

Question (that the House resolve into Committee) put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes—23

Mr. Bovell	Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. Brand	Mr. Lewis
Mr. Burt	Mr. I. W. Manning
Mr. Cornell	Mr. W. A. Manning
Mr. Court	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Craig	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Crommelin	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Dunn	Mr. Runciman
Mr. Gayfer	Mr. Wild
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Williams
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. O'Neill
Dr. Henn	

(Teller)

Noes—22

Mr. Brady	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Davies	Mr. D. G. May
Mr. Evans	Mr. Moir
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. Norton
Mr. Graham	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Hall	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Rowberry
Mr. Heal	Mr. Sewell
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Toms
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Jamieson	Mr. H. May

(Teller.)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr. Nimmo	Mr. Curran
Mr. Hart	Mr. Bickerton

Majority for—1.

Question thus passed.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. I. W. Manning) in the Chair; Mr. Wild (Minister for Labour) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1: Short title and citation—

Mr. MOIR: I move an amendment—

Page 1, line 7—Insert after the word "Arbitration" the words "Court Abolition."

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. I. W. Manning): The member for Boulder-Eyre has moved, on page 1, line 7, to insert after the word "Arbitration" the words "Court Abolition."

Mr. MOIR: Mr. Chairman, I do not think this is in order, as the word "Act" will have to be included.

Progress

Mr. TONKIN: Mr. Chairman, to enable you to consider the matter, I move—

That the Chairman do now report progress and ask leave to sit again.

Motion put and passed.

[The Speaker Resumed the Chair.]

Leave to Sit Again

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. I. W. Manning) reported that the Committee had considered the Bill, made progress, and asked leave to sit again.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): The question is—

That leave be given to sit again.

Is it the decision of the House that there should not be a division? If there is no opposition to the motion, I will put the

question on the voices that leave be given to sit again. I take it that the motion is carried.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 3.34 a.m. (Thursday)

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 7th November, 1963

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The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Assent

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the Bill.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE LOADING KIBBLES AT PORT OF ESPERANCE Ownership

1. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS asked the Minister for Mines:

Who owns the loading kibbles, located at the port of Esperance, which are used to load concentrates?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:
The Government.

2. This question was postponed.

WATER SUPPLY AT ESPERANCE Installation of Water Softening Plant

3. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS asked the Minister for Mines:

Further to the question asked by me on the 21st August, 1963, regarding a water softening plant for Esperance—

- (1) What progress has been made in the procurement of this plant?
- (2) On what date can it be expected to be in operation?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) Tenders for a suitable plant will be invited within the next few weeks.
- (2) Early in the 1964-65 financial year.

Salts Content of Bore Water

4. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS asked the Minister for Mines:

What is the salts content of the bore water to be reticulated at Esperance, particularly in relation to—

- (a) calcium;
- (b) magnesium;
- (c) sodium;
- (d) potassium;
- (e) bicarbonates;
- (f) sulphates;
- (g) chlorides; and
- (h) fluorides?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

	Parts Per Million
(a) Calcium, Ca	104
(b) Magnesium, Mg	24
(c) Sodium, Na	143
(d) Potassium, K	9
(e) Bicarbonates, HCO ₃	311
(f) Sulphates, SO ₄	49
(g) Chlorides, Cl	243
(h) Fluorides	0.2
Others	55
Total	938

BILLS (2): THIRD READING

1. Licensing Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).

Bill read a third time, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Justice), and transmitted to the Assembly.

2. Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Act Amendment Bill.

Bill read a third time, on motion by The Hon. L. A. Logan (Minister for Local Government), and returned to the Assembly with amendments.

TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2) Second Reading

Debate resumed, from the 6th November, on the following motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North) [2.39 p.m.]: It seems that we never go very long in this session without a taxing measure of some kind being presented to us. This practice is directly contrary to the policy advertised when this Government was elected. It castigated the previous Government for its taxing measures and suggested that if it were elected to office it would alleviate that situation.

However, after five years in office, despite previous taxing measures, this Government is lifting the cost of an application for a license to drive a motor vehicle. If it were lifted by 50 per cent., I would say that would be seriously lifting the fee; to lift it by 100 per cent. would be bordering on lifting it drastically; but the fee is being lifted from 10s. to £2 which, I would say, would be by 400 per cent., but Mr. Watson is looking at me, so I will say it is being increased by 300 per cent.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: I thought you were going to ask that the Bill be referred to a referendum.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: If the Bill were made the subject of a referendum, the Government would fall.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: There is a challenge!

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: I have, however, no desire to embarrass the Government on an issue such as this.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It is not much of a challenge, really.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: Apparently this Government thinks that people are just goods and chattels that can have taxes imposed on them at will; and apparently it considers that if one is a motor driver one has no friends at all.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: You are fair game, then.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: Surely the limit has been reached in respect of a f.a.q. Australian running a motorcar. I myself have been paying instalments for so long that I do not like to remember, and I still have a year to go—

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: You are afraid to forget them, though.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: —and I have one of the smallest cars that can be bought. What happens in the case of new aspirants for a motor driver's license, and who, in the ultimate, may be owners of vehicles? They start off with this increment in the fee for an

application for a driver's license. Individually the amount is not very much, but it will return to the Government, this year, £19,000; and next year, £38,000. I wonder what becomes of that money, and what advantage the poor unfortunate applicant for a license gains from it? It seems to me that the fee at present is quite adequate. After all, only recently we passed a Bill which covered innumerable millions of pounds in total expenditure, and we did not agree to the principle of raising the royalty of 1s. 6d. a ton on iron ore which was in an agreement 30 odd years ago with the B.H.P. We said that 1s. 6d. is good enough today, and we did not have regard for the devaluation of the pound. But in this case we say there shall be a 300 per cent. increase.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: For that matter, we did not have regard for the drop in the price of iron ore.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: There has not been a drop in the price of iron ore over the period.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I wish we could get for it today, when we start to sell it, what we could have got 10 years ago.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Your wish is that you could sell it.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Yes; and it should be your wish, too, Mr. Wise.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Of course it is.

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver): Order!

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: If iron ore is now to be the subject for debate, I do not intend to enter the contest.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: It is needed to make a motorcar.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: The Government, by the Bill, intends to increase drastically the application fee for a license to drive a motor vehicle. If it were in my power to do so, I would endeavour to reduce, equally drastically, that figure, but it is not in my power. Therefore the only right available to me is the right to express my opinion on the Bill and to vote against it.

THE HON. G. BENNETTS (South-East) [2.45 p.m.]: I am surprised that I have once again to rise to protest against the taxing methods that the Government is applying in respect of people who own and drive motorcars. Today a person who wants to drive a motorcar, or own one, is taxed to the hilt. I do not know what is going to happen with all these taxes. Bills come before us and we find that a few more pounds are wanted from the public in some way or another. I think it is time we forgot about many of these taxes. I oppose the Bill.

THE HON. F. R. H. LAVERY (West) [2.46 p.m.]: I know we must have money to finance the Consolidated Revenue, and I know that for an organisation to function it must be financial. Over the years I have been here I have risen in my seat, even when a Government which I supported was in office, to speak on, and oppose, Bills imposing a sectional tax on the motoring community.

I know we will be told a little later when some other taxing measures are brought down, that the Government has had to introduce them because of the Grants Commission. Probably to a point that is correct. But who is actually running this country? Who in Western Australia is administering the State? Is the present Government or Cabinet administering it, or is the Grants Commission administering it?

When it comes to a matter of increasing wages for civil servants, and others, in the various States, the basic figures come from Western Australia. But when it is a matter of getting more money out of the pocket of the motorist, we have to do what New South Wales and Victoria tell us through the Grants Commission.

I know it is simple for me to sit opposite the Government and criticise its action, but surely there is a limit to what the Government can expect in regard to our sitting here quietly and accepting what it puts forward in a measure such as this.

It is not very long since the fee was 5s., and then it was raised to 10s. If the fee had been raised to £1 I do not think we would have complained, but the position is somewhat different when it is being increased to the figure that is suggested, especially when a greater number of people are applying for licenses today than applied even two years ago. The amount of money proposed to be raised by this measure is, in my view—and I have observed the Traffic Office and the employees there—not necessary to warrant increasing the fee from 10s. to £2.

I would have thought that the whole situation, so far as the licensing of motorists is concerned, had reached the stage when some organisation outside of Parliament should be formed to fight for the motorists; and I can assure members I would not mind taking an executive position on such an organisation if one were established.

Time and again, Bills to amend the Traffic Act pass through this House, but when we on this side of the Chamber attempt, as private members, to introduce a Bill, we are accused of taking the business out of the hands of the Government.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You have never been told that.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: In effect, I am taking business out of the hands of the Government now by suggesting to it that increasing the driver's license fee from 10s. to £2 is definitely not good business practice. If a business man in the city increased the cost of an article from 10s. to £2, as the Bill proposes to do with the driver's license fee, I know what would happen to him within a very short time. People ask: Why amend the Act in a piecemeal fashion? Why not bring the whole legislation up to date in one move?

I am quite satisfied that when it suits this Government, or any other Government for that matter, to find another way to take a further 10s. from the pocket of the taxpayer, it will find it; and that is bad enough, but for the Government to take it from the pockets of one section of the community is completely unfair. Therefore I intend to oppose the provision.

THE HON. R. THOMPSON (West) [2.52 p.m.]: I do not intend to record a silent vote on this question. As other speakers have said, to increase the driver's license fee from 10s. to £2 is exorbitant. Even if the traffic policeman who is in charge of the driving test were to keep this money himself, the fee of 10s. for each test would represent a handsome return. The Traffic Department must be making a lot of profit at present from this source. The position relating to driving tests at the moment is that an applicant for a test must make an appointment and usually the appointment is made two or three weeks ahead. Traffic offices throughout the metropolitan area are completely booked out with appointments for driving tests for the next two or three weeks.

Only this morning a man came to see me asking for assistance because he had his license taken from him on medical grounds under section 24 of the Traffic Act. Before his license can be returned to him, he must produce not only a medical certificate, but he must undergo another traffic test. Therefore, in the way I interpret this provision he would be called upon to pay a fee of £2 for that test despite the fact that he has held a driver's license for the past 30 years.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Have you a copy of the speech I made when introducing this Bill?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: No.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It shows that I said this will apply only to the initial fee.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: The Minister in another place said that if the driver had lost his license through suspension he would have to pay the fee of £2 to have another license issued.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: This man has not lost his license through suspension. His license has only been postponed. However, I do not think it is reasonable for motorists to face up to an increase of 300 per cent. in the fee for a driver's test. Through the years, successive Governments have complained bitterly of inflation. Yet here is a Government department introducing a taxing measure which is definitely inflationary, and which, to my mind, is not necessary.

The Minister might tell the House what the money is to be used for. Why is this tremendous increase in the fee necessary? Is the money required to carry out something in the Traffic Department, or is it a straightout tax to swell the coffers of Consolidated Revenue? I do not intend to support this provision.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban—Minister for Mines) [2.56 p.m.]: I am sure no Minister cares to stand up in this House, or in another place, to introduce any taxing measure.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: That has been said from that seat for 30 years.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Then perhaps that lends quite a deal of strength to the statement I have just made. There are three particular occasions during a Parliamentary session which cause my colleague and myself, the staffs which are available to us, and all the other Government departments, a considerable amount of work. I am not complaining about this, but the work is brought about when Parliament opens and the debate on the Address-in-Reply commences. A similar amount of work is occasioned when the first Supply Bill is introduced, and similarly when the time for the introduction of the second Supply Bill comes around.

The reason for this extra work is obvious; because those are the periods that are referred to as the grizzle sessions—I say that for lack of a better word—when members can air, quite rightly, any of their views about the Government of the day and about the electorates they represent, and when they can point out to the Government where it is falling short and what it should do to effect remedies. You know, Mr. President, and we all know, that during these particular periods we listen to debates when every member of this House—my colleague and I do not have this opportunity, being in the Ministry—points out to the Government that something is required in his district.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: They have to work the parish pump.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I did not say that. They make requests for a police station, a hospital, a road, and they complain that the strength of the Police Force

is not sufficient and it should be increased. They also complain that rates of pay for certain workers are not enough; that civil servants have asked for an increase in salaries; or that this section or that section of workers is requesting either an increase in margins or improved conditions. Where do these requests come from? They can only emanate from one source.

I do not propose to do this, but if I so desired I could spend a little time at the office of *The West Australian* newspaper and attempt to have myself transported to the El Dorado that is to be created, according to the political promises that have been published in this morning's issue of *The West Australian*. I realise, of course, that someone will have to pay for all the additional benefits that are promised. The public of Western Australia, and of the whole of the Commonwealth, will have enough sense to realise that the money can only come from one source.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: There is a difference between wasting it and using it.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am glad the honourable member has at last realised that. The money can only come from one source, and that is out of the pockets of the taxpayers—the people who provide the money. It is no use Mr. Lavery asking who is running this country, the Western Australian Government or the Grants Commission. The Grants Commission is not running Western Australia; but, as I have heard Mr. Wise on many occasions say so correctly, Western Australia has a great deal to thank the Grants Commission for in more ways than one. However, we cannot allow ourselves to be in a situation where we do not come into line with the standard States, for which the Grants Commission is likely to penalise us.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Did it mention these two?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not think it did, because the report of the Grants Commission lags for a considerable period of time. But we have to shape up to these things. Mr. Ron Thompson suggests the department must be making quite a bit, because one has to ring up and make an appointment in order to get a license.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You not only have to ring up, you have to fill in a form and wait a long time.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am sorry about that; but if the service is to be improved it will cost more money. Let us have a look at what a person gets for his money.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Will you put on some more officers to relieve that situation if we grant you this extra money?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Police Department is putting on more officers. I think I gave that information to the House

some time ago. The fee of 10s., as I have said previously, is not sufficient to pay for the costs involved in testing an applicant and granting a license.

The Hon. R. Thompson: One pound would be nearer the mark.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I said the present fee is not sufficient to do this.

The Hon. R. Thompson: They only spend 10 minutes in a drive around the town.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not know what the period of time is. Frankly, it is a long time since I went for my driver's license test.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I know people who have had to have five tests.

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver): Order!

The Hon. R. Thompson: We'd better test the Minister.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Any time the honourable member likes. I am prepared to say this: As one goes along in political life and obtains more experience, one is likely to change one's mind about certain things. I have made some bad mistakes since I have been in Parliament and, no doubt, I will make some more. I have had erroneous ideas about things.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: When you were in Opposition.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I have never been in any doubt about the honourable member. Now that I am privileged—and it is a privilege to serve in Cabinet—to be a member of the Government, I know the problems with which a Government is faced. Its members have to sit around the table with the Premier and Treasurer of the State and they have to shape up to the problems of the State, not only in regard to necessary expenditure, but in regard to finding sources of taxation whence the money can come to meet this expenditure. That is what we had to shape up to on this occasion.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Things should be better after the 30th November.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is a bit of wishful thinking. If things are going to be as good as this morning's *The West Australian* suggests, obviously we are going to move into an El Dorado, but the people who make these promises realise they have to find the money from somewhere; and I do not think it is possible to pull the wool over the eyes of the Australian public to the extent some people think.

The Hon. R. Thompson: This Government has done it for the last five years.

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver): Order! Will the honourable member please address himself to the Bill.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Obviously it is a touchy subject and I will not pursue it. I was pointing out that the Government has problems which it must face up to, and it is therefore necessary for it to introduce taxing measures. I will leave off where I started by repeating that nobody likes to introduce taxing measures, and when one sits on the other side of the House, it is easy to criticise.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: That is what you used to do.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: We have to live with realism; and one man in this House will appreciate what I am saying—I refer to Mr. Wise—because not only has he been a Minister in several Ministries, but was once the Treasurer of the State.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: He was a good housekeeper.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: He knows what the problems are. I hope this Bill will receive support, because although it raises a tax in a certain direction it is part and parcel of the whole scheme to raise the necessary taxes for the State's finances which will enable us to further the demands—if not fully, to some extent—that members in this House and in another place make in respect of the districts they represent.

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

Ayes—15

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. R. C. Mattiske
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. J. Heitman	Hon. H. R. Robinson
Hon. J. G. Hilslop	Hon. S. T. J. Thompson
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. A. L. Loton	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. G. C. MacKinnon	(Teller)

Noes—12

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. D. F. Dellar	Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs
Hon. J. Dolan	Hon. R. Thompson
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. W. F. Willsee
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. F. R. H. Lavery	Hon. J. D. Teahan
	(Teller)

Pair

Aye	No
Hon. C. R. Abbey	Hon. E. M. Heenan

Majority for—3.

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (The Hon. N. E. Baxter) in the Chair; The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2 put and passed.

Clause 3: Section 23 amended—

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I neglected to answer the query raised by Mr. Ron Thompson in respect of the initial license fee of £2. I understand this will not be a recurring fee. I think the reference may

be to another Bill that is coming up later in respect of the suspension of licenses under certain conditions.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: This is another taxing measure. It is taxing one section of the community rather heavily.

The Hon. A. L. Loton: I cannot hear a word of what the honourable member is saying.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I will direct my voice to the honourable member's ear. I look upon this clause as another taxing measure on behalf of the Government. It is a direct taxing measure in respect of one section of the community. In countries that are more advanced than Australia, motorists are not required to pay any license fees at all. I refer to Belgium. There is no license fee there, and I think there are other European countries in the same category. In Belgium no driver is required to have a motor driver's license. When the driver gets into trouble, or is involved in an accident, or parks in the wrong place, or does something contrary to the laws of that country, he is brought before the court, and if he is declared guilty he pays the price.

Here in Australia the payment of a fee for a driver's license is really a taxing measure—no more and no less. Various Governments have increased it—Labor Governments and Liberal-Country Party Governments. All Governments have increased the fees that drivers have to pay. It is wrong to impose a sectional tax on the community; and I am sure that the honourable member who could not hear me—

The Hon. A. L. Loton: Don't take too much for granted.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: —will agree that sectional taxes should not be imposed on the community. There should not be a favoured section of any community, and I am opposed to the clause for that reason.

I draw the attention of members to the United Kingdom. In that country when drivers are required to have a license they have to go through two stages. They have, initially, to obtain a learner's permit; and I have met people in England who have driven their vehicles on a learner's permit for as long as six years. They failed to pass a driving test, but they were not prohibited from driving their vehicles on the road. That is the law in Great Britain.

Here we are increasing a fee purely for revenue purposes. It has nothing at all to do with the safety of people on the road. It is simply a measure to increase revenue for the Treasury. I oppose the clause.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: I, too, object to the clause, because I do not think driving licenses should be used as a taxing

measure. Motorists are penalised everywhere they look. Today a motor vehicle is a necessity, because of transport difficulties. This is like any other amenity which comes to society. At first it is a luxury and then it becomes a necessity. There are other avenues for raising revenue besides increasing the fees for driving licenses.

As I have said before, it is a matter of good housekeeping. This Government is not a good housekeeper; it is a very bad housekeeper, in my opinion. The Labor Government was a much better housekeeper in regard to its taxing measures. It did not penalise one section of the community as heavily as one will be penalised under this Bill. The Federal Labor Party will be a good housekeeper; and, from the sound of applause after our leader's speech, the public is in favour of the Labor Party becoming the Government. I object to the clause as a taxing measure. I think this is one thing that should not be used as a taxing measure. There are other things that do not affect the working man that could be taxed and that would not mean his being so heavily taxed on something that is a necessity in life. I voice my objection from that point of view.

Clause put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), and passed.

STAMP ACT AMENDMENT BILL

(No. 2)

Second Reading

Debate resumed, from the 6th November, on the following motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

THE HON. F. J. S. WISE (North—Leader of the Opposition) [3.19 p.m.]: This Bill also deals with taxation in a form somewhat different from that imposed in the measure last dealt with. It imposes a taxing measure in a form *ad valorem* on stamp duty, but to an extent to provide a return to the Government far greater than the amount dealt with in the previous Bill.

The provisions of the previous Bill envisage the receipt of a sum of £38,000 per annum by the raising from 10s. to £2 for the initial driving license of those persons licensed to drive motor vehicles. But this proposal is to impose a rate of 10s. *ad valorem* duty when taking out a motor vehicle license initially, and on the transfer of a motor

vehicle license. In both cases the stamp duty is to be 10s. per cent., and this taxing measure is expected to realise £280,000 in the one year.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: They don't miss a trick.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: There is no doubt that the owners and users of motor vehicles in these days have become very much the milking cow of Governments anxious to levy taxation in all its forms, quite apart from those insidious taxes levied by the Commonwealth, including customs, excise duty on petrol, sales tax, and the like. It even includes a tax on batteries; and if one buys a battery in a remote part, like Hall's Creek, one pays sales tax on it at the same rate as one would pay on a battery purchased in Melbourne. One has to pay the same excise duty on petrol wherever it may be used, and even in places where there is no form of transport other than by motor vehicle.

This rapacious Government, in regard to taxes, is anxious to take another £280,000 per annum from motor vehicle owners on the licensing and transfer of motor vehicles. In his reply to the comments on another Bill, and in his introductory remarks, the Minister stated that this action is necessary because of the Grants Commission attitude on the difference between the revenue of this State and that of the standard States; and because the revenue is needed, in any case, for all sorts and kinds of expenditure.

I was most interested, and somewhat amused, by the recital given by the Minister from the seat which he now occupies. He was endeavouring to justify the action, and his attitude was very different from that which he took when he had little or no political responsibility. It was a most interesting study. I acknowledge that with his great responsibility he has assumed considerable political stature; that is acknowledged by everybody. But we cannot have him lecturing us from that side on things which the Government finds unavoidable, and which become merely the actions of copyists; because this Bill is the copy of an Act of another State. That is what it is all about.

One of the standard States did this and that is why the Government is doing it; it is not because—and I repeat: it is not because—the Commonwealth Grants Commission raised the question of making a budgetary adjustment. This alteration has been made, and the tax is to be levied before the Grants Commission has made any comment upon the matter. I do not think that makes sense.

As I have said frequently in this Chamber, and with all the respect I have for the great work of the Grants Commission, I think we are very much tied to its apron strings in matters which should be subjects for the decision of State administrators alone. There are many items on which I

think we should take a chance as to whether we are prejudicially levied or charged by the Grants Commission.

This unfortunate tax of 10s. per cent. on every license for a motorcar, and on every transfer of a motorcar, is to be collected for the Government and, on the figure anticipated by the Premier, will produce £280,000 in one year. That is a statement by a Premier whose greatest slogan at the time of his initial election was that taxation had reached breaking point. That was five years ago and that was the statement most repeated, and it was his greatest argument as to why at the time there should be a change of Government.

Those of us who follow this sort of thing, either through Grants Commission reports, or through the attention we pay to the Budgets of other States, know that this action was taken in New South Wales. But does that make it necessary for it to happen at this point here? I say it does not. As I said by way of interjection, the motorist is someone who is singularly available as a medium for taxation because he is so identifiable. He is registered and he is somebody, not necessarily of opulence, who has a capital asset; and there is no capital asset more subject to depreciation. It is an asset which, as Dr. Hislop said, will vanish; it is something which wipes itself out simply by running on the road. A motorist pays from the time the wheel of his car turns; when one takes it out of the garage as new, after having paid sales tax and all the other taxes upon it, and one runs it down the road, one has immediately lost £200, and the vehicle becomes secondhand.

During the whole of the life of the vehicle the motorist is fair game, and he is to continue to be under this impost. I think he is too easy to get at. I object to this taxation at this rate, and in this form, for several reasons, not the least of which is that this is something that so far has not been raised against us. For those reasons, I oppose the Bill.

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central) [3.30 p.m.]: Like Mr. Wise I, too, am opposed to what I feel is a sectional taxing measure. I spoke on a similar measure last year and referred to the fact that the motorist in this State was taxed very unfairly, and treated on a sectional taxation basis. Mr. Wise referred to the various methods of taxation. Not only is the motorist subject to State taxation, but he is also subject to Federal taxation. He is subject to a tax on tyres, on spare parts, and on anything else he requires for his car.

After all is said and done, when one considers the position of the owner of a car, one finds he is paying through the nose right and left. I think the figure last year, roughly, of the overall costs

and taxes, etc., on a motorcar—and that is without petrol—was about £32 per annum. To that we added £1 last year by way of third party surcharge. Now the Government seeks to impose a further tax.

I wonder whether the Government, when it is thinking out ideas for getting more money, looks beyond the motorist. I think that two years running is more than enough for any section of the community to have taxes increased. Perhaps I might be able to give the Government some ideas about raising revenue. I suggest—though I do not know whether this would be permissible under the Federal Constitution, because I have not checked it—that some means of taxation be levied on the daily papers, or weekly newspapers. What is wrong with making them pay a 3d. tax? This would provide a fair and reasonable overall cover of taxation.

I have no particular set against the newspapers, but I do feel that my suggestion would spread the means of taxation more fairly and evenly. It would not affect the newspapers themselves, because they would pass it on. I have very strong objections to the form of taxation proposed in the Bill and I cannot support the measure.

THE HON. J. D. TEAHAN (North-East) [3.32 p.m.]: At one time motoring was regarded as a luxury, and those who owned motorcars were considered to be rich. I think it will be generally accepted that the poorest and the humblest in the land are now able to possess a motorcar. We have been conditioned to the point where a motorcar is almost a necessity. The working man who lives some distance from the city tries to reduce his travelling costs, especially where he has a family of four or five.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: Or seven or eight.

The Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: By grouping his expenses he endeavours to make his travelling to work a little cheaper than it would be by other means. He also endeavours to make his sources of pleasure a little cheaper than would otherwise be the case. I am sure he curtails other avenues of spending, with the little he has to spend, and devotes his expenditure to his car. The motorcar has done quite a lot of good. In my opinion it helps to keep a family together. It is a family unit. The father, mother, and other members of the family enjoy their pleasures together.

So I think we should reach the stage of encouraging this form of pleasure, leisure, or travel, rather than continually tax it to the point where it will no longer be a working man's privilege to own a car. Every time I see the insurance fee

for motorcars rising, I feel the time is fast approaching when it will be impossible for the working man to possess this necessity.

I would like to quote some figures which I think speak for themselves. They show that the motorist has been taxed continuously and heavily. We find that the excise duty on motor spirit is £56,700,000, and the sales tax on motor vehicles amounts to £42,700,000. Together those two items amount to about £100,000,000. If one cares to follow through the smallest item required for a motorcar—the smallest spare part—one will find that it leaves the factory at a cost of, say, 2s. 11d., but by the time it reaches the owner of the car it costs 22s. 6d. So all along the line the motorist is being taxed very heavily. The working man would be the greatest sufferer, because this amount of 22s. 6d. is borne by him. The cost to the carrier or the cartage contractor is added to the delivery costs, and they are all added to the cost of the article.

We would be remiss if we did not protest against these continuous inroads on the motoring public who, for the most part, comprise the ordinary working man, who has been conditioned to the use of the motorcar being almost a necessity.

THE HON. D. P. DELLAR (North-East) [3.36 p.m.]: I think the time is overdue for a protest to be made concerning this mode of taxing the motorist. If the Government is looking for more revenue it should look elsewhere. Each year for the past three years a further tax has been imposed on the motorists; people who can ill afford such continued taxation. It might be said: Why do they own a vehicle?

Surely in modern times people are entitled to own a motorcar; they are entitled to some enjoyment. In the majority of cases these motor vehicles are owned for family pleasure—to have a week-end out shooting in the country, or something of that nature. It is the only type of enjoyment to which the working man can look forward. I am beginning to think that the members of the present Government must have plenty of money.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You say you are beginning to think!

The Hon. D. P. DELLAR: I expect that sort of remark from the Minister. Whenever the Government needs more revenue it sets out to impose a tax on the motorist. The members of the present Government, who probably own big farms, can afford to pay these extra taxes on vehicles. I feel the time has come for the Government to look further afield for its revenue. It should leave the motorist alone for a change.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban --Minister for Mines) [3.39 p.m.]: I could reply to the second reading speeches made on this Bill in a similar vein to the replies

I gave on the Bill we dealt with prior to this, because the causes are, as Mr. Wise said, the same. I shall start with the last speaker.

The Hon. D. P. Dellar: Naturally.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Not naturally. I am glad to know the honourable member is beginning to think about one or two of these matters, because he has been criticising this Government very severely for the lack of services in the province he represents. I have had occasion to refer him to the facilities and services which this, and past Governments, have provided in that area.

From where did the Government made up of the political party to which the honourable member belongs get the necessary money to provide the facilities and services? Where does he think the present Government will get the required money from? He talks about the need for workers to travel over the roads in the week-ends, but where does the money come from to build those roads? Where does he think the money required to provide annual leave and other facilities, the education of children, additional hospitals, new classrooms, and more roads, comes from? Money has to be found to provide many facilities which are required by a growing community.

The money comes from the taxes which are raised. The motorist in Western Australia is treated in a similar manner to motorists in other States. We know that the Grants Commission stringently examines the position in each State and it does not hesitate to point out to a State that it is lagging behind in some charge. In such a case the commission could make an unfavourable adjustment.

I have had occasion to make a comparison between the charges imposed in this State, as compared with the standard States of New South Wales and Victoria. It is of no use for Mr. Dellar to talk in the vein in which he has, and then to tell the people in Kalgoorlie that he trimmed up the Government on this point.

The Hon. D. P. Dellar: I have not done that yet.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not know. I am not suggesting the honourable member has.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: The Minister is not being fair.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: This is not a matter of being fair, but of being factual.

The Hon. D. P. Dellar: I might be able to stir the Minister up a little.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I was replying to comments which had been made in this debate.

The Hon. D. P. Dellar: I think the comments were uncalled for.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Maybe they were. The honourable member should not have made them.

The Hon. D. P. Dellar: I am referring to your comments.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The position is that this Government has to accept its responsibility. This is not a sectional tax.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: What is it then?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It is no more a sectional tax than any other tax. It is all very well for Mr. Baxter to say that he will oppose this, or that tax. It is so easy for one who has no responsibility for providing the services of this State to say that.

Point of Order

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I object to the words used by the Minister, and I ask that they be withdrawn.

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver): The honourable member desires the Minister to withdraw the words that created the offence.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: If the honourable member regards those remarks as offensive I must withdraw them, and I do so.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: To put it in other terms, the Government of the day has to accept the responsibility for imposing taxes. It does not do so willingly. It imposes taxes with a full sense of the responsibility it has to take. It is of no use for any member to stand up in judgment of a situation and declare that he will not support a particular tax, without accepting the resultant responsibility for so doing.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: Was I the only member to say that?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am not talking about the honourable member; his conscience is worrying him. I said it was of no use for anybody to say that. We all share the responsibility of the imposition of taxation, and we all hope to share in the services which the State provides through the taxes that are raised. Addressing myself to Mr. Baxter, through you, Mr. President, he should realise that the Government does not impose a tax of this nature lightly.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: You mean the Government imposes the tax heavily?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Of course, I used the word "lightly" not in the sense implied by the honourable member.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I notice you use tricks of debate with other members. I do not want you to get away with that one

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is good enough. No Government, in bringing down a taxing measure, considers the matter in a light vein.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: Did I suggest that you introduced the Bill in a light vein?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: At this moment I am expressing the point of view of the Government. Every Government is aware that it is not a delight to introduce a taxing measure. It is all very well for some to refer to what the present Treasurer said during the last election; and I remember that the Government which I supported as a private member was partially destroyed when the slogan, "Tax-Us Rangers" was used in the election campaign. That was when the boot was on the other foot.

I hope this Bill will be passed, because it is a part of the taxation—and it is not a sectional tax—which the Government considers to be necessary in order to produce a reasonably balanced Budget.

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

Ayes—14

Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. J. G. Hilslop	Hon. H. R. Robinson
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. S. T. J. Thompson
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. A. L. Loton	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. G. C. MacKinnon	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. R. C. Mattiske	Hon. J. Heltman

(Teller)

Noes—13

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. D. P. Dellar	Hon. R. Thompson
Hon. J. Dolan	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. F. R. H. Lavery	

(Teller)

Pair

Aye	No
Hon. C. R. Abbey	Hon. E. M. Heenan

Majority for—1.

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

Sitting suspended from 3.50 to 4.10 p.m.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), and passed.

TAXI-CARS (CO-ORDINATION AND CONTROL) BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed, from the 5th November, on the following motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

THE HON. F. J. S. WISE (North—Leader of the Opposition) [4.13 p.m.]: This Bill has been introduced in an endeavour to make available to the drivers of taxi-cars some measure of regulation and control of their operations by a board.

Some sort of control has been forecast for them for many years. Sections of the industry—and we can call it such—have desired control by a board. Other sections have had entirely different views, and still others, who obtain their living by driving taxi-cars, wish to have the best of both worlds. Indeed, I think it could be said quite safely and truly that there would be no greater individualist than a taxi-car driver. It would be a remarkable thing if universal approval among them could be obtained for any single method of control of their operations by a board.

Since the introduction of the Bill I have been interviewed by groups representing different interests—claiming to be different interests, but indeed it is very difficult to define where the difference in their interests might lie. There is no doubt, however, that in a personal sense they are in many ways at variance. So they are engaged in an industry which is difficult to regiment or control by legislation that is likely to meet with the approval of a majority. The Bill seems to me to be an endeavour, basically, to meet a need, or to lay a foundation which can be altered and adjusted from time to time to meet the needs as the people themselves think they should be met.

I have put several amendments on the notice paper, and as today is the first time they have appeared, the Minister may wish to consider them for a day or two before having them dealt with in Committee. Before dealing with them, may I relate for a few moments the different sorts of interests which obtain in the taxi industry? To me the most important units within the industry are the owner-driver people, particularly the family men who own their taxis and drive them. Many of them have been in the industry as taximen for a quarter of a century. They are reputable people who are respected.

There is another section who are hirers of vehicles that are company-owned. Some companies are numerically strong in the number of vehicles they possess and hire to individuals, and it appears from my examination of the situation that the vehicles are hired to people who have qualifications that are little more than the ability to drive a car and to pay the lease fee or rent, which is £3 a day for seven days a week; namely, £21 a week.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Does that cover all their outgoings?

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Provided they find the £21 every Monday morning, they are satisfactory people to whom to rent a car. No consideration is given in respect

of the service they render to the public; or as to whether they are competent within the city to take the shortest route in the interests of the client; or in respect of their demeanour, personal appearance, and cleanliness. These people keep on paying the rent of £21 a week from which the company meets the garage expenses and incidentals attaching to the upkeep of the car. The lessee provides petrol, oil, and ordinary running expenses.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: Does it cover insurance and that sort of thing?

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The company pays the insurance but does not take all the responsibility. So these people hire vehicles on this basis either from big companies—I will not name them but members know them—or from multiple owners who own five, six, seven, or eight cars but who do not drive them. Those people lease their cars to individuals who are nearly all on the same rate of rental.

I find from the information that some people have given to me that the multiple owners of the smaller number of cars, say five cars, are considered to be very reputable. They are jealous of the appearance of their vehicles and see to their upkeep. They are proud of the appearance of the cars and claim the vehicles are suitable for use at any type of function. I understand that those owners consist of the considerate employers—if that term can be used—to the lessee. But some of the others are prepared to employ people not very long in Australia—people who, I think, it is not quite fair to employ in this sort of business.

It is claimed by the owner-drivers who have seen me—and two groups have seen me—that the owner-drivers are severely prejudiced because of the number of inept or inexperienced, or sort of pressurised, drivers or lessees plying for hire who are by force, as it were, required to earn this £21 a week, plus, to compete with them in their legitimate owner-driver sphere; and that is very understandable, I think.

A man who has almost his all in a very good type of cab—and I am sure most of us here know the sort of man; a single owner, proud of his vehicle—is a credit to himself and to the industry. He works many hours a week to get the extra few shillings in the time when he should be available, not necessarily on a rank, in competition with the drivers of cars leased from companies. There is, as members can understand, tremendous competition, and certainly a differentiation of interests, between the driver of a company-owned vehicle and the owner-driver.

The Bill is an attempt to sort things out. One of my amendments, which I will explain in detail in Committee, is designed to ensure that when

the board is created the nominees from the industry itself shall be taxi operators in the true sense. That is to say, the two referred to in paragraphs (b) and (c) on page 4 of the Bill shall be nominated and elected; and I think we will find we will get a better representation in that manner than by having specific representatives from the association and from outside the association.

What I would like to see is some sort of inducement to these people—all of them—to belong to an association. The fact is, as I mentioned earlier, that they are very individualistic in their outlook; and that is understandable. They are fighting for a fare; vying with each other for a customer. Some of those who use, and have used in the past, questionable methods to obtain customers have brought all of the taximen into some sort of disrepute. The Bill is an attempt, I think, to make an acknowledgement of the need for a better sort of control by having a board on which there will be different sorts of people represented.

I propose, by another amendment, to ensure that instead of two people being selected from the Local Government Association—this will also be found on page 4 of the Bill—

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Only one is to be chosen.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Yes; one. I propose to ensure that that person shall be taken from the Metropolitan Passenger Transport Trust. I think there is a very strong affinity between all of the persons operating in transport; and the Metropolitan Transport Trust could, in the regulation and adjustment of traffic, because of the decisions it has to make regarding routes, stopping places, and those sorts of things, be of considerable help by way of advice in these matters.

I think it will be found, if the Minister makes the inquiry, that the Metropolitan Transport Trust has—I imagine unwittingly—been left out. If members examine the Bill they will find the trust has been left out entirely. Rather than add to the board, I have been looking for a member of it who has been mentioned and who could be substituted by a person from the Metropolitan Passenger Transport Trust.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: You would be leaving out the City of Perth.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: That is right. One other angle is this: The clause specifies who shall be chairman. It is strange that because of the affinity between the Department of Transport and the Minister in charge of the Bill, the commissioner selected means the Commissioner of Transport. Now the Commissioner of Transport and the Department of Transport have very little to do with metropolitan transport—very little indeed. Its operations in the main are in connection with permits,

the control of outer city areas, and the control of transport as it applies to those outer regions.

I have an amendment, as the Minister will note, which seeks to get more experienced people—people who have been working in traffic matters with the city council, the Main Roads Department, and others in the control of traffic—placed on this board. The people I have in mind to be directly associated with this board, rather than the Department of Transport itself, which has very little to do with city traffic, are those who have had a lot to do with the inner region of the city.

I put those matters forward for consideration, as it were. I have discussed them with the Minister for Police and he kindly listened to all my points and asked me to explain them so that he could discuss them with the Minister who represented him in this House.

It will be noticed that I am endeavouring to have reference made to the board in the Bill rather than to the commissioner in most instances where that occurs. It will be found that the board is mentioned in several places, and then the term "commissioner" is used for no apparent reason. That occurs in clause 13 and subclause (2) of clause 15. In regard to all those duties which belong to a board, rather than matters which should be referred to a commissioner, I have given notice of an amendment which I think is appropriate to the need. For example, if members look at the top of page 10 where there is reference made to the return of plates, I think, since the board will have its chairman and secretary, if provision is made for the return of plates, etc., to the board it will be more acceptable and more appropriate.

In general, I think we are dealing with something which should be organised in its true sense. I would like to think that we could organise these people on a basis of their belonging to a board, or to an organisation which would ensure certain standards of working conditions and hours; that the individual, in his giving service to the public—which is tremendously important—should be properly recompensed for that service which, of course, should be rendered in a proper manner.

Further, carelessness in dress of the drivers should not be tolerated—not that it is desired to put them in a uniform or anything of that kind—because have not all of us seen taxis that we walk past rather than open their doors for our wives to enter? We would rather walk a few hundred yards further on because of the appearance of the driver who has a cigarette hanging from the corner of his mouth, is ill-kempt and, all in all, is an entirely unsuitable person to drive a taxi. However, this Bill contains no power which can be used to insist on conditions

relating to the appearance of the drivers; but it is something we should have a look at.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: We might be able to do that by regulation.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: They might be like some of those publicans we spoke of.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Yes; but I have not seen any as bad as that. We should try to establish certain conditions concerning their work and appearance for the good name of the city itself, and the good name of towns throughout our State. This would prevent any deterioration in the appearance of a person who was registered and licensed to operate within this industry. I think it is important that we should look after the working conditions of the operator to ensure that there is capacity for him to make a living. We cannot deny him that. If it is at all possible, we should not permit the exploitation of anyone by a person who has dominated the industry at the expense of two people—the passenger, and the person performing the service.

I come down very strongly on the side of the owner-driver. If the company angle can be properly organised to give an adequate service, without either the public or the drivers being exploited, I have no quarrel with that; and I hope the board will have on it a representative of the people concerned—the drivers in particular, for whom the Bill provides—so that he may be enabled to express their opinion. I say that because I expect this Bill is simply a mould for the commencement of a system which will be reset in the future—indeed next session, I expect—after the board has been in operation, to ensure that there will be an opportunity for the industry to operate as satisfactorily as possible.

I have had a look at the South Australian Act, and although it is not on all fours with our legislation, the Metropolitan Taxi Cab Act of 1956, as it is called, appears to be a very good Act. I cannot see any provisions in our Bill that have been directly lifted from the South Australian Act. This Bill may be an entirely local draft. I take it it has been drafted after consultation with the representatives of the interests involved. In the South Australian Act it is found that the board consists of 12 members with varying types of representation. It is proposed that the board to operate in this State shall consist of five members. For a city such as Adelaide, I consider that a board of 12 members is not an unwieldy one.

The Minister, after consultation with the Minister for Police, who is in charge of this legislation, might consider, instead of effecting the alterations I have forecast in regard to the Metropolitan Transport Trust, making provision for additional representation on the board. He might

consider adding to the board instead of reducing the members, so that the representation will conform with that provided in the South Australian Act. In Adelaide four members represent the Adelaide City Council, four represent the Municipal Councils Association of South Australia, two represent the taxi cab operators through the South Australian Employers Federation, one is nominated by the Transport Workers Union, and one is nominated by the Governor, which member shall be initially nominated by the Police Department. It appears to be quite a good board.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: It is a bit large.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Yes, but it could operate quite successfully. Above all we should ensure that we give maximum representation to the man who bears the heat and burden—particularly the owner-driver—and therefore two representatives should be appointed to the board to look after the interests of drivers. Then we will soon find that the type of men who are ambitious to give their best service and to use their asset to the best advantage—a suitable family-man type—will be attracted to the industry and we could have a better taxi service to meet the needs of the people of this fair city of ours. I support the Bill.

THE HON. G. BENNETTS (South-East) [4.38 p.m.]: I support the Bill and I am pleased to hear the remarks expressed by Mr. Wise, because when I raised the question of an increase in the taxi flag-fall charge for the benefit of taxi drivers, I mentioned that the operations of these people should be controlled by a board instead of being under the control of the Police Traffic Branch.

I have occasion to use taxis a good deal. I travel from my hotel in the city to the station and return, and whilst in the city I use taxis to visit the various departments which are scattered throughout the metropolitan area, and only in one instance have I had any fault to find with a taxi driver. This incident occurred a few years ago. Mr. Wise has already made reference to an influx of New Australians into the taxi ranks. The taxi driver who transported me on this occasion could have been reported to the board if there had been one in control of the industry. He drove me from my hotel to the station, and at the time I was carrying only a small suitcase. When we reached the station he insisted on an extra charge of 2s. for the suitcase. He could not read the meter properly and he seemed to be a little mixed up in regard to the fare that should be charged.

I advised him to consult the little book that had been issued to him in order to check the instructions printed therein for the information of taxi drivers so that he could ascertain the correct fare that should be charged. I might add that he asked for

this extra charge for the suitcase in front of another taxi driver who knew me, because he was an ex-Kalgoorlie man. After I had told this New Australian off, this man who knew me approached him and said, "You have done the wrong thing. You will lose your license, because this man is a member of Parliament." He certainly put the wind up him.

That is the only complaint I have to make about taxi drivers. In the main they are very decent fellows. However, I can give the House a running commentary about the drivers who operate in the city. Before doing so I would point out that on one occasion a taxi driver, upon my entering his cab about 12 months ago, did not turn his meter on. After carrying me to my hotel for which I usually paid a fee of 2s. 9d., he asked me for 6s. I said to him, "How do you make the charge out to be 6s.?" and he replied that that was the fare. I then said to him, "When are you going to turn the meter on?" but he made no reply to that. I then said, "I will take your number and give you my name and address and you can come and collect your extra fee from me if it is over and above 3s."

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Did he collect that fee?

The Hon. G. BENNETTS: I knew of another instance of a taxi driver who, when he picked up a fare, instead of driving the short distance that was required, drove for a mile around the city before reaching his destination. Another person I know informed me that he had hired a taxi so that he could come and interview me, and although he knew the fare was only about 2s. for the journey, the driver had charged him 10s.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: In other words, he was taken for a ride.

The Hon. G. BENNETTS: It is quite an easy matter to be taken for a ride in the Eastern States, but, in this State, I can readily say that I have been using taxis for 18 years and I know of only two instances where the taxi drivers did not do the right thing. As I have pointed out, one of them was a New Australian who did not understand the language very well. If a board is established, many of these instances of overcharging will not occur, because the drivers will be fearful of being reported to the board.

Further, when an applicant for a taxi driver's license presented himself for a test, the board could ensure that he was able to understand English and make the proper charge. Very often when the wrong fare is charged it is in favour of the person who is making the charge.

On the question of the dress of taxi drivers, in the main they are pretty tidy; but I think this is a matter which could be raised at a later stage after the board has been in operation. It could prescribe

regulations for the type of dress to be worn by taxi drivers, and take any action if the regulations were breached. I consider that the Bill is a move in the right direction. If the taxi drivers formed themselves into an association they would be able to air their grievances through their representative on the board from time to time and I think that, eventually, this would make for one of the best taxi services in Australia. We have the right type of fellow in the industry who, I think would comply with what was laid down by the board. I support the Bill.

THE HON. J. G. HISLOP (Metropolitan) [4.46 p.m.]: This Bill has interested me considerably, because I hope that its passing will be instrumental in making the occupation of a taxi driver a more honoured occupation than it has been in the past, and in giving the public the opportunity of adopting a different attitude towards these men. Like every organisation, this industry is composed of different types of individuals; and there is no doubt whatsoever—as Mr. Wise has said—that there is a considerable difference between the man who drives a cab which belongs to another person and for which he pays £21 per week, and the owner-driver. I think the owner-driver needs quite a deal of consideration.

From that point of view, one of the things that interests me is the mileage a car can do before it is taken off the road, both in regard to a cab that is owned by other than a driver, and one that is owned by a driver. I understand that some Holdens have done as much mileage as 300,000 miles; and if an individual is charging £21 per week for cars that have done something over a quarter of a million miles, I think that charge is excessive as there must be considerable repair and upkeep required by those cars.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: Petrol and oil consumption.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: This Bill looks more like a care and license measure than one to control the taxi industry; and it may be that later on, as this board meets, there will be a suggestion from it that its duties be extended. I have spoken here previously of the need for taxi cars to coast. I think that is the word that is used in many countries. I say this, because the area taken up in the city by the taxi stands is, in my opinion, excessive and against the interests of the shopkeepers. It is extremely difficult at times to find any parking space within our city. As I have said before in this House, one can drive around the city block many times looking for a parking spot, despite the fact that everyone is supposed to move his vehicle at the expiration of half an hour. Whether the other fellow is always

successful in just being ahead of one I do not know, but the position is difficult indeed.

Even at night time these taxi-cars are policed; and, that aspect of taxi-car driving must eventually be taken over by a board of this nature. It may be all right for the city council to lay down certain conditions as to what should happen in a city, but this is not always in the best interests of the public or the taxi drivers. I think it is a matter that should be considered on a much wider basis. After a time, I would like to see this board extended very considerably and given more power. If necessary, as was suggested by Mr. Wise, I would like to see its members increased in number.

I notice that clause 26 of the Bill provides that the Governor will have power to make regulations; and I consider the clause to be very loosely worded. It reads as follows:—

The Governor may, with or without the recommendation of the Board, make regulations for any purpose for which regulations are contemplated or required by this Act; and may make all such other regulations as may, in his opinion, be necessary or expedient for giving full effect to the provisions of, and for the due administration of, this Act.

I wonder whether the provisions of this Bill would have any control over the mode of dress of taxi drivers!

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: The Minister may find out how wide a scope that clause gives.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: That clause allows the Governor to make regulations in much the same way as he can under so many other Bills.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: I think you may have a point, but I am not sure.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: It is clause 26.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I think perhaps we should divide up our regulating powers into paragraphs as we do in many other Bills, and in this way give the board the right to control certain things. The board should be able to tell a taxi driver to wear better clothing. If it did that under this measure, the person concerned would ask the board from where it got its powers—and I do not think it has any. We must ensure that the board can see that taxi drivers are neatly dressed in, say, a white shirt and neat trousers. They should not be wearing a singlet with short sleeves and that sort of thing. That is what we have seen in the past.

I would like the board to have power to instruct taxi drivers in the habits of handling customers. Usually, today, one sees a taxi driver sitting in his car on a rank, and when someone comes along to hire the cab, that person has to open the door in order to enter the taxi. In other

parts of the world, the moment one makes for a taxi and engages it, the first action of the driver is to get out of the vehicle to open the door. This applies particularly to women passengers. It is a little courtesy that makes an impact upon the public and has a tremendous effect on the standing of the taxi driver in the community.

I will support the Bill, but I would like the Minister to have a look at the matter of regulations to see whether he should not be more specific and lay down some of the regulations under which this board will operate.

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central) [4.57 p.m.]: Like Mr. Wise, I have been approached by taxi owners in connection with this Bill and given some information as to the situation in regard to the running of taxis in the city and the metropolitan area. As mentioned by Dr. Hislop and Mr. Wise, certain things should have been included in this Bill; things that would have given the taxi driver a better standing in the community.

Mr. Wise quoted some figures in regard to the arrangement entered into by drivers who hire cabs from the multi-owners. What he said is quite correct. However, there is one bad feature in this situation in that no legal contract is drawn up at all. A list of people available to hire cars is kept. The rental is £3 per day; and the agreement is entirely verbal and can be terminated at a minute's notice. The driver who, as Mr. Wise said, pays £21 per week, provides the petrol. He also pays from £25 to £75 in the case of an accident when the cab is insured by the multi-owner.

The man who hires these vehicles has to work very long hours to find this money; and to compete with him, the private taxi owner has to be almost in the same category. He has to keep pace with the multi-owner driver who is attempting to raise his £21, his petrol costs, costs in case of an accident, and to make a living for himself. I have spoken to taxi drivers on the odd occasions when I have used a taxi, and they have assured me that it is a hard struggle to even make the basic wage after working long hours. As Dr. Hislop has pointed out, there is nothing in the Bill to control that situation; nor is there anything that will give the board power to control the standard of dress.

Dr. Hislop has pointed out that the board may make regulations under clause 26. There is also another clause—clause 11—which sets out the powers of the board, portion of which reads as follows:—

11. (1) Subject to the Minister and to the provisions of this Act, the powers and duties of the Board include—

(a) the making of investigations and inquiries into, and the formulation of schemes for

the co-ordination and control of taxi-cars and the recommending of regulations for that purpose.

Therefore, under this measure the board will control taxi-cars, but will not control the working conditions of drivers or their conditions of agreement with the multi-cab owner; and I think these are matters that should come under the supervision of the board. Therefore, the board should have some power to make regulations in this respect to see that the industry is run on a reasonable and decent basis. I have been informed that when the taxi business was cleaned up in Sydney some of the worst element came to Perth, because they were not tolerated in Sydney. Whether that is true or not, I do not know, but I was informed along those lines. Perhaps that aspect is responsible for some of the practices that have gone on.

To outline the position which some of these hirers are under and what the multi-car owner's costs are, I would like to illustrate the position, using the popular Holden car. This car costs £1,200; the license fee is £40; insurance, £80; and rank fees, £150, making a total of £1,470 outlay in the first year. The multi-cab owner in a year receives £1,092 from the driver. In the second year—without replacement and additional costs for running the car, such as tyres, etc.—he would pay £270 in fees. The replacement cost of a new cab is £350. Therefore, for the outlay of £350 for a new cab plus £270 in fees, making a total of £620 he would receive a return of £1,092. So, by replacing his cab each year at a cost of £350, his average outlay over a period of five years would be £790, and each year on that £790 he would receive a return of £472. So, it is a fairly profitable business; and yet these drivers have to pay £21 a week plus the cost of their petrol before they get any money for themselves.

I do not believe this system is in the interests of the taxi business in our State. As Dr. Hislop explained, some of the drivers are not very well dressed; but the position is that they do not care so long as they can make the money necessary to meet their commitments and to provide themselves with a living. I was told it is not unusual for a driver to be called in to pay his £21 to the cashier and receive a moment's notice.

It is a fairly unsatisfactory position, and I think the Minister would be wise to have a look at this angle to see whether any provision could be placed in the Bill to deal with those matters which Dr. Hislop, Mr. Wise, and I have mentioned. I would like to see the Bill get started off on the right foot. I believe it is a good measure. It will do a lot to tighten up the control of taxi-cars in this State, and I believe we could go a lot further with it. I support the measure.

THE HON. F. R. H. LAVERY (West) [5.1 p.m.]: I am delighted with this Bill for various reasons. This body of taxi men—approximately 700 of them—are providing a service to the public both in the city and outside, and in the past they have been working as a rabble—I use the word conservatively. They have been working under all kinds of conditions. There was no organisation at all until they reached the stage where the meter system came into being and radio control was introduced. As a result, a certain amount of peace came into the industry.

The main thing in the Bill—and the thing that pleases me—is that there will be one authority. In the past we had the Perth City Council and the Traffic Department; and in other areas we had the shire councils, all of whom had ideas of getting taxi drivers to do certain things. There was no co-ordination.

I support the appeal made by Mr. Wise for a representative of the Metropolitan Passenger Transport Trust to be on the proposed board. I say that because of the long experience I have had of the road transport industry in the metropolitan area. I have spoken to a large number of people in the course of my work regarding a suitable set-up for the future. The Minister for Local Government and for Town Planning has to deal with this future aspect. Professor Stephenson and many other people have told us that we must have co-ordination. If a representative of the Metropolitan Transport Trust were on the proposed board it would benefit not only the public in general but also the taxi-car industry. We have been told that the Minister for Railways intends to introduce a system dealing with co-ordination of rail and motor transport. Taxi drivers on the outer perimeter of the metropolitan area have been, are, and will be in the future a very important adjunct to our transport services in transporting people to and from their places of business.

Dr. Hislop referred to the question of whether taxi drivers should be confined to a parking bay, or whether they should be allowed to ply for hire at certain periods of the day. I agree with Dr. Hislop's views.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: I think the latter is the better situation.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I would draw members' attention to the situation in Hay Street at about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. From that time until about 5 o'clock, or a little later, taxi drivers pick up fares—mainly people who come out of the shops—in two stopping places in Hay Street between William Street and Barrack Street. Those people who deal with traffic problems and planning of traffic movement in the city should clear the south side of Hay Street from 3 o'clock instead of 4 o'clock and permit taxi drivers

to pick up fares anywhere along that cleared section. The public would then have quick egress out of the city.

I have discussed this matter with many taxi drivers. We have only to get into a taxi and, if we are known to be members of Parliament we get the story from all angles. I commend the Minister for bringing down the Bill and I hope he will consider the advice offered by our leader, Mr. Wise.

THE HON. L. A. LOGAN (Midland—Minister for Local Government) [5.6 p.m.]: Might I say how much I appreciate the tenor of the debate this afternoon in connection with this Bill. It is a pleasure to have a debate such as this. I took part in a Select Committee which was formed hurriedly in 1958. Mr. Griffith was a member of that committee, as also was a member of the Labor Party, whose name I cannot recall. During the dying hours of the 1958 session an amending Bill to the Traffic Act came before the House, and a Select Committee was set up to deal with the problem of taxis.

Possibly at that stage part of the trouble had arisen because of an over-supply of licenses that had been granted. We have not been able to catch up with that position since, unfortunately. I still believe that some of the trouble encountered by the taxi industry, and the rat race the taxi operators are faced with in order to make a living, has been due to there being too many taxi operators.

Some taxi drivers in St. George's Terrace stand in the second line of traffic, with the stern of their taxis sticking out, waiting for the fellow in front of them to move out of the taxi bay in order that they might fall in behind. That happens every day, and the rest of the traffic has to pass around those taxi-cars. It creates a traffic hazard.

The suggestions that have been put forward appear to be very fair. I am sure Mr. Wise will appreciate the difficulties which the Minister has in trying to draft a Bill which will be agreed to by all parties concerned. It is very difficult. Negotiations in connection with this Bill started back in the days of the late Charles Perkins, and continued when Mr. Craig took office.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: They also took place when Mr. Graham was in office.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: That is true. Mr. Craig said to me, "Let us get this Bill on to the Statute book and then we will see whether it needs amending." He also said, "I have had a battle to get agreement even at this stage."

I believe there is merit in some of the suggestions put forward and I will discuss them with Mr. Craig. I will not say that I agree with all of them. I do not think I could agree with Mr. Wise concerning representation on the proposed board.

Rather than take away local representation—which, on consideration, I think should be the City of Perth—it might be better to increase the size of the board. I would rather see that happen than lose the other representation.

There is some doubt in my mind as to whether there is power to deal with the individual, when I take a quick look at the functions of the board. I have had sufficient knowledge of by-law making powers to know that unless it is stipulated in the Act that one can make a by-law for a particular purpose, it is too easily contested.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: It is too easily challengeable.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Yes. I propose to make sure that we do not have any loopholes, and that the board will be able to put the industry on a proper basis.

The Hon. R. Thompson: When you are making regulations, make one to prevent taxi drivers from stopping outside one's house at night and tooting the horn while waiting for a fare.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The law is that one must not toot a car horn or a taxi-car horn unnecessarily. It is an offence to do that.

The Hon. R. Thompson: But they still do it.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: But it is still an offence, unless it is an emergency.

The Hon. R. Thompson: They just sit outside a house and blare the horn while waiting for a fare. They don't go into the house.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Mr. Bennetts referred to a certain type of taxi driver. That type is found not only in Australia but also in Brussels. One never pays the charge shown on the meter; one always pays a lot more. That is the basis on which they operate. I recall taking two friends from a conference that we had been attending to a place down town to arrange for train and plane tickets. The taxi meter showed 19 francs. I passed over a 20-franc bill and then got out of the car. I later discovered that one of my friends, for whom I was supposed to be paying, had had an argument with the driver, and it had cost him 10 francs. That type of thing has grown up. Because of the large number of taxi drivers, it is becoming a rat race for them to earn a living. That factor has a lot to do with the problem.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Will you have a look at the M.T.T. representation?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I will have a look at all the suggestions made by members. I am sure that Mr. Craig will study the debate, because he is a reasonable type of fellow. I am quite sure that if he sees a good point, then he will go along with it. I do not propose to deal with the

Committee stage this afternoon, in order to give the Minister an opportunity of studying what has been said. Again, I thank members for the excellent way in which the debate took place this afternoon.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILLS (2): RECEIPT AND FIRST READING

1. Bulk Handling Act Amendment Bill.
2. Parks and Reserves Act Amendment Bill.

Bills received from the Assembly; and, on motions by The Hon. L. A. Logan (Minister for Local Government), read a first time.

FACTORIES AND SHOPS BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed, from the 6th November, on the following motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

THE HON. J. G. HISLOP (Metropolitan) [5.17 p.m.]: This is a measure which I think deserves a good deal of recommendation, because many efforts are made in it to ensure that the control of factories and shops is reasonable and well cared for.

Probably it does not go as far as I would go, because I do not believe there should be any control over the hours which a man shall work if he conducts his own business. If he likes to work all hours of the day and night I would let him do so. I think the only control we should have is over the number of hours worked by an employee. In my view most people who have succeeded in life have done so by being prepared to work at all hours, and to devote the whole of their energies to their occupation.

I have always felt that probably in the whole country we were working towards a plan whereby business was carried on from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and work beyond those hours should be regarded in a very poor light; and that those were the only hours during which individuals should work. I believe that we can never progress as a country while we maintain that sort of attitude, but the same sort of thing is continued with this Bill; because although it states "eight in the forenoon to six in the afternoon" it really means the same actual hours exist, except for those shops for which exceptions have been made.

There is, however, a series of conditions in the measure which causes me a certain amount of, shall we call it, mild alarm. No matter where I look through the Bill I cannot see how an individual who holds such power gains his qualifications. If one reads the Bill one will see there is a tremendous amount of power placed in

the hands of the Chief Inspector, and all we know is that the Governor can appoint as many inspectors as are necessary to carry the legislation through. One of those inspectors is to be the Chief Inspector and another the Deputy Chief Inspector.

But nowhere in the measure can I find the qualifications of this man, or what qualifications he must hold to be the Chief Inspector. We are left without any statement in this regard. If this man holds only one certificate as an inspector can he hold the position of Chief Inspector, or does he need to hold all certificates? I believe that a health inspector who holds a diploma, or qualifications under the British scheme, has to undergo a course of study lasting some three years. Some who may be better qualified than I am to know about that could probably advise the House of the exact time, but it is a very long course of instruction.

However, when it comes to a factories and shops inspector, the amount of time involved is very short—something like 60 hours or more—and there are certain features which he is called upon to study. But I can find no mention of examinations. The fact that a man is expected to study something does not mean that he will be qualified on being appointed to the post.

One reads later on in the administration section that a person shall not be a full inspector unless he passes the prescribed examinations. But I would like the Minister to tell me who prescribes the examinations and what they consist of; because this Bill does not lay down any examinations at all. Nowhere in the Bill does it do that. It gives the most extraordinary powers to an inspector without any definition as to what qualifications he shall hold. I believe there are four or five classifications of inspector. One can be a sanitary inspector, a meat inspector, a factory building inspector, or a scaffolding inspector.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Or a machinery inspector.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: What I want to know is whether, with all those types of inspectors, we should not be employing a more highly qualified man, one who holds two, or possibly more than two, certificates; and that the Chief Inspector should be a person who is able to express a qualified opinion on all aspects of the legislation. Unless he can do that I cannot see that he has any right to be the Chief Inspector.

I believe what is necessary in the Bill is to prescribe a series of examinations for these inspectors, and that we should lay down that after the lapse of a certain period—to give all the people who are acting as inspectors time to sit for these

examinations so that they may qualify—the qualifications demanded of these people should be very high.

There are one or two aspects of this legislation which I think we must look at very carefully. In the total absence of examinations we find that an individual can receive a certificate. But what does this certificate mean? This is one of the most extraordinary clauses in the Bill—and I refer to paragraph (i) on page 17—when we realise that the most highly qualified inspector is the health inspector. Paragraph (i) states—

If the inspector holds a certificate from the Commissioner—

That is the Commissioner of Health—

—that in the opinion of the Commissioner, the inspector is competent to exercise the powers conferred by the Health Act, 1911, on an inspector under that Act, he may, in relation to any factory, shop or warehouse, exercise all the powers of the inspector appointed under that Act.

In what way does an inspector who holds a single certificate satisfy the Commissioner of Health that he is capable of carrying through all the duties that befall a health inspector so that he can be provided with a certificate?

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: You would want to be a Philadelphia lawyer.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I for one want a very clear explanation of that, otherwise I suggest that paragraph (i) of clause 16 should be eliminated from the Bill.

Here is another interesting clause; and I refer to subclause (1) of clause 18 which reads—

Where an inspector observes in any factory any breach of the provisions of the Health Act, 1911, or the regulations or by-laws made thereunder or if an inspector is of opinion that to secure proper sanitary conditions therein, the exercise of certain of its powers by the local authority in whose district the factory is situated is necessary, he shall notify the local authority in writing accordingly.

From there on certain amendments have been suggested. But that does not classify or state that the inspector must have some knowledge of health inspection to carry out the conditions provided in that clause. I cannot see that the appointment of an inspector in such terms in any way qualifies this individual to take over the duties of a health inspector.

We can go through the Bill and find the same sort of situation where an inspector, without any qualifications at all, is empowered to do a number of things under the legislation. If that is so, then the inspector must be a man qualified in the various aspects relating to the Bill.

Just leaving that for a moment—I will return to it at a later stage—on page 23 in subclause (4) of clause 23 we see that the Chief Inspector can refuse to register a place as a factory, shop, or warehouse, etc., or to renew its license; but in that case what happens in relation to the Town Planning Act, because the property may no longer be a non-conforming property, and then a number of difficulties face the individual concerned? We find that if an inspector goes into any place at all and suspects that there is something wrong from any angle of inspection, he may take certain action and may require that certain conditions be carried out.

If members read the Bill they will find that the Chief Inspector, right throughout the measure, has a tremendous amount of power, and the number of things that the Chief Inspector can order to be done is very considerable. Because of that I looked at the regulations to see whether there was any arrangement whereby the Chief Inspector would be classified in regard to his qualifications, but I found nothing.

When one reads clause 121, which gives the powers of the regulations, one finds that not one single mention is made of any examination being set for these individuals. If this Bill is to be effective, these inspectors must be qualified. We cannot allow a person with one certificate to act as an inspector under another separate branch. It is just not possible.

It looks to me as if the administration of this matter has been taken up on the basis of inspections, without any consideration whatever to putting these men on to a standard which can be respected so far as their work is concerned. I would hope that a regulation could be added to this measure giving power to formulate and prescribe examinations and conditions of appointment, together with qualifications for the various posts. It goes so far that one must express a certain degree of alarm. I would like to quote clause 118 which reads as follows:—

An inspector has no jurisdiction over any machinery or accidents caused by or through any machinery or boiler to which the Inspection of Machinery Act, 1921, applies, and a power conferred by or under this Act on an inspector in relation to machinery of any kind shall not be exercised by an inspector unless that inspector holds a certificate from the Chief Inspector of Machinery under the first mentioned Act that in his opinion that inspector is competent to exercise that power.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: There is a simple explanation of that. There are two different forms of inspectors—one under the Inspection of Machinery Act, and the other under the Factories and Shops Act.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Does not the Minister think we are entitled to know what the qualifications are of these men who are widely called inspectors, and who are given all sorts of powers? That should be in the Bill. Surely we must know what qualifications are required before a chief inspector is appointed! He should be a man with wide experience; he cannot be a man with only one certificate. When we consider that we can confer powers on a health officer who receives a certificate from the commissioner, then I say a lot more explanation is required.

I would like to see the qualifications of these people dealt with, because they are going to be walking in and out of factories and businesses, ordering this and that to be done. They should show their qualifications, and be accepted as highly qualified individuals. If that were provided in the Bill I would be a lot happier.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs.

KOONGAMIA-DARLINGTON RAILWAY

Reopening: Motion

Debate resumed, from the 30th October, on the following motion by The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON:—

That this House requests the Government urgently to consider the resumption of regular rail passenger services between Koongamia and Darlington, and the integration of such rail services with the existing omnibus service provided by the Metropolitan Transport Trust, in such a way that those residents of the district who are at present served by public omnibus services would be conveyed to the railhead at Darlington for transfer to the railway passenger service.

THE HON. R. F. HUTCHISON (Suburban) [5.34 p.m.]: When the Minister spoke to this motion I think he overlooked some of the reasons that were put forward by the people concerned. People do not just sign a petition without first giving some consideration to the reason for the petition. The Hills Transport Co-ordination Committee, which comprises representatives from Glen Forrest ratepayers, and the Darlington and Boya-Helena Valley progress associations, met to study the rapid transit proposals that were released. That is from where the petition emanated.

Their reaction was reported by spokesman Mr. A. Dall in the *Weekend News* of Saturday, the 21st September, when he said that the committee and the residents of the hills did not favour the Government's plan to co-ordinate northern hills transport at Midland. It favoured the creation of a Darlington railhead, where it wanted the co-ordination to be. Mr. Dall

also said that there was plenty of parking space up-line from Darlington, and it was the natural and convenient centre for co-ordination.

In 1955 the then Government promised the local residents that the service would be resumed immediately diesels became available. Diesels are now available, and it is up to a successor Government to honour the promise. The service could break even economically, and would have a good chance of running at a profit. Its reopening would add only two and a half miles to the Bellevue-Koongamia section. The existing heavy rail track is in good condition, and requires little rehabilitation. That was the interjection I made to the Minister when he was speaking. The line was maintained up till recently as far as Boya quarry. There is no doubt the service would channel extra custom now lost to the department on to the existing Koon-gamia-Perth section.

One of the reasons the service was suspended in 1955 was that it was operated by costly and inefficient steam trains in competition with railway and Beam buses. Now the service would be operated by more economical diesels, and integration of the bus service with the railway would remove costly competition. The Minister caused me some concern by his misrepresentation of the facts.

In 1955 the steam trains were withdrawn because they were slower and, I understand, more costly than the road transport; and the people were promised that when the fast diesel engines were available the railway would be reinstated.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Who made that promise?

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: We now have the diesels. Surely the residents of the district are not fools! They ask that Darlington be made the co-ordinating point of transport. The district is very poorly served, and in my experience this would help considerably to provide a measure of comfort to the residents. It is something to which they are entitled.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Who made the promise that the service would be reinstated?

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: It was made when the engines that did not pay were withdrawn. It was made by a Labor Minister; but it was said then that the line would be reinstated.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Why was it not reinstated?

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: The Minister and his party are in power, and I am asking why he does not do something about it. Mr. Abbey suggested that the petition was taken up almost under threat. I resent that, because when nearly 400 people put their names to a petition they do not do so under threat. It was a preposterous allegation for Mr. Abbey to make. The

petition was signed voluntarily, and the honourable member knows it. People are not sheep; we cannot make them do what they do not want to do. I must say that the implication of the honourable member was rather objectionable. The petition was brought to me personally by a resident of Darlington. I had no prior knowledge of the fact, although I knew that resentment was brewing because of the Government's indifference to the residents of the hills district.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: This railway was closed in 1954, and up to 1959 it had not been re-opened by the Government you supported.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: I understand that at that time my Government was arranging for the engines in question. These have now been obtained, and something should be done about the matter. The people are very poorly treated by the Government. The Government reinstated the Koongamla railway under pressure, and no one can tell me that it cannot be taken another two and a half miles further. The rail head can be at Darlington. That is what the residents want. Why should they not get what they want? They pay their rates and taxes, and help keep the railways going.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Why was not the line reopened during the five years of the Labor Government?

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: I ask the Minister to take cognisance of that fact, and give a more satisfactory answer than has been given to the people of the district. The women of the area are put to no end of inconvenience because of the great distances they have to walk, whereas if there were a co-ordinating system the problem would be solved. Part of the railway goes through my district, but seeing that the member for Darling Range broke his promise after having said that he would work for the reinstatement of this railway, I thought it advisable and necessary to move this motion.

The Hon. H. R. Robinson: He made no such promise.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: The people were promised that the railway line would be reopened when the diesels became available. It does not matter which Government made the promise, the fact is that it should be honoured. It is time Parliament came to the defence of these people.

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

Ayes—10

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs
Hon. J. Dolan	Hon. R. Thompson
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. W. F. Willsee
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. H. C. Strickland	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery

(Teller.)

Noes—13

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. G. C. MacKinnon
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. R. C. Mattiske
Hon. J. Heltnan	Hon. H. R. Robinson
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. A. L. Loton	(Teller.)

Majority against—3.

Question thus negatived.

BREAD ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), read a first time.

House adjourned at 5.48 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 7th November, 1963

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