

suggestion that the powers conferred by that section have been abused. I would like now to place before hon. members a letter recently received by the Commissioner of Public Health showing the view that is taken of Western Australian legislation in other parts of the world. During the last couple of years we have had requests from many countries for copies of our legislation and reports as to how it has worked. The President of the Chicago Medical Society wrote to the Commissioner of Public Health on the 15th April of this year as follows:—

I received a few days ago a copy of your annual report for 1917, for which I am writing to thank you. I have read with much interest your comments upon your Western Australian Venereal Act. I have been greatly interested in that legislation since it first came to my knowledge. I became acquainted with it upon looking up the literature of legislation in regard to the venereal diseases a few years ago, and I gave an editorial to it in the Journal of the American Medical Association, in which I wrote a series of editorials on activities throughout the world in regard to the control of venereal diseases. At that time I expressed the feeling that it would probably be a long time before any American Commonwealth would have the enlightenment to adopt such legislation. Much to my surprise, however, within a year I was able, at the invitation of the Health Commissioner of Chicago, to suggest your Western Australian Act, with slight modifications, for Chicago, and practically without a dissenting vote, it was adopted. This was the first time of its adoption, I believe, in the United States. Since that time it has been adopted in a modified form by the State of Illinois, and has become well known as the Western Australian Act. It seems to me to be far and away the most intelligent application of law to the venereal problem that we have had, and I am glad to have this opportunity to congratulate its author.

The remaining clauses of the Bill provide for the reprinting of the principal Act and its amendments. It also corrects a typographical error in Section 188 of the principal Act. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW (Metropolitan-Suburban) [8.20]: As one who was responsible in some measure for helping to shape the Health Act as it was originally drafted, and having had the privilege of reading the comments of the Commissioner of Public Health on its working during the years it has been in force, I desire to support the second reading of the Bill now before the House. During the time I was in the Eastern States I had the pleasure of speaking to those in authority there in connection with health matters. Our Act has been copied, to a certain extent, in the Eastern States and I have no hesitation in saying that we have far and

away the best Act that has yet been introduced in Australia in connection with this subject. I quite recognise that the provisions that were inserted originally in the Bill as it was drafted—a portion of which was drafted, I believe, through my influence—have proved that further powers should be given to the Commissioner, so that the measure may work smoothly. I am not wedded entirely to my own ideas, but I hope to be able to take advantage of the experience which has been gained in the working of the Act. The Act has not yet had a fair chance. Owing to the absence of medical men, all that might have been done in connection with the working of the Act has not been done. Now that things are becoming settled, and with the advent of more medical men here, and probably with additional help for the Health Department, we will be able to do something towards curbing venereal disease in Western Australia.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, &c.

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

House adjourned at 8.56 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 2nd September, 1919.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION—MAIMED SOLDIERS, RAIL AND TRAM PASSES.

Mr. O'LOUGHLIN asked the Premier: 1, Is it a fact that the New South Wales Government have granted a free railway and tramway pass for life to one-legged soldiers?

2, Is it the intention of his Government to grant a similar concession to one-legged and blind soldiers?

The PREMIER replied: I have not been able to get the information, and I think it would be as well to discharge the question from the Notice Paper.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: No, I cannot agree to it being discharged. It is remarkable that you cannot get the information. I shall get it for you.

QUESTION—SPRING CARTS, GOVERNMENT CONTRACT.

Hon. P. COLLIER asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Have the Government let a contract for the construction of a number of spring carts required for soldier settlers? 2, What is the amount of the lowest tender received? 3, The name of the firm and the contract price of the work?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, Yes. 2, £23 10s. each for 10 carts. 3, Bolton & Sons, £23 10s. each spring cart.

QUESTION—FERTILISER AND FEEDING STUFFS ACT, AMENDMENT.

Mr. PICKERING asked the Honorary Minister: Is it the intention of the Government to introduce this session a Bill to amend the Fertiliser and Feeding Stuffs Act of 1905?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied: The matter is under consideration.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. Hardwick, leave of absence for two weeks granted to Mr. Veryard (Leederville) on the ground of ill-health.

On motion by Mr. O'Loughlen, leave of absence for two weeks granted to Mr. Holman (Murchison) on the ground of urgent private business.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—STATE SAWMILLS.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George — Murray-Wellington) [4.38]: With the permission of the House, I would like to make a statement. Hon. members will have noticed in both the "Daily News" of Saturday last and the "West Australian" of yesterday, a paragraph referring to the visit of two gentlemen from France, who are reported to have been on the look out for timber propositions. These gentlemen, Messrs. Ghyselincx and Dutilleul, representing the Franco-Australian Syndicate of Paris, have been in correspondence with the Industries Department and with me for some months. Their visit has brought about several conferences, at which an understanding has been arrived in regard to the State sawmills, which they propose to acquire. Sub-

ject to the fulfilment of certain conditions, to deal with which these gentlemen have left Western Australia en route for France, matters are arranged between the parties. Provision has been made to fully protect the rights of Parliament to approve or veto the proposed sale and, as soon as the purchasers have completed the conditions referred to, the Government will bring the question of sale before both Houses of Parliament for decision.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You are depriving the country of a splendid revenue producer.

BILL—GENERAL LOAN AND INSCRIBED STOCK ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

BILL—TRAFFIC.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from 28th August.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [4.43]: This is the third attempt which has been made to pass into law a Traffic Bill. On each of the former occasions when the Bill was before Parliament, its main principles were very thoroughly and exhaustively debated and, whilst both Bills secured the endorsement of a majority of the members of this House, they failed to secure the support of another place. This Bill follows closely the main provisions of the two Bills to which I have referred and, in that regard, there is very little need to debate its main principles. It is very desirable that we should have embraced in one measure, as this Bill now provides, all the Acts, of which there are several, dealing with the control of traffic throughout the State. In that respect I believe the Bill will be welcomed, particularly by the representatives of many local governing bodies. The main point upon which this Bill differs from its predecessors is that it does not contain the debatable clause which led to the defeat of former Bills; that is, the provision providing for the pooling of licensing fees in the metropolitan area and for their payment to the local governing bodies on a basis proportionate to the length of road under the control of each of those bodies. The Minister, I understand, claims that this provision has been emphatically rejected by the Council on two occasions, the defeat of the measure being involved, and that therefore he does not feel justified in further delaying the passage of such a Bill as we have now before us, which certainly is in many respects desirable, simply for the purpose of retaining the pooling principle. I do not know whether it is desirable that that principle should be eliminated. I do know that when the question of pooling of licensing fees was discussed at a representative conference of the local governing bodies concerned—that is, the municipalities and

roads boards embraced within the metropolitan area—a resolution endorsing this pooling principle was carried by a very large majority; I think, 15 to 4. The minority, of course, consisted of two representatives of Perth and two representatives of Fremantle. All the other representatives supported the principle. Perhaps it is not to be wondered at that both Perth and Fremantle objected to the pooling principle while all the other local governing bodies concerned endorsed it. Certainly, however, there is much to be said for the policy of pooling the whole of the licensing fees collected within the metropolitan area and distributing them on what may be considered an equitable basis. We know perfectly well that the great bulk of the licensing fees will under this Bill be obtained in Perth and Fremantle, whilst the vehicles licensed may be mainly plying over the roads embraced by the territory of other local governing bodies. I think the Minister, in introducing the Bill, said that about 45 per cent. of the licenses were taken out in Perth and about 23 per cent. in Fremantle. I do not know how the Minister obtained that information. He told the House that a census had been taken, but did not state for what period.

The Minister for Works: Fourteen days.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is questionable whether that comparatively brief period would yield a reliable result. However, if those figures are reliable, they mean that the greater proportion of the fees collected would be paid to Perth and Fremantle. If that is so, it is somewhat difficult to understand the opposition of those two centres to the pooling provision.

The Minister for Works: They want the money.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They would get the great bulk of the money under the pooling policy if the great majority of the licenses are issued within their boundaries.

The Minister for Works: That is not so. I shall explain that matter fully when replying.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I gathered from the Minister that he himself is not opposed to the pooling principle. He intimated that if the House was pleased to insert it, he would offer no objection. However, seeing that it will be practically impossible to secure the consent of another place to that principle, it may be wise that we should pass the Bill as introduced and so obtain the benefit of the various improvements for which it does provide. Under this Bill, if it passes, we shall have uniform control of traffic throughout the State, instead of, as at present, various local governing bodies passing different by-laws dealing with the same subject. One of the best provisions of the Bill, to my mind, is that enabling the Government to provide for the licensing of drivers of motor cars. I do not know why that has not been done up to date, but I suppose the reason is that the local governing bodies have not the necessary power. Certainly, the power has been too long delayed. Having

regard to the advantages which will accrue from the general provisions of the Bill, I believe the House will be justified in endorsing the measure, notwithstanding that it does not contain the principle of pooling, which this House endorsed on two former sessions. I support the second reading.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [4.53]: I was hoping that some of our friends from the country would have something to say about this Bill. The measure is widely different from the Traffic Bill which has been considered on two previous occasions. I have taken the opportunity of sending copies of the present Bill to one or two roads boards in the metropolitan area, but sufficient time has not elapsed for me to receive a reply as to how the measure affects their districts. The Bill refers, I observe, to "Government roads." I do not know of any road in this State that is called a Government road; possibly there may be some in the North-West, which I have never visited. All the roads that I know of are roads belonging to the various local authorities who control them. Therefore I am unable to say why this Bill continually uses the term "Government road," unless it is the Government's intention to declare Government roads in future with a view to providing means for the upkeep of such roads. The Perth-Fremantle road is at present, I believe, kept in fair order by the Government. That being so, in all probability the various roads boards between Perth and Fremantle will not object so strenuously to this Bill as they did to previous measures of the same nature. If the licensing fees collected are to go to each local authority, while the main roads are to be maintained at the expense of the Government, I have no objection. But if it is fair that a road between Perth and Fremantle on one side of the river should be maintained by the Government, it is also fair that a similar road on the other side of the river should be maintained by the Government. Why should the ratepayers of the Melville Road Board maintain seven miles of road carrying about 50 per cent. of the traffic that is carried by the Perth-Fremantle road? If the Bill provided for the pooling of license fees and for the payment of a subsidy on the basis of the amount collected, there would be a contribution to the funds of the Melville Road Board towards the upkeep of main roads running through their district.

Mr. Gardiner: And through South Perth as well.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes; the whole of the road from the Causeway to Fremantle. The Melville Road Board represents only one district on which injustice will be inflicted owing to the desire of the Minister to please the city of Perth.

The Minister for Works: No.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Bill has been prepared for no other purpose.

The Minister for Works: I assure you that you are wrong.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: On two previous occasions the city of Perth has used its influence in another place to defeat a Traffic Bill which provided for the pooling of fees. On this occasion the Minister tells us that he does not feel justified in introducing a Bill with a similar provision on that account.

The Minister for Works: No. I said that I had omitted that one provision, but that hon. members could insert it if they liked.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You should stand behind your Bill.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Under this Bill the traffic is to be administered by the Government instead of by the local authorities. In New South Wales motor traffic is administered by the Commissioner of Police, who issues all licenses, while the money is paid into consolidated revenue. In Victoria the law is on somewhat similar lines. In South Australia the work is done by the local authorities. But in each of those States the Government grant assistance for the upkeep of main roads, and the Government of Western Australia do not at present make such grants. That, no doubt, has been one of the reasons why the Minister proposes to allow municipalities and road boards to continue to collect fees from the vehicles licensed in their respective districts. While the Minister was introducing the Bill, I asked him whether the Government intended to purchase the Fremantle tramways. I am not prepared to say that the Fremantle tramways have not been setting an example to the Government in the matter of the running of that species of public utility. However, by this Bill the Government propose to take control of the running of the Fremantle tramways; they propose to take the control entirely out of the hands of the Fremantle people. The Bill provides that stopping places may be proclaimed anywhere. Of course the Government have the power to do this in connection with their own trams, but the Perth trams are exempt from the operations of the Bill. I do not think there is any necessity in a Bill such as this to include such a provision where trams are run under a special Act of Parliament. The powers the Minister asks for, as far as private tramways are concerned, are excessive and not warranted. I am doubtful whether a Bill of this kind—even though it was first submitted by a Government of which I was a member—will prove as beneficial as the provisions which exist in the Municipalities Act. The Bill provides for regulations being framed, while under the Municipalities Act everything is laid down definitely and distinctly in regard to traffic in various parts of the State. Regulations are not always readily available. It is always better to make direct provision in an Act of Parliament. I agree with the leader of the Opposition that it is of great importance to provide for the licensing of drivers of motor cars. I notice that the police are to grant these licenses, but that the Consolidated revenue will receive the fees. One thing I

would point out is that, while the Minister has favoured the city of Perth considerably in the Bill, he has overlooked the fact that it costs the State about £2,000 a year for the control of the traffic in the city by the police. No other place is granted a similar privilege. A subsidy is given to the city of Perth by way of providing policemen as traffic controllers, and I maintain, if the police are to take full control of the traffic, then the Government should take the licensing fees to meet the charge.

Mr. Pickering: Why all the fees?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Because the Government pay much more than they would collect. It is not done anywhere else in the State.

Mr. Pickering: It is not done in London.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The local authorities in the Old Country pay their own police. In matters of this kind Perth is receiving favoured treatment, while the outside districts are struggling to keep their roads in proper order.

Mr. Foley: They reckon all the harmful vehicles comes from Fremantle.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They are sure to do that. There is one thing about Fremantle, and it is that that municipality does not ask the police to control their traffic. Apart from these matters, there is not much else in the Bill that we can object to.

Mr. ANGELO (Gascoyne) [5.6]: We must agree that the Traffic Bill will be welcomed not only by the House, but by all local authorities throughout the State. The license fees that will be collected under the Bill are estimated to amount to £15,000 so far as motor cars are concerned, and only about £5,000 to £7,000 in connection with other vehicles. I think we can take it that to a large extent the Bill deals with motor traffic which has so materially increased in recent years. Like the two previous speakers, I welcome the provision for the licensing of motor drivers. If this provision had been introduced many years ago, it would have prevented a lot of accidents from occurring. I also welcome the provision for the imposition of a heavy penalty on any person who, while in a drunken condition, drives a car. That, too, will have the effect of preventing accidents. The Bill is framed on right lines, but some suggestions which may have the effect of bringing about improvements may be made in Committee. The member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Angwin) has referred to police control. My opinion is that the provision for the control of traffic by the local authorities is absolutely unnecessary, as the police are the people who are best adapted to carry out this work. The appointment of traffic inspectors in smaller districts will not be warranted, because motor traffic there will be of a negligible nature. The police are an established institution and can well carry out all traffic work. If the administration of the Act is handed over to the Commissioner, the result will be more uniform

working than would otherwise be the case. The police are in uniform and drivers of vehicles will respect the police at all times, whereas that is not likely to be the case if the supervision of the traffic is in the hands of the inspectors appointed by local authorities. The Bill provides that the police shall issue all drivers' licenses for motor vehicles, and therefore I consider that the police should go further and look after the traffic throughout the whole of the State. Subclause 4 of Clause 19 provides that the Commissioner of Police may appoint members of the police force to perform the duties of control subject to certain reservations. It is, however, unlikely that he would do this unless his officers had control of the whole of the motor traffic throughout the State. Of course it might be said that this will be increasing the duties and the responsibilities of the police, but if the suggestion is adopted, and the police do assume control of the whole of the motor traffic, they should be permitted to retain, say, 10 per cent. of the fees collected, as a reimbursement for the work they will be called upon to perform. In the Bill many important matters are undefined and left to be dealt with in the by-laws to be framed. The enactment of by-laws in this manner is not right and will lead to vexation. This has already been the experience of the city of Perth. It will be remembered that only recently the magistrate of Perth said that one of the by-laws framed by the municipal council was capable of a grotesque construction. When introducing the Bill the Minister for Works stated that it was proposed to frame uniform by-laws. That would be satisfactory if all parties were consulted in the compilation of those by-laws. Owing, however, to the increased traffic and the increased population throughout the State and the fact that the local authorities are continually changing, I am of opinion that a board should be appointed to frame by-laws under the Act for the regulation of traffic throughout the State. Such a board should consist of representatives of the Municipal Association, the Road Boards Association, the Automobile Club, the Carriers and Passenger Vehicle Owners, while a member of the Government should be nominated to act as chairman. The difficulty of having a variety of by-laws can be appreciated by hon. members. One might be motoring through a district where one set of by-laws exist and then proceed to another town where there might be a totally different set.

Mr. Smith: These by-laws would have to be approved by the Governor in Council.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: For instance, Perth charges a license fee of 2s. 6d. for bicycles and Fremantle does not charge anything.

Mr. ANGELO: Some local authorities might require one kind of lamp for motor cars and others might require a totally different lamp, whereas, if a board were in existence everything would be uniform and in that way trouble would be obviated. It is suggested that certain amendments should

be made to the Bill when it is in Committee. At present it is not my intention to oppose it, and I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [5.15]: As a farmer I always oppose the payment of a wheel tax. I have always been of opinion that sufficient revenue should be raised by means of ordinary taxation in the way of rates imposed by road boards, and that when the farmers are compelled to use vehicles as part of their trade it is rather severe that they should not only have to pay road board rates but an additional tax upon such vehicles, which are used in the course of earning their livelihood. The only obstacle I see to that is that there are certain members of the community who are not affected by rates, and yet use the roads. These are the people who should have to pay license fees and wheel taxes, not the producing community, whose carts and wagons are part and parcel of their stock in trade.

The Minister for Works: Name any part of Western Australia where they have not to pay a wheel tax.

Mr. PICKERING: I will not attempt to do any such thing. I object to the principle. The rates should be raised by the road boards and there should not be this extra tax imposed.

Mr. O'Loghlen: You did not say that at Avon last year.

Mr. PICKERING: I regret very much, not that a certain section was omitted from the Bill that was contained in the last Bill, but that the Government have not brought in a measure for the pooling of all wheel taxes and motor taxes and some provision for pro rata collections throughout the whole of the districts of Western Australia.

The Honorary Minister: Pro rata on what?

Mr. PICKERING: We might say pro rata on the length of the roads. The country districts, more especially those I represent, frequently have their roads destroyed by motorists coming from all parts of Western Australia. We have no claim upon them at all.

Hon. P. Collier: They make their money out of the motorists.

Mr. PICKERING: I should like to see a clause introduced to bring about the pooling of the rates on an equitable basis, between the various governing bodies. I regret that the clause, which the member for Gascayne (Mr. Angelo) has read out about traffic inspectors, should be obligatory. I think it should be made optional upon a board to appoint a traffic inspector. It seems to be burdening the local governing bodies with extra expense.

Hon. P. Collier: They would appoint the town clerk of the municipality or the secretary of the road board.

Mr. PICKERING: Then it should be necessary that we should remunerate these local governing bodies for the extra expenditure involved.

Hon. P. Collier: Not necessarily!

Mr. PICKERING: The secretary of the road boards of my districts and the clerk of the municipal council of my district both have sufficient work to do for the money they receive.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They will not have more work to do under this.

Mr. PICKERING: It must mean extra work.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Not a bit.

Mr. PICKERING: I should like to see some provision made for a notification of the transfer of licenses.

Mr. Green: It is already in the schedule.

Mr. PICKERING: I have not seen it in the Bill.

Mr. Smith: It is in Clause 14.

Mr. PICKERING: I wish to give my point of view whether it is in the Bill or not. There are certain people using motor cars who register their cars in certain districts, but that is the end of any payment. It is only right that when they move from any particular district they should put a plate and number of the town in which they are residing on their motor cars.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Why should you ride on such a car?

Mr. PICKERING: I did not mention any particular car. There is another clause in regard to which I must take the side of the driver of a locomotive or traction engine, and that is that apparently he cannot recover for any damage accruing from a defective bridge or culvert, or from a bad road over which he may have to travel. If that is the case the road board should be compelled to put a notice on such culverts, bridges or roads, for the protection of those people who, confident that they are not in any danger, use them.

Hon. P. Collier: Further than that, the board can recover from such drivers if they destroy the property of the road board.

Mr. PICKERING: If that is so, the drivers should have some warning given to them of the danger that is confronting them.

The Minister for Works: Do you not know they have to give notice of their intention to travel through a district?

Mr. PICKERING: On the question of convictions, the Bill says that the Commissioner of Police must be notified. I do not think that is going to be sufficient notification unless the Commissioner of Police has seen to it that all the boards are notified of any such convictions, so that they can be safeguarded. There is a particularly drastic clause in the Bill. It says that the inspector can within two miles pull up any carter travelling on a road and compel him to go back that distance and have his cart and load weighed. This is a very serious thing. It means that a carter can go out loaded and be made to travel an extra distance of four miles, which is a very big consideration for men who have as long a distance as 40 miles to go.

The Minister for Works: He should get his cart weight. There is plenty of opportunity for him to do so.

Mr. PICKERING: It is not a question of that, but it is a question of the load that has to be drawn. I join with the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) in objecting strongly to the clause dealing with the regulations of companies. All such regulations should be endorsed by the Government. If anyone should know how to regulate its traffic in order to bring about a suitable state of affairs it is the company concerned. The Governor in Council might not have sufficient business acumen and knowledge to appreciate the difficulties arising in the control of such traffic. I very much appreciate the proposal to license drivers of motor-cars. I hope that not only will these licenses be rigidly enforced, but that proper control will be exercised over the drivers themselves. I have often had my life placed in jeopardy through the recklessness and inexperience of motor-drivers, and I resent being put to that personal inconvenience. I endorse the action of the Government in introducing such a provision, and I hope they will see that effect is given to it.

Mr. NAIRN (Swan) [5.25]: This is the third time we have made an attempt to produce a workable Traffic Bill, and I hope this will be a successful one. At the same time I would not like to see it succeed as it stands at present. I do not consider it is a just Bill. I cannot see the justice of permitting one local body to absorb a very much greater share of the fees than the proportion it is entitled to. We have that evidence before us in the city of Perth. Although I do not know the exact figures, I venture to say that an overwhelming proportion of vehicles registered in the City is not used in the City streets. I represent a constituency which, particularly on two days of the week, has hundreds of motor-cars travelling through it. These contribute nothing to its revenue, and generally take a good many liberties in outlying districts which the drivers would not dream of taking in the City. A Traffic Bill without an adjustment in that direction is not equitable, and I desire to see it altered. It is very doubtful whether those who have their vehicles registered in Perth are getting fair value for the money which is being charged for such registration. Very often they are looked upon as birds to be plucked by these local bodies. It is a mistake, and we have no right to perpetuate such a system as this Bill would do. I wish to make a remark in regard to the charges. Someone has raised a protest against the wheel tax. It is a great mistake to hold the opinion that because someone is running a vehicle, either a sulky or a motor-car, it is a luxury. I believe that in this part of the world we are less favoured than in almost any other part of the habitable globe in the matter of means of transporting ourselves over the State. In other parts of the world a motor-car is

looked upon almost as a necessity, and certainly not as a luxury.

Mr. Thomson: It is a necessity, especially in the country.

Mr. NAIRN: More especially is it a necessity in the country. I have not in mind the dweller in the city when I make this reference. To regard these necessities as luxuries is wrong, and out of touch with the spirit of the times. We should encourage as much as we can in every direction the use of advanced and up-to-date means of transport, and of giving persons an opportunity for enjoyment, health and pleasure. This Bill is not equitable if it continues to discourage such a thing. There are one or two other provisions which have been mentioned in regard to local authorities. I am inclined to believe that the argument which has been advanced by the Automobile Club, whose business it is to make a study of these affairs, is a good one, namely, that the police would better administer the Act than the local authorities. The danger I see of having too many local authorities dealing with the matter is that it is likely to lead to confusion. Unless we have some body controlling and closely scrutinising the various resolutions which are carried by the local bodies, we are going to make the life of the motorist an unhappy one indeed. I should like to see some over-riding control. We are told that it is the Minister who will have that control. We know it is impossible for a Minister to say where regulations will lead, even though he may approve of them. I hope the Bill will be amended in that direction.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The police can do it.

Mr. NAIRN: The police will do it very much better than the local authorities, for, after all, it is the business of the police. It is very much more the business of the police than of, say, the town clerk, who is largely in his office.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Bill provides that it shall be done by the police.

Mr. NAIRN: Only partially. I am speaking, not so much of the administration, as of the making of by-laws controlling traffic. In many instances we must have a local authority to do it, because there are no police available. However, I want uniformity as nearly as possible throughout the State, and I cannot expect that if we are to depend entirely on the Minister's realisation of what the regulations mean. We have had instances cited this afternoon. A cyclist is charged 2s. 6d. per annum for his ordinary push bike. That is a highly improper charge.

Hon. P. Collier: That will come out.

Mr. NAIRN: One might as well charge a license for a sewing machine or for a perambulator. There are other absurd licenses, all of which have been approved by Ministers. With some amendments such as I have suggested, I think we can produce a satisfactory Bill. But I have no desire to see the Bill passed in its present form. We have waited a long time for it and we do not now want to be at the bidding of any muni-

cipality. I hope when in Committee to help put the Bill into a more equitable shape.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning) [5.33]: I am somewhat disappointed with the Bill. It contains some very important amendments in respect of traffic, but to my mind it does not go far enough. The Minister, referring to the Traffic Bill introduced by the Labour Administration, said that the proposal in that Bill was to collect £20,000 by way of licenses and for the Government to add another £20,000, making £40,000 in all, which would represent a respectable sum for the maintenance of main roads. But I cannot find in this Bill anything dealing with main roads, to my mind an important factor which should be considered without further delay. In my electorate the Kojonup Road Board has 80 miles of main roads to look after. During the summer many hundreds of motor cars rush over those roads, causing certain damage in respect of which the board does not receive one penny. Moreover, there are on those main roads many bridges requiring to be kept in good repair. I may be told that any such provision should come under the Roads Act, but I think it should be embodied in the Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is no provision in the Bill in regard to that.

Mr. THOMSON: No, but since the Minister drew attention to the Traffic Bill introduced by a previous Government, perhaps I am in order in touching on this subject.

Mr. SPEAKER: Only if your purpose is to illustrate.

Mr. THOMSON: That is my purpose. I am very pleased with some of the provisions. It is essential that drivers of motor cars should be licensed. I think the local authorities should have an opportunity to consider the Bill. At the last road boards conference which I attended it was unanimously resolved to request the Government to reintroduce the Traffic Bill, and to make it applicable to the State. Sufficient consideration has not been given to the Traffic Bill. The methods of travel have been revolutionised during the last few years, and people who were previously content to travel 25 or 30 miles a day now think nothing of covering 150 miles in the same time. We have not taken into consideration what is done in Victoria, where they have the Country Roads Board Act, and where they manage to maintain their roads in really good order. The same may be said of South Australia. It is my intention to move, when the second reading shall have been carried, that the Bill be referred to a select committee.

The Minister for Works: Can you not get all that you want in Committee?

Mr. THOMSON: If a select committee, consisting of experienced men, were appointed, and if that committee conferred with the roads boards association, with which is affiliated practically every roads board in the State—

Hon. P. Collier: You said, a moment ago, that they asked for the reintroduction of the Bill.

Mr. THOMSON: What they asked for was the old Traffic Bill. This Bill is not the same.

Hon. P. Collier: Except in regard to the pooling of the fees, it is much the same.

Mr. THOMSON: No, for it neglects the question of main roads. I hope the House will agree to refer the Bill to a select committee.

Mr. ROCKE (South Fremantle) [5.40]: The Bill provides a framework upon which a good measure may be built, but it is very necessary that certain amendments should be effected to make the Bill even just. It seems hard that outside local authorities should be put to the expense of maintaining miles of roads which are destroyed by vehicles from which the local authority receives little or no return. I hope that justice will be done to those local authorities. The Bill provides that a local authority shall issue a vehicle license, but that the license for the driver shall be issued by the police. I am not able to see what qualification the police have for issuing such licenses. I think the proper authority to issue drivers' licenses is the Chief Inspector of Machinery, who has to issue licenses in respect of traction and locomotive engines.

Hon. P. Collier: The persons responsible for controlling the drivers should issue the license.

Mr. ROCKE: There may be something in that. The police may know to whom they are issuing a license, but how are they to know that the driver is qualified? Provision is also made for traction engines and locomotives to work on farms, where they will be exempt from the license fee. But there is nothing to prevent those tractors or locomotives going from farm to farm. They may not belong to the farmer; they may belong to some machinery corporation, and there is no provision to prevent them going along the roads and damaging those roads without paying any license fee.

The Minister for Works: You are wrong.

Mr. ROCKE: No; I have been carefully through the Bill. The Bill says they may perform work on farms, but it does not say they must not go from farm to farm.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

The Minister for Works: You have seen the scale of fees for those engines?

Mr. ROCKE: Yes.

The Minister for Works: Why should they be there if they were not to be imposed?

Mr. ROCKE: But a corporation could have agricultural machinery working on a farm under exemption from license fees, and those tractors and engines could go from farm to farm over the main roads without paying any fees. That will be the position unless the Bill is amended, as I hope it will be. The Bill also provides

that an inspector may grant a license for a vehicle, but that the local authority shall issue the license. I think the order should be reversed, that the local authority should grant the license and the inspector issue it. The member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Angwin) referred to the tram service at Fremantle. I hope this House will not yield the power which the Government ask for the regulation of the Fremantle trams. The Government cannot have the information which the local authority will have as to the best places to stop the cars. This Bill provides that the Governor-in-Council shall provide for the stopping places of tram cars. I hope an alteration will be made, and that the right now given to local governing bodies will be retained. I was not in the House during the passage of the previous Traffic Bill and I do not know anything of the arguments for or against the contentious clause dealing with the pooling of fees, but there is something in this Bill which will prove more contentious and result in more litigation than the pooling of fees could do. I refer to the matter of extraordinary traffic. There is no definition of extraordinary traffic. I have been through what authorities I could find, and have been unable to discover that any definition has been laid down. I have found some very interesting arguments in the "Proceedings of the Incorporated Association of Municipal and County Engineers," which bear directly on the subject matter of this Bill. It may help the House to a better understanding of the law regarding extraordinary traffic if I quote from those proceedings. The memorandum issued with the Bill shows that Clause 5 is taken from the Highways and Locomotives Act of 1878. An interesting reference is made to that Act—

What is known as "the law as to extraordinary traffic" dates from the passing of the Highways and Locomotives Act, 1878, but the undue use of roads by one person to the prejudice of the ratepayers appears to have been a grievance for several centuries. The office of Highway Surveyor appears to have been created in the year 1555, and from that date there are records of legal action dealing with the nuisance of what may be termed "extraordinary traffic." In the reign of James I. a proclamation was issued by the King "to restrain the excessive carriages in wagons and four-wheeled cartes, to the destruction of the highways." In the year 1635 Charles I. made a proclamation "that no person do upon the common highway go or travel with any wagon cart or carriage whereon is laid at once above 2,000 weight, nor to use above five horses, or above four oxen and two horses, and above six oxen without horses at any one time"; and the proclamation proceeds, "and because such extraordinary carriages have heretofore, by the opinion of the judges, been held to be general nuisances, the King commands all judges and justices diligently to inquire after such offences."

Mr. Jones: It reads like the ten commandments.

Mr. Smith: What sort of roads did they have in those days?

Mr. ROCKE: The fact remains that the term "extraordinary traffic" has not yet been defined. If the Bill leaves this Chamber without a definition, local governing bodies will be subject to endless litigation which will be costly for somebody.

Mr. Johnston: Extraordinary traffic would probably be air traffic.

Mr. ROCKE: We had a case in Fremantle. The Cliff-street road, which carries all the traffic from the wharf, was constructed of tar macadam. A ship arrived with a load of kerosene. All the lorries available were put on to remove the kerosene from Fremantle to South Fremantle. In less than a week the road was absolutely ruined. When the engineer viewed it, he was unable to say who was responsible for the condition of the road, and the question arose as to whether it was extraordinary traffic or ordinary traffic conducted in an extraordinary manner. This is a point which must be settled and this House should be the competent authority to settle it. With the amendments which have been suggested, the Bill may be made useful; it is certainly essential to the preservation of human life. I shall support the second reading, reserving to myself the right to move in Committee amendments in the direction I have indicated.

Mr. HARRISON (Avon) [5.52]: I regard this Bill as a machinery measure and therefore one for detailed consideration in Committee. I do not intend to speak at length upon it. This is an attempt to consolidate the five Acts dealing with traffic, so that citizens of the State and those administering the various Acts may know what they are about. For some years, local governing bodies in the agricultural districts have been endeavouring to get uniform by-laws. Under this Bill it is intended to bring in uniform by-laws, whereby the various fees will be adjusted and will apply to all districts alike. The member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) said he thought those who occupied land, after having paid their rates to the local authority, should be free from wheel tax. I agree with him to a large extent because farmers do not use their wheels over anything like so great a period of the year as others do. On the average the farmer uses his vehicles for six weeks a year, not more. Contractors and others, who make their living by carting, use the roads 52 weeks a year and destroy them far more than the occupiers of land. Of course, some of our farmers take up contracting, but there are by-laws which aim at meeting such cases. The present method of inspection is a bad one, because a road board secretary has not the power to ascertain whether a driver is in possession of his license or whether the fees have been paid for the vehicle, though the road board members have that power. If we

appoint inspectors as outlined in the Bill, we shall limit the number.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington—in reply) [5.55]: I desire to thank members for the way they have received this Bill. I am quite satisfied that, when we reach the Committee stage, we shall be able to arrive at an agreement upon many matters which require to be altered. The leader of the Opposition spoke of the omission of the debatable clauses relating to the pooling of fees and the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Angwin) referred to this as an attempt on the part of the Government to placate Perth. So far as this Bill is concerned, I have had no communication with the city of Perth.

Hon. P. Collier: You know their wishes.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is about time we passed a measure for the proper government of the roads, and if there was a lion in the path, it was only wise to avoid it. As I mentioned in my opening remarks, if members think differently, the matter rests in their hands. The hon. member spoke of the census we took. An officer was stationed at each inlet on to the Perth-Fremantle road with power to deal with every vehicle which came along and form his own judgment as to the weight and place of origin, and from the varied information so obtained we collated figures showing the mileage use of the road. From these investigations we found out that of the total traffic on that road, 45 per cent. had its origin in Perth. The facts were noted very carefully and the results were very satisfactory. When I proceeded to deal with the municipal subsidies on these percentages, the objection taken by the Perth City Council was not so much to the percentage as that I should take any portion of their subsidy for the upkeep of any roads outside Perth. Some members have referred to the question of main roads. I regret that in my opening remarks, I omitted a few words in regard to main roads. The Government are fully aware that, at the earliest possible moment, it would be wise to bring a Bill before Parliament to deal comprehensively with the question of main roads. We are quite satisfied that, unless our main roads are put in something like decent order, a great deal of traffic which otherwise would use them will not be able to do so. I refer to the passage of traffic regarded as tourist traffic. This is regarded by the Government as a means of settling the land in different parts of the State. If people go on health and joy rides through any considerable portion of the State, they are able to learn the value of Western Australia, and settlement will inevitably follow such travelling on the roads. Although we have collated a considerable amount of information regarding main roads, we are not yet in a position to put it forward in the shape of a Bill, but I hope before the session ends, I shall be able to bring down a Bill for the consideration of the House. Even if it is not passed, it will have

the effect of starting the ball rolling. The member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) demurred against the power to make regulations, saying that the provisions ought to be embodied in the measure, as the power to make regulations was open to abuse. I would agree with that contention if everything could be foreseen. But the conditions of traffic alter as time goes on. Vehicles suited to traffic requirements of 25 years ago are not fitted to cope with the requirements of to-day. The greater proportion of our vehicles now are motor cars, and the traffic regulations of 25 years ago dealt mainly with buggies, carts, and wagons; it follows that traffic regulations must vary from time to time. The member for North-East Fremantle also referred to the cost to the State of providing police to control traffic. That, however, is a point which can be discussed in Committee, and I shall be glad to have the hon. member's assistance on it. The member for Gascayne (Mr. Angelo) suggested the establishment of a board or a committee to deal with the matter of regulations. I hardly think that course is necessary, though I do not desire in any way to depreciate the value of such a body. The Public Works Department have officers who are accustomed to deal with the matter of regulations, and those officers are not only specially skilled, but I may say even learned, in questions appertaining to road boards and municipalities. They examine thoroughly into every by-law. They know the law and the various districts, and they can see at once whether a road board is endeavouring to pass a by-law which would have an incidence against a neighbouring road board. Unless the officers are satisfied that a by-law should not be passed, they refer it to me, and I then submit it to the House. The member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) in his customary lucid manner gave us his experience of working under the existing roads legislation, and I thank the hon. member for several suggestions that he made. The member for Swan (Mr. Nairn) almost alarmed me when he stated that the Bill was not a just measure, but my mind was set at rest when I grasped that he was referring only to the matter of pooling of license fees. The member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) desires that the measure should be referred to a select committee, but I hope the House will not agree to that course.

Mr. Thomson: I thought you were in favour of a select committee.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: For the Roads Bill, not for this Bill.

Mr. Thomson: The trouble is that this Bill does not deal with main roads.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It cannot. I have said so already. As hon. members know, this is the third time of asking for the present Bill. Except as regards a few points which have been alluded to, the measure before the House is practically identical with a measure which has passed here twice. It would be a pity to lose time

by referring the measure to a select committee. The member for South Fremantle (Mr. Roche) carried me back beyond my knowledge of English history, referring to the times of James I. The hon. member appears to be much concerned regarding extraordinary traffic. I assure him that under this Bill any extraordinary traffic that may occur in Western Australia can be dealt with. In fact, the only extraordinary traffic there has been in this State so far is the sleeper-carting and the hauling of tuart logs, and this has been done chiefly over the roads of my electorate. I have, therefore, taken great care to embody in the Bill a clause adequately providing for that matter. I thank hon. members for their reception of the measure, and shall be still more grateful if they will help me to get into Committee and put the Bill through.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

To refer to Select Committee.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning) [6.7]: I move—

That the Bill be referred to a select committee for report.

On the second reading I gave my reasons for proposing this course. With all due respect to the Minister, and while acknowledging that the Government have gone thoroughly into the question, I still maintain that the one point which has not been dealt with, but should be dealt with, is the upkeep of main roads; and I think it is essential that we should have an opportunity of learning the views of the bodies concerned on this point. Whilst I do not dispute the Minister's statement that we can deal with the subject in Committee of the whole, I feel satisfied that the report of a select committee which had heard evidence from municipalities and road boards would be of material benefit.

Mr. ROCKE (South Fremantle) [6.8]: I second the motion, and entirely agree with the mover's remarks. Although there may be much good in the Bill, yet its reference to a select committee, which could obtain evidence from the representatives of municipalities and road boards and from residents of outlying districts, would afford the House the opportunity of framing a more adequate and therefore even a better measure than the Bill in its present form.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington) [6.9]: I must again ask the House to oppose the reference of the Bill to a select committee. If this were the first introduction of the Bill, I would offer no opposition to such a motion as that of the member for Katanning. But, seeing that the Bill has been

fully debated here twice, and that it has been twice sent forward to the other Chamber, I think the House is fully able to deal with the measure in Committee of the whole. Going to a select committee means the loss of a certain amount of time, and also involves a certain amount of expense; and I am not able to see that any special good can be expected from such a course. As regards the question of main roads being dealt with under this Bill, I can assure the member for Katanning that any such attempt would remove all possibility of passing the measure. For one thing, neither I, as Minister for Works, nor my department, would be prepared to deal with so important a question at the present time. The intention is to make main roads the subject of a separate Bill altogether. Such a matter cannot be dealt with by a few members meeting in a room. Hon. members know how far the life of the present Parliament has advanced, and they can see for themselves that if the Bill does not go through this session, a very necessary piece of machinery for the use of road boards will not be passed promptly, and may be delayed for years.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [6.11]: I support the motion because I consider this Bill should contain provision for the pooling system. If the Bill goes into Committee straight away, we shall not have an opportunity of adequately dealing with that question. The measure has been before members for only a few days. We have no concern with what measures may have come before previous Parliaments. I owe a duty to my electorate as regards the pooling principle, and I consider that the House should have an opportunity to frame a clause dealing adequately with that phase of the question.

Question put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	9
Noes	..	..	..	26

Majority against .. 17

AYES.

Mr. Duff	Mr. Roche
Mr. Durack	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Thomson
Mr. Johnston	Mr. Griffiths
Mr. Pickering	(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Green
Mr. Angwin	Mr. Harrison
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Jones
Mr. Collier	Mr. Maley
Mr. Davies	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Draper	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Foley	Mr. Munste
Mr. Gardiner	Mr. Nairn
Mr. George	Mr. O'Loghlen

Mr. Pilkington	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Scaddan	Mr. Willmott
Mr. Smith	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Walker	Mr. Hardwick

(Teller.)

Question thus negatived.

Sitting suspended from 6.18 to 7.30 p.m.

In Committee.

Mr. Stubbs in the Chair; the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 5—agreed to.

Clause 6—Passenger vehicle, and carriers' licenses:

Mr. SMITH: Will the Minister make it clear whether drivers of licensed vehicles must pay, in addition to the license fee, the ordinary wheel tax? If so, it will be a severe handicap on those who are earning their living in this way.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The clause reads—"A passenger vehicle license is required for every vehicle used for the carriage of passengers for hire." The object of having a license for the driver is that he may drive any vehicle for which he has a license, and I do not think it is a wrong thing to charge a man a small fee like 5s. a wheel.

Mr. SMITH: With regard to Subclause 2, dealing with carriers' licenses, is there any intention of placing a restriction on the issue of these licenses? Are drivers who are to be placed in charge of vehicles to be tested? We know that many drivers of vehicles are not experienced.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: While I agree that a number of people drive vehicles who would be better for having their skill and nerve tested, I do not quite see how any such proposal would operate. If they are to drive vehicles I think that fact in itself will be a guarantee.

Mr. Underwood: Do you drive a vehicle or a horse?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is the usual way of talking in regard to these matters. It is hardly likely that a person would be put in charge of a horse and vehicle unless that person had some knowledge and experience.

Mr. MALEY: Will every farmer who engages in contract carting have to procure a license? If so, they will be put to considerable inconvenience and a certain amount of irritation will be caused.

The Minister for Works: Why should they not take out a license?

Mr. THOMSON: I am satisfied that the Committee will regret now that my motion for referring the Bill to a select committee was not carried. I move—

That progress be reported.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	14
Noes	..	..	..	21

Majority against .. 7

AYES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Pickering
Mr. Duff	Mr. Piesse
Mr. Durack	Mr. Pilkington
Mr. Harrison	Mr. Roche
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Thomson
Mr. Johnston	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Maley	Mr. Mullany

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Brown	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Nairn
Mr. Collier	Mr. O'Loughlin
Mr. Draper	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Foley	Mr. Smith
Mr. Gardiner	Mr. Willcock
Mr. George	Mr. Willmott
Mr. Green	Mr. Willson
Mr. Jones	Mr. Hardwick

(Teller.)

Motion thus negatived.

Mr. JOHNSTON: The question raised by the member for Greenough is an important one. The difficulties of the position out-back will be realised when there is taken into consideration the case of a new settler arriving at a siding and employing a friendly farmer to take his goods out to his new home. This farmer would not be able to perform that service without a license.

Mr. PICKERING: In the case of carting cream the matter is one of adjustment between the farmers, as a rule. Some amendment should be made to provide that farmers and others so situated are protected against the imposition of a license of this kind.

Mr. THOMSON: I am surprised at the Committee exhibiting this unseemly haste.

Hon. P. Collier: The hon. member must not reflect on the decision of the Committee.

Mr. THOMSON: I maintain there has been unseemly haste. Subclause 2 was only framed for the metropolitan area and was not intended for the country districts at all. A little more consideration should be given to the country areas. It is already a difficult enough matter to secure cartage there, but under this Bill a man must take out a license before carting anything for anybody under a penalty of £20. The Minister did not go into this particular question when he made his second reading speech, and I appeal to the Committee to allow more time to be given to it. To rush through an important measure like this does not reflect credit on either the Government or the Committee.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The farmer is only asked to contribute an additional £1 per annum in the course of carrying on his business. Why should not a man who has a carting business in the country pay for carrying it on there as well as in the town? People frequently go from the towns into the country in order to cart wheat during the season and they should pay this license

fee. This clause has already been approved of twice by Parliament.

Mr. Thomson: When was the Bill first brought in?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There was a Bill introduced in 1913. If a carrier has to be licensed for one place, it is only fair that he should be licensed for another. Only one license is required.

Mr. MALEY: I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of Subclause 2, after the word "vehicle," the word "regularly" be inserted.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I cannot see the force of the amendment. If an individual, who has to pay so much a year, after carting for himself carts for hire, he will be making more use of the roads than he would otherwise do.

Mr. Maley: I want to see this word inserted as a safeguard for those people who only do this kind of work intermittently.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The Minister says that a man who does carting for other people after doing it for himself makes more use of the roads. I would point out that the big farmer, being able to use his own teams for his own carting, would have to pay no license fee, but that the small man would have to take out a license fee if he desired to earn any money himself by carting. This is undoubtedly a tax on the little man, and I think the amendment is warranted.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	16
Noes	..	..	..	..	16
A tie	..	..	..	..	0

AYES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Maley
Mr. Duff	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Durack	Mr. Pickering
Mr. Gardiner	Mr. Pilkington
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Roche
Mr. Harrisou	Mr. Thomson
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Johnston	Mr. O'Loughlin

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Brown	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Collier	Mr. Nairn
Mr. Draper	Mr. Pilkington
Mr. Foley	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. George	Mr. Smith
Mr. Green	Mr. Willmott
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Hardwick

(Teller.)

The CHAIRMAN: I give my casting vote in favour of the ayes.

Amendment thus passed; the clause as amended agreed to.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Progress reported.

BILL—STATE CHILDREN ACT AMENDMENT.

Recommendation.

On motion by the Minister for Mines, Bill recommitted for the purpose of further considering Clauses 4, 17, and 24.

Mr. Stubbs in the Chair; the Minister for Mines in charge of the Bill.

Clause 4—Special magistrates may visit institutions:

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I move an amendment—

That after "magistrate" in line 1 the words "or any member of the Children's Court authorised in that behalf by the Governor" be inserted.

Mr. ROCKE: Are we to understand that if a member of the Children's Court desired to visit an institution, it would be necessary for him to have the permission of the Governor-in-Council, or will any member of the Children's Court have the entree?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No, the Governor-in-Council would be authorised by the amendment to appoint one or more members of the Children's Court to have the same right as a special magistrate to visit the institution. No other members would have the right.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause 17—Begging or performing or work connected with racecourses by children under 16 forbidden:

The MINISTER FOR MINES: This clause deals with the employment of children for different purposes. It was suggested that if paragraph (c) remained as in the Bill, it would prevent the employment of children in any case whatever. My attention was drawn to the fact that in other States special provision is made for the granting of exemptions. I move an amendment—

That at the beginning of paragraph (c) the words "except with the license in writing of the Minister, and subject to such restrictions and conditions as may be therein expressed" be inserted.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause 24—Parent or guardian punishable for misconduct or neglect leading to delinquency of child:

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I move an amendment—

That after "neglect" in line 2 of Sub-clause 1 of the new Clause 118a the words "or by any wrongful or immoral act or omission encouraged or" be inserted.

In some cases it has been found difficult to obtain a conviction, owing to the fact that although there has been wrongful or immoral conduct on the part of those in charge of the children, there has been nothing proscribing such wrongful or immoral conduct.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I have no objection to the amendment, but it will open up a big

question later in the clause, as it will give power to prosecute the parents or guardians of a child who is found guilty of being a neglected child. I do not know how the court will procure evidence of parents having contributed to or suffered a child to become neglected. Some children become neglected notwithstanding the best efforts of their parents to prevent them from drifting in the wrong direction. I should imagine that the court would require strong evidence of the general daily life of the household before it would be able to say whether the parents had contributed to or suffered the child to become neglected. However, parents or guardians might be dragged before the court when they were in no way responsible. It might be argued that the parents in such cases would not be convicted, but they would be subjected to a great indignity by being so charged. I do not know where the line can be drawn between those parents who ought to be dealt with in this way and those who are not to blame. The amendment will confer considerable power on the court.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The definition of "neglected child" is given in the interpretation clause. It is not a question of a child being allowed to go barefooted. The definition refers to a child who habitually begs or receives alms, or frequents a public place for the purpose of so doing, etc. If a parent suffers a child to do this the parent is guilty of an offence.

Mr. Pilkington: Only if a parent suffers it by wilful misconduct or wilful neglect.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is so. If a child is wilfully suffered to do such things the parent is guilty and should pay the penalty, because the parent in that case is more guilty than the child.

Amendment put and passed; the clause as amended agreed to.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Bill again reported with further amendments.

BILL—CROWN SUITS ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Resumed from 28th August. Mr. Stubbs in the Chair; the Attorney General in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported on Clause 2.

Clause put and passed.

Title agreed to.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

BILL—JUSTICES ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Order of the Day read for the resumption from the 28th August of the debate on the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Stubbs in the Chair; the Attorney General in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2, 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Substitution of new section for Section 29:

Mr. FOLEY: The amendment stipulates that there must be two justices on the bench to deal with any indictable or simple offence. In remote portions of the State, it is often difficult to obtain two justices and there are some cases which might well be dealt with by one justice. Do the Government intend to provide police magistrates to a greater extent than at present? It is asking too much of justices to require two to sit on every case.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I am not prepared to give an undertaking to appoint more police magistrates at present. Section 32 of the Act provides that one justice may hear a complaint when there is not another justice residing within 10 miles. Sometimes it is difficult to get two justices. Under ordinary circumstances, two justices can be obtained and it is desirable that they shall sit.

Mr. Munsie: What is the position if the two justices disagree?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: There would have to be a re-hearing.

Mr. FOLEY: I would be satisfied with the Attorney General's reply if he assured me that Section 32 of the Act would operate, notwithstanding this amendment.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The position is that if there were two justices and they disagreed the opinion of the senior would prevail.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 5—Amendment of Section 33:

Mr. PICKERING: What is the idea of extending the powers of police magistrates to every portion of the State?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: A person who is appointed to such a position generally possesses the qualifications that render him an acquisition as regards the giving of decisions in any portion of the State. He is, therefore, being given power to adjudicate in any part of Western Australia in which he may happen to be.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 6, 7—agreed to.

Clause 8—Insertion of new section after Section 94:

Mr. MUNSIE: I should like the Attorney General to explain this clause. It appears to give too much power to any sergeant of police. If a justice grants bail to an individual a sergeant can apply for a re-

hearing with the object of having that bail revoked.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Occasions arise where after bail has been given circumstances are brought to the notice of the police which render it advisable that the bail should be revoked. This power will not be worked to the hardship of anyone and will be lightly used.

Mr. MUNSIE: I am not satisfied with that explanation. If the police have any objection to an individual being let out on bail, they should state it before the bench while the case is being heard.

The Minister for Mines: They might get the information later.

Mr. MUNSIE: If after the bench had refused bail and the defendant had fresh evidence to bring forward later, would he have an opportunity of re-applying for bail?

The Minister for Mines: Who told you he could not apply for bail?

Mr. MUNSIE: I know he could apply before a judge of the Supreme Court, but I do not think he could apply once the bench had revoked bail at the instance of the police. This places too much power in the hands of the police.

Mr. PICKERING: In my opinion, too, it should not be placed in the power of any police officer to have bail refused. If that is not the intention of the clause, then it is badly worded.

Mr. MUNSIE: The court is supposed to have heard the whole of the facts of the case before committing a man to trial.

The Minister for Mines: Not all the facts, but sufficient.

Mr. MUNSIE: If that were not the case how could the court commit a man for trial? If the bench decides that a man should be granted bail, I am not prepared to give to a constable the right to get another justice of the peace, who may agree with him, to revoke that bail.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: There may be cases in which, if the police had known all the facts at the time, they would have opposed the granting of bail.

Hon. P. Collier: Is there any machinery to enable the bench to revoke its decision?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I do not know that there is, in this particular matter.

Mr. MUNSIE: There is more in the clause than meets the eye. If it is right that the defendant has to appeal to a judge of the Supreme Court, it should be equally right for a police officer, who considers that he has sufficient grounds, owing to a miscarriage of justice, for desiring that the bail should be revoked, also to apply to a judge of the Supreme Court. But I am not satisfied to have the constable again simply appeal to a magistrate.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Suppose a policeman in charge of a distant country station, say Broome, has reason to believe that an accused person on bail is about to abscond. Then, if the police constable has

to obtain an order from a Supreme Court judge, the provision is useless.

Mr. Munsie: It would be equally useless to the unfortunate charged.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The man charged could telegraph to a solicitor in Perth to obtain him bail. The object of the provision is to prevent persons arrested and then released on bail from escaping the consequences of the commission of offences. Hon. members must give justices, and also members of the police force, some credit for desiring to act impartially.

Mr. Munsie: Quite so, but I object to the policeman having two chances to the other man's one.

Clause put and negatived.

Clauses 9 to 20—agreed to.

Clause 21—Insertion of new sections in Part VIII:

Mr. PICKERING: We have not had time to consider this measure, and it is going through at extreme speed. I move—

That progress be reported.

Motion put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 22 to 25—agreed to.

Schedule, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

BILL—WHEAT MARKETING.

Second Reading.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [8.56] in moving the second reading said: This is a very simple and easily understood measure. On three occasions in this Chamber we have discussed wheat-marketing measures, and on the present occasion I ask the House to extend the existing legislation for one year, so as to cover the 1919-1920 season. I also ask the House to approve of a further acquiring agency agreement with the Westralian Farmers Ltd. This agreement has been accepted by the company, but of course it will not become effective until it has been approved by Parliament. Hon. members know that the average charge last year was 1½d. The terms and conditions of the agreement are exactly the same as last year, and the advisory committee recommend the Westralian Farmers Ltd. as agents again. Hon. members will recollect that we discussed this question of agency at considerable length in connection with previous Bills. Power is also asked to the Minister to advance for the purchase of cornsacks. This power was obtained when a similar measure was before Parliament last session. Hon. members are, of course, aware that the guarantee for the coming harvest is 4s. 4d. per bushel. I would like to give a few figures in connection with the handling of the wheat of this State; I daresay hon. members will be glad to know them. The whole of the 1915-16 wheat has been dealt with. Of the 1916-17 harvest, 375,200 bushels re-

main on hand. I am sorry to say that that wheat is not in good condition. However, there are only 375,000 bushels, some affected by weevil and some damaged by weather. The wheat here is very much better than the wheat in some of the Eastern States. Generally, the position here is very satisfactory indeed, thanks to the management first of Mr. Sibbald, and now of Mr. Keys. Of the 1917-18 crop, 1,912,466 bushels remain on hand, and of the 1918-19 crop 6,462,800 bushels. The amount paid per bushel against the wheat for the 1915-16 crop is 4s. 4¼d. less freight from sidings to nearest port; for the 1916-17 crop, 3s. 8d. at sidings; the same amount for the 1917-18 crop; and for the 1918-19 crop 4s. 4d. less freight from sidings to nearest port. I wish to point out to the House that there has been paid against the 1916-17 and 1917-18 crops very much less than against the 1915-16 and 1918-19 crops.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Most of it is sold, though. That is the worst of it.

The PREMIER: But it has been sold on account of the Australian Wheat Pool, and although our shipments have been heavier in proportion to our production as against the rest of the States, the advantage to us is that we have not to take care of the wheat.

Mr. Munsie: But this State shares the loss consequent on the bad condition of the wheat in the Eastern States.

The PREMIER: I am much obliged to the hon. member for his interjection. It is not so. Each pool is responsible for the proper care of its wheat. The hon. member will recollect that the New South Wales wheat, which was of inferior quality, had to be sold at a considerable discount, and that a set-off was made to the pool.

Hon. P. Collier: It is alleged that a great quantity was stolen there, too.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: A good deal of this has been sold and delivered below 5s. 6d.

The PREMIER: I think I may claim that the care of the wheat in this State has been exceptionally good. We have had very small losses.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: If more care had been taken we would not have had any at all.

The PREMIER: That may be, but I think proper care has been exercised. If the same care had been exercised throughout Australia, it would have been very much better for all concerned. The operations of the Wheat Pool in this State during the past four years have resulted in something like 10 million pounds worth being delivered to the Pool. That is to say, 10 million pounds sterling will have been distributed when the balance owing to the farmers is paid to them. That is a very fine sum—2¼ millions per annum for an industry which 10 years ago did not exist except in a small way. In addition to this result, it is hoped that the present harvest will yield something approaching 12 million bushels.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It is too early to estimate it.

The PREMIER: Yes, but it is hoped that that will be the result. If it is we shall again have a fine cheque to distribute amongst the farmers of Western Australia. I have told the House that the guarantee against next season's crop is 4s. 4d. delivered at the sidings. That is about 4s. to the farmer.

Hon. P. Collier: Is the Pool going to be continued?

The PREMIER: I do not know how long it will be continued. I am asking for power now to continue it for another year. If it is to be continued beyond the 1920 crop, Parliament will be consulted.

Hon. P. Collier: Has the Commonwealth Parliament decided about the coming crop?

The PREMIER: The guarantee against the coming crop is 4s. 4d. at the siding, the same as last year.

Hon. P. Collier: That is what the State guarantees.

The PREMIER: The State guarantees 3s. and takes half the risk. The Commonwealth takes the other half beyond the 3s. per bushel.

Hon. P. Collier: The Commonwealth are continuing the Pool for next harvest?

The PREMIER: Yes. I do not know when the Pool system is to stop.

Hon. P. Collier: A South Australian petition, with 10,000 signatures, asked that it should be discontinued.

The PREMIER: No one knows just now whether 1920 will see the end of the Pool. I suppose that so soon as we have free buying again, and so soon as shipping is available, farmers will no doubt desire to go back to the old system. In the meantime, lack of shipping makes it imperative that the Act should be continued for another year, and that is all I am asking the House to agree to to-night. I do not think I need say anything more in connection with the matter. I shall be very glad to supply any information members may desire to have. What I ask now is that the conditions of last year be made the conditions for the coming year.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You are not reducing the price.

The PREMIER: No. I am asking for the same conditions as applied to last year's crop. I am asking that the same provision be made for an agreement with the Western Farmers, Ltd.

Hon. P. Collier: What profit did they make last year?

The PREMIER: I have not the slightest idea.

Hon. P. Collier: It is all right; it is all in the pockets of the people.

The PREMIER: I refer the hon. member to the leader of the Country party for information on that point.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We pay a farthing more here than in South Australia.

The PREMIER: I dare say the conditions here are not the same as in South Australia.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They are better here.

The PREMIER: I am not sure that the conditions are the same. This is a more scattered country, with plenty of sidings. Our wheat is grown over an area 500 miles by 100 miles and naturally it is a more expensive matter to receive wheat at a number of sidings in small quantities. All I can say is, if we pay a farthing a bushel more the result here has been better than in the other States.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You cannot beat South Australia.

Mr. Gardiner: We do not want a repetition of the South Australian Wheat Pool here. It was the most scandalous thing known, next to New South Wales.

The PREMIER: The member for North-East Fremantle, as chairman of the Wheat Commission, is familiar with these subjects. He was very thorough in everything he did on that Commission and nothing escaped him. I ask the House to agree to the measure, and move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Harrison, debate adjourned.

BILL—PERTH MINT ACT AMENDMENT.

Message.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending the Bill.

BILL—TRADING CONCERNS.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from 28th August.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [9.10]: The Minister in introducing the Bill pointed out that it was only a very small one, the object being to increase the number of undertakings under the Trading Concerns Act. He, however, gave no reason whatever why the undertakings mentioned in the schedule or the Bill should be brought under the Trading Concerns Act, except that they could be properly capitalised, and interest, sinking fund, and depreciation provided for, and that the country would then know exactly what the position was so far as these enterprises were concerned. Is it not strange that for many years we have been running in Perth, Government Refrigerating Works, and that a few years ago the possibility of doing away with these works altogether was considered, because it was thought that they were not up to requirements; that they were not a paying proposition, and that a good deal of the machinery was worn out? It was considered then that better equipped

works were necessary for Perth. Now the Government come along and ask that these works, which have been condemned, be brought under the Trading Concerns Act. I would like to know what the reason is. In my opinion it is none other than to show that the various trading concerns which were established by the Labour Government when they were in office are not turning out satisfactorily. I do not know anything about the Busselton butter factory as it is at the present time, although I did some few years ago. It has lately been reorganised and a new plant has been installed, but the capitalisation of the old plant is to be brought under the Trading Concerns Act in an exactly similar manner as was done in the case of the Gwalia hotel. That institution paid for itself out of the profits which it made, and yet it was brought under the Trading Concerns Act at its full capital cost. That is what is being done in regard to the old Busselton factory. Then again, we have the Government markets in Perth, markets which have been condemned, and on which the Government are losing money. Under the present conditions these will never become a profitable undertaking. These markets, too, are to be brought under the Trading Concerns Act. There must be some reason why the Government are anxious to do this. So far as the Metropolitan Abattoirs and Saleyards are concerned, I do not know exactly under what conditions they are being run, or whether they are a paying proposition or not. But I do want to say that it is very strange that if a payable proposition has added anything to the Consolidated Revenue of the State, that is the concern that the Government are desirous of selling.

Mr. O'Loughlen: It will be a crime if they do it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They are not going to do it easily. But where they have undertakings which are continually making a loss, undertakings started by a Liberal Government many years ago, the plant and buildings being almost worn out, with no possibility of making the propositions pay, they wish to bring them under the Trading Concerns Act. I have a certain amount of sympathy with the Government. Since they have been trying for so long to stop the deficit, I can understand their attempt to bring under the Trading Concerns Act any undertaking showing a loss; because by so doing they will serve to reduce their deficit. They ought to do the same with the railways.

The Premier: Are they trading concerns?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They are business undertakings. They are like the cattle deal. When it looked like a profit it was a business undertaking, but when it showed a loss it was a trading concern.

The Premier: That was the way in your time.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Long before the loss was made, the member for Pilbarra predicted that loss. I have never heard from

the Minister any reason why these losing business undertakings which have been condemned should be brought under the Trading Concerns Act. Each of these undertakings has shown a considerable loss. It appears to be the Minister's one idea to try, as far as possible, to transfer to the Trading Concerns Act business undertakings showing a loss.

The Minister for Works: What is the difference between a business undertaking and a trading concern?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not know. The Minister himself invented the distinction. The only difference I can see is that the revenue and expenditure of the trading concerns are not taken into consideration in relation to Consolidated Revenue. The Minister, when introducing the Trading Concerns Bill, embodied in that measure every concern supported by the Labour Administration. He anticipated that there would be a continual loss. He did not then realise that the only bright spot in the finances were the trading concerns.

The Premier: Due to the war.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They would have showed a much better return but for the war. The war affected practically every trading concern in the State. Nearly all private employers suffered through the war, and the State trading concerns have suffered similarly. Nevertheless, last year the trading concerns contributed handsomely to Consolidated Revenue. The Minister never anticipated that when he introduced the Trading Concerns Bill. Now he proposes to bring under the Act five other concerns which he knows will never pay.

The Premier: It does not make any difference to revenue.

Hon. P. Collier: But it makes a difference in the argument against trading concerns.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It will make a difference to the balance in respect of revenue.

The Premier: Not a bit.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They are not taken into consideration in respect of Consolidated Revenue except when they show a profit. If there is a loss, it is mentioned only in condemnation of the Labour party.

The Minister for Works: We are not seeking to injure the Labour party at all.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Because you have no chance of doing so. Still, it has a tendency to put the trading concerns in a worse light than they should be. The Bill affords opportunity for discussing some of the concerns already in existence. We realise that the State sawmills have shown several thousand pounds profit this year, and that because they are a payable proposition and afford a good check on private charges the Minister intends to get rid of them.

The Minister for Works: The House has to decide that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We have one of the most up-to-date brickworks in the State. I do not wish to anticipate, but I am instructed by the municipal council in my

electorate to organise a deputation to the Minister, requesting that he shall increase the output from those works. The whole of the building trade is practically hung up for want of bricks. Yet there was very little output from the State brickworks last year. I remember that on one occasion those works turned out in one month 635,000 bricks. We have been told that bricks would never be made at 25s. per thousand. A deputation which waited on the Premier, the Minister for Works being present, declared that it could not be done. Yet those bricks were made, with all standing charges—

The Minister for Works: At 32s. 10½d.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Interest and sinking fund, depreciation and full standing charges were put up, and the cost of the bricks ran out at something less than 32s.

The Minister for Works: It was 32s. 10½d.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That included everything. There was an amount of 9s. or 10s. per thousand for standing charges.

Mr. SPEAKER: Which of the trading concerns is the hon. member discussing?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Those mentioned in the Title of the Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member will be in order in discussing those contained in the schedule. The Bill deals only with those in the schedule.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I was merely trying to point out the difficulties we are placed in owing to the neglect to work the State trading concerns to their maximum output. Never before have we had such a demand for increased output. Never have the people been so anxious that the Government should make the best use of the trading concerns. I want the Minister to increase their number, but I say let us have payable propositions. The State brickworks, for instance, if properly operated, would show a considerable profit. Instead of that we are to have brought under the Act undertakings that show a loss. But for the war the Government markets, Perth, would no longer have been in existence. In view of the disgraceful condition of those markets, could anybody be expected to open a stall in them? Or could any person be expected to go there, seeing that none can say how long it will be before the markets are removed to make room for railway buildings? Of course nobody would take such a risk.

The Minister for Works: You do not object to our trying to make the best of the proposition?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But these concerns have been condemned, notwithstanding which their capitalisation will be charged up under Trading Concerns Act. They represent a total loss, and once they have been brought under the Trading Concerns Act, their evil reputation will be spread broadcast among the people, not only of this State, but of the Eastern States and even of London. Owing to the action of a member of the present Government, I, when Minister for Works, deemed it my duty to

send an audited balance sheet to Melbourne, by way of refuting statements made in regard to the sawmills. I hope Parliament will not agree to these business undertakings scheduled in the Bill being transferred to trading concerns. I do not object to the new Busselton butter factory being included but I do object to the old factory, in which the machinery is worn out, being charged up with the full capital expenditure. It is unfair and unjust, and not in the interests of the trading concerns that the old factory should be embodied in the Bill.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [9.31]: I support the Government in so far as the Busselton butter factory is concerned, because the Labour party, when they converted that factory into a State factory, conferred a great benefit on the dairying industry of the State. From the establishment of the factory as a State trading concern, the dairying industry has progressed continuously, and to the success demonstrated by that factory might be attributed the many co-operative ventures which have been started in this State. I regret that I have not the figures applying to the Busselton butter factory, but I can assure the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Angwin) that the improvement in the dairying industry in the Busselton district has been most marked ever since this became a State concern. At the time the then Minister, Mr. W. D. Johnson, converted it into a State concern there were only 7 contributors to the factory, and to-day, I believe, there are over 400, and some of them as far distant as Waroona. Recently the Government made an offer to get this factory converted into a co-operative concern and the figures placed before the contributors showed that the factory was on a very satisfactory footing. Although it is not paying to-day, it is within a very small sum of doing so. The people of the district, desirous of seeing this carried to fruition, realise that the State conferred a boon on the district by establishing the factory, and do not desire that the control be disturbed. They even went so far as to pass a resolution to that effect. The time is not opportune for any change in the control of this factory. We have been confronted with heavy expenses in the way of clearing and, prior to taking over the factory, we had the difficulty of getting the true value of the produce purchased by the factory. The consequence was that the dairying industry began to go down rapidly. In view of these facts and my conviction that the producers are getting a fair deal from the Government management of this factory, I hope the Government will not unduly handicap us by putting the additional value of an obsolete and derelict factory, which the present factory has replaced, against the capital charge, as that would affect us seriously. I hope the view of the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Angwin) will not be borne out in fact. The debt should not go back beyond the initiation of the new factory.

The Minister for Works: This is simply to get the thing into a proper form so that we shall know where we are.

Mr. PICKERING: I am prepared to support the Bill with that object.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [9.34]: I regret that apparently this comparatively small, yet important Bill does not excite the same degree of interest as did the question of a five shilling license fee for farmers' wagons, judging by the attendance of members, particularly those who occupy the cross benches. It is also to be regretted that the Minister in charge of the Bill did not give some tangible reasons for the motives which actuated the Government in bringing it forward. I not only listened carefully to the speech of the Minister in introducing the Bill, but have since read the report in "Hansard," and I have failed to find one word of explanation or justification or any reason whatever why the Government seek to bring these particular concerns under the Trading Concerns Act.

The Premier: It is of no advantage to revenue.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No, but it is to that section of the community who live politically and have for years lived politically by denouncing State trading concerns. It is of considerable advantage to those who make it a theme of their eloquence whenever they get up to discuss public questions. It is of great interest to them to be able to point to the results of the State trading concerns to show they have made a financial loss on their operations.

The Premier: They are State trading concerns whether they are under the Act or not.

Hon. P. COLLIER: At the present time they are described as business undertakings and as such they do not come under that great volume of criticism or attack levelled against State trading concerns in recent years.

The Premier: You are not serious.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am. The Minister gave no reasons whatever. Apparently the object of the Bill is to placate a number of private traders in this State.

The Premier: It is not.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Minister for Works said many of the private traders objected to the way these concerns were being conducted and, for that reason the Government were bringing them under the Act so that these private traders would be in a position to judge the financial results of the operations of these concerns.

The Minister for Works: Have not they, as taxpayers, the right to know the financial results?

Hon. P. COLLIER: They are not the only taxpayers in the State. Because they constitute themselves the Chamber of Commerce and foregather in a back room in Perth and put themselves up as kings of commerce and finance, and explode on every possible occasion with regard to State trading concerns; because they have an objec-

tion and apparently have the ear of the Minister, he comes down with this Bill to placate them.

The Minister for Works: They are no friends of mine.

Mr. Underwood: They thought they were.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They have always regarded the Minister as their friend. Is not the Minister for Works the one strong man of the Government who, through thick and thin, through all the storm and stress of public agitation against State trading concerns in recent years, stood out and said—"I still am opposed to State trading concerns."

Mr. Underwood: Yes.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I heard several of his present colleagues on the platform, within recent months, men who had been just as prominent as he in the past in denouncing State trading concerns, express the view that they had been converted. Seeing all his colleagues have deserted him in that respect and have now come over to the view of the Labour party, and have embraced the principles and policy which for years they denounced in this House and out of it, is it any wonder that these private traders have selected the Minister for Works as the one man they would go to in order to unburden their minds of their troubles?

The Minister for Works: Some of them would hang me.

Hon. P. COLLIER: However, they have secured their wishes. I should like the Minister to tell the House—and the House and the country are entitled to know—what is the guiding principle, the deciding factor with the Government as to which of these concerns shall be brought under this measure. Why are the five, mentioned in the Bill, selected and the many others that are classed as business undertakings allowed to remain outside the scope of the Bill?

The Premier: You can add to this list.

The Minister for Works: Which ones do you wish to add?

Mr. Munsie: What about adding a super-phosphate works?

Hon. P. COLLIER: Surely there is an obligation on the Government to explain their system in this matter. Why have the Government selected those concerns?

The Premier: What do you want added?

Hon. P. COLLIER: The whole lot.

The Premier: What are they?

Hon. P. COLLIER: The whole of those classified under the heading of business undertakings. There is not one argument that can be advanced for the inclusion of these five concerns under this measure that cannot, with equal logic and consistency, be advanced for the inclusion of all the others now classed as business undertakings.

The Premier: What are they?

Hon. P. COLLIER: We have to-day, under State trading concerns, the ferries. What argument can be used to justify the inclusion of State ferries under the provisions of this measure that cannot with equal force and consistency be applied to the Govern-

ment tramways? Why are not the tramways included? They are a public utility just as are the State ferries. What is the argument, what is the deciding factor, what is the guiding principle that actuates Ministers when they decide to include one and exclude the others?

The Premier: Competitive trading concerns.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The ferries are not competitive trading concerns. But that argument does not apply because there are many others.

Mr. Munsie: What about Wyndham Freezing Works? What are they competing against?

Mr. Underwood: All the world. What about the Moola Bulla Station?

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, the Moola Bulla station is not under the State trading concerns, and yet the shipment of cattle from the North-West is, no doubt, because it was a losing proposition. The Government lost something like £30,000 in one year on cattle.

Mr. Munsie: It was a business undertaking.

Hon. P. COLLIER: What is the argument justifying the bringing of a shipment of cattle from the North-West under this measure and not the Moola Bulla station? Will the Minister please explain?

The Premier: It is easily explained. Moola Bulla is a native station.

Hon. P. COLLIER: How does that affect the principle?

The Premier: It is intended to look after the natives.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Would the natives be looked after any less well if that station were brought under this measure? How would they be affected? Whether the station is under the heading of business undertakings or State trading concerns, it is controlled and administered by the Government, and does the Premier suggest that the Government, in administering the Moola Bulla station under the State Trading Concerns Act, would be less mindful of the interests of the natives than if it were classified under business undertakings?

The Premier: It is a totally different proposition.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Wherein is it different?

The Premier: Of course it is.

Hon. P. COLLIER: There is no difference whatever.

The Premier: Why was the station bought?

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is a trading concern. The station is raising stock, and is in competition with other stock raisers on the meat market. The stock is brought down and placed on the market in competition with other men in the business.

Mr. Foley: And is showing a good profit.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, and that is one of the main reasons why it is not proposed to bring it under this measure. I have no hesitation in saying it appears to me that

the main underlying principle, which has actuated the Government in bringing these concerns under the measure, is to include them not of a profitable character for the purpose of discrediting, in the public mind, the principle of State trading. We know the man in the street, and the leading traders, the men of commerce and industry the State, who in recent years have put themselves up as critics of the principle of State trading, have judged these concerns absolutely from the one point of view, namely, as to whether they have proved to be financial success as regards profit and loss. If a big Government undertaking has shown a financial loss on the year's operations they say that no further argument is needed; they show the fallacy of the whole principle. I judge a State trading concern from the point alone is unfair, and the judgment of no value. When we judge of the value of State trading concern we have to take into consideration not only the financial aspect of the business, as to whether it is showing a profit or a loss, but have to take into account the service it is rendering to the public. That is a point entirely lost sight of by critics. It may be that the State trading concerns, which it is proposed to bring under the Bill, have shown a financial loss for the year, but it may also be that they have rendered and are rendering to the public much greater service than would be rendered by similar concerns controlled by private enterprise. There are many concerns on the list. The tramways are showing a handsome profit annually of from £10,000 to £12,000. There is no suggestion of bringing them under the classification of a State trading concern.

The Premier: What about the railways?

Hon. P. COLLIER: The railways would show a bigger loss than, because they would be debited with sinking fund and depreciation, which at present is not charged against them.

Mr. Duff: What about State hotels?

Hon. P. COLLIER: They are not mentioned here. The tourist department is a concern which is not brought under the Act. It is classified as a business undertaking.

The Minister for Works: Add it if you like.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Is that the way the Minister has drawn up his Bill? Apparently he holds no opinion on the matter. Does this represent his attitude?

The Minister for Works: No.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Apparently it does. Everyone of those concerns to which I have referred as being brought under the term "business undertaking" the Minister says we can include if we like. The Government should have some definite idea as to what should be or should not be included in the measure. Their present attitude is conclusive proof of the fact that they have no definite guiding principle in the matter.

The Minister for Works: We have.

Hon. F. COLLIER: As soon as I mention any concerns which ought to be included in the Bill, he says, "Include them if you like." Is this the haphazard way they have arrived at their opinion in regard to these proposals?

The Minister for Works: No.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Minister failed to give the House any reason why these concerns should be brought under the provisions of the Act any more than those I have already indicated. He merely suggested that there were certain traders in the city desirous of knowing how these concerns were being conducted. For their information he brings down this Bill to include them. I shall oppose with all my strength the inclusion of any more of these undertakings under the State Trading Concerns Act until the Government have defined their real position.

The Premier: They all ought to be put in.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Then why have they not been included in the Bill?

The Premier: They are included.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They are not here. The Bill provides only for adding to the list of concerns now under the Act, the Government refrigerating works, the Government markets, the Busselton butter factory, the metropolitan abattoirs and sale-yards, and the Kalgoorlie abattoirs.

The Premier: All paying propositions.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They are not paying propositions. The Premier now says they ought all to be put in. If that is the policy of the Government, why are they not included in the Bill? This shows that they have given no consideration to the principles involved.

Mr. Underwood: They just threw it on.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is quite evident. The Minister for Works says that we can bring in many other concerns, and the Premier says that we can bring them all in, and yet we find no provision for doing so. Evidently the Bill has not been brought to the House as a result of any matured policy or definite conviction on the part of the Government. This is my justification for the assertion that the motive underlying their action is to get under the Trading Concerns Act all those business undertakings that are of an unprofitable nature.

The Minister for Works: You did not establish these.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It does not matter who established them. During all the years the Minister has been here these concerns have been going on and have not been looked upon as State trading concerns. They have never been in the minds of those opposed to State trading concerns. I object to legislation being introduced to strengthen or bolster up the opposition in the country to the operation of these concerns.

The Minister for Works: That is not the object.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Let us adjourn the debate until the Government have fully con-

sidered the matter, and have prepared an amendment to place under the Act the Railways and Tramways and the other services as well as those that are at present being excluded.

The Premier: Are you tobogganing down the list?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not propose to do that, or to allow Ministers to toboggan the Bill through either. I hope the Minister will be as considerate to us in reporting progress as he was to our friends on the cross benches when a tax of 5s. per wheel, affecting a few farmers' wagons, was brought forward earlier in the day. The time of the House ought not to be taken up in the consideration of this Bill. There is more important legislation to deal with. Our time should not be engaged in the consideration of legislation which has for its object merely the gratification of a few trading critics in the city of Perth.

The Premier: That is not the object.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Minister for Works expressed that opinion when moving the second reading. It may be that many of the concerns which the Government feel called upon to dispose of, in accordance with their professed policy, but which they do not wish to dispose of, will be brought under the provisions of this Bill, so that they can throw the responsibility on the House afterwards of getting rid of them. The Minister for Works stated earlier that the Government were negotiating for the sale of the State sawmills, a concern which has shown a profit, after allowing all the charges that this Bill lays down must be charged against them.

Mr. Munzie: Which are very unfair.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Such as interest and depreciation every year since it has been in operation. At the same time there is no suggestion of disposing of that State trading concern which has shown a loss every year since it has been in existence. I refer particularly to the State Implement Works. The Government have had instructions from the cross benches not to dispose of that undertaking, but the cross benches do not care what the Government may do with the other trading concerns. There is no consistency on the part of the Government in the matter. Members who now comprise the Ministry have for years denounced the policy of State trading concerns, but to-day many of them are supporting them.

Mr. SPEAKER: This Bill does not affect the principle of State trading concerns. It only aims at bringing certain trading undertakings under the State Trading Concerns Act. The hon. member cannot discuss now the whole principle of State trading concerns.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I have no desire to contest your ruling in the matter. The principle of State trading concerns is, however, somewhat involved. I intend to oppose the second reading of the Bill and to oppose it at every stage. I am in opposition to any

proposal of the Government to bring under the operation of the Act any additional concerns until they give some substantial reason for so doing. There has been no guiding principle in the drafting of this Bill. Will the Minister give the House the reasons which actuated him in selecting these particular concerns and in omitting those which are now classified as business undertakings? Unless he can give some good reason for the inclusion of those provided for and the exclusion of others, he has no right to ask for the support of the House. In my opinion we might well leave the State trading concerns where they are. We do not want any addition to them unless it is some genuine concern such as—

The Premier: A butter factory.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know why the Busselton butter factory should be included.

The Premier: It is a buyer and a seller.

Hon. P. COLLIER: So are other concerns.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: So are the bacon factories.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They are not included. A year or two ago we read in the paper that a butter or a bacon factory was being established every week in our rural areas.

The Premier: Kalgoorlie and Boulder?

Hon. P. COLLIER: No, although we can supply requirements from Kalgoorlie to keep the bacon factories going better than can the agricultural portion of the State. But there are other butter and bacon factories included in the term "business undertakings." Why have they not been included in this Bill as well as the Busselton butter factory? Why has Busselton been selected? Just as the Busselton factory has emerged from its initial difficulties and reached the paying stage, the Government want to drag it in. There are many other undertakings which might be included as well, and I hope the Government will not persevere with this Bill. For my part, I intend to oppose the measure, because the Minister has given no reason for it whatever beyond saying, when presenting the Bill to the House in a casual way, that a few trading friends of his in the City desired him to do so. For that reason he has brought down the Bill to occupy the time of this House.

Mr. FOLEY (Leonora) [10.2]: I was rather surprised on reading this Bill, and I was still more surprised when I heard the Premier interject this evening that the Bill deals only with those trading concerns which are non-competitive. Many of the business undertakings of the Government are absolutely as competitive as those enumerated in the Bill. The very first one mentioned, the Government refrigerating works in Perth, competes with other businesses of the same kind. Private enterprise will have something to say on that score. Further, there are markets now competing with the Government markets in Perth. Then, as regards the Bus-

selton butter factory, there are other competing butter factories. Next let me ask, what is going to be done about the A.L.F. factory? A lot of Government money has been spent on that jam or pickle factory, and up to the present there is very little chance of getting much of that money back. On the lines of the Government's argument, I contend there should be included in this Bill every business in which any of the money of this State has been invested.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member would be in order in moving an addition to that effect during the Committee stage.

Mr. FOLEY: I am mentioning this on the second reading by way of suggestion. I am engaged in drawing a comparison between businesses that are on the list and others that are not on the list. I am pointing out that there are other businesses which might better have found a place on the list. We have heard a great deal about the Busselton butter factory. No doubt it is, as the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) claims, a very sound institution. It is empty, and "empty vessels make the greatest sound." The member for the district in which the factory is situated, or I may say the member for that factory, now wants to tell the House that it is a payable proposition.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think the merits and demerits of the Busselton butter factory are under discussion, but simply whether that factory shall be subject to the State Trading Concerns Act, 1916.

Mr. FOLEY: I am arguing that the factory should not come under that Act. If I am not allowed to discuss that—

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order in discussing whether the concerns named in the schedule are paying or non-paying. The question is whether they should be included within the scope of the State Trading Concerns Act, 1916.

Mr. FOLEY: I am of opinion that the Busselton butter factory should not be included in the schedule to this Bill. I contend that the money which the Government have put into that factory represents all the capital that has gone into the undertaking. The member for Sussex now says that he does not wish the Government to interfere in any way with the management of the factory, but to allow those in control to carry on in their own sweet way. If that is to be allowed, the State should not take over the responsibility. The responsibility should fall on those who carry on the factory.

Mr. Pickering: That is the position, too.

Mr. FOLEY: The position is that the Government have supplied all the capital, and that now the proprietors of the factory do not want to pay on the capitalisation, but want to get all the debts wiped off. They are practically selling the Minister for Works a pup, and he is taking the pup into his arms. I do not know what he is going to do with it, but I think he ought to drown it. When the Bills gets into Committee, I will help the leader of the Opposition to get this par-

ticular pup drowned. Let us know, when the Estimates are brought down, exactly what these concerns are costing, and then, if they are paying, we can help them. But if they are not paying, we ought not to take them over on that ground, allowing the shareholders to manage them and pat themselves on the back if eventually a success is made. I strongly object to these businesses being carried on by means of Government money while the State has no opportunity of recovering the funds so invested.

On motion by Mr. Munsie, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.9 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 3rd September, 1919.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30, p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION—WHEAT LOADING AT FREMANTLE.

Hon. A. H. PANTON asked the Minister for Education: 1, Is he aware that the boats "C.J.S." and the "Almora" were delayed in Fremantle owing to insufficient wheat being available to load? 2, In the interests of the Fremantle port, will the Minister take steps to prevent such delay in the future?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1 and 2, There was no undue delay in supplying wheat for the "C.J.S." and "Almora." The wheat was supplied in accordance with the terms of the charter parties which governed the loading of the vessels.

QUESTION—ALIENS AT KALGOORLIE.

Hon. A. H. PANTON asked the Minister for Education: 1, Are the Government aware that large numbers of aliens have left Kalgoorlie under advice by the police? 2, In the interest of peace, will the Government take steps to prevent these aliens invading other industrial centres?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, The Government are aware that a number of aliens have left Kalgoorlie. 2, The Government are not aware that these aliens are invading other industrial centres and are informed that a number are arranging to leave the State.

QUESTION—SOLDIERS' SENTENCES, REMISSIONS.

Hon. A. H. PANTON asked the Minister for Education: 1, How many returned soldiers were undergoing sentence in the State for other than military offences on Peace Day (19th July)? 2, Were any of the sentences remitted? 3, If so, how many, and to what extent?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, It is not recorded whether prisoners (other than those convicted of military offences) are returned soldiers or not. 2 and 3, All prisoners were granted a remission of sentence on the declaration of Peace in accordance with the following scale:—Sentences of 3 months and under, 14 days; for each subsequent period of 3 months, 14 days. Limit of remission, 6 months.

BILL—MENTAL TREATMENT ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Assembly.

BILL—HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT.

Recommittal.

Order of the Day read for the third reading.

Hon. A. SANDERSON (Metropolitan-Suburban) 4.37: I move—

That the Bill be recommitted for the purpose of further considering Clause 2. When I saw that the second reading was fixed for yesterday's sitting I did not think there was any chance of the Bill going through Committee on the same day, and when the matter was before the House last night I was unavoidably absent. I crave the indulgence of the House to that extent. The Bill is a controversial one, and while I am not making any complaint against the leader of the House—indeed he can make one against me—I thought the ordinary procedure would be for the Committee stage to be taken at another sitting of the House. With regard to Clause 2, I would like to be permitted to put one or two matters before hon. members. That is why I ask that the Bill be recommitted.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [4.38]: I have no objection to the Bill being recommitted, but I would like to assure the hon. member that the usual procedure was followed. If the hon. member had intimated to me that