

will not be able to get along successfully, or even reasonably—either from the point of view of wealth production or from the point of view of living conditions—without the scheme.

Hon. N. Keenan: I believe you have read Sir John Forrest's speech.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No. I frankly confess that I have not read any of his speeches in recent years.

Hon. N. Keenan: I do not mean in recent years.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have not read any speeches in recent years except those of the member for Nedlands, which I always read and very much enjoy. The Government places this Bill before Parliament with every confidence. We believe Parliament will take the opportunity provided of approving of a scheme of great magnitude, one that will prove of incalculable value to the people of the districts concerned. In the confidence of that belief, I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Doney, debate adjourned.

## BILL—SUPPLY (No. 2), £2,200,000.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

House adjourned at 8.37 p.m.

## Legislative Council.

Tuesday, 22nd October, 1946.

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

## QUESTION.

### WOOL.

#### As to Freedom of Movement of Purchases.

Hon. A. L. LOTON asked the Chief Secretary:

1, Is the Minister aware of the statement as published in "The West Australian" dated the 17th October, 1946, re wool sales at Newcastle—"That no further wool will be bought or sold in Australia until conditions return to a stage when buyers are sure of freedom of movement of wool purchased"?

2, Has the Minister verified such statement?

3, If the above statement is correct, is the State Government taking steps to guarantee such movement of wool in this State?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

1, 2 and 3, The statement quoted emanated from a meeting of brokers, buyers and shipowners and had particular application to New South Wales.

## MOTION—WAR FUNDS REGULATION ACT.

To Approve of Proclamations for Transfer of Assets.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [4.36]: I move—

That under the provisions of Section 5, Subsection (4) of the War Funds Regulation Act, 1939, this House approve of the issue of proclamations authorising the transfer of the assets of the Australian Comforts Fund (Western Australian Division), the Naval Welfare and Comforts Fund and the R.A.A.F. Comforts Fund, in the terms set out in the proclamations.

This motion deals with assets in the nature of cash and goods held by the Australian Comforts Fund, the Naval Welfare and Comforts Fund, and the R.A.A.F. Comforts Fund, comprising three of the major war fund organisations registered in this State under the provisions of the War Funds Regulation Act, 1939. That Act provides for the constitution of a War Funds Council to supervise the operations of individuals, committees etc., raising moneys for purposes connected with the

recent war. Section 5 of the Act sets out that—

(1) The Governor, on the recommendation of the Council, may at any time by proclamation direct that any moneys or securities for moneys, or any articles in any war fund which it considers will not be required for the purposes for which the fund was established, shall be:

(a) applied by the trustees of such fund to purposes connected with the present war but not authorised by their trust; or

(b) vested in and transferred to some other war fund; or

(c) vested in and transferred to the Council for allotment for the purposes of other war funds or for other purposes connected with the present war.

It further provides that a proclamation shall not be issued under the section until a resolution has been passed by both Houses of Parliament approving of the issue of the proclamation. As the assets concerned, details of which I will give to the House, are no longer required by these three war funds, and as the trustees of the funds are desirous of transferring their assets to other war fund objectives, and the War Funds Council approves, it becomes necessary, in order legally to effect this transfer, to seek the authority of Parliament in the form of this resolution.

In seeking this, however, I feel that members would like to have some information covering the very laudable work carried out by the many patriotic citizens associated with the three funds. Citizens from all walks of life and in all parts of the State, imbued with the idea of assisting in every way possible in the provision of amenities and benefits for men and women in the Services, did, as members are no doubt aware, give very generously indeed of their time and in many instances of their money. Two reports have already been tabled in Parliament covering the activities of all registered war or patriotic fund organisations, and members are well aware of that particular aspect of the State's contribution to the war effort. It is not my intention, therefore, to deal with the activities of all patriotic organisations, but to give a brief resume of the work of the three funds which are the subject of this resolution.

Dealing with the Australian Comforts Fund, I point out that activities commenced in November, 1939, in the name of the Victoria League Camp Comforts Fund. Subse-

quently the title was altered to the Australian Comforts Fund (Western Australian Division). The objective of the fund was the supply of comforts and amenities to men and women of all the Services, particularly those overseas. Branches were formed throughout Western Australia, and these, with the co-operation of many citizens in all parts of the State, raised money, made and purchased goods, and provided other assistance for the services.

During 1940 and 1941, the activities were mainly concerned with the packing and shipping of comforts to the Middle East. In 1942, with the return of the A.I.F. and a great increase in the number of Service personnel in this State, activities were directed to the organisation of amenities within the State, particularly in the North-West and more remote areas. From 1943 onwards work within the State declined, and the main effort was in the provision of comforts and amenities in New Guinea and the islands, together with supplies for Australian personnel in England, India and elsewhere.

As to the finances of the fund, the total moneys handled by the central executive amounted to £263,653. This does not include moneys received from the central fund in Melbourne. Of this amount, £209,656 was expended in the purchase of comforts and amenities; distribution costs and special appeal expenses amounted to £8,104; administration costs to £9,542, federal expenses and country hostels, etc. £3,873, and donations to other war funds £7,693, leaving a surplus of £24,785 for final distribution. Those figures, of course, do not include all the moneys collected by branches of the fund. Statements in the possession of the Chief Secretary's Department disclose that the total collections, including those of branches, amount in round figures to £365,000. Branches, of course, were very active, and whilst the greater part of the moneys raised by them were handed in to the central fund, many thousands of pounds were spent in country areas in the purchase of goods, etc., for overseas parcels, which were forwarded on through the central fund in Perth.

The proposal by the Australian Comforts Fund for the disposal of its surplus funds is as follows:—

40 per cent. to the Perth Legacy Club for the provision of scholarships;

30 per cent. to the War Veterans' Home Building Appeal;

15 per cent. to the Wanslea Hostel Committee;

15 per cent. to the Y.W.C.A. Building Appeal for the erection and furnishing of a wing for the particular use of ex-Servicewomen.

The R.A.A.F. Comforts Fund was established in July, 1940, its objective being somewhat similar to that of the Australian Comforts Fund, but confined solely to R.A.A.F. personnel. Many thousands of parcels have been provided by that organisation. In the last few years its main effort was the conduct of the Rendezvous, an entertainment centre in William-street, Perth. The statements disclose that an amount of £33,937 was collected since the commencement of activities. Of this amount, £26,795 was expended on amenities and benefits; £488 was allocated to other war funds, and £4,701 to various items of expenditure, leaving a surplus of £1,953. Assets in the nature of furniture, refrigerator, wireless, billiard tables, etc., to the value of approximately £950, remain in the Rendezvous, which is still being used by Service personnel and ex-Service men and women. Details of these assets are set out in the files in the department.

The proposal is that the surplus moneys and goods mentioned be transferred to the Air Force Association, to be placed in trust for the amelioration of R.A.A.F. personnel, and ex-Servicemen and their dependants, irrespective of whether they are members of the association or not. It is considered that such a condition should apply, because the moneys were originally made available by the public for amenities and benefits to R.A.A.F. personnel; therefore the fact that an ex-Serviceman was not a member of the association should not debar him from obtaining relief where necessary. In the event of Parliamentary approval, the assets will be applied to an account in the name of the R.A.A.F. Welfare and Rehabilitation Fund.

The Naval Welfare and Comforts Fund was sponsored by the ex-Naval Men's Association and was established in April, 1940, its objects being to provide comforts for naval personnel and assistance to their dependants in necessitous circumstances. Provision of comforts for those at sea was the fund's first obligation. It claims, too, that no vessel with naval personnel on board has called at Fremantle without receiving amenities in the nature of either woollen goods, sports goods, libraries, radio, or

tobacco and cigarettes, fruit, etc. In addition to providing various items for vessels, depots and so on, all returned survivors have been supplied with new clothing or a cash grant to assist them. That refers to vessels sunk during the war, survivors from which ultimately arrived at Fremantle.

The statements submitted to the War Funds Council disclose that a total amount of £46,212 was raised by the fund. Of this amount £38,068 was expended on comforts and relief, £1,434 was donated to other war funds, and £3,739 was utilised on administrative and appeal expenditure, leaving a balance of £2,971. The proposal is that the assets of the fund be transferred to the Ex-Naval Men's Association, to be placed in a trust account for the relief of distress amongst naval personnel, ex-Service personnel and their dependants, irrespective of whether the personnel concerned are members of the association or not.

That is a brief outline of the activities of of the war funds mentioned and of the proposals for the allocation of their existing assets. These proposals have the approval of the War Funds Council and the trustees of the funds concerned. Since the commencement of their activities the three organisations have submitted quarterly financial statements to the War Funds Council for examination, and it can be said that never once did the voluntary workers concerned complain of their obligations in this regard. In each instance the affairs of the funds have been in the hands of citizens holding high executive positions in the business and commercial life of the community. Having regard to that fact and also to the fact that professional services—all in a voluntary capacity—have been rendered in respect of accounts, and that quarterly statements submitted have been examined by the council, Parliament can be assured that the moneys so generously contributed by the public have been wisely administered. I hope that the proposals for the disposition of these surplus assets will meet with Parliamentary approval. If the House agrees to the motion, it must be transmitted to another place for its approval before the proclamations can be issued. After the proclamations have been made, then the organisations that I have already mentioned will benefit in each case to the extent to which I have referred.

Question put and passed; the motion agreed to.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move—

That a message be transmitted to the Legislative Assembly acquainting it of this resolution, and requesting its concurrence therein.

Question put and passed, and a message accordingly transmitted to the Assembly.

## BILL—ROAD DISTRICTS ACT AMENDMENT.

### *Recommittal.*

On motion by Hon. J. G. Hislop, Bill recommitted for the further consideration of Clause 2.

### *In Committee.*

Hon. H. Seddon in the Chair; Hon. A. L. Loton in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 160:

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: When the Bill was in the Committee stage I desired to add a proviso to Clause 2 providing that there should be some standard of building to be purchased or acquired for the purpose of a hostel. The proviso which I proposed to move is on the notice paper and is as follows:—

Provided that before any such property is acquired by purchase or otherwise the board shall obtain from the Commissioner of Public Health a certificate in writing that such property is suitable in his opinion for the purposes of this Act.

I have since considered the amendment and it is my wish to insert between the words "is" and "suitable" the words "or can be made." The effect would be that if the property is or can be made suitable, in the opinion of the Commissioner, then it may be purchased or acquired for the purpose of a hostel. I feel the sponsor of the Bill will agree to the alteration. If so, I will formally move it.

The CHAIRMAN: I draw the attention of the hon. member to the fact that when a Bill is recommitted on the third reading the only amendment that can be made is that which is placed on the notice paper. To obtain his objective, the hon. member would have to recommit the Bill once more.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I ask the sponsor whether he will accept the amendment as

it stands. If not, I shall be forced to recommit the Bill again.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Would it not be competent for another member to move that the words now proposed to be inserted in the amendment be included?

The CHAIRMAN: The words proposed to be inserted cannot be included in the amendment as they have not been placed on the notice paper.

Hon. A. L. LOTON: It had been my intention to oppose the amendment as it appeared on the notice paper, but I am willing, with the permission of the Committee, to accept it if the suggested words are included.

The CHAIRMAN: There is one way in which the difficulty can be overcome, and that is if the hon. member has the leave of the Committee to insert the words and there is no dissentient voice. Has the hon. member leave to insert the words?

Leave given.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I move an amendment—

That at the end of the clause the following proviso be added:—"Provided that before any such property is acquired by purchase or otherwise the board shall obtain from the Commissioner of Public Health a certificate in writing that such property is or can be made suitable in his opinion for the purposes of this Act."

Hon. A. L. LOTON: The objection I had to the amendment, as it appeared on the notice paper, was that it would have prevented a road board from acquiring a building which it desired to put in order for the purpose of a hostel. To my way of thinking, such an amendment would have made the Bill worth nothing. I do not object to the amendment as altered, although I do not like the Commissioner of Public Health coming into the matter at all. The local health authority would have a better idea of what would be required in its locality.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The amendment is unnecessary and, in addition, it is a reflection on the local authority. If the Commissioner of Public Health took the amendment seriously he would have to send a special officer to Gnowangcrup to make a report. That local authority has responsible officers to guide it. This amendment is one

which seeks to centralise authority, and that should not be encouraged.

Hon. A. THOMSON: The amendment is a wise one. If we were dealing only with Gnowangerup, we could have no objection, but the Act is being amended and it applies to the whole State. I could instance people who wanted to unload a property, allegedly, for the public benefit.

The Honorary Minister: In the country?

Hon. A. THOMSON: I am not saying where, but I can prove my statement. If a building is purchased, it is essential that the Commissioner of Public Health shall be in a position to say whether it is right or wrong. That principle applies to our public halls, so how much more important is it in the case of housing our children?

Hon. L. CRAIG: That does not apply to our public halls, does it?

Hon. A. THOMSON: I think it does.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I do not like these amendments coming by word of mouth. Members should have time to study their implications. The amendment is different from what is on the notice paper.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: But you did not object to it.

Hon. L. CRAIG: No, but we should not rush into these things. Members of local authorities are not going to acquire some dirty old shed in which to house their children, and they do not waste their money unnecessarily. The local health officer could surely decide what is suitable accommodation without having to refer the matter to the Commissioner of Public Health at Perth. If that were done, he would have to send an officer to the town concerned, and that would be additional expense to the local authority. These buildings are not going to be erected in obscure country places, but only in large country towns.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: The amendment does not apply to the erection of buildings.

Hon. L. CRAIG: It does, in effect, because if a building is erected it will have to be passed by the Commissioner of Public Health. If a building were acquired by a local authority, it would have to be renovated. Surely, in places such as Northam, Geraldton, Bunbury or Kalgoorlie, the local health officer is capable of saying, "This is a suitable place in which to accommodate

boys and girls." I think the amendment is quite unnecessary.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: It seems to me that the amendment is necessary. It struck me as strange that the Honorary Minister should question the expense of sending a public servant to Gnowangerup, or anywhere else.

Hon. R. M. Forrest: What about Wyndham?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Or Wyndham.

The Chief Secretary: What is wrong with the local health officer?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: There is no power for the local health officer to deal with it.

Hon. L. Craig: That is all we want.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: Under the Bill, the local health officer would have to pass it.

The Honorary Minister: It would have to conform to the local by-laws, surely.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: The local authorities and the Commissioner of Public Health only deal with uninhabitable houses, and that is not the case here. This deals with the matter of hostels for children. A building might be perfectly habitable as a house but not suitable as accommodation for children. Very often there is on a local authority an influential man who has a property he would like to dispose of.

Hon. L. Craig: There is rough stuff in the country!

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I have lived in the backblocks and have seen, as has Mr. Thomson, an influential man unload a property on a road board. The amendment also places local authorities in an invidious position. If a road board chairman wished to do a good act and sell a suitable property for the purpose of a hostel, the immediate reflection would be that he was trying to unload it.

Hon. W. R. Hall: He is not allowed to do that under the law.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: That is so, but it would be done in some other way. In addition, there might be an influential man in the district whose votes carry a good deal of weight.

Hon. G. Fraser: That is why we want to abolish plural voting; to take away the powers of those individuals.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: That is a new reason. I was doubtful as to how I would vote on this amendment, but now I have made up my mind. There should be some safeguard provided before these places are purchased and children put into them.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: The amendment would lower the dignity of the medical officers and engineers in our towns. They are highly responsible officers at Kalgoorlie and other towns.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: But they have no control.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: If the buildings contemplated here are erected, they will not be passed unless the local medical officer and the local engineer agree.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: There is no authority for those people to interfere.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: Our local by-laws will cover that position.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: No.

Hon. A. L. LOTON: Most of the argument seems to be centred on the Commissioner of Public Health. I refer members to Sections 12 and 13 of the Health Act, which will clarify the position. The whole matter is bound up in those sections, and all the powers that Dr. Hislop wants are there.

Hon. W. R. HALL: I cannot support the amendment, and I disagree with Mr. Parker that local authorities have not got the power to inspect certain buildings and pass them as fit for human habitation.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: You can do that for a building to be used as a private house, but not for one to be used as a hostel.

Hon. W. R. HALL: On the Goldfields, we have a medical officer and health inspectors, and any local authority of consequence has such officers. It should be sufficient for the health inspector to be satisfied about any such buildings. The road board would not be so foolish as to enter into some agreement to purchase an unsuitable building. Local authorities administer the building by-laws and should be able, on the advice of their officers, to determine whether a structure is suitable. I have sufficient confidence in road board members and officers to leave the decision to them.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Many of the road boards have not a medical officer of health.

Hon. W. R. Hall: Some have not.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I point out that this Bill does not apply to municipalities.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: The road boards are not greatly concerned about the amendment. Only in a place like Kalgoorlie would the board be likely to act on its authority. In some cases local authorities might be glad to have this protection. One district which is trying to get a secondary school, appointed a deputation to interview the Minister and the chairman was asked whether the local authority would provide the accommodation for the children if a school were built. There should be no objection to a local authority inspecting a building and authorising its being put to this use.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I thought my amendment would meet with approval so that there would be some control over the accommodation to be provided for school children. I can visualise people being almost compelled to purchase a property which was not considered highly desirable and on which large sums would have to be expended, and such people could get protection from the Commissioner of Public Health. There would be no need for the Commissioner to run around the country because he could depute his authority. Members seem to have a better opinion of the capabilities of local medical officers of health than I have. I consider that the whole system of appointing the general practitioner in the district to the post of medical officer of health is wrong. The State should be divided into areas and medical officers trained in public health should be appointed to those areas.

Many doctors in the country know little about the fundamental principles of public health, but the medical officer who goes to a country town almost automatically becomes medical officer of health and his knowledge may be very limited indeed. A doctor, in the average course of training, receives little instruction beyond a few lectures on public health. This is why it has become necessary to arrange a post-graduate course and award a diploma of public health. Thus men who desire to specialise in this work may acquire a knowledge of the subject before accepting appointment. Where a local medical officer needed guidance, the Commissioner could go or send

his deputy. Surely some sort of standard is needed. In the past we have suffered through lack of standards, and this is one method by which we can provide a standard.

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

Bill again reported with an amendment.

## **BILL—FISHERIES ACT AMENDMENT.**

### *Second Reading.*

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [5.22] in moving the second reading said: This Bill deals with a subject which is one of almost universal interest, namely, fishing, and as members are aware, is one that usually leads to animated discussion. Many old records testify to the importance of fish as a constituent part of the human diet. Probably that statement will be endorsed by Dr. Hislop. The importance of fish as a food has led to the development of fishing as a profession and, in every country where fish abound, the professional fisherman is a part of the economic life of the community.

There is another aspect of fishing that has maintained its popularity through the ages, and that is the pleasure it gives to those earnest followers in the footsteps of Izaak Walton. I suppose that there are few people who, given the opportunity to be near a sheet of water, have not succumbed at some time or other to the fascination of angling. To the ardent devotee, angling is rather a stern business, but it is one that affords valuable recreation and pleasure to a large number of citizens, and the requirements of the amateur fisherman cannot be dismissed easily when giving attention to any matter concerning the fishing industry.

This Bill, which proposes to amend the Fisheries Act, 1905-1940, relates mainly, of course, to the professional aspect of fishing, but there are provisions in it which will undoubtedly prove of benefit to the amateur enthusiast. Five provisions are contained in the Bill, these being:—

(1) The formation of a fishermen's advisory committee;

(2) The prevention of over-exploitation of any particular fishing ground;

(3) The authorisation for inspectors to seize any unattended unlawful net discovered in open waters;

(4) The continuance for a further 12 months as from the 31st December, 1946, of the control of fishing gear. The present control will lapse on the expiration at the end of this year of the National Security Regulations;

(5) The freeing of inspectors from any liability which may eventuate as the result of justifiable action on their part in the performance of their duties.

Before dealing with these amendments, I should like to mention that there are two organisations covering professional fishermen in Western Australia. One, known as the Confederation of Licensed Fishermen, is representative of fishermen at Fremantle and Safety Bay; the other is the Western Australian League of Licensed Fishermen's Associations to which the majority of the fishermen of the State, with the exception of those operating on the Swan River and on the beaches near Perth, belong, the secretary being Mr. L. E. Renfrey of Mandurah. This organisation comprises the licensed fishermen's associations of Albany, Denmark, Mandurah, Bunbury and Geraldton, and I understand that the fishermen on the Swan River intend to revive their defunct association and join the league. It will therefore be seen that apart from its numerical superiority the league is representative of a considerably greater production of fish than is the confederation, and it is interesting to note that this Bill is accorded the support of the league.

The first proposal in the Bill is to constitute a body which will be entitled the fishermen's advisory committee. This committee will consist of either four or five members, who will be appointed by the Minister. The chairman will be the Chief Inspector of Fisheries, and there will be three representatives of professional fishermen, each coming from a different phase of fishing activity, one being interested in crayfishing, another in estuary and beach fishing, and the third in deep-sea fishing other than crayfishing. Crayfishing, particularly in the Geraldton district, has gone ahead to such a degree that it is considered that those interested should have representation on the committee. A fifth member may be appointed who will not be representative of the professional fishermen but who will have a thorough knowledge of fishing and who, in effect, will represent the amateur devotees of the art. He will be able to protect the

interests, not only of this very considerable number of sportsmen, but also of the consumers.

The term of office of members of the committee will be three years, and their functions will be to make inquiries into and report to the Minister on any matters referred to them by him or the Chief Inspector of Fisheries, and to advise and make recommendations to the Minister in connection with the fisheries of the State. It is felt that the appointment of this committee will give the practical men in the fishing industry the opportunity of ventilating their opinions, and that their advice will prove of great value to the Minister and to the Chief Inspector of Fisheries. It goes without saying that the counsel tendered by men with the practical knowledge possessed by professional fishermen will be of benefit to departmental officers in the execution of their duties.

Another important aspect is the necessity of maintaining the co-operation and good feeling that was so noticeable between the department and the fishermen during the war years. This confidence was brought about to a great extent by the appointment during the war years of the Consultative Council of Fishermen. Such councils were established in each State for the purpose of advising the Commonwealth Government on matters relating to fishing in connection with the Commonwealth's efforts during the war period to rationalise the industry and the production of fish.

The Western Australian Council functioned splendidly and the recommendations submitted by the department in this State as a result of the council's advice proved of the utmost value in designing suitable developmental and conservational measures. As a result, a feeling of co-operation and confidence grew between the department and the fishermen, and it is hoped that the formation of the committee proposed by the Bill will continue and consolidate this mutual feeling of confidence.

The members of the Confederation of Licensed Fishermen, in a circular, have queried the appointment of this committee. They apparently are of the opinion that it is unnecessary in view of the existence of the Consultative Council of Fishermen. The latter body, however, owes its appointment

to the Commonwealth Government and has no authority to deal with questions of domestic policy which come within the aegis of the State Government. At the present time the Consultative Council is not being called upon by the Commonwealth for any advice, and its future will be determined at a conference to be held early next year between the Commonwealth and the States. The professional fishermen have frequently requested the department to refer any action which affects the interests of the fishermen to the various fishermen's associations before it is put into operation. This method would, however, prove somewhat cumbersome, and the submission of any contemplated action to the proposed committee should prove a much more expeditious and effective method.

The next amendment is designed to obviate the chance of any particular locality being overfished in the future. There are numerous instances where fishing areas have received so much attention that the supply of fish has dwindled almost to vanishing point, an occurrence that is detrimental to the local professional fishermen and to the future of those particular areas. This state of affairs can occur because the Act entitles the holder of a professional fishing license to catch fish anywhere in Western Australia. The majority of our rivers and estuaries contain only a limited supply of fish and will permit only a limited number of fishermen in each place to obtain a decent living. If it is bruited abroad that the fishermen in a certain locality are obtaining a fair measure of success, men from other areas descend on the spot like a swarm of locusts. The eventual result is the depletion of fish stocks, perhaps for years, in the area concerned, with adverse effect on the local fishermen, whose initiative and enthusiasm were first responsible for the success of operations there.

The Government feels that the time is ripe to take steps to prevent the over-exploitation of fishing localities by restricting the number of licensed fishermen permitted to operate in areas which it is considered will support only a certain number of men. The League of Licensed Fishermen's Associations supports the Government in this resolve. It states that certain areas have almost reached saturation point so far as the number of fishermen operating are concerned, and it feels that the limitation of fisher-



men in those areas requires the most serious consideration. In the past few weeks several views of this nature have been expressed to the department by professional fishermen. Members of the Mandurah Fishermen's Association have stated that unless some restriction is imposed, fishing in that vicinity will become uneconomical, as the waters of Peel Inlet can hold only a limited supply of fish and support a limited number of men.

A few days ago a delegation of fishermen from Hopetoun waited on the Chief Inspector of Fisheries and expressed the fear that if more fishermen were allowed to exploit the salmon resources of the 12-mile fishery at Hopetoun, nobody in that locality would be able to make a reasonable living. During the last year or two a very valuable and profitable fishery for salmon has been developed at Hopetoun as the result of the energy and enthusiasm of a number of local residents. A canning factory has been established and success seems assured, providing the continuing influx of fishermen is not allowed dangerously to deplete the stocks of fish.

The two cases I have quoted are of very recent occurrence and are used as examples. There are many others of a similar serious nature, and it is proposed in the Bill to take steps to prevent the continuance of such circumstances and to protect local fishermen, all of whose assets are in their particular area, from the operations of roving fishermen who possess no interest in the locality other than the chance to catch as many fish in the shortest possible time without any regard to the eventual result on fish resources. It is therefore proposed that Section 17 of the Act, which gives licensing officers discretionary power in the granting or refusal of licenses, shall be repealed in favour of a new section which will provide that fishing boats shall be licensed to operate in certain areas only. This will give the department the authority to restrict the number of boats fishing in any given locality and will ensure a reasonable living for those fishermen and prevent the depletion of fish resources.

A further proposal in the Bill gives the department power to limit and define the days upon and the period during which any boat may be used for catching fish for sale. This is specifically designed to guard against

depletion of stocks in any particular locality, mainly in small inlets, rivers or estuaries where there is only a limited supply of fish.

Hon. H. Tuekey: That applies in Bunbury now, does it not?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is applying in a number of cases. If it is discovered that the fish resources are becoming dangerously low, action can be taken to restrict the period during which fishing can take place, thereby giving the fish a chance to increase in number. Country fishermen are in favour of this restriction, which they have stated is needed in certain localities at present. Hopetoun is cited as an example. Once a net is cast in that area, the salmon disappear for the rest of the day, and it is considered by local fishermen that fishing should take place only every alternate day in order that the fish may not be permanently scared from the locality.

Another proposal limits and defines the species and quantities of fish which any fisherman may obtain during any specified period of the year. As members may be aware, different fish usually go to certain waters during the spawning season, and this restriction is designed to prevent the taking of large numbers of spawning fish in the different localities and to ensure that fish stocks are continually being built up. The next amendment is designed to rectify an anomaly in the principal Act, which, in Section 49, gives a fisheries inspector the power to seize a net found in closed waters without there being any person in visible possession of it.

The Act also gives an inspector the power to seize an illegal type of net found in open water if some person is in possession of that net, but it does not state that the inspector may take the net if it is unattended. It is an anomaly that legal types of nets in closed waters, whether unattended or not, and illegal types in open waters, when attended, may be seized, but that illegal unattended nets in open waters may not be taken. The Confederation of Licensed Fishermen in its circular objects to this provision, but I am afraid its argument does not hold water. It considers that the nets should not be seized; but if a man is using an illegal type of net, he is flouting the law and cannot expect to retain it for further

use in defiance of the law as is suggested by the confederation.

The fourth amendment was requested by the League of Professional Fishermen's Associations which mentioned that as the National Security Regulations would expire at the end of this year, the control exercised over the release and distribution of fishing gear would then automatically lapse. The league asked that legislation be enacted by the State Parliament to continue this control for a further 12 months.

Hon. L. Craig: That would be controlling the stuff within the State only?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes. The Commonwealth found it necessary to impose this control during the war owing to the shortage of nets and netting and of hanging and mending cotton. Under such control nets and other articles were released only to those fishermen genuinely requiring them. The ending of the war has not improved the position to any appreciable extent. Fishing gear is still extremely limited, due largely to the world shortage of cotton, and both the fishermen and the retail and wholesale houses agree that control should continue in order to give an equitable distribution to fishermen of the available supplies and to ensure that only those full-time fishermen in genuine need share in the stocks that are available.

The confederation objects to the continuance of control. It has been suggested that the underlying reason for its objection is that as the confederation is composed of metropolitan fishermen, its members would be aware when stocks of gear were available; and, if there were no control they could obtain their requirements at once, leaving little or nothing for their country colleagues. The continuance of controls for 12 months will ensure an equitable distribution throughout the State of whatever stocks come to hand.

The last amendment is considered most necessary and is similar to that included in the Act of New South Wales. It proposes to free an inspector from any liability that may accrue as the result of an action that he has taken in the course of his duties. There are occasions when fisheries inspectors have to make decisions on the spur of the moment, such as the seizure of a net under unfavourable conditions. If the inspector had had time to reflect, he might not have taken

such action, but the fact remains that he did it in good faith. Upon maturer consideration he may return the net to the fisherman, who, however, could if he wished sue the inspector for wrongful detention of his property. The amendment will protect the inspector from the consequences of his action, provided he can prove that he made the seizure in good faith and with reasonable cause. An eventuality of this nature would seldom occur, but it is quite possible that circumstances over which the inspector has little control may contribute to such a happening, and it is desirable to protect an inspector who offends in good faith in the course of his duties.

I think that explanation covers the amendments contained in the Bill, which is designed mainly to prevent the over-exploitation of any fishing area, and also to ensure that fishermen enjoy a reasonable chance of making a decent living. The provisions of the Bill will directly affect fishermen, but will also have a beneficial effect upon the consumers. An important result of the restrictions in the Bill will be to induce fishermen to undertake deep-sea fishing, which is far preferable to having a large number of men exploiting the resources of the shallow waters of the coast. There is ample scope in the deep waters for numerous fishermen, and beyond the territorial three-mile limit there will be no control over their activities. The result of men undertaking this type of fishing should prove very beneficial to the consumers.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: Is it proposed to have no restriction outside the three-mile limit?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There they are outside territorial waters, and we have no jurisdiction. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. C. H. Simpson, debate adjourned.

## BILL—FACTORIES AND SHOPS ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

*Second Reading.*

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. E. H. Gray—West) [5.47] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is brought before the House as a result of representations that the Government has received

from the Service Station Association (Inc.) of Western Australia, which is a member of the Garage & Service Station Federation of Australia, and which is representative of the proprietors of motor service stations throughout Australia. The Bill is in accord with the wishes of the association, which has requested that there be uniform hours of trading for service stations throughout Western Australia. Prior to 1939, when the principal Act was amended, premises retailing motor spirit, oil and accessories, were required by the Act to maintain the same hours as other retail shopping establishments, with the exception that petrol, etc., could be supplied in cases of emergency to enable travellers to continue a journey.

In 1939 Mr. Dimmitt successfully introduced a Bill dealing with the hours of trading by service stations within the metropolitan shop district. I might mention that the boundaries of the metropolitan shop district are not at an even distance from the G.P.O. They follow certain electoral boundaries which in some instances are within a few miles of Perth and, at least in one area, namely Rockingham, are over twenty miles from the G.P.O. Mr. Dimmitt, in explaining his Bill, advised the House that custom and usage had conspired to bring about a position by which the flouting of the law by service station proprietors was tolerated. Instead of remaining open only during the hours laid down by the Act, that is, the regular shopping hours, garages in the metropolitan area were in the majority of cases open for custom from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., or in some instances to 11 p.m. In addition there were garages which maintained an all-night service.

As a result of the approval by Parliament of Mr. Dimmitt's Bill, service stations within the metropolitan shop district were forced to observe regular hours. Those hours are from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Mondays to Fridays, 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays. They are required to close on Christmas Day, Good Friday and Anzac Day, but are allowed to remain open until midnight on the days immediately preceding those three holidays. This provides a total of 77 trading hours each week, which I think it will be agreed is quite generous treatment. Those hours are not at present in opera-

tion, owing to the National Security Regulations providing for closure at 6 p.m., the regulations, of course, expiring at the end of this year.

Any person found guilty of trading within prohibited hours is liable to a fine of £20 unless the sale was made in a case of unforeseen emergency, to enable a traveller to undertake or continue a journey. The traveller is required to enter certain information in a register kept by the retailer, and failure to do so renders both traveller and retailer liable to fines. Members of the Royal Automobile Club are allowed to obtain supplies, in cases of emergency, from the club. Mr. Dimmitt's Bill did not apply to retailers outside the metropolitan shop district; they are still required to observe the shopping hours maintained in their districts.

Ever since Mr. Dimmitt's Bill became law the Service Station Association has been inundated with requests that similar hours be made applicable to retailers in country districts. The association therefore decided to test the popular feeling of proprietors of garages and service stations throughout Western Australia, by means of periodical plebiscites. It was as a result of these plebiscites that the Service Station Association in April of this year first approached the Government with the request that a maximum range of normal trading hours be introduced and be made applicable to the whole State. These hours, which are embodied in the Bill, are from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. on five days a week, and from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. on whatever weekly half-holiday is observed in the district concerned, with no trading permitted on Sundays or public holidays unless a public holiday, with the exception of Christmas Day or Anzac Day, is observed on a Monday, when premises may remain open from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. This will provide, if the Bill is passed, a total weekly trading range of 61 hours, which should adequately meet all requirements.

So far as the metropolitan area is concerned, this proposal retains the present hours with the exception that Sunday trading between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. is eliminated, trading on holidays is curtailed, and premises will be required to close at 6 p.m. instead of 8 p.m. Beyond the metropolitan shop district there is even less alteration. The hours that are now observed will con-

linue, with the exception of the introduction of trading from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. on public holidays that fall on Mondays, and the alteration of the opening hour from 8 a.m. to 7 a.m. The provisions in the Act relating to sales to travellers in cases of emergency and to Royal Automobile Club members are not affected. This is a conservative rather than a radical change, and is based on the overwhelming majority of opinion expressed by retailers in the recent plebiscites.

To give members an idea of the support accorded the Bill by retailers I will quote a summary of the plebiscites which, as I have said, were conducted throughout Western Australia. Of the country traders, 85 per cent. do not seek an opening hour earlier than 8 a.m., while in the city and suburban area at least 60 per cent. do not desire to open before 8 a.m., and neither in the country nor in the metropolitan area does any trader wish to open prior to 7 a.m. In regard to the closing hour on week days, 95 per cent. of traders both in the country and the metropolitan area seek a closing hour not later than 6 p.m., while a very substantial percentage prefers either 5 p.m. or 5.30 p.m. For the weekly half holiday, country traders are unanimous that they should close not later than 1 p.m., while 94 per cent. of metropolitan retailers also favour 1 p.m. on the half holiday. Some 80 per cent. of country traders, and 94 per cent. of metropolitan retailers, do not desire to open on Sundays, and the balance in each case have suggested limited trading on that day.

Although possibly the majority of public holidays are observed on Mondays, over 60 per cent. of traders throughout the State do not wish to open on such days, but in view of the fact that the Bill proposes the elimination of Sunday trading, and that service stations close at 1 p.m. on Saturday, the Service Station Association considers that some service on Monday holidays is desirable, and therefore that trading should be permitted between 7 a.m. and 10 a.m., except when Anzac Day or Christmas Day is observed on a Monday. The Service Station Association states that it is within the capacity of the trade to satisfy public demands within the range of hours that the Bill proposes. It points out that by virtue of National Security Regulations these hours have been commonly observed during the war years, and that although the volume

of road traffic will undoubtedly increase, motorists should have no difficulty in securing all their requirements during the hours provided by the Bill. I think that opinion will be held by all members who drive their own cars.

The capacity of the petrol tank on any motor vehicle provides for supplies sufficient to cover a run of 200 miles without the necessity for replenishment, or for recourse to reserves which can comfortably be carried in 1, 2 or 4 gallon containers. During the maximum hours of closure stipulated by the Bill, that is, from 1 p.m. on Saturday to 7 a.m. on Monday, there would be few motorists requiring to travel more than 200 miles except in cases of emergency, and in such cases the motorists can take advantage of the "emergency sale" provision of the Act. Where a public holiday falls on a Monday it is provided that supplies can be obtained between 7 a.m. and 10 a.m. In order that motorists shall not be handicapped during the long holiday period at Easter, provision is made for trading on the morning of Easter Saturday.

The Bill states that traders shall close on public holidays and that such holidays shall be those specified in the award. A new award, No. 12 of 1946, was issued from the Arbitration Court on the 30th of last month, and has replaced that of 1935, which was amended in 1941. The new award provides for the observance of ten public holidays on which, as proposed by the Bill, traders shall close, but in order to cater for motorists during the Easter holidays, Easter Saturday is not included in the award as a holiday, and therefore motorists may obtain supplies on that day from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. On Easter Monday service stations will again open from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m.

In the other States the hours of trading generally are from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., with half holiday trading until 1 p.m. These hours conform to those proposed by the Bill. Sunday trading varies considerably. There is no activity on that day in Queensland or in the South Australian and Victorian metropolitan areas. In Tasmania only motorists requiring emergency supplies can be catered for on Sundays, and in New South Wales retailers may operate from 9 a.m. to noon. There is at present a proposal in New South Wales to eliminate Sunday trading entirely.

Persons requiring emergency supplies in this State should not have difficulty in acquiring them. Within the city area there are several service stations that have attendants on duty later than the normal trading hours in order to cater for cars that are required to be parked. Throughout the metropolitan and country areas there are very many garage proprietors who live adjacent to or near their businesses, and from whom emergency supplies can be obtained. The Service Station Association has advised that at all times the trade is prepared to handle emergency business.

So far as employees of service stations and garages are concerned, it is hardly necessary to state that they fully support the proposals in the Bill. The new consent award, which I have stated was recently issued, has reduced the weekly working hours from 48 to 44, and it is hardly reasonable that employees, who are generally youths, should be rostered to work beyond 6 p.m., which would occur should the present closing hour of 8 p.m., as provided by the Act for the metropolitan shop district, not be reduced. I am informed that many of these youths are keen on taking advantage of evening educational facilities and study in order to better themselves, as the industry is regarded as a "dead-end" one. If these lads have on occasions to work until 8 p.m., their efforts to improve their education will be interfered with.

Motorists should have no objection to the proposed hours. Neither petrol nor oil is a perishable commodity, and consequently every motorist has ample opportunity, and facilities are readily available to him, to obtain sufficient supplies to enable him to keep on the road while the retailers are shut. The Bill is one that I can unconditionally commend to the House and one that will meet the desires of the trade, which is responsible for the representations that actuated the Government in introducing it. The hours of trading that the Bill proposes have the support of an overwhelming majority of the traders, and they also have the concurrence of the employees.

It has usually been the custom after a certain section of traders have taken full cognizance of their own interests, and have asked for a reduction in trading hours, to request that their decision be incorporated

in the relevant legislation. The trade's request, with which the Bill deals, is not an extreme one. Rather does it propose to introduce a stabilised range of hours which will be adequate to meet the total normal requirements of the motoring public and at the same time retain an emergency provision by which persons in genuine unanticipated difficulty may obtain legal after-hours service. From every economic angle the Bill is one which should receive the approval of members. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. A. Dimmitt, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—LEGAL PRACTITIONERS ACT AMENDMENT.**

*Second Reading.*

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [6.4] in moving the second reading said: This is a small measure, but one which I believe will receive the unanimous support of members. It is generally agreed that, so far as their employment is concerned, some consideration should be extended to ex-members of the Forces on their return to civil life, and that this applies in particular to those young men and women whose war service has interrupted their training or who desire to commence a period of training qualifying them for some skilled or professional vocation. The majority of ex-Servicemen or women undertaking such a course of training would be some years older than their fellow-students, and this may prove to be a considerable handicap to the ex-Service student, particularly when it is realised that he may have the responsibility of a dependent wife and children.

This situation has given rise to concern by the Faculty of Law of the University of Western Australia so far as law students are affected. Professor Beasley, the Dean of the Faculty, has taken up the matter with the Barristers' Board, which completely agrees with the Professor's views. As a result, the Government has been asked whether it would introduce legislation designed to give the Barristers' Board authority to take steps to reduce the period of training that ex-Service personnel are required to under-

take before qualifying as legal practitioners.

I would like to explain that there are two courses open to a person desirous of adopting law as a profession. He may either serve under articles of clerkship to a qualified practitioner for a period of five years, after which he has to pass a rigorous examination set by the Barristers' Board, or he may attend the University course for the degree of Bachelor of Law, which extends over four years, and on graduating serve as an articulated clerk for two years—six years in all. As both the University and the Barristers' Board, which are the two bodies concerned in the training of students and the regulation of the legal profession, were unanimous in their views, the Government agreed to submit this Bill, which proposes that the Barristers' Board be given authority to reduce the term of training of the two classes of ex-Service law students, namely—

(a) those who entered into five-year articles prior to enlistment in the Forces; and

(b) those who, on discharge from the Forces, continue or commence study at the University.

With regard to the former, the Bill provides that the Barristers' Board shall have power to rule that a period of service not exceeding 12 months in the Armed Forces shall be deemed to be part of the term to be served under articles. So far as those who are students at the University are concerned, it is proposed that their training shall be reduced by one year by their serving the first year of their articles concurrently with their fourth and final year at the University. Suitable arrangements will be made for these students to attend the requisite number of lectures at the University, some of which are held, of course, during the evening.

At the request of the University authorities the Bill does not specify that the period of articles to be served concurrently with the University course shall be 12 months. The Faculty of Law has requested this omission on the ground that, if included, it may affect an alteration that is under consideration in regard to the course of study for the law degree. As the request emanates from the University I think it is only reasonable to accept it. Both the Faculty and

the Barristers' Board agree that the period shall be 12 months, which will be the term put into operation should the Bill be approved by Parliament.

It will be observed that Section 6, Subsection (1) (d) of the Act gives the Barristers' Board authority to prescribe what portion, if any, of articles may be served by students during the currency of their University term. This provision, however, has never been availed of, as the Barristers' Board is very jealous of the quality of practitioners and considers that it would not be in the interests of either students or the public to reduce the period of study. The board is, however, prepared to make an exception in the case of ex-Servicemen, but is of the opinion that Section 6 cannot be used to discriminate between ex-Service and other students. The board states that any rule made under this power would apply to all students and not to any particular section, and therefore advises that the Act be amended to bring about the desired result.

If the Bill be passed it will assist ex-Servicemen studying law at the University in regard to two handicaps under which they may labour.

Firstly, on an average they are approximately five years older than students who enter the University when they leave school and the majority of them will be nearly 30 years of age before qualifying as legal practitioners and, secondly, the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme provides for a subsistence allowance as a free gift for a period of three years, and thereafter as a loan. Therefore, a student who found it necessary to request this subsistence allowance for the full present training course, that is, four years at the University and two years at articles, would be required to refund three years' allowance, which in the case of a single man would be approximately £500 and a married man £750. Although the rate of interest is only 2 per cent. and repayments may be spread over a lengthy period, this is a heavy debt for a young man to incur at the commencement of his career. If the ex-Serviceman is given the opportunity to serve his first year of articles prior to graduation, this debt will be reduced by one-third.

I am informed that the University and the Barristers' Board are confident that the Bill

will not affect the reciprocity existing between Western Australia and other States. In view of the fact that the proposals in the Bill have been endorsed and in fact initiated by the University and by the Barristers' Board, and that they will benefit ex-Service-men who are deserving of every consideration, I feel that the House will give it sympathetic consideration. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

**HON. H. S. W. PARKER** (Metropolitan-Suburban) [6.12]: This Bill has been considered by the Barristers' Board, the Faculty of Law at the University and the Law Society. They all approve of it. As the Chief Secretary has so ably explained its details, I do not propose to delay the House, except to assure members that the Bill meets with the approval of all the authorities I have mentioned.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee.*

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

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

## **BILL—TOTALISATOR DUTY ACT AMENDMENT.**

*In Committee.*

Resumed from the 17th October. Hon. H. Seddon in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 3:

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported on Clause 2 to which Hon. C. F. Baxter had moved an amendment to strike out paragraph (b) and insert in lieu thereof the following:—

“(b) by inserting in line two of Subsection (2) after the word ‘club’ the words ‘outside the metropolitan area’ and by adding at the end of the said subsection the words ‘and no fractional part of sixpence shall be paid by any racing club within the metropolitan area by way of such dividend.’”

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: When progress was reported there was some doubt as to whether my amendment would fit into the clause and the Act itself. If the amendment is accepted it will be very clear. I am in some doubt as

to whether the term “metropolitan area” is defined, but in any case it could be rectified later. My amendment makes it quite clear that outside the metropolitan area no fractional part of a shilling will be paid, and inside the metropolitan area no part of 6d. will be paid. While there are a few racing clubs—galloping and trotting—where the people are not tote-minded and the fractions are low, there are other clubs that would feel the strain very much if they received only half their present fractions.

I purposely went to the trots on Saturday night and was astounded at the falling off in attendance. Also, the amount invested on the tote was low and, I discovered, from inquiry, that the bookmakers were handling very little money. It is clear to me that in the near future the subsidies that have been paid by the central body to country clubs will not be forthcoming. At present, even with the subsidy, many clubs are losing money and, if the Bill extends to them, they will lose even more. We want to encourage sport in country districts because they have very little of it.

The Chief Secretary: What trotting meeting did you attend?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I attended at Gloucester Park.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The amendment will determine the issue as to whether or not the totalisator fractions shall be treated in a uniform manner throughout the State. The amendment means that the clubs operating in the metropolitan area—and there are only two, Gloucester Park and Richmond Park—shall pay to the nearest 6d. and all other clubs to the nearest 1s.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: The racing clubs come into it as well.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member referred to the reduced attendances at trotting meetings. The racing clubs all operate under the one authority in the metropolitan area, and there has been no objection raised to this matter by the W.A. Turf Club. I cannot agree to the amendment. We believe that this matter should be uniform throughout the State. The amount involved in the country clubs is small. The Bill, if agreed to, means a reduction of approximately half of what they would otherwise receive from totali-

sator fractions. During recent years there has been a large increased patronage of both trotting and racing clubs, and they have received the resultant benefits in the way of increased revenues from the operations of the totalisator, including the revenue from the fractions. Even if the attendances that we have been used to during the war period are not continued, the sport will not drop back to the revenue that was received in pre-war years—those that have been quoted by some people who are opposed to the measure.

The figures involved are large. In answer to a question the other night I said that the fractions amounted to no less than £700 at one meeting. The winning investors on the totalisator are entitled to a portion of that, and they will get it under the Bill. The total amount accruing during the year would, according to my idea of the position, be quite sufficient to allow the parent body to continue its subsidies to country clubs on the same or a larger scale than in previous years. The Royal Commissioner, in his report, points out how strong is the financial position of that body. It has not now to meet a big bill for the payment of Gloucester Park. It certainly has to make up a little leeway in the maintenance of its property, but even so the Bill would not affect its financial stability.

It has been argued that other clubs would be vitally affected. The two mentioned, in particular, are the Golden Mile Trotting Club and the Fremantle Trotting Club. Figures have been quoted to show that over a given number of meetings those clubs showed a loss, and that if the full fractions had not been allowed the loss would have been greater. I noticed, however, that no mention was made of the results of the recent operations of the Fremantle club. Last year no less a sum than £11,000 odd was paid to the Fremantle club by the Trotting Association, being the profits made at meetings held at Gloucester Park on behalf of the Fremantle Trotting Club. The Fremantle club is now in the course of spending a large sum—the greater proportion of the amount I have mentioned—on improvements to its course. The Fremantle club does not own the course; it belongs to the W.A. Trotting Association. Therefore the net result is that the profits made by the Fremantle club, from racing at Glou-

cester Park, are being put back into the assets of the association.

The Fremantle club will gain no monetary benefit; the only benefit it will gain will be that of having a better and more suitable course for racing. The figures for the Golden Mile club have been produced to show that the club has been operating at a loss practically all the time and that it has been necessary for the association to subsidise it to a large extent. There again I understand that the ground is owned by the association. One can fairly put the position this way, that both the Golden Mile club and the Fremantle club are only subsidiaries of the W.A. Trotting Association in Perth.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: The Fremantle club is not involved in my amendment.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: I understand that it is intended to move another amendment to exempt the Fremantle club from the operations of the Bill. My remarks would apply to that amendment also. Of racing clubs there is perhaps a larger number than of trotting clubs, but the amounts involved are very small.

As an indication of what is happening, on Saturday night a paragraph appeared in "The Daily News" stating that the chairman of the Bunbury Racing Club considered that the winning investors on the tote were entitled to be paid to the nearest sixpence, but that this would have a serious effect on his and other country clubs and that there should be some quid pro quo to make good the loss. In yesterday morning's paper there appeared an item notifying that the Bunbury Racing Club had decided to increase its stakes by £100 per meeting, which indicates either that the club is in a prosperous condition or that it is taking a risk as to the patronage that may be extended to it. However, this fact does not indicate that that country club will be seriously affected by losing half the fractions.

Hon. L. Craig: The president told me that the club would greatly miss the fractions.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: The club would miss any revenue, but it cannot have such a serious effect on the club's finances if it can increase the stakes by £100 per meeting. If the country clubs increase their stakes irrespective of what the patronage might be, they would miss not only the few pounds



from the totalisator fractions, but also anything that would reduce their revenue from other sources. The Government considers that winning investors are entitled to a more adequate return for their investments. The only way to provide it is by paying to the nearest 6d. instead of the nearest 1s. In other States the tote pays to the nearest 6d. and in some places to the nearest 3d. We think it fair to pay to the nearest 6d.

In view of the fact that the financial position of the parent organisations is so strong and that it is part of their duty to foster the country clubs, even though this costs the parent organisations a little more money, it is obviously their duty to find it. We should not place on the winning investors on the tote the responsibility for providing in the future the revenue they have provided in the past. I think the amendment will determine the fate of the Bill. The Government desires the system to be uniform throughout the State. If Mr. Baxter's amendment is successful, I point out that there is no definition of "metropolitan area" in the Act and that the definition would have to be included in the Bill. I hope the Committee will not agree to the amendment.

Hon. G. FRASER: I move—

That the amendment be amended by inserting before the words "outside the metropolitan area" the words "racing at Richmond Park, Fremantle or".

This will mean that no fractional part of 1s. shall be paid by any club racing at Richmond Park or outside the metropolitan area. The Fremantle Trotting Club has not published any figures of recent meetings because those meetings have been held at Gloucester Park. The military authorities occupied the course during the war, and I understand that £8,000 is to be expended to put the course in order. The course belongs to the Gloucester Park club and that is one of my reasons for moving the amendment. If the Bill be passed as drafted, we shall not get trotting at Fremantle again, because the £8,000 will not be spent to put the course in order. Fremantle is entitled to 12 meetings a year, two of which are earmarked for charity, so the Fremantle club can hold ten race meetings, which puts that club in the same position as country clubs. Unless the money is expended at Fremantle and the club resumes racing there, all future trotting will be at Gloucester

Park. No benefit will accrue to the Fremantle club while it races at Gloucester Park.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: You think the club ought to rob only the people of Fremantle?

Hon. G. FRASER: I am not prepared to enter into an argument on that point. To take the fractions from investors is legalised robbery, but the Fremantle people will not have the benefit of trotting as a sport there unless some alteration is made to the Bill. My amendment is the only way to compel the Fremantle club to resume racing on its own course.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Baxter's amendment falls into two parts. I propose to deal with the part for the insertion of the words "outside the metropolitan area" so that Mr. Fraser may move his amendment on the amendment.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am afraid Mr. Fraser has been misinformed or does not understand the position regarding the Fremantle Trotting Club. The money he referred to as being spent at Richmond Park is being provided by the Fremantle club and represents the profits made while racing at Gloucester Park. The club is utilising its profits to improve the assets of another organisation. The Fremantle club races at Gloucester Park only by permission, but not by permission of the Trotting Association. Its ground was occupied by the military authorities during the war. The ground is not in proper order for racing and the club, in addition to doing maintenance work, proposes to make alterations. I have been advised that the Fremantle club is committed to making the alterations and that it will then race at Richmond Park. If it does not, there is every possibility that it will not race at all. It is the wish of the sporting people at Fremantle that the meetings be held there. From the meetings at Gloucester Park the Fremantle club received £11,000 in profit last year and the bulk of that money is to be spent on improving the ground, the asset of the W.A.T.A., without any corresponding benefit to the Fremantle club except that it will have a better course to race on. If the Committee approves of an exception being made of country clubs, it will not mean much to the revenue, but as a matter of principle the Government holds that the law should be uniform.

Hon. G. FRASER: My information is the reverse of that given by the Chief Secretary. I have been informed that the club will not spend the £8,000 if this Bill be passed in its present form. What action will be taken in that event is in the lap of the gods.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: The amendment moved by Mr. Baxter is justified, although I narrow it down to its effect on the Kalgoorlie club. On the Golden Mile there is a population of 20,000 against 250,000 in the metropolitan area. I do not know much about the trotting club at Kalgoorlie, but the racing club is conducted on very sound lines. We have one of the best secretaries in Australia, one of the best staffs, and one of the nicest racecourses. But we have only a very small population to support the club. Water, which costs clubs down here little or nothing, is a very expensive item on the Goldfields. Our course is used largely as a park and is a resort in that barren area for children and others holding sports.

In spite of careful management, and in spite of the fact that it gets a subsidy from the Turf Club, the Kalgoorlie club has the greatest difficulty in maintaining its standard, and it has an expenditure of about £150 facing it. The loss of a portion of these fractions is going to be a handicap to the Kalgoorlie club. If the amount could be made up in some way, I would be happy to support the Bill as it stands; but I am afraid our application for a reduction in the water charge would not be granted, and I do not know how else the loss could be met. I feel that the public would be the poorer by the action proposed in the Bill and that the fact that the members of the public are losing an odd sixpence here and there is something they should not mind. They should continue to contribute that sum towards the upkeep of that lovely amenity on the Goldfields.

I have heard of no agitation on the Goldfields for this reduction and I think the people there would be willing to continue as they have in the past; and in that indirect way they would be contributing some small amount towards the upkeep of the club, whose circumstances cannot be compared with those in the metropolitan area or at Bunbury, Northam or Albany. Nothing can be done on the Goldfields without water, and in that connection the club has to spend about £700 a year which other

clubs do not have to face. In view of the special circumstances appertaining to Kalgoorlie, I feel I am justified in supporting Mr. Baxter's amendment.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I quite agree with the Chief Secretary regarding racing and trotting in the metropolitan area. In fact, from that angle the time has long past when this Bill should have been introduced. There has been no justification for allowing metropolitan clubs to take fractions up to one shilling. But the metropolitan clubs are in a different position from those in the country. They charge double—and more than double in some instances—to people for admission to the course. It might be said that the country clubs could increase their entrance fee; but they cannot do that, for the simple reason that they cannot put on an attractive programme. They have not the population to do it. They cannot draw the horses; their stakes are too low. Nine-tenths of both galloping and trotting in the country clubs is kept going by a lot of free labour given by those associated with the organisations, who also put their hands in their pockets to find money for the purpose. I know the struggle that the country clubs have had. I have watched them for many years and encouraged them all I could to try to maintain the sport. In view of the small amount of money involved to the Government, I do not see why the Chief Secretary should be so anxious to extend the provisions throughout the State. If the price of admission could be increased, it would be all right. But when one looks at the balance sheets and finds that the clubs are all making losses, although they are receiving subsidies from the parent bodies, it makes one think and indicates that every pound is worth a lot to them.

Hon. C. B. Williams: What about the punter, who keeps the game going? You say the punters should be thieved from!

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: My friend will have his little talk. He can have his say in a moment if he likes.

Hon. C. B. Williams: You are making a second reading speech.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Oh, keep quiet! In regard to the subsidies paid to racing and trotting clubs in the country, as I said last week, they cannot expect very much in

the near future. There has been a falling off in the amount of money invested and that will continue. There is not the enormous amount of war money and gratuity money in existence that there was. It has been expended, and we are reverting to the old conditions. The Chief Secretary said that we would not get back to the low pre-war figures but I will be happy if we do not get back to lower figures.

Hon. C. B. Williams: How much do you pay to go to a trotting meeting?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Like the hon. member, nothing!

Hon. C. B. Williams: Why not pay a couple of bob and help the sport?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I very seldom go. I am trying to ensure that what little sport there is in the country is kept alive. There is no loss to the Government in this matter. It means little to the Government and I do not see why the amendment should not be agreed to so that country clubs, especially those that receive a reasonable amount from fractions, are given encouragement to continue. There is no doubt that the totalisator is gradually becoming more popular in the country districts and the more popular it becomes the better that will be for the clubs. In the country, working bees are organised to keep the courses going; and the fractions received, though not large, mean a lot to the clubs.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I would like to correct Mr. Baxter's impression that the Government is going to get something out of this Bill.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: No, I said only a small amount was involved.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member could not see why we should be so keen on the measure applying all round. As a matter of fact, the Government will lose money by this measure, but it will be a very small sum. It will not be as great as that which the clubs will lose, as the Government receives only 7½ per cent. of the fractions whereas the clubs receive 92½ per cent.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: I think the Kalgoorlie club has a better case than the Fremantle club. There is a great deal in what Mr. Heenan has said, but that does not come into it.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Yes, it does!

Hon. H. TUCKEY: 1 favour Kalgoorlie in preference to Fremantle.

Amendment on amendment put and negatived.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: According to the figures supplied by the Chief Secretary a few nights ago, few clubs receive much money from the fractions. But they are very concerned about this Bill. I have had one or two telegrams from clubs in the South-West which have gone so far as to say that if the Bill is passed it will mean ruination to country racing. I do not know that it will mean ruination, because except for Kalgoorlie, I do not think the amount received by the country race clubs is very big. In view of the hostility to the measure, and on account of requests made to me, I support the amendment.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	9
Noes	..	..	..	..	11
Majority against					2

AYES.	
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. O. H. Simpson
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. R. M. Forrest	Hon. F. R. Welsh
Hon. E. H. H. Hall	Hon. C. F. Baxter
Hon. E. M. Heenan	(Teller.)
NOES.	
Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. J. A. Dimmitt	Hon. A. L. Loton
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. C. B. Williams
Hon. F. E. Gibson	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. E. H. Gray	(Teller.)

PAIRS.	
Hon. W. J. Mann	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. G. B. Wood	Hon. J. G. Hleslop

Amendment thus negatived.

Clauses 3 to 7—agreed to.

Clause 8—Commencement of Act:

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I do not wish to move an amendment to this clause, Mr. Chairman, but would point out to the Chief Secretary that the date mentioned in the clause is "not earlier than the first day of January, 1947." That leaves it entirely in the hands of the Government. The first day of January will come in the middle of a number of big meetings. I am not so much concerned with the monetary aspect of it as with the fact that it might be extremely awkward for the clubs to alter their methods and get their officers to reckon in an entirely dif-

ferent way. I would like the assurance of the Chief Secretary that the Government will give that matter consideration before fixing the date of the proclamation.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY:** Sir Hal has pointed out that this clause is permissive, as to the time when the measure shall come into operation, and he asks for an assurance that the Government will not proclaim this measure to come into operation before the end of the Christmas meetings of the two racing bodies concerned. I gladly give him that assurance.

**Hon. C. F. BAXTER:** I suppose the Chief Secretary is taking into consideration the fact that the Cup is run on the 1st January and the Imperial Stakes on the 4th January, and that the programmes have been prepared and allocated on the basis of the fractions which, in the metropolitan area, reach a considerable amount in the aggregate.

**Hon. C. B. Williams:** And cheap admission for members.

**Hon. C. F. BAXTER:** I am getting tired of Mr. Williams and his claptrap. The clubs have based the value of their prize-money on the fractions, which mean a large amount to them at each meeting. I hope the Chief Secretary's assurance is that the legislation will not be brought into operation until the end of February. I intended to move an amendment to that end, but it has been mislaid.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY:** My assurance was that the measure will not come into operation until after the Christmas and New Year meetings.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 9, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

## **BILL—TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).**

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 8th October.

**HON. A. THOMSON** (South-East) [8.25]: There are several clauses in this measure that are well justified, and long overdue, but there is some feeling in the country, and

people are anxious to be assured that it is not the intention of the Government to make any alteration regarding the collection of fees. At the present time, all the traffic fees are collected and retained by the country districts. The local authorities fear that if the Bill is passed in its present form it will alter the position. I wish to take this opportunity of congratulating the Commissioner of Police on his effort to reduce the number of accidents occurring on our roads. There is no gainsaying the fact that more control is required. I suggest—I trust the Minister will hand the suggestion on to the Commissioner of Police—that more attention should be paid to those large motor trucks which, particularly on country roads, stick religiously to the centre of the road and force the ordinary motorist on to the side of the bitumen. If the Police Department sent men out—not necessarily in uniform—with the necessary authority, they would find certain drivers deserving of censure, who could then be brought before a court and dealt with. The hit-and-run motorists, those who deliberately run away and leave their victims—sometimes maimed for life—lying there, cannot be dealt with too severely.

I wish now to refer to something that affects country road boards, because it deals with the fees that are collected. In today's issue of "The West Australian" it is reported that a considerable amount of money has been distributed to various local authorities. I would draw the Minister's attention to the unequal distribution that takes place, as far as some of the country road boards are concerned. At present there is 11½d. tax on petrol. That revenue has been distributed pro rata to the various State Governments, and it is to the credit of the late Mr. Alce McCallum that, when Minister for Works, he was able to arrange that instead of being distributed on a per capita basis it was distributed more on an area basis, which enabled Western Australia to receive a greater amount of the petrol tax. In some districts we have extraordinarily heavy traffic on the roads and, under the Traffic Act and other legislation, the local authorities are given power to limit the loads that can be carried on their roads, and to hold those destroying the roads responsible.

There is being conducted at Boddington, which is in my province, a company called

the Industrial Products Company, which is producing a very excellent tanning extract from waste whitegum timber. The timber is put into a large container, which has teeth that tear the timber into pulp. Eventually the timber goes through a process—a very expensive one. The company gives work to a large number of people. The whitegum is carted over the roads in loads as heavy as 12 tons. That small road board cannot construct roads to carry such heavy loads, and therefore I suggest to the Minister that he should ascertain whether it is not possible for the Main Roads Board to come to its assistance, especially in view of the heavy industry established in its district.

It would be interesting to know the number of accidents caused directly and indirectly by cyclists, and I think the Minister can probably supply it. Could the Government suggest to the Commissioner of Police that the roads should be patrolled? Excellent work was done by the police vehicle which traversed the city recently. The officers gave the people good advice. I myself got into a traffic jam in which the Chief Secretary also was caught. I could go neither forward nor backward; but when the police car came along the officers were able to untangle the jam and let us proceed. The jam took place at the Town Hall corner, where alterations were being made to the road. I hope the Minister will be sympathetic to the amendment proposed by Mr. Loton asking that the measure should include the words "outside the metropolitan area." I also hope that when the Bill reaches the Committee stage members will support that amendment, notwithstanding that it was negatived in another place.

The safety of the public is paramount. There are a number of children in the gallery tonight, and what they have heard will be something for them to carry away and think over. Probably many of them travel to and from school by bicycle. I am afraid that some children take extraordinary risks when cycling along the roads. I have had them shoot in front of me, and it has been fortunate for them that my brakes were in good order. It might be well for the teachers to inculcate in our school children the slogan that has been before the public for the last week or so—

"Safety First." Perhaps this applies more to country districts than to the crowded city, but certainly in the outskirts of the city we find very young children—who seem to be too young to be entrusted with a cycle—riding along the road with a younger member of the family perched on the tail. The bicycle wobbles along the road, a danger to the public as well as to the children. The traffic authorities might well pay some attention to that matter. I have pleasure in supporting the second reading of the Bill.

**HON. H. TUCKEY** (South-West) [8.37]: The two most important clauses in this Bill are those dealing with the hit-and-run motorist and the staggering of licenses. I do not think the penalty can be too severe for the motorist who causes personal injury to somebody and then runs away and leaves his victim lying on the roadside. At the same time, everything should be done to assist in improving certain things which contribute in some measure to the accidents that are occurring at the present time. First, I refer to the menace of the regulation dealing with headlamps on cars on country roads. There is no doubt whatever that the high beam of the headlamps is a menace to the traffic on those roads. That fact has been well known to the authorities not for a few weeks, but for some years. I do not know why something has not been done before to remedy this matter.

It is utterly impossible for anyone to see with the high beam light that is set according to the regulation. In the city it does not matter so much, as there are street lights which illuminate the road, but as soon as one gets out of the metropolitan area and on the country roads, more particularly where there is a possibility of danger from straying stock, then it is a very great danger unless the light is so fixed that one can see some distance ahead and thus at the same time contravene the regulation. I hope something will be done to bring about a better system of lighting, one which will enable motorists to see without their feeling that they might be overtaken on the road by some speed cop who would get them into trouble.

Another factor that contributes to some of the accidents is the narrow roads, bridges and culverts. I am not going to criticise the

Main Roads Board, which has done a wonderful job, but we have to look back to the beginning of that board and consider the situation in which it began to work. The board had hundreds of miles of roads to construct, and it was necessary in those days, I suppose, to provide roads for the then volume of traffic and at the same time construct the length of road required. Let me take one road with which most of us are acquainted, the highway between Perth and Bunbury. A number of bridges—some people refer to them as culverts—will be found on that road. Many of them are far too narrow and have been the cause of more than one accident.

Only the other night a lady was driving two of her family from Benger to Harvey. She met a large truck on one of these small bridges. As it was keeping to the centre of the roadway, the lady was compelled to keep to the culvert, with the mudguard resting ward and took off both caps of the hubs of the wheels. The driver pulled up a little further on and got out of his truck. He said to the lady that he did not think he had hit the motorcar. The lady said, "You have damaged the car. Why did you run into me?" The driver of the truck replied, "It was no good running into the bridge." The lady said, "No; it was no use to run over us, either." He then made the excuse that lights further on dazzled him. To make a long story short, both were very close to a serious, perhaps fatal, accident. It was at that particular spot on the road where a chairman of the road board at Bridgetown was killed. I think the narrowness of the culvert had something to do with the accident that caused that man's death.

I can quote a number of other cases where these bridges have contributed in some way or other to accidents. The width of these bridges is 18 feet, which leaves eight or nine feet for two trucks to pass each other. That is altogether too narrow. On the Fremantle-Mandurah main road there are some narrow sections. Only a few weeks ago two buses were passing each other south of Fremantle. They were so close to each other that a passenger had one of his arms cut off and it fell into the passing bus. It was his right arm. No damage was done to the vehicles, except that some paint was rubbed off each of them. Both drivers considered that they had given each other the full half of the road. The accident happened early

in the evening and they considered they had given each other ample room to avoid a collision. That part of the road is certainly not wide enough for the traffic using it, and the time has come when it and other sections of the road will have to be widened, otherwise they will continue to be unsafe for present-day traffic.

I hope it will be possible for the Main Roads Board to give attention to some of these matters. As I said, the board is not altogether to be blamed for the situation, but these matters will have to be remedied. The culverts on the Bunbury road are a menace to the fast traffic using it. I would point out that many years ago the South-West conference of local bodies sent two resolutions to the Public Works Department, in which they asked that the Main Roads Board should survey all main roads one and a half chains wide. Although it is many years since the local governing bodies in the South-West suggested to the Government that the main roads should be widened to the extent of 1½ chains, very few roads have been so widened. It is a great pity to see our public highways as narrow as they are. When I first came to this House I spoke about the Canning-highway. At that time there was not a great deal of building along that highway, but today there is a lot and it would be costly to widen it.

Wherever one goes one finds miles of country roads that could be widened at very little cost because there is not a great deal of improvements alongside them. As time goes by improvements occur and it becomes costly to widen the roads. Most of the country alongside the road from Fremantle to Mandurah is of a poor type and it would cost very little to widen the road to 1½ chains which would give a highway that would carry the traffic for all time. Today our roads, particularly in the farming areas where the farmers have to travel stock, are too narrow. I have known 13 sheep to be killed by a motortruck running into a flock, and I can recall two or three head of cattle being killed by a truck running into a herd. There are frequent such collisions and they are mainly due to the fact that there is not sufficient room for the stock to get out of the way of oncoming traffic. Our highways should be widened wherever possible.

The staggering of licenses is strongly opposed by the road boards outside the metro-

politan area. This matter has been considered by the association which is opposed to it. I have spoken to the secretaries of many road boards and in each case they have expressed opposition to the staggering of licenses. They have no difficulty in renewing their licenses at the beginning of each year. They get the money in and the job is finished within a short time and they know exactly where they stand. Only the other day one road board secretary said to me that the boards would far rather make provision for the issuing of the licenses in the last three or four weeks of the financial year than have them running throughout the year. By issuing them in a short space of time they would soon be finished with the job whereas by dealing with 600 to 800 licenses over the year they would be continually called to the counter and would never be finished.

I understand that one reason for the congestion at the traffic office in Perth is that it is the policy of the department to use only one issuing book. This is brought about by the auditors' requiring to have all the licenses issued in numerical order for auditing purposes. One would think that such a matter could be overcome by having two or more books. One can well understand delay at the traffic office if every person has to go to the one counter for a license. It takes approximately five minutes to issue a license because there is a regular rigmarole to be gone through and all kinds of things to be written on the license form. That makes a big job for one issuing officer to carry out. There should be no need to write out a new license each year. Once a license is issued it should only be necessary to renew it.

Petrol licenses are renewed by being stamped and, while that may not be sufficient for motor licenses, there is no reason why they should not be stamped in some way and a general receipt issued for the fee. Such a system would occupy about a quarter or a fifth of the time that it now takes to issue a new license. Another aspect is that today provision is made for quarterly licenses. A road board secretary can be asked to write out a license every three months with the result that a man instead of coming in once a year can come along four times. There are thousands of these licenses which involve a charge of only 10s. 5d. a quarter. What motorist wants to

get down to paying only 10s. 5d. for a license? That should not be necessary. Why should not these quarterly licenses apply only to the licensing of new cars or vehicles that have been on blocks for some months or years? A man should not have to pay a 12-months' license fee when there is only three months of the year to run. I should not be allowed to take out a license for three months when I well know that I will be using my car for 12 months or 12 years.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: You hope!

Hon. H. TUCKEY: Yes. If a person can afford to own a motorcar he should be able to afford a reasonable license fee, and if he owns the car permanently he should be required to license it for more than three months. If everyone wanted a quarterly license there would be a queue two or three miles long instead of half a mile long as at present. This entails a great deal of work. Another aspect is that this means that all money has to be handled four times. First of all it passes through the issuing book, then into the licenses cash book, then into the general cash book and then into the ledger. That involves a lot of work. While these old ideas of book-keeping might ensure safety, surely some improvements could be made to keep abreast with the times and enable the work to be done much quicker.

It would be a step in the right direction if, once a license were issued, it could be stamped or have a sticker put on it together with a general receipt to cover the whole transaction. That would make for simplicity and speed. My main concern is that staggering of licenses shall not apply to country road boards. I have no objection to the clause which provides the severe penalty of gaol, without the option of a fine, because I do not think that penalty is too harsh in all the circumstances. It is high time that people who kill or almost kill others, and leave them to fend for themselves, should be adequately dealt with, and the Government is to be commended on trying to prevent them from doing so. I support the second reading.

On motion by Hon. W. J. Mann, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 8.55 p.m.*