Various members have told us that in the country people are driving around at night with lights blacked-out and meeting military trucks with headlights full on. That condition prevails anywhere outside the metropolitan area and probably in it, too. I have actually been in a bus together with 30, 40 or 50 other people on the trip to Safety Bay when it crashed into a herd of driven cattle. The reason that we crashed into these cattle was because we could not see them. If we are really endeavouring to kill the people we are going about it in a very right and proper manner. Furthermore, if it is our desire to increase vice in this State, what better method than to black-out the city? I cannot find one single point in favour of the black-out at this precise moment.

If the enemy comes he will find Perth, do not worry! If we have our lights on we can put them out. We can do that once the alarm is given. By going on night after night as we are, with everything in darkness, and bicycles being ridden on the streets and people walking across the roads, as described by members, we will only kill our own people. The member for Nelson, I think, said that we had lost more people by the black-out than by bombing. That is true, because we have not had the bombs!

The Minister for Mines: You were on a win that time.

Mr. J. H. Smith: I said that we have lost more than we ever will from bombing.

Mr. BERRY: We are wasting life by the legislation introduced as a result of panic. I defy anyone to contradict that statement.

Mr. Thorn: That is the cause of it.

Mr. BERRY: On the 7th December last we dived into a horrible state of panic in this country. We should have organised dispassionately then and not rushed in like a lot of madmen. The black-out regulations were introduced. Certain machinery has

been provided to implement and work them; so we come back to the old story of the man who is paid to do something. We jolly well have to put up with it because it is a paid job, and he will not give up without a struggle. That, I maintain, is the position now. Here again I defy the military authorities to contradict my statement. They set up a department to control civil defence matters; officials have been appointed to it and are being paid for the work they have to undertake. We shall have to continue with the black-out, whether it is good or bad—just to give someone a job. I do not know how other members or other people feel on this matter, but I am fed up to the back teeth with the multiplicity of fatuous silly anomalies that have been set up under the cloak of war effort, and this is one of them.

**MR. W. HEGNEY** (Pilbara): I wish to express my opinion regarding the black-out and brown-out. I have no hesitation in saying that the whole matter is a farce from beginning to end. There is no consistency whatever about the regulations, particularly from the practical standpoint. Mention has been made of, the Rottneest light blinking, whereas the whole of Fremantle, apart from the harbour itself, is blacked out. It may be of interest to members if I quote from the Sydney "Century," a reference to the recent trial black-out that was held in that city. Under the headings: "Harbour Lights. International Law and Black-out," the article included the following:—

Apparently in computing light consumption, Lazzarini did not take into account the result of turning off all the street lights. So Bob had to give Bert a lesson in elementary lighting arithmetic. But the real joke of the black-out was the reason why harbour navigation lights were not blacked-out during the test. With impressive gravity, the authorities announced that to black-out these lights would be a breach of international law.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would direct the hon. member's attention to the fact that all we are discussing on this motion is the lighting of the vehicles. It has nothing to do with the brown-out or the black-out.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I think the whole question is covered by the motion, particularly the last paragraph which suggests that all papers dealing with the negotiations between the Minister and others be laid on

the Table of the House, and I respectfully suggest that I am quite in order.

Mr. SPEAKER: That reference affects only the lighting of motor vehicles.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I think the motion covers all aspects.

Mr. Seward: The exemptions I referred to include the lights that you are speaking about.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: Yes. Paragraph (b) of the motion reads—

That all papers relative to the advice of military authorities and to the consultations between the Government of this State, the Minister for Home Security, and the Military Commandant, both prior to and later than the 22nd day of May, 1942, be laid on the Table of the House.

I interpret that to refer to all papers dealing with the lighting restrictions as a whole.

Mr. Seward: That is so.

Mr. SPEAKER: And I interpret it to refer to the lighting of vehicles only.

The Minister for Mines: All these phases are dealt with on the one file.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: The Minister for Mines says that the file deals with all phases of lighting restriction. I do not wish to move to disagree with your ruling, Mr. Speaker, and, if you persist in restricting the debate to the lighting of motor cars, I shall have to abide by your decision.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have listened to the remarks of other members, and they confined their attention to the lighting of vehicles.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: Then do you still adhere to your ruling, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: That being so I shall not proceed further along the lines I was following, except to say in a general way that the black-out restrictions appear to be an absolute farce. Mention was made of the position at Meekatharra and Marble Bar. Unless one has travelled through the back country, one cannot appreciate the disabilities under which the people are labouring in the far northern areas. I have no hesitation in saying it is absolutely impossible for a motorist in the back country to travel with any degree of safety at night if he complies with the lighting restrictions. To ask him to do so is absolutely futile. It may be said that motorears should be kept off the road but, on innumerable occasions in the country areas when travel by night is absolutely necessary, motor

vehicles represent the only available form of transport unless one is prepared to walk exceedingly long distances.

Mr. Patrick: Doctors have to travel at night.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: Yet they are obliged to comply with the lighting restrictions, just as are other civilians. Anyone acquainted with conditions obtaining in the back country must realise that the application of the regulations there is totally impracticable, and is calculated to develop a feeling of defeatism among the people. I remember reading recently in "Hansard" a statement that on a farming property a tree had fallen across the fence and the farmer was engaged in burning it up so as to repair the fence. An inspector informed him that he would have to put the fire out at night. The official who instructed him along those lines had to carry out certain obligations under the Civil Defence Regulations, but that incident shows how ridiculous it is to police the regulations in that spirit. To be consistent, the Bush Fires Act would have to be amended. If people in the country areas light fires to burn off on their properties, they immediately commit a breach of the regulations.

Recently in the North-West a man had to be driven in from the hilly country to the hospital. It was the only way in which he could be taken to the township. The owner did not have any opportunity to procure masks for his motor headlights, and he ran the risk of prosecution for a breach of the regulations. Not only from the standpoint of the lighting restrictions upon motor vehicles, but from whatever standpoint one may view this question, I hope the House will unanimously agree to the motion submitted by the member for Pingelly and that in the near future—I know that you, Mr. Speaker, are most interested in the brown-out and black-out—we shall be able to welcome an opportunity for a discussion on the whole problem.

MR. WATTS (Katanning): The portion of the motion that interests me most is that which seeks the tabling of papers regarding the negotiations that took place between the Minister, the Department of Home Security, and the military authorities.

#### *Point of Order.*

The Minister for Mines: On a point of order! The position should be cleared up

before the debate proceeds any further. You have ruled, Mr. Speaker, that the debate can proceed only on the question of lighting restrictions as applying to motor vehicles. I give the House my assurance that, if the ruling is maintained, I shall not be able to reply effectively to the debate concerning the contents of the file, because throughout the record of conversations and the correspondence there was no segregation of the different phases of the application of the lighting restrictions. If you adhere to your ruling, Sir, it will be impossible for me to place on the Table a file dealing only with the restrictions upon lights attached to motor vehicles. It will be impossible for me to set out the attitude of the Government because at no time and at no place have the various phases of the question been dealt with separately. In the circumstances the matter should be cleared up, because it will make all the difference to the attitude I shall be able to adopt.

Mr. Seward: When dealing with the motion I enumerated certain lighting that was excluded from the operation of the regulations. These lights are particularly mentioned in the regulations—harbour lights, lights on boats at sea, lights at aerodromes and on aircraft. They are specifically mentioned as being exempt, so I take it that in the circumstances those lights can be dealt with under this motion.

Mr. Speaker: I have no option but to rule that the motion deals with motor lighting. When the member for Pingelly opened his remarks, he pointed out that he had not included all lighting because two other members had notices on the paper, and that he would deal only with motor lighting. If it was otherwise, those members who have had their notices struck off the paper would not be able to move subsequently. I do not think I have any option but to rule that the motion applies to the lighting of motor vehicles.

Mr. Thorn: I take it that the motion may be amended?

Mr. Speaker: Yes, but the hon. member, having already spoken, cannot move an amendment.

Mr. Seward: You did not understand me quite correctly, Mr. Speaker. I said that I would deal with headlamps because there was really no objection to the indicator, tail and stop-lamps. The only mention I made

of the other notices of motion was that I had placed mine on the notice paper in anticipation of those members not being here to move their motions, and I did not want the debate to lapse today. I did not deal with indicator, tail and stop-lights. The exemptions I mentioned are specified in the regulations as follows:—

This Order shall not apply to—

- (a) Any light displayed by any member of the Armed Forces acting in the course of his duty as such;
- (b) Any light displayed with the consent of the Naval Board from a lighthouse or other structure on shore, or from a light vessel or other floating structure, being a light provided solely for the guidance of shipping;
- (c) navigation lights displayed on ships under the instructions or with the consent of the Naval Board; and
- (d) navigation lights on aircrafts or other lights displayed at aerodromes in accordance with instructions given by or on behalf of the Minister of State for Air.

All those lights are specifically mentioned in the order as lights to which the order shall not apply.

Mr. Speaker: I must rule that the motion refers to the lighting of vehicles only. The motion begins—

That this House is of opinion that the Lighting of Motor Vehicles Order published in the "Government Gazette" of the 22nd May last constitutes a menace to public safety, is imposing unnecessary hardship on drivers of both public and private motor vehicles, and is particularly impracticable in country districts.

That is the substance of the motion. If the motion has not been framed as the hon. member desired, it does not alter the position. The motion deals with the lighting of vehicles.

#### *Debate Resumed.*

Mr. WATTS: When I have finished my remarks, I hope, by moving an amendment, to cure the difficulty arising from your ruling, Mr. Speaker. I cannot at this stage do so because I should have to confine my remarks to the amendment. It appears to me extraordinary that it should be alleged, as I believe it has been alleged, that the existing regulations have been made in consequence of the wish of the High Command. I find—as other members have found and have stated here today—that the people who most flagrantly offend against the regulations, who show glaring headlights from motor vehicles which can be seen a mile or

more away, are those who are driving vehicles belonging to the Army. It does not seem possible that the Army authorities can be so stupid and negligent as to allow men under their guidance to drive vehicles lighted as I have mentioned, if they were the people who recommended that these stringent provisions applicable to civilians should be included in the regulations.

The Minister for Labour: The Army can do no wrong.

Mr. WATTS: That is not the point. The Army authorities may think they can do no wrong but, if they do, I am firmly of the belief that they would not ask the public generally to accept restrictions of the nature of those imposed upon them if they themselves were the first to ask that those restrictions be re-imposed in the form they are after having been disallowed by the Legislative Council. I want to know how and why the present regulations came into operation under the National Security Act. What type of request was made and what sort of negotiations took place between the departmental heads referred to previous to the re-enactment under the National Security Act of these restrictive regulations?

If the matter was so urgent, why were five weeks or more allowed to elapse between the time the Legislative Council disallowed the regulations under the Civil Defence (Emergency Powers) Act of this State, and the time when the new regulations were promulgated under the National Security Act? Why was the matter not dealt with in a very few days? It seems to me that there is more in this than meets the eye. If there is not, if we so find after we have seen the papers, I would be the first to say I was satisfied I was wrong. But it is essential that this House should see the papers and ascertain why it was that the rights of this State Parliament should be taken away from it, and the obligation imposed upon the people of this State to submit to National Security Regulations over which we have no control. Why is it that New South Wales has not the National Security Regulations? Is it so close to Canberra that it can bring its ideas more strongly to bear upon the Commonwealth authorities, or is it because the Government of that State knows its rights? Why is it that South Australia has not got National Security Regulations? It may be argued that South Australia is perhaps not so vulnerable as Western Aus-

tralia is, but I submit that New South Wales is more vulnerable. It is certainly nearer at present to the main seat of enemy operations.

Mr. WARNER: The people of Sydney have had a taste of enemy shell-fire.

[Mr. Withers took the Chair.]

Mr. WATTS: Yes, they have experienced enemy action in their city. What need is there at present for the restrictions to be imposed upon our people in the manner they are, restrictions carrying with them as they do the risks to human life? By what means is it supposed from the 22nd May to this time that at night there has been any considerable risk of enemy air operations over this city or over the South-Western District of the State—I say “South-Western District” advisedly? These localities are as far from any enemy base as is Japan from those parts of China from which, we were told, Japan was inaccessible. There is no prospect of an enemy attack being made by air at night-time from a land base either at present or during the period over which these regulations have been in force, so far as the metropolitan area and the south-western portion of the State are concerned, because there is nowhere whence attacking aircraft could come and return. If the Japanese had a base in the northern part of Western Australia, those arguments naturally would not apply. Then there would have to be a reconsideration of the position. But as the position has stood since the 22nd May, what justification has there been for these stringent restrictions to be imposed, to the danger of the public?

I also want to know whether there is any prospect of an air-raid upon this capital city or on the South-West at night-time, the only time we are concerned with as regards lighting restrictions, from an aircraft carrier. I have discussed the matter with two or three naval officers with whom I have come in contact and they assure me that as regards night-time it is extremely difficult, if not impracticable, to take off from and land on an aircraft carrier. Consequently there must be only a scanty chance—I am not sufficiently versed in the matter to say there is no chance—of any operation of that kind taking place at night-time either in this capital city or in the south-western part of the State. Therefore I ask, why have these drastic regulations been imposed, causing a substantial number of our fellow-



citizens to be killed—many of them in most unfortunate circumstances directly attributable to the black-out regulations? The Government has much to answer for in this respect. It is useless for any member to sit smiling when other members on both sides of the House offer their criticisms. There must be a complete case to explain, if it can be explained, for what purpose these regulations have been re-imposed for the last few months in the circumstances that we have been discussing.

The Minister for Mines: Is it so unusual for the Minister for Mines to smile?

Mr. WATTS: Now let us turn for a moment to the position of persons in the country districts. Shortly after these new regulations were imposed under National Security, I was approached by local authorities in my district who told me something which I in fact knew without being told, that it was extremely difficult, if not impracticable, to drive motor vehicles with the prescribed headlight masks over country roads. I made representations to that effect to the Minister for Civil Defence and received from him one of his customary pleasant and courteous replies. To the reply as such I take no exception whatever; but I wish to quote what seems to me to be the chief paragraph in it, to the effect that the Minister hoped to be able to ensure that everybody got the maximum of light allowed by the regulations.

At that time I did not quite know what the maximum of light allowed was; but a few days ago Mr. Long and Sergeant Gray came to my district, and I had the opportunity subsequently of seeing a vehicle on which the approved headlights had been duly fixed; and I have no hesitation in saying that the amount of light which emanated from those lamps as fixed up was totally inadequate for safe driving over any road, whatever the time of year, and especially inadequate for driving on back country roads when wet, corrugated, or slippery, as so many of them are, more particularly in these days when it is becoming increasingly difficult for local authorities to keep their roads in good order by reason of lack of manpower and loss of possession of their machinery that has been taken over for defence purposes. Driving over corrugated roads at 20 miles per hour one finds it next door to impossible to avoid accidents, because at 20 miles an hour the fate of the motorist is to be in the ditch in

a very few minutes. Usually an extraordinary type of side-slip sets up, and the vehicle cannot be kept in control. Then the speed has to be increased to 30 or 35 miles per hour, in which case the driver immediately offends against the regulations. In any event, one cannot drive with the headlights one is supposed to use. Having seen the type of headlights that accords with the regulations, I cannot but state that they are totally inadequate; and unless the Minister and those responsible under him are quite prepared to change their tune in this matter, it is useless to make any further personal representations.

Very great hardship is occasioned to people who are compelled, for one reason or other, to use the roads at night-time, people who cannot avoid using them. The transport officer of St. John's Ambulance at Katanning came to me shortly after the promulgation of these regulations and said, "I shall be unable to take the ambulance out at night if I have to use lights of this kind." This ambulance goes out occasionally 60 or 70 miles from Katanning in case of accident, and the transport officer assured me that he would be unable to go out at night unless he could get rid of those headlights. As the member for Pingelly has pointed out, there are ways and means of getting rid of them. The transport officer, I have no doubt, will be obliged to break the regulations in order to save human life. In the circumstances in which we find ourselves, knowing where the enemy is at the moment, knowing his capacity at the moment to attack this country at night, we ought not to countenance the retention of these regulations in their present form. If we do, we shall certainly have a great many more people killed on our roads. There may be some justification for action that has been taken in the northern portion of the State—I do not know, and shall not make any statement on the subject—but I do contend that there is little justification for the application of the existing regulations either in Perth or in the South-West.

Now, in order that this discussion may not be narrowed down and the Minister put to difficulties if the motion is carried, I move an amendment—

That in line 4 after the word "last" the words "and the Civil Defence Regulations generally" be inserted.

I hope the motion will be carried and that the Government will do something reasonable to make the life of the motorist possible.

I would not for one moment be the driver of a bus in the metropolitan area today. It is not a question of wanting a fair wage; by the Holy Prophet, I would require a very high wage to undertake that work at the present time. My sympathy goes out to the men who, for so many months past, have carried on that work with what I regard as very few accidents in view of the perils of their employment. I hope some relief will be speedily afforded to them. I also trust that the Government will ensure that if it can put a little black paint on the headlights of trams, it will be satisfied with a little black paint on the lamps of motor vehicles, so that these may be driven in safety by their owners on their lawful occasions. They would then be able to see where they are going.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I suggest to the member for Katanning that his amendment is not in the right place and that he should add it to Subclause (b).

Mr. WATTS: Very good! I accept your suggestion and ask that the amendment be made near the end of paragraph (b), after the figures "1941."

MR. HILL (Albany—on amendment): I support the amendment, because in my opinion it is absolutely essential that there should be some modification of these regulations. As members are aware, I represent a vital district. Albany has been referred to as one of the best blacked-out towns in Australia; nevertheless, the residents desire some amelioration of the black-out conditions. Recently I was speaking to a naval officer and a military officer, both of whom hold responsible positions and both of whom desire a modification of these regulations.

The Minister for Mines: At Albany?

Mr. HILL: Yes. The military officer took a very commonsense view of the matter. He said that Albany residents were black-out-minded, and that therefore, should it be necessary to reimpose the black-out regulations, the job would be an easy one. The street-lighting is something that could be improved without much trouble, because it is controlled by a master switch and black-out conditions could be restored at any time within a couple of minutes. I hope members will give serious consideration to the motion, so that the people may be protected from civil danger as well as from a possible attack by the enemy.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison—on amendment): I am sorry the amendment has been moved. I was inclined to support the motion as submitted to the House, but even now I am doubtful whether it is altogether in order. I thought that perhaps you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, would rule the amendment out of order because of other notices of motion appearing on the notice paper.

The Minister for Mines: But those motions have elapsed.

Mr. MARSHALL: If that is the case, it makes all the difference. Viewing the two lapsed motions and the one we are now discussing, to which an amendment has been moved, it would appear that there has been an understanding between the movers.

Mr. Doney: I do not think so.

Mr. Seward: There has been no undertaking on my part.

Mr. MARSHALL: From the wording of the three motions, and from the expressed desire of the member for Pingelly that he did not wish his motion to conflict with the two motions which have lapsed—

Mr. Seward: There were three notices of motion on the notice paper dealing with the one subject.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is so. The amendment, if carried, will deny to the other two members the right to discuss these regulations during the session. Both those members are, unfortunately, ill, and they were denied the opportunity last session to speak to these regulations.

Mr. Thorn: One of them is not ill.

Mr. MARSHALL: I understand both are ill. Both have given notices of motion to deal with what is the subject-matter of the amendment, and they should be given some little credit for their initiative. This the amendment will deny them; all the credit will go to the mover of the motion now before the Chair.

Mr. McDonald: What does credit matter? It is the subject that matters—people's lives!

Mr. MARSHALL: I have my own viewpoint.

Mr. Doney: With which no one agrees.

Mr. McDonald: And I have mine, too.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am more inclined to the view expressed in one of the other motions. The present motion, even with the amendment, will preclude members from

discussing the points raised in the other motions.

Mr. Doney: Did you not suggest collusion between the three members?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

[Resolved: That motions be continued.]

Mr. MARSHALL: I only made that statement because the wording of the three motions implied what I said and the statement made by the member for Pingelly, to a degree, conformed to that idea. If the amendment is carried, what I wish to have tested in this Chamber will not be tested. The substance of the motion and the amendment is that papers shall be laid upon the Table of the House. Those papers would certainly give the information sought, but that would not get us anywhere so far as concerns a direction or request to the Government to do something we want done.

Mr. Seward: It is part of the motion.

Mr. MARSHALL: Would the motion indicate to the Government, or the Premier, exactly what is required? I say, no! It is requested that the regulations be modified. Modified in what direction? I may want them modified in one way; some other member may want them modified in a different way. If a vote were taken, the House would be well divided as to what modification should be made. I favour one of the other motions. That would get us somewhere. This motion, as amended, will not. I am not particularly concerned whether the amendment is carried. What I fear is that, if it is carried, it will deny me the opportunity to discuss this matter further during the present session. That is where we are getting to. It is no use our saying that the regulations should be modified. We should point out in what way they should be modified. Should additional lighting be allowed, and, if so, how much? The other motion definitely says what is wanted, and that is the one I favour.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: That motion is not before the Chair.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am not discussing it but merely comparing the two motions from the point of view of adequacy. Where will this motion get us if we finally carry it? All that is asked for is a modification and that certain papers be laid on the Table. Almost every session we have listened to requests for a modification of the lighting of mobile units and of trams, trolley buses,

omnibuses and railway trains, and of the city generally. But we never get beyond asking for a modification. Nobody has definitely stated to what extent a modification is desirable. Nothing has been specifically set down. If this motion, with or without the amendment, is carried, what is the State Premier to do? What case has he to present? Can he go to the Federal authorities and merely say, "I want a modification?" That is all the motion directs him to do. Is the Premier, or the State's delegate, to be left without any information as to what this Chamber really wants? The degree of modification required is not stated in the motion, which gets us nowhere.

What is wanted by every one of us—including the mover of the motion and the mover of the amendment—is that it should be specifically stated that we require an improved lighting system for mobile units and stationary units, a better system than is in force today. The motion does not ask for that. It is not fair to the State's delegate to say to him, "There is the direction we have given you. We ask for a modification. Now use your discretion as to how much you modify it." Apart from asking for a modification, the motion merely desires that certain papers should be tabled. I suppose that when they are tabled, they will be like scores of documents I have seen laid on the Table since I have been here. They will be perused by the individuals concerned and then quietly returned to their homes in some office. The tabling of papers does not get us anywhere. What we do want is to have this city and mobile units better lighted. That is what we want, and we should say so.

We ought to say definitely to what extent we want that done. We need to say also whether it should apply to the whole of the State, or only portion of it. The motion does not go that far. I agree with the remarks of those who have spoken to the motion and to the amendment as to the dangers that ever confront motorists who drive at night under conditions imposed by these regulations. One has only to walk along the city streets to realise the great danger that exists, and it can be fully appreciated how much that risk is aggravated when a man attempts to drive on improved roads that are none too straight or wide. I agree with all that has been

said, but am stressing the uselessness of merely asking for a modification. What does that mean? It gets us nowhere.

There is an aspect of the matter upon which I would like the Minister to make some pronouncement. What is the legal responsibility of the driver of a mobile unit who figures in an accident when driving under the conditions imposed by these regulations? Is it a fair thing to render liable at law a man who of necessity must drive under conditions verging on the impossible, and who in doing so innocently takes the life of another? If such a man is liable, the regulations should immediately be removed. That is not justice, or British fair play.

Mr. J. Hegney: In that case he is covered by emergency regulations.

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not know whether he is covered, or who is covered. I know that many scores of people have been covered—by six feet of soil. According to figures I received only a few days ago, 78 people have been killed in this city since the 31st December. I was prepared to give favourable consideration to this motion provided it did not impair my right to express myself in the future.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: It will not.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, it will. Once a decision is given on this motion, I doubt very much whether Mr. Speaker will permit me to engage in a discussion on a similar subject later on. I do not propose to support either the motion or the amendment. I refuse to do so because the motion lacks sufficient instruction. There is too much indecision in it. It does not convey to our State delegate what we really want. If we cannot decide what we want, we have no right to impose that responsibility on our delegate to the Eastern States.

Mr. Thorn: If this motion contained everything you desire, and were carried, do you think it would be given effect to?

Mr. MARSHALL: No! As a matter of fact, I do not think we count for much.

Mr. Thorn: That is what I think.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is the attitude I adopt. It is no use asking for a modification or a review of the regulations unless we set down specifically and definitely to what extent we desire amendments to be made; to what extent we want an improvement of the position. It is not impossible to draft a motion to give effect to our de-

sires. We could say, for instance, that we think that brown-outs, black-outs and all other "outs" should go out all over the State until a period of time has elapsed and then instead of all being out, all would be in. We would be in total darkness.

*[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]*

The Minister for Lands: You agree that preparation for a total black-out would be our best safeguard.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is so. This motion does not do that; neither does the amendment. It seeks a modification but does not say to what extent. It asks for papers to be laid on the Table of the House. That would be useless. It gets us nowhere, and I therefore refuse to vote for it.

MR. FOX (South Fremantle—on amendment): I agree with many of the views expressed by the member for Murchison. It might be a good idea if the motion and amendment were withdrawn and members given an opportunity to discuss the matter at some future time. I do not know if that would be in order.

Mr. Seward: We have waited long enough.

Mr. FOX: The hon. member would not have to wait much longer. I do not think he will get finality today. I am in accordance with many of the views expressed. We have gone too far in this black-out business. It is bad in the country. Immediately people get beyond the town area they should be permitted to put their lights full on. Several fatalities have occurred during the last 12 months in the district I represent. These accidents are quite unnecessary. Fancy driving in the bush with the little bit of light permitted in the metropolitan area! There is just one consolation, although it does not amount to much. I was in the Eastern States recently, where they do things quite as stupidly as we do. I was in a country district there and I drove three miles one day and on the way out only saw one man ploughing a paddock. I returned in the evening and could not see anybody. They have, perhaps, even less light than we have in this State. The member for Albany said that Albany was the most blacked-out town in Australia. I do not think that is correct.

Mr. Hill: That is the opinion of outsiders.

Mr. FOX: If members go to Fremantle on a dark night they will not be able to see anybody in the streets. The black-out is not as severe in the Eastern States as here. The No. 1 danger area in Melbourne is near Williamstown where all the street lights are on but have a shade over them. In Fremantle no street lights are on notwithstanding that the harbour is a blaze of light and that the schools occupied by the military authorities are all lit up and, as another member said, the harbour lights are blinking all the time, as is also the Rott-nest lighthouse. It is essential that transport should be kept going and that the lights should be on for that purpose, but I understand there is a switch at the harbour so that in the event of an alarm all the lights can be extinguished at once. I cannot see why we should not have some arrangement in the metropolitan area whereby all the lights could be switched out with one switch.

Mr. North: After reasonable warning.

Mr. FOX: Yes. Surely we should have an hour's warning of any planes approaching.

The Minister for Mines: What, an hour?

Mr. FOX: Yes.

Members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. FOX: Reconnaissance planes are always out, and I fail to see how we will be unexpectedly raided here. If we are raided would not members expect that a convoy would come down the west coast with an aircraft carrier? In that event our reconnaissance planes would surely pick up the convoy. We should not have a night raid because I understand that to get back to the aircraft carriers the planes need daylight.

Mr. Doney: You will have to make your arrangements with the enemy.

Mr. FOX: No. I understand they need daylight to return to the aircraft carriers. On a moonlight night they could follow the contours of the coast and pick out any place they desired. Another reason why we should have the black-out restrictions lifted a little is because of the heat we will shortly be enduring. If one's home is blacked out, as it is in Fremantle where there is no brown-out—people there are likely to be prosecuted if not properly blacked out and cases are frequently coming before the court in Fremantle over the matter—conditions become very oppressive at night-time. The

doors have to be shut and people have to sit outside or have no light inside, because it is impossible to stay indoors on a warm night with the house properly blacked out. The black-out has been overdone. Something sensible should be done. If the black-out continues as in the past, a number of people at present alive will be in the cemetery by this time next year.

**MR. McDONALD** (West Perth—on amendment): Before the Minister replies—

Mr. Doney: You are only speaking on the amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question before the Chair is that the words proposed to be inserted be inserted.

Mr. McDONALD: I want to speak on the motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: When I resumed the Chair the Deputy-Speaker advised me that the question before the Chair was that the words proposed to be inserted be inserted.

Amendment put and passed.

**MR. McDONALD** (West Perth): I hope the House will do something practical with regard to this question. Whatever we may think, the public has already made up its mind, and by an overwhelming majority the people of this State have decided that these regulations need to be overhauled. They have definitely come to that conclusion whatever our individual opinions may be. This House has an obligation to the public and to its own self-respect to ensure that these regulations are, as far as possible, brought into conformity with defence requirements and commonsense provisions for the safety of the people. This civil defence question was by agreement reserved to be a State matter. That was the initial arrangement at the inception of the war, and we proceeded to deal with it as a State matter and passed legislation, and set up our Civil Defence Council. But when the regulations made under the State Act were disallowed. Mr. Lazzarini stepped in and assumed over-riding powers. The assumption is that the intellect of one, Lazzarini, is more than equal to the intellect of 80 members of this Parliament, I for one respectfully beg to disagree with that proposition. I think, however, it may be argued with some force if this Parliament does not find itself able to make some sensible regulation to overcome these particular difficulties, then we cannot complain of another authority intervening.

The member for Murchison said quite correctly that this motion was rather vague. But it cannot be otherwise for the time being. I see no difficulty. If the motion is agreed to, as I hope it will be, as soon as members who are interested have had an opportunity to read the relevant papers, I suggest the Minister should co-opt three or four members of this House to discuss with him what modifications might be made in the regulations. After this debate I think that any member could draw up from the remarks made by the various speakers five or six heads under which it is thought the regulations should be modified quite apart from his knowledge of what the public require in this respect. If the Minister will do that and later tabulate the views of the selected co-opted members—we do not need the appointment of a Select Committee for the purpose—and refer those views to the Civil Defence Council, the opinions of which should be obtained, and also to the military authorities, to whose views great weight must attach, then I think we would have the basis for some sensible modifications of the regulations so as to meet at once the demands of defence and, on the other hand, the requirements of the people for better protection than they have been afforded to date. I shall not dwell at this hour on my own experiences of the brown-out. There could have been a vacancy in the representation of the West Perth constituency on Saturday night last, but I had no desire to be a martyr to lend support to the motion under discussion.

It seems to me that a regulation requiring the application of car-lighting restrictions in places like Wiluna represents an insult to the intelligence of the Japanese. The time has long since gone when our military authorities were able to regard the Japanese as inferior airmen. Although members representing northern inland constituencies may mistake their chief towns as of more importance than the metropolis of the State, I do not think any Japanese airman will do so. If the Japanese want to go to Perth, they will go—light or no light. If they want to go to Wiluna, they will go irrespective of whether the local police constable has lights burning on the car in front of his office, or has no lights whatever. It will make no difference at all to the Japanese.

I trust the motion will be carried promptly. It has remained on the notice paper for five weeks and the people are getting tired of nothing being done. If

the motion is carried, with sensible co-operation between members of this House, the Civil Defence Council and the military authorities, something should be arrived at that will meet the situation and indicate that we have the capacity to deal with what is comparatively a minor problem.

**MR. TONKIN** (North-East Fremantle).

I move an amendment—

That a new paragraph be added as follows:—(c) That the Government take up with the Service Chiefs the matter of existing brown-out and black-out restrictions with a view to their modification.

My amendment is designed to make it possible for the Minister to reply to the debate in the way he desires and to enable members to deal with the question as they wish. Beyond doubt, something should be done as quickly as possible to remedy the present most unsatisfactory state of affairs. I live in a locality where it is possible to see the Rottnest light flashing every evening. That serves to indicate how ridiculous it is that the area around Fremantle must be completely blacked out while Rottnest light, which is visible from a distance of 60 miles, indicates exactly where the port of Fremantle is situated.

We are told that the restrictions are necessary in order to make it difficult for raiding planes to locate various targets in the Fremantle area and so that marauding airmen will find it extremely difficult to approach those targets from any great distance. If the Rottnest light is permitted to continue flashing, then, without the necessity for any other light whatsoever in or around Fremantle, the enemy airmen will know exactly where the port is situated. All that will be necessary for them to do is to go straight for the Rottnest light, which they can pick up 60 miles out to sea. As there is no intention of putting out the navigation lights, it seems to me merely foolish to insist upon the restrictions that have been imposed upon people in the Fremantle area. I have been told by soldiers who have returned from the Middle East that the black-out restrictions at Fremantle are far greater than those applying in Alexandria. That information has been conveyed to me not by two or three soldiers but by numbers of them. After I had heard that from two or three soldiers, I made further inquiries with a view to securing confirmation of the statement.

Mr. Watts: You are not the only one to be told that.

Mr. TONKIN: They have assured me quite definitely that our lighting restrictions are far more severe than those applying in Alexandria. They have told me that at that Egyptian port there has been very little boarding-up of shop fronts. Much glass has been left in windows although I think they said some material had been placed over the glass. They stated that the street lights were left burning although they were shaded, and that those lights were never put out except when a raid was imminent. In the area where I live no street lights are shown and it is extremely difficult to move round by night unless one carries a torch. If people are permitted to walk around flashing torches then we might just as well have shaded street lights.

Mr. J. Hegney: The torches have to be browned-out.

Mr. TONKIN: We are told that it is possible to see sky-glow at a great distance, and we are further informed that we must avoid lighting that will cause sky-glow, hence the shading of street lights. If these steps are necessary, let us have a suitable modification of the existing foolish provisions. I have endeavoured to ascertain the position that prevails in the other States. While I have not had the benefit of personal observation I have read considerably about the subject, and I have not been able to ascertain that anywhere else in the Commonwealth are the restrictions as severe as they are in Western Australia. Some members have recently returned from the Eastern States, and they state that in New South Wales and Victoria the restrictions are nothing like as drastic as they are here. By night one can see lights showing from dozens of windows in the Naval Depot at East Fremantle, as well as the harbour lights and the flash of the Rottnest light. In the circumstances, it seems foolish to impose upon the people severe restrictions that appear to be serving no good purpose.

If the lighting restrictions were in any way effective then the people should be asked to submit to the hardships and inconveniences entailed. On the other hand, while so many lights are displayed no good purpose can be served by imposing the restrictions. I am wondering how people will fare during the summer months. We can put up with the inconvenience now because

the weather has been cold and people have remained inside with doors and windows closed. But what will be the position in the height of summer when the only way to maintain a complete black-out is to keep doors closed? As soon as a door is opened the light shows outside and it will be necessary for those who live in a black-out area—the people of Fremantle, for instance—to keep their doors shut. This being so, they will be obliged to stay outside, and that is a thing we should endeavour to avoid. Urgent attention should be given to the question. I trust the Government will take up the matter with the Service Chiefs in an endeavour to have the restrictions very considerably modified.

#### THE DEPUTY PREMIER AND MINISTER FOR WORKS (on amendment):

We feel that this is a matter that should be dealt with promptly. We propose to give an opportunity tomorrow to finalise it. My colleague, the Minister for Civil Defence, will later move the adjournment of the debate, as he will need an opportunity to get the papers here, but we are anxious to have the matter dealt with promptly, and that will be possible only in the way I suggest. After members have satisfied themselves in respect of this discussion, the Minister for Civil Defence will move the adjournment and we shall so arrange the notice paper that the matter will be dealt with tomorrow.

Hon. N. Keenan: When you say "dealt with promptly," do you mean that the action asked for will be taken?

The DEPUTY PREMIER: The hon. member must not ask too much. I cannot promise what the Commonwealth Government will do. What I mean is that we will deal with this motion promptly and finalise it. But for the arrangement I have suggested, the motion would have to stand over until next Wednesday.

Mr. Marshall: You are prepared to put this motion in front of Government business tomorrow?

The DEPUTY PREMIER: Yes.  
Amendment put and passed.

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands): Before addressing myself to the motion as amended, I wish to acknowledge the great pains taken by the member for Pingelly in presenting the motion and the great mass of information he has made available to members. It will be of the greatest importance in help-

ing us to determine what we ought to do. I do not know whether the House appreciates that every State in Australia, except Western Australia, has made its own lighting regulations, as we once did. The history of the case is this: In common with every other State, we passed a civil defence Act, and under certain provisions of the Act, which I presume are much the same in all the States, certain lighting regulations were promulgated dealing with motor cars. I think this was done under a section giving the right to regulate lighting or the use of lights in streets and on roads. Another place disallowed the regulations, as it was perfectly entitled to do. Members there did not object to the whole of the regulations; they objected to only a portion relating to country districts, but under Standing Orders both here and in another place, the House cannot disallow a portion of a regulation; it must disallow the regulations in their entirety or not at all. So, to achieve the limited purpose in mind, another place was obliged to disallow the whole of the regulations. At that time it was within the power of the Minister to admit the views of another place and publish new regulations. But he did not do so.

Mr. J. Hegney: He was not here at the time.

Hon. N. KEENAN: He must have been here at the time the regulations were disallowed, and the fact remains that he did not promulgate new ones.

The Minister for Mines: I was in Melbourne at the time.

Hon. N. KEENAN: How long elapsed between the disallowance of the State regulations and the promulgation of the regulations by the Commonwealth?

The Minister for Mines: That is another question.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I do not know how long the Minister was in Melbourne, but on his return to Perth he could have taken action. In spite of that, for some obscure reason the Commonwealth Minister took action. These regulations now in force have not been promulgated by the State authority; they are Commonwealth regulations. This raises the very important question whether the Commonwealth has any power whatever to promulgate special regulations for Western Australia. The Commonwealth, under the Constitution, may not discriminate between one State and another, and we

know from what the member for Pingelly has brought before the House that the regulations in force in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia are of a character entirely different from the regulations in force in Western Australia, and are of a very much milder nature. I am told by people who have recently been in Melbourne that there is very little restriction in the way of the use of head-lights. The cars in the streets are all lighted up. In Sydney, which of all places in Australia one would think was most likely to be bombed, far more liberal regulations are in operation.

The Minister for Works: You need to be careful. There are members here who have recently been in Melbourne and Sydney.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I received my information from people who have recently been in Melbourne and Sydney. We all know that the Premier of South Australia, Mr. Playford, announced his intention of removing entirely the restriction on motor car head-lights in that State, except in a limited area from the coastline inland. The point has been emphasised that the main objection to the present regulations is possibly to be found in the fact that they do not apply to military vehicles, to tram cars or to trolley buses. Any person who uses the roads, complies with the regulations, and meets one of the young gentlemen driving a military motor vehicle with all the pace he can get out of it and with glaring head-lights, is absolutely at the mercy of that man. The civilian driver is blinded; he cannot take any steps to save himself; he can merely hope that the young military gentleman misses him, and he does not always do so.

Then we have our tram cars blazing with light, not merely from the head-lamps, but from the internal lighting, and the same remark applies to the trolley buses. Then we have the private cars of officers of the Army. A particularly high-ranking officer who lives in my neighbourhood goes off with his head-lights absolutely uncovered—not an atom of cover on them. I suppose the Minister has seen instances of that sort.

The Minister for Mines: The other night I met three convoys of eight military cars and they all had lights full on.

Hon. N. KEENAN: There is no exception to the rule; and that is the substance of the grievance. What is complained of is the obviously unnecessary. If it were



necessary, we cannot imagine the G.O.C. allowing it to be broken in such a flagrant manner by all these various persons. I hope something substantial will be done. As the member for Murchison has pointed out, it is no use passing a pious resolution. If the House does carry the motion, that will be useless unless, acting on what the motion wishes, the Minister will do it—unless, in fact, the Minister does it! In other words, I hope the Minister will approach the Commonwealth Government. In doing so he may very properly put the case that for Western Australia this regulation means something in the nature of discrimination, plainly in the nature of discrimination, and that the regulation is one which, if any exception was taken to it by the State Government, could readily be disallowed, provided action were taken in proper form. With that threat held over the heads of Commonwealth Ministers, I do not think our representative would be treated in the same cavalier fashion that is apparently customary in dealings between this State Government and the Federal authorities.

On motion by the Minister for Mines, debate adjourned.

### MOTION—LICENSING ACT.

#### *Liquor Trading Hours.*

**MRS. CARDELL-OLIVER** (Subiaco)  
[5.3]: I move—

That in the opinion of this House the Government should take immediate action to prohibit the sale of alcoholic 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.

This matter has been before the House on many occasions. There is little need for me to add anything except that almost every member who spoke on the Address-in-reply mentioned the fact that drink itself, was the means by which many girls today were finding themselves in court, and by which many other delinquencies arose. So I feel that I am not the inspiration of this motion, but merely the humble instrument in putting forward, through the motion, the views of every member of the Chamber. Thus the question may properly be dealt with, and I simply move the motion as it stands, without further ado, trusting that it will receive the approval of the House and that it will be dealt with immediately, since to this State it is a very, very urgent matter. The

public expects us to do something about this matter; and I feel that if we can in some way deal with this and one or two other important subjects during the next few days, some sort of confidence may be restored in this House.

On motion by Mr. Seward, debate adjourned.

### MOTION—BETTING.

#### *As to Closing S.P. Premises.*

**MRS. CARDELL-OLIVER** (Subiaco)  
[5.6]: I move—

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.

In this instance, too, I shall refrain from making a long speech. The matter has been debated so often in this Chamber that there is absolutely no necessity to say more about it than what has been so often said already, namely, that every day on which the starting-price betting shops remain open we are allowing the law to be broken, and that as lawmakers it is our duty to see that the law we have made is obeyed.

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

*House adjourned at 5.8 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

*Thursday, 3rd September, 1912.*

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

### QUESTIONS (3).

#### CIVIL DEFENCE.

*Local Authorities and A.R.P. Expenditure.*

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister for Mines: 1, What is the total amount of the