

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

**Ayes—15**

Hon. C. R. Abbey	Hon. G. C. MacKinnon
Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. N. McNeill
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. S. T. J. Thompson
Hon. C. E. Griffiths	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. J. Heltman	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. E. C. House	Hon. H. R. Robinson
Hon. L. A. Logan	(Teller)

**Noes—8**

Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. R. Thompson
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. W. F. Willsee
Hon. H. C. Strickland	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs	Hon. J. Dolan
	(Teller)

**Pairs**

**Ayes**

**Noes**

Hon. V. J. Ferry	Hon. E. M. Heenan
Hon. G. E. D. Brand	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery

**Majority for—7.**

**Amendment thus passed.**

The Hon. H. K. WATSON: I move an amendment—

Page 2, line 8—Insert after the word “employers” the words “of port or harbour labour at each port or harbour.”

**Amendment put and passed.**

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I move an amendment—

Page 4, lines 11 to 26—Delete new subsection (13) and substitute the following:—

(13) (a) Where a judgment for damages has been given in favour of a worker, independently of this Act, in respect of an injury by accident and the worker receives payment of the whole amount of the judgment, he shall not commence or continue proceedings for, or in relation to, compensation under this Act in respect of the same injury.

(b) Any amount paid to a worker under a judgment for damages in respect of an injury by accident shall be deducted from the sum recoverable by the worker from the employer, by way of compensation under this Act, in respect of the same injury.

(c) Any amount received by the worker from the employer by way of compensation under this Act in respect of an injury by accident shall be deducted from the amount recoverable by or payable to a worker from or by the employer, under a judgment for damages in respect of the same injury.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The new subsection to be substituted does not alter the meaning or the context at all, but is merely better paragraphed, three paragraphs replacing the original two.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I agree with the Minister that this amendment is better worded; but I do not agree with the principle. In all the other States in Australia when common law actions are taken, compensation payments already paid are not recoverable. In this State we have had to learn to live with the provision in our legislation. I do not want members to think for one moment that this is everything that is desired. We have had to learn to live with it, but we do not approve of it. We have no way at present of altering it so that all moneys received remain with the injured person or his dependants.

**Amendment put and passed.**

**Clause, as amended, put and passed.**

**Clauses 3 and 4 put and passed.**

**Title put and passed.**

**Bill reported with amendments.**

*House adjourned at 5.53 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 28th October, 1965

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## BILLS (2): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Stamp Act Amendment Bill.  
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Brand (Treasurer), and read a first time.
2. Clackline-Bolgart and Bellevue-East Northam Railway Discontinuance and Land Revestment Bill.  
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Court (Minister for Railways), and read a first time.

## QUESTIONS (33): ON NOTICE

## CONDITIONAL PURCHASE LEASES

*Improvement Conditions: Suspension for National Service Personnel*

1. Mr. W. A. MANNING asked the Minister for Lands:
    - (1) Where a holder of a conditional purchase lease is called up for national service, will the improvement conditions be suspended during his time of service?
    - (2) Could one on national service and out of the State or out of Australia apply satisfactorily for conditional purchase land while absent, with a view to development without delay on his return?
- Mr. BOVELL replied:
- (1) Any lessee of conditional purchase land called up for national service training may apply for waiver of improvement conditions. Sympathetic consideration will be given to applicants who apply for an extension of time under these circumstances.
  - (2) Yes. Any person may apply either personally or through his agent.
2. *This question was postponed.*

## MEEKATHARRA-MARBLE BAR ROAD

*Maintenance Cost and Allocations*

3. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister for Works:
    - (1) What is the average cost per mile which has been spent on maintenance to the road from Meekatharra to Marble Bar for the years—  
1961-62, 1962-63, 1963-64, 1964-65?
    - (2) What amount per mile has been allotted for the year 1965-66?
- Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

(1)	Year	Length of Road miles	Expenditure £	Cost per Mile
	1961-62	457	10,149	22
	1962-63	457	20,140	44
	1963-64	457	17,281	38
	1964-65	457	17,244	38
(2)	1965-66	457	17,500	38

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

# CONDITIONAL PURCHASE LEASES

## Applications: Preclusions

4. Mr. W. A. MANNING asked the Minister for Lands:

Are there any persons, such as—

- (a) Ministers of the Crown;
- (b) members of Parliament;
- (c) senior civil servants;
- (d) others;

precluded from applying for an allocation of conditional purchase land, either by law or by precedent?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

Section 25 of the Land Act reads:—

No person in the service of the Government of the State, and no surveyor who is paid by the Government by results, shall hereafter be allowed to purchase or lease Crown lands without the previous permission of the Governor in writing: Provided that this prohibition shall not apply to any town or suburban land sold by public auction.

# TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS

## Number not Attributable to Liquor

5. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Police:

What number of road accidents, casualty and non-casualty, which occurred during the 12 months ended the 30th June, 1965, were not attributed to the effects of alcohol?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

Many accidents attributed to other causes may to some extent result from drivers of vehicles and pedestrians affected by alcohol; therefore it cannot be said with certainty how many are not as a result of the effects of alcohol.

	Casualty	Non-Casualty	Total
All causes .....	4,028	11,416	15,444
Directly attributable to intoxication of drivers and pedestrians .....	90	134	224

# CENSORSHIP OF FILMS

## "Adults Only" Classification: Admission of Children

6. Mr. ELLIOTT asked the Chief Secretary:

Because theatres continue to admit children to motion pictures classified "Adults Only," will he give consideration to action necessary to prevent this?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

No. This is considered to be the responsibility of parents.

# APPRENTICES

## Payment of Percentage of Tradesmen's Rate: Legal Impediment

7. Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister for Labour:

Adverting to my question 24 of the 26th October, 1965—

- (1) Does any legal or other impediment prevent the Government from granting by administrative action a percentage of the tradesman's rate annually to apprentices in Government workshops?
- (2) If not, and as an additional incentive to recruitment as mentioned in the reply to part (2) of my previous question, will he with a view to alleviating the publicised drastic shortage of tradesmen, and as an inducement to private employers to emulate, pay to Government employed apprentices the tradesman's percentage mentioned?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) No. But as previously advised it is the policy of the Government to leave decisions regarding rates of pay to the Industrial Commission.
- (2) Answered by (1).

8. *This question was postponed.*

# POPULATION

## Proportion of Primary and Secondary School Children

9. Mr. EVANS asked the Premier:

- (1) What is the ratio of children pursuing primary and secondary education studies to the entire State population?

## Average Ages: Comparison

- (2) What is the average of a Western Australian?
- (3) How does this average age compare with the all-Australian average?
- (4) What was the average Western Australian and the average Australian age in 1960?
- (5) Which State has the youngest and which has the oldest average age?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) Primary school children comprise 15.8 per cent. of total population or one child to each 6.34 head of population.

Secondary school children comprise 6.5 per cent. of total population or one child to each 15.46 head of population.

Total school children comprise 22.3 per cent. of total population or one child to each 4.5 head of population.

These figures are based on recent population estimates.

- (2) The latest mean average age figures available are those provided in the Statistician's Report following the 1954 census.

Western Australia's mean average age in 1954 was 30.70 years.

- (3) The Australian mean average age in 1954 was 31.91 years.

- (4) The 1954 census figures are the latest available.

- (5) In 1954—

Youngest: Tasmania — 30.22 years. Oldest: Victoria—32.51 years.

### GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES' HOUSING AUTHORITY: JURISDICTION

*Teacher's House at Kweda: Low Water Pressure*

10. Mr. GAYFER asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) Is he aware that following construction and completion early this year of the governmental teacher's house at Kweda, the hot water system would not work because of the lack of water pressure?

- (2) As the usual practice in country areas is to elevate a tank some feet off the ground in order to provide water pressure, could not this avenue be investigated?

- (3) If this matter has to be referred to the recently appointed Government housing authority, may I ask why, as this house was completed before the institution of that authority?

*Homes: Repairs and Maintenance*

- (4) Will repairs and maintenance of governmental houses, usually carried out by the Public Works, now have to be sanctioned by this authority before receiving the consideration of the Public Works Department?

- (5) If so, does the cost of such repairs or maintenance come from funds set aside for this housing authority?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Yes.

- (2) The dwelling was designed and constructed by the State Housing Commission.

It was thought that the water supply pressure was sufficient to operate the hot water system and no action was taken to provide an overhead tank.

- (3) Action was taken by the Public Works Department early in October to have the hot water

system rectified. Approval was received on the 22nd October, 1965, from the authority to put the work in hand.

- (4) The authority will determine what repairs and maintenance are required and arrange for the work to be carried out. The Public Works Department will not normally be required to undertake any work on behalf of the authority.

- (5) Yes.

### NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINING

*State Civil Servants: Exemptions*

11. Mr. CORNELL asked the Premier:  
What categories (if any) of State civil servants are exempt from national service by virtue of their employment?

Mr. BRAND replied:

None.

### SOIL EROSION

*Interdepartmental Committee: Tabling of Reports*

12. Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is it proposed to table in this House the reports so far prepared by the Interdepartmental Committee which is studying soil and river erosion and associated problems?

- (2) If so, when?

- (3) If not, why not?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) to (3) A preliminary general report dated the 29th January, 1965, and a further more detailed report dated the 28th July, 1965, were submitted by the Committee. These reports have not yet been fully examined by the Government.

### NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINING

*Natives: Registration and Call-ups*

13. Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Native Welfare:

- (1) Is the Native Welfare Department taking steps to ensure that natives are duly registering for national service?

- (2) If the information is available, how many natives have actually been called up?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) Natives are not required to register for national service: therefore no action is required of the Native Welfare Department.

- (2) None, so far as is known.

## STATE ELECTRICITY COMMISSION

*Capital and Financial Results*

14. Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Electricity:

- (1) What was the capital employed by the S.E.C. on the 30th June, 1962, 1963, 1964, and 1965 respectively?
- (2) What were the separate financial results returned by the S.E.C. for the metropolitan and the south-west power scheme for each of the four years ending on the above dates?

*Contributory Scheme*

- (3) What was owing to the commission under the contributory scheme on the 30th June, 1962, 1963, 1964 and 1965 respectively?
- (4) What were the respective amounts of repayment received under the contributory scheme for each of the four years ended on the 30th June, 1965?

*Sales*

- (5) What quantity of electricity was sold in—
  - (a) metropolitan area;
  - (b) area covered by the south-west scheme
 in each of the four years ended the 30th June, 1965?

Mr. NALDER replied:

(1)	Year ended 30th June, 1962	£	36,269,400
	Year ended 30th June, 1963	£	37,583,910
	Year ended 30th June, 1964	£	39,048,201
	Year ended 30th June, 1965	£	Figures not yet available
(2)	Year ended 30th June, 1962	£	Profit 452,941
	South-West Power Scheme Loss	£	237,818
	1963: Metropolitan	£	Profit 854,190
	South-West Power Scheme Loss	£	312,351
	1964: Metropolitan	£	Profit 849,427
	South-West Power Scheme Loss	£	317,201
	1965: Figures not yet available.		
(3)	Contributory scheme agreements for annual payments were signed—but not all of them connected—as follows:—		
	p.a.	£	
	Year ended 30th June, 1962	£	5,085 p.a.
	Year ended 30th June, 1963	£	16,639 p.a.
	Year ended 30th June, 1964	£	34,815 p.a.
	Year ended 30th June, 1965	£	Figures not yet available
(4)	Payments made under agreements for annual payments under the Contributory Scheme were:—		
	Year ended 30th June, 1962	£	1,337
	Year ended 30th June, 1963	£	6,044
	Year ended 30th June, 1964	£	15,007
	Year ended 30th June, 1965	£	Figures not yet available
(5)	Year ended 30th June,	Metropolitan Area Units	South-West Power Scheme Units
	1962	620,920,823	72,996,416
	1963	697,263,025	83,953,333
	1964	768,393,871	103,215,120
	1965	Figures not yet available.	

## ROADS NEAR UNIVERSITY

*Cost of Works*

15. Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Works:

What is the anticipated cost of the road and ancillary works at present being constructed in the vicinity and for the convenience of the University?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

The road works being carried out by the Main Roads Department are confined to Winthrop Avenue, Stirling Highway, and Hackett Drive. They are not for the convenience of the University. It is known that the University has works in hand for the improvement of its internal roads.

## T.A.B. ALLOCATIONS TO RACING AND TROTTING CLUBS

*Frequency and Date of Distribution*

16. Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) How often is the T.A.B. required to make distribution of its surplus to racing and trotting bodies?
- (2) When was the last distribution made and up to what date did this relate?
- (3) If distributions are in arrears, what is the reason therefor?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

(1) Section 28 of the Totalisator Agency Board Betting Act provides that the board shall distribute its surplus by such periodical or other payments as agreed between the board, the Western Australian Turf Club, and the Western Australian Trotting Association.

The Board accounts on an annual basis (the racing year) and makes interim payments during the year against the actual or the anticipated surplus.

(2) The last distribution agreed upon was for the year ended the 31st July, 1965. Monthly distributions of £50,000 per month to racing and trotting have resulted in the board's surplus to the 31st July, 1965, having already been distributed apart from an amount of £1,802.

(3) Answered by (1) and (2) above.

COALMINE FLOODING AT COLLIE  
*Hebe Mine Employees: Government Subsidisation of Wages*

17. Mr. HAWKE asked the Premier:

(1) Is the Government subsidising in whole or part the wages of any workers who are affected by the Hebe mine flooding at Collie?

- (2) If so, how many individual workers are involved and how are they employed?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) The State Electricity Commission and the W.A. Government Railways are recouping costs of some workers so afflicted.
- (2) Forty-six—on unproductive work in and around the Muja area, viz.—
- Building work;
  - Making concrete bricks;
  - Burning off;
  - General duties.

### SICK LEAVE FOR GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

#### *Grant for War-caused Disabilities*

18. Mr. HAWKE asked the Premier:

- (1) Has the Government granted up to an additional ten days' sick leave per year to public servants and school teachers who are absent from employment through war-caused disabilities?
- (2) If so, are there any other Government employees receiving this benefit?
- (3) Have other Government departments been approached by trade unions or associations of employees regarding this matter?
- (4) If so, with what result in each instance?
- (5) Does the Government intend to grant this benefit to all Government employees who lose employment from time to time because of war-caused disabilities?
- (6) If the Government does not propose to extend the benefit over a much wider field, what are the reasons for such refusal?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) Yes—up to a maximum credit of 60 days.
- (2) No.
- (3) Not to my knowledge
- (4) Answered by (3).
- (5) No decision has been made in this matter but the Government has been making inquiries, including the ascertaining of the position elsewhere, and I have not yet received a report of the result of these investigations, so am not yet in a position to make a statement.
- (6) Answered by (5).

### RAILWAY HOMES

#### *Rental Increases*

19. Mr. HAWKE asked the Minister for Railways:

- (1) Have rentals of railway homes at Northam and other centres been increased recently?
- (2) If so, what is—
- (a) the minimum weekly increase;
  - (b) the maximum weekly increase?
- (3) In what centres other than Northam have rentals been increased?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) Northam—minimum: Total decrease 4s. per week.
- (b) Northam—maximum: Total increase 24s. 9d. per week.
- (3) A general review of rents of departmental properties was recently completed by a committee comprising an officer of the Railways Department (Licensed Valuer) and a representative of the Railway Unions joint Executive with a senior officer of the State Housing Commission as an independent chairman.

### SHEEP STEALING

#### *Penalties*

20. Mr. GAYFER asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) What are the prescribed penalties in Western Australia for sheep stealing?
- (2) Are these comparable with other States in Australia?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) Seven years' imprisonment upon indictment.
- (2) Yes

### GENERAL MOTORS HOLDENS

#### *Establishment of Plant in Western Australia*

21. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) Is it a fact that General Motors Holdens are going to open an assembly and/or other works in this State?
- (2) If the answer is "Yes" what is the specific intention of General Motors Holdens?
- (3) Has this company applied for any land; if so, where is this land located?
- (4) Has it been made available to them and from what source?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) to (4) General Motors Holdens already has a plant in Western Australia.

In accordance with the Government's general policy of industrial promotion on a diversified basis, there have been negotiations with a number of motor vehicle and farm equipment manufacturers including General Motors covering varying phases of component, motor vehicle and farm equipment manufacture.

No finality has been reached with any company—except for manufacture of certain component parts and assemblies which are in production by local firms and look like expanding.

It is unlikely finality will be reached with any of the several companies on the more advanced phases of vehicle and equipment manufacture in the immediate future.

No land has been made available from Government sources.

#### STAMP DUTY

##### *Revenue in Last Five Years*

22. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Treasurer:

What was the estimated revenue from stamp duty on receipts for each of the last five financial years?

Mr. BRAND replied:

	£
1960-61	233,337
1961-62	245,460
1962-63	253,858
1963-64	270,208
1964-65	311,210

#### ESPERANCE BREAKWATER CO. PTY. LTD.

##### *Caratti Holding Co. Pty. Ltd.: Affiliation*

23. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Works:

In answers to questions on the 11th August, 1964, and the 19th August, 1964, the Legislative Assembly was informed that Esperance Breakwater Co. Pty. Ltd. was a subsidiary of Caratti Holding Coy. Pty. Ltd., and on the 26th October last he informed the House that Esperance Breakwater Co. Pty. Ltd. was not a subsidiary of Caratti Holding Coy. Pty. Ltd. Will he state which answer is the correct one and explain the contradiction?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

The information now available at the Companies Office indicates that Caratti Holding Co. is not a subsidiary of the Esperance Breakwater Co. Pty. Ltd.

When the information was given on the 11th August, 1964, the department, on the information of the liquidator, was under the impression that Caratti Holding Co. was to be a subsidiary. At that time the formalities of registration had not been completed with the Companies' Office.

#### WHEAT

##### *Septoria and Rust Damage: Reports and Effect on Yield*

24. Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Has the Department of Agriculture received any reports regarding septoria and/or rust damage in wheat crops?
- (2) If so, how extensive is this damage and what is the probable effect on the yield for the ensuing harvest?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Incidence of septoria is widespread but does not appear to be abnormal in amount or severity. Rust has occurred in very restricted areas. The probable effect on the total harvest must at this stage be considered slight.

#### MEATWORKS IN THE NORTH-WEST

##### *Cattle Slaughtered and Number in Calf*

25. Mr. RHATIGAN asked the Minister for the North-West:

- (1) What number of bullocks, bulls, cows were killed during 1965 at the meat works at—
  - (a) Wyndham;
  - (b) Broome;
  - (c) Glenroy?
- (2) What number of cows killed at each of these works were found to be in calf?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) (a) 16,869 oxen, 484 bulls, and 6,170 cows (includes 45 heifers) were killed during 1965 at the Wyndham Meat Works.
- (b) 15,758 oxen, 1,869 bulls, and 6,168 cows were slaughtered together with 183 condemned cattle (mixed) during 1965 at the Broome Meat Works.

(c) 2,986 oxen, 436 bulls, and 384 cows were killed together with 11 condemned cattle (mixed) during 1965 at the Glenroy Meat Works.

- (2) Wyndham, Broome, and Glenroy Meat Works do not keep a record of the number of cows found to be in calf when slaughtered.

### HOUSING IN KIMBERLEY ELECTORATE

#### Construction Programme and Painting

26. Mr. RHATIGAN asked the Minister for Housing:

- (1) How many houses are to be built during this financial year in the towns of Broome, Derby, Wyndham, and Kununurra?
- (2) What number of houses are to be painted in each of these towns during this financial year?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

(1)

	For State Housing Commission	For Other Departments	For Native Welfare Department
Broome	12	1	4
Derby	4	4	6
Wyndham	6	5	...
Kununurra	7	26	5

The 36 houses to be built for other departments include 8 for the Government Employees' Housing Authority.

(2)

Broome	2
Derby	9
Wyndham	6
Kununurra	...

27. This question was postponed.

### MITCHELL FREEWAY: LAND ACQUISITION

#### Number of Properties Acquired by Negotiation, Owners, and Sums Paid

28. Mr. TOMS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Town Planning:

- (1) As the Minister for Works, in answer to parts (2) and (3) of question 16 on page 896 of *Hansard*, gave a full answer to my question re Mitchell Freeway land resumed, what is the reason the same information could not be made available in answer to parts (2) and (3) of question 7 on page 1043 of *Hansard*?
- (2) Is he now in a position to furnish me with these particulars?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) It is not considered ethical to publish details of private properties purchased as a result of negotiations.
- (2) The honourable member has been informed that the information is available in the Minister's office.

### HEAVY TRANSPORT CHECKS

#### Merredin-Kalgoorlie: Results

29. Mr. MOIR asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) On how many occasions this year have members of the Police Traffic Branch carried out checks on the Great Eastern Highway between Merredin and Kalgoorlie on heavy transport vehicles for—
  - (a) exceeding the permitted speed limit;
  - (b) exceeding the permitted loading provisions?
- (2) What has been the result of the checks?
- (3) Are they being continued?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) On 66 days for all breaches of the Traffic Act or regulations including—
  - (a) exceeding the permitted speed limit; and
  - (b) exceeding the permitted loading provisions.
- (2) Speeding offences—14 briefs. Overloading offences—35 briefs. Refusing to weigh—3 briefs. Miscellaneous offences—16 briefs. Six warnings were also issued for speeds slightly in excess of that permitted. 125 vehicles were checked and found not overloaded.
- (3) Yes.

### TOWN PLANNING AT ESPERANCE

#### Heenan Street Scheme: Completion

30. Mr. MOIR asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) What is the reason that a small town planning scheme at Esperance known as the Heenan Street scheme is not completed?
- (2) Is he aware that the owners of the lots involved cannot utilise their land until facilities are provided by the Esperance Shire Council?
- (3) As this scheme was commenced by the Esperance Shire Council about 1960 and approximately only 26 lots are involved, does he not consider that five years is an abnormally lengthy period for this undertaking to be finalised?
- (4) Will he endeavour to expedite finalisation of this scheme as far as his department is concerned?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) This is a matter primarily within the jurisdiction of the Esperance Shire Council. I understand that the Heenan Street Redevelopment



Planning Scheme was adopted in principle by the Council on the 1st February, 1963. Due apparently to changes in the council's staff, progress on the scheme was halted between July, 1963 and January, 1964.

- (2) Yes.
- (3) Yes, subject to (1).
- (4) Yes.

## TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS: FATALITIES

### *City and Country Drivers: Statistics*

31. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Police:

How many city and country drivers were involved in fatal traffic accidents—

- (a) in the city area under police traffic control for the year, the 1st July, 1964, to the 30th June, 1965, segregating city and country drivers and recording respective shires and municipalities;
- (b) on country roads for the year the 1st July, 1964, to the 30th June, 1965, segregating city and country drivers and recording respective shires and municipalities?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (a) City drivers .... 120
- Country drivers .... 2
- (b) City drivers .... 40
- Country drivers .... 117

Information in respect of individual shires and municipalities is not available.

## HACKETT DRIVE

### *Extension and Relocation*

32. Mr. DURACK asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) Are there any plans for the extension of the relocated Hackett Drive around the river foreshore or near to it?
- (2) If so, what are they?
- (3) If not, will there not be further congestion of traffic around the Nedlands Park Hotel in view of the two right-angle turns which will have to be made to proceed into The Avenue?
- (4) How far will—
  - (a) the nearest point of reclamation work, and
  - (b) the relocated Hackett Drive be from the bird sanctuary at Pelican Point?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Some preliminary proposals were developed which were discussed with the Nedlands City Council.
- (2) To connect the extended Hackett Drive into the existing Esplanade at Broadway and a possible connection at the southern end with the existing road system.
- (3) Possible traffic problems in the vicinity of the Nedlands Park Hotel were considered, and it was agreed with the Nedlands City Council not to proceed initially with construction beyond Broadway. On completion of construction to Broadway the situation would be kept under review.
- (4) (a) The reclamation work will commence at the boundary of the bird sanctuary about 1,000 feet west of the main area—that is where the bird sanctuary tapers to a point;
- (b) The relocated Hackett Drive will be approximately 620 feet from the boundary of the bird sanctuary or about 1,700 feet from the main area.

## MIDLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

### *Adjacent Land: Use for Playgrounds or Recreational Purposes*

33. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is the Education Department still planning to use land on the north side of Morrison Road opposite the primary school, Midland, for playgrounds?
- (2) If so, at what stage is the planning?
- (3) When is it proposed to resume land and houses adjacent to the school and permit same to be used for recreational purposes?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) and (3) These properties are being acquired as they become available on the market. So far four properties have been acquired and six remain.

## QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE ROADS NEAR UNIVERSITY

### *Cost of Works*

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Works:

Referring to question 15 on the notice paper today, the department, in reply, was so busy denying my imputation that the road works in the vicinity of the University were being done for the

convenience of the University that it omitted to tell me the cost involved.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

What the honourable member says is, perhaps, true. But it was not by imputation; it was a statement, and this statement had to be corrected. I do agree, in looking at the answer to the question, that we have neglected to supply the cost.

Mr. Hawke: Thank you.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: But I would like the honourable member to try to be as specific as he can about what sections are involved, the work referred to, and also whether he wants the cost of the work done up to date, how far, and so on.

Mr. Hawke: What about a personal inspection?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Also I would like the honourable member to tell me whether he includes the roads running directly towards the University from Thomas Street.

Mr. CORNELL: In reply to the Minister for Works—

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): This is question time, I would point out.

Mr. CORNELL: —I shall frame a suitable question with the intention of getting the information I desire. At this stage, let us agree to differ on the question of whether the works there have been done for the convenience of the University or otherwise.

## SWAN RIVER CONSERVATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### *Introduction and First Reading*

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Tonkin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition), and read a first time.

### *Printing*

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [2.39 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be printed and the second reading made an Order of the Day for the next sitting of the House.

In support of this motion I wish to say that the Premier has given me an undertaking that opportunity will be afforded to discuss this Bill. Had he not done that, Sir, I would not have moved this motion because, in view of the decision of the House, the other evening, there is no necessity to do so. I would have proceeded, while I was on my feet at this stage, to deliver the second reading without the Government having any opportunity of

preventing me. I mention that expressly for the information of the member for Murchison and the Minister for Industrial Development who so stoutly argued the other evening in connection with this question.

Mr. Hawke: Their arguments were stout but not strong.

Mr. TONKIN: As I have had an undertaking from the Premier that ample opportunity will be given to consider this Bill, there is no necessity for me to take advantage of a situation which was created quite recently.

Question put and passed.

## BETTING INVESTMENT TAX ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### *Second Reading*

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer) [2.42 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill comes to the House as a result of the proposed changeover to decimal currency from the 14th February, 1966. Under the original legislation, a tax of 3d. is imposed on an amount of money paid as a consideration of a bet not exceeding £1. Where the amount of a bet exceeds £1, the tax is 6d. As there is no exact equivalent of the 3d. in the new currency it will not be physically possible on and after the 14th February, to pay the amount of tax now imposed on bets of £1 or less.

A new rate of tax must therefore be determined for bets not exceeding £1. The present tax of 6d. on bets exceeding £1 converts exactly to 5c, and there is no problem here as regards payment. Nevertheless, it is desirable to consider this rate in association with the amount to be paid in the future on bets of £1 or less. Generally speaking, the present situation is that a tax of 3d. is paid on bets under £1, and 6d. is paid on bets over £1, but there the scale stops. It does not appear to be very reasonable that whether the bet is 25s., £100, or £1,000, one should still only pay 6d. of 5c.

Mr. Tonkin: If you bet by credit the bookmaker pays.

MR. BRAND: The Leader of the Opposition cannot resist coming in and saying something on matters of this kind whenever he gets the opportunity.

Mr. Hawke: I did not say a word.

MR. BRAND: I apologise. I meant the Deputy Leader of the Opposition; because the Leader of the Opposition, like myself, does not know which end of the horse to bet on.

Mr. Tonkin: It's true, isn't it?

MR. BRAND: The original idea was to tax the bigger punter at a higher rate but I do not think it could be held that the

present dividing line of £1 between the lower and higher rates of tax satisfactorily separates the big punter from the small.

A number of alternatives has been considered, bearing in mind the total yield from the current tax, which is reasonably satisfactory, and the desirability to minimise the impact on the Treasury and the punter, of the changeover to decimal currency.

Of every eight bets, roughly seven are for amounts of £1 or less, and one is for an amount exceeding £1. The current tax yield on every eight bets is therefore 2s. 3d. being equivalent to 22½c. If the tax on all bets, irrespective of amount, were dropped to 2c, the yield on every eight bets would be 16c, which is considerably less than the present yield of 22½c, and could therefore not be justified.

Even if the tax on bets exceeding £1 were left at the present equivalent of 5c, the yield would only be 19c. A flat tax of 3c per bet whatever the amount, would yield 24c for every eight bets, which is a slight gain on the present yield.

If the higher rate of 5c were continued for bets exceeding £1, the total yield on every eight bets would be 26c, which is considerably higher than the present yield of 22½c.

Having regard for the purpose of the measure it is considered that the rate of tax to be levied with the advent of decimal currency should be the one which would give a total return not significantly different from the present return. The tax should also be capable of simple collection.

There have been complaints from the T.A.B. and from various agencies that difficulty is experienced in collecting the tax, and a very definite request has been made for relief from the tax altogether. I do not agree with this at all, and the decision has been made that we fix a flat rate of 3c for all bets irrespective of the amount thereof. The Bill provides accordingly.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Hawke (Leader of the Opposition).

## ROAD MAINTENANCE (CONTRIBUTION) BILL

### Second Reading

Debate resumed, from the 26th October, on the following motion by Mr. O'Connor (Minister for Transport):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

**MR. NORTON** (Gascoyne) [2.48 p.m.] : This is the first of a number of taxing measures which the Premier forecasts in respect of motor vehicles and motor transport. It appears that the motor vehicle and motor transport industry is one of the favourite taxing sources for all Governments.

If we look at the number of taxes levied at present on the motoring public, we will find they are very substantial indeed. It is interesting to see just how much is paid in these taxes. First of all we have the liquid fuel tax—a Commonwealth tax—which is paid by everybody who uses a motor vehicle these days. Then we have the motor vehicle licenses which have been going up from time to time; and I believe they are about to go up again. Likewise the drivers' licenses have been the subject of taxation over the past few years, and are to be increased again this session.

While we cannot exactly class insurance as taxation, insurance premiums have been steadily increasing; and insurance does, in a way, become a tax on the motorist. Further, we have the £1 levy imposed on third party insurance, which goes into general revenue.

Unlike other States, Western Australia must rely very considerably on road transport for its development and communication. No other mode of transport is practicable in the outback area owing to the sparseness of the population and the distances one must travel. Therefore these taxes become a burden on those people who are developing our hinterland over the years.

In Western Australia it is not practical to develop this State by putting down railways owing, as I said before, to this sparseness of population and great distances. But could it be developed by the building of railways, then the cost would fall on all the community and thus the development would be paid for by all sections. However, once we start raising taxes through the motor section of transport, then we are putting a sectional tax on the community of the area that is being developed. These road taxes hit people who have no other means of transport whatsoever; and this particularly applies in the electoral districts of Kimberley, Pilbara, Gascoyne, and the new Murchison-Eyre seat. These taxes form a very important part of the cost structure in those parts; so every tax imposed is a burden in those particular areas.

It does not matter whether a person is going to work, or whether he is going out for recreation, or going on holidays, motor transport of some sort has to be used, whether it belongs to the person concerned or is hired. These taxes greatly affect the cost of living in those places and again hamper those persons who are willing to go out and develop them.

Those people are now faced with probably the biggest tax of the lot—the road maintenance tax—which is before us at the present time. This particular tax will not affect car users, but will affect only those who are operating vehicles with a load capacity of over eight tons. In the

main, people who are operating this type of transport are commercial carriers, and we are told this tax is imposed so that persons using the roads will be the ones to pay the tax.

Taking that literally, that may be so; but people who earn their living by transport will naturally have to pass on the extra costs which this tax will impose upon them in order to keep up their profits or keep their businesses buoyant. If the taxes were not passed on it would mean that those people would become bankrupt. It appears to me this Government is easily beguiled in a number of cases by the Commonwealth Government offering the Western Australian Government something that looks a good proposition.

I think the Exmouth townsite was probably one of those propositions. Now we have the road maintenance tax which has come before us. In regard to Exmouth, the Commonwealth Government offered to finance on a pound for pound basis the cost of developing Exmouth up to a certain amount of money. However, Exmouth is a defence project and should have been entirely financed from defence or Commonwealth funds and should not have been a liability on the State. It should have been financed in a similar manner to the Woomera rocket range.

This road maintenance tax which the Commonwealth Government dangled in front of the State Government will, I believe, amount to £3,800,000 over the next four years, provided the State finds a like amount to match this grant. I know it is difficult to turn down an offer such as this when money is badly needed.

Mr. Brand: That would be an understatement, wouldn't it?

Mr. NORTON: I think more should have been done to point out to the Commonwealth Government that there was some responsibility on its part to make money available, especially as we have seen that Government make considerable grants towards beef roads further north, over a period of years.

Mr. Brand: The Commonwealth already makes the parent grant under this particular Act.

Mr. NORTON: That is quite correct; but the Premier must remember this: The motoring public is being taxed very heavily through the liquid fuel tax to raise the money which is returned to this State.

Mr. Brand: The question is the distribution of the money between the States.

Mr. NORTON: If the tax were returned to the State it was taken from, then this taxing would not be necessary.

Mr. Brand: If we want to turn it down, Victoria and the other States will take it up pretty quickly.

Mr. NORTON: Let us look at the history of this particular tax.

Mr. Bickerton: Could they afford to?

Mr. Brand: If you think we should turn it down, get up and advocate it!

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order!

Mr. NORTON: I think we should have a look at the history of this particular tax. It originated in Victoria in 1956 after a High Court ruling that the State could not impose taxes or levies of any sort on interstate hauliers. Therefore those hauliers were getting away with their carriage of goods practically for nothing and were paying nothing into road construction or maintenance. It was found that if a tax were levied on interstate hauliers, it could be no different from that which was levied on intrastate hauliers. In other words, the tax could not be discriminatory; and that is why the tax for road maintenance was introduced. When the tax was introduced, it had to go entirely to the maintenance and care of roads. It was not so hard for Victoria to introduce this tax, because it is a State which is well developed and one which has an excellent network of railways to serve all areas within the State.

Mr. Craig: Victoria was not the first State to introduce it.

Mr. NORTON: If the Minister will look at the record he will find that Victoria was the first State to introduce it after the High Court decision in 1956. To continue: I was saying Victoria was not hit hard by this tax, because of the modes of transport used; and also, when Victoria brought in this tax, it brought in quite a number of exemptions in respect of various commodities. Whilst it is not possible to exempt any particular hauliers, commodities can be exempted; and to support this I will quote from a pamphlet called, *Alert*. I quote as follows:—

Exemptions are granted to enable a defined list of commodities to travel free of taxation. It is perhaps significant that this free list closely resembles the list of goods which are permitted to travel by road in free competition with rail.

In Victoria, two trucks each weighing 25 tons or more could undertake identical journeys, yet one would pay tax whilst the other escaped. A load of steel would pay, but a load of bananas would not.

I would interpolate here and say that bananas could be an interstate hauling job as well as intrastate. Continuing—

A load of potatoes would pay, but a load of pumpkins would not. A load of frozen peas would pay, but a load of freshly picked peas would not. Hides and skins would pay, but livestock would not.

So we find they have probably a very large list of exemptions in respect of this particular tax.

The only exemption Western Australia is to receive is a slightly higher pay load weight tax which is provided for in the Bill. Victoria has found this tax very lucrative because it has collected as much as £2,500,000 per year from it and it is catching those transporters—and there are many of them—who pass through from South Australia to Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland and the other way through to Western Australia. They were in no way paying for the roads they used. After the situation was ascertained in Victoria it was not long before the other States followed Victoria's example, the last two being South Australia last year and Western Australia now.

I would now like to give the House some idea of the effects this is going to have on the cost of road transport which is so vital to those who live in the electorate which I represent and also in the electorates of other members, including the member for Murchison. I think a number of members are going to be astounded when they hear how this Bill will affect transport costs.

As a first example I am going to take a vehicle carting primary produce from Carnarvon to Perth. This vehicle has a capacity loading of 20 tons and a tare weight of 16 tons. Last year this vehicle paid a license fee of £200, and assuming that the vehicle this year does the same mileage as it did last year it will pay a road maintenance tax this year of £2,000. On top of that £2,000 it will pay half its normal license fee of £105, together with third party insurance and other insurances over the produce carried. On those figures, that vehicle has a taxable weight of 24 tons and at one-third of a penny per ton that is equal to 8d. a mile on every trip whether the vehicle is loaded, partly-loaded, or empty.

Therefore, on a return trip between Carnarvon and Perth that vehicle will return a tax to the State under this Bill of £40 per trip. This is equal to £1 per ton extra freight cost on its capacity loading if the vehicle is loaded both ways. However, no vehicle can carry a capacity loading both ways. If we add the £1 per ton to the present freight cost this amounts to 10 per cent., provided the vehicle is fully loaded both ways; but if it is only loaded one way the freight cost increase will be 20 per cent. It is estimated that the average increased cost on freight will be between 13 and 15 per cent.

Mr. Burt: How many miles a year did you say this truck was doing?

Mr. NORTON: I assumed it would do 50 trips and the distance is 600 miles. That means the return trip is 1,200 miles. The honourable member can work it out from there at £40 a trip.

I have also taken out a schedule on a typical truck used throughout the north and the Murchison for the haulage of general goods, wool, stock, and so on; and I have no doubt that the member for Murchison will agree that this is a very fair average vehicle. It has a capacity loading of 16 tons, being a semitrailer. It has a tare weight of 8½ tons. Allowing 40 per cent. of the capacity weight, this gives a taxable weight of 15 tons which, at one third of a penny per ton a mile is 5d. a mile of travel.

I have worked out the tax and the cost per trip and, in order that it might be easily included in *Hansard*, I have set it out in the form of a table as follows:—

	Tax per return trip	The cost per ton if loading one way		The cost per ton if loading both ways	
		£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Carnarvon to Perth .....	25 10 0	1	12 0	16	0
Carnarvon to Geraldton .....	12 15 0	1	6 0	8	0
Carnarvon to Exmouth .....	10 8 4	1	3 0	6	0
Perth to Exmouth .....	31 1 8	1	18 10	19	5
Shark Bay to Geraldton .....	10 13 4	1	3 4	6	8
Shark Bay to Perth .....	23 19 4	1	9 7	14	9

So we can see that this tax is going to step up very steeply the costs of transport.

Another section of transport will be affected also and this is a very essential section in the pastoral areas and is, of course, the mail services. There are nine mail services in my electorate which radiate from Carnarvon, Geraldton, Mullewa, Yalgoo, Cue, and Meekatharra; and all these will have to pay the extra transport costs. These vehicles go fully laden to the first station, but unload a little at each station and by the time they arrive at the end of the trip they have practically no load on them at all; and the backloading in the off season—when the shearing is not in progress—is very light. Therefore the costs of these trips will go up considerably and will affect not only the station owner but the contractors and all those working on stations, because they will definitely increase the cost of all commodities.

Stock carting is going to be another mode of transport which will be very severely hit because those vehicles are as a rule only built to cater for stock and therefore do not lend themselves very much to backloading. The movement of stock is very vital in all outback areas and the distances the stock is carried over are quite considerable. We must realise that as these costs are going to increase by at least 20 per cent., the movement of stock will be made very expensive in drought periods and immediately following drought periods when the replenishment of stock is so necessary.

The carting of wool will be hit very extensively because we must realise that nearly two-thirds of such carting is one way loading and therefore the cost will be increased by at least 15 per cent. I will have a little more to say on that towards the end of my speech.

There is no doubt that all of the transporters will have to make a charge which will be slightly in excess of the estimated increased tax because if they do not they will run at a loss or, at least, their profits will be very considerably reduced.

The primary producers in the wheatbelt have some chance of dodging this tax because their distances are not great and they can use vehicles which will come under the maximum permitted by the Act. There are certain sections of hauliers that will be hit very heavily, and one comprises those who deal with bulk-handling requirements—those whose trucks run from the bins to the ports or railheads after the season has finished in areas where the railways are not operating. Those vehicles play a big part in shifting the crop, particularly on the Northampton line, which is now closed. Large amounts of wheat have to be carted from Binnu, Ajana, and so on to Geraldton for shipment, and as these vehicles always run empty back to the bin, the costs must go up, I would say, 15 to 20 per cent.

Likewise the Railway Road Services will feel the pinch because they are not exempted under the Act. They will have to pay. So will the Public Works Department in respect of the heavy vehicles which it uses on construction work in the north-west and in other parts of the State. That department will definitely have to pay as the Bill does not exempt it.

The Main Roads Department will be hit in regard to the construction of its roads, because all the main roads contractors will have to pay this cost on the heavy vehicles they use and pass the increase on, and the department will have to pay the cost to the transporters who transport heavy equipment from one place to another on low-loaders. An exceptionally high rate of tax will have to be paid in order to shift machinery from one place to another. All in all this tax will hit every part of the community in the north-west, even the Government departments.

I just want to deal with the effect it will have on the shires. Whilst there is a clause in the legislation which says the shires may receive grants, no indication has been given by the Minister that they will get the equivalent, or more, of the loss of revenue due to the amending Act, which will come in later on, under which the license fees will be halved.

I have here a telegram from the Shire of Carnarvon, in respect of the licensing of motor wagons, trailers, and so on. It reads—

Private wagons £3,000 hire wagons £6,700 hire trailers £5,300 total 65/66 £15,000 loss £7,500 plus matching £5,625 total loss £13,125 Stop Council budget seriously affected by loss of this revenue.

Every council will definitely be affected, and particularly the councils in the remoter areas where heavy transport is used; and there is no guarantee—nothing has been said by the Minister or the Premier—as to what reimbursement will be made to the councils for this loss of money. In any event, should any money be made available to the councils out of this fund, it could be used only for maintenance and repairs to roads, because it is laid down in the Act that that is what the money is raised for.

The next matter I want to deal with is the cost of collections and administration. This cost is going to be considerable. From what I can find out, it will cost between 10 and 15 per cent., and it is estimated that the total cost could be in the vicinity of £75,000. This means the Government will have to find from revenue of some sort, other than the tax collected, an amount of £75,000 to meet these administration costs.

Mr. Cornell: I think you are a bit light-on.

Mr. NORTON: I do not want to exaggerate; it is better not to exaggerate in a matter like this. What is going to be the cost per vehicle to the vehicle owner for keeping his books, making out his bills and cheques, and posting them to the Transport Board? It is estimated that the cost per vehicle, per month, will be 10s. That means it will cost of the transport owner an extra £6 a year for every vehicle he has.

I feel the liquid fuel tax is the one that should be returned to the State and should be given for the maintenance and development of roads in these remote areas. The remote areas of the north and to the east are the definite responsibility of the Commonwealth Government. I have no doubt this money could easily be found from the liquid fuel tax which is so heavily imposed and in respect of which we have had a 3d. rise.

Mr. Brand: You do not think the Commonwealth would agree to a larger share for Western Australia as against the other States? You want to argue this point around the Premiers' table and see how you get on!

Mr. NORTON: I do not see why not. Probably the other Premiers would object. I know Mr. Bolte would; I went to school with him.

Mr. Brand: He would not object to our turning down this amount of money so that he could match it.

Mr. NORTON: Apparently the Premier is niggardly about this, but I am putting forward a logical and clear argument.

Mr. Brand: It is not logical at all. If you follow your course you will finish up £3,000,000 in debit in regard to the road money which is so vital to this State.

Mr. NORTON: I did not at any time say that this tax should not be levied. I have pointed out the impact it will have on the cost of development and the cost of living of the people I represent and those represented by the members for Murchison, Kimberley, and Pilbara.

Mr. Bickerton: That is what the Premier did not want you to point out.

Mr. Brand: What nonsense! It is there for everybody to see.

Mr. NORTON: On the 22nd of this month there was a report from the W.A. Road Transport Association setting out the increased cost of road haulage to the north-west. I wish to quote one or two items to show the cost of transport in that area. Prior to the 10 per cent. rise this month, the cost per ton to Port Hedland was £26 19s. 6d. The price now is £30 10s., and when the impact of this tax is felt it will rise to £35 1s. 6d.

Mr. Tonkin: Three cheers for decentralisation!

Mr. NORTON: The cost to Dampier used to be £26 10s. 6d., and it increased to £28 10s. with the 10 per cent., and when the road tax is added it will rise to £32 15s. 6d. I have other examples, but I will not quote them.

I have taken out a list of the different types of carriers in my electorate, and I have been able, in some cases, to show, conservatively, what will be paid by these people in the first 12 months of operation of this tax. I would have liked to get the figure for the complete list, as I believe the Gascoyne electorate will pay at least 25 per cent. of the required amount in the first 12 months after the interstate hauliers' collections have been deducted.

Wool carting from the Gascoyne amounts to 5,000 tons a year. I cannot work out the amount on that because mileages vary up to 700 miles. Likewise it is impossible to work out the amount of stock carting. I am not aware of the figures for the Main Roads Department contractors. As to fuel carriers, quite a quantity of fuel is carried through to Carnarvon from Geraldton. The term "machine transporters" refers to low loaders. Then we have the operations of Mayne Nickless, and those of the Main Roads Department and the Public Works Department, which use several vehicles.

The owners of vehicles carting primary produce will pay £61,600 a year, and that is a conservative figure because I have taken a lesser number of vehicles than those actually used. Also there are seven large freezers operating between Perth and Carnarvon and their tax contribution will be £14,560 a year. Mail contractors, on the nine mail runs, will pay in the vicinity of £5,000 a year in tax.

Mr. O'Connor: Would the vehicle which you quoted a while ago as doing approximately 60,000 miles a year, be a freezer truck?

Mr. NORTON: No, that is a truck operated to cart primary produce. I have probably underestimated the amount to be paid in tax by the operators of freezer trucks, because I have not taken into consideration their capacity and tare weight. I have based the figure which they will pay on the tare weight and capacity of the truck used to carry primary produce which is run normally between Perth and Carnarvon. So I have been conservative with that figure, because the bodies of those trucks are very heavy with the refrigeration machinery with which they are equipped. The total figure that will be paid in tax on the vehicles I have cited will be £81,160, so it can be seen that, from my own electorate, a large sum of money will be raised by the Government in taxation.

In addition, there are a large number of carriers who operate between Perth and Carnarvon carting a number of other commodities, and also there are Eastern States' vehicles which travel through Carnarvon to parts further north. Therefore, by and large, the road through that district will earn a terrific amount of tax in any 12-month period.

As I said before, the Gascoyne district in the long run will be paying 25 per cent. of the estimated total we were given over a period of 12 months, if the tax paid by interstate hauliers is deducted. The Pilbara, Kimberley, Murchison, and Gascoyne areas will be the hardest hit.

MR. BURT (Murchison) [3.23 p.m.]: I support this Bill with reluctance, which is the feeling every other member will share in considering a taxing measure such as this when it affects the people who are engaged in trading within his electorate. This tax, of course, is no light one and it will hit hard most of the people living in remote areas, as was said by the member who has just resumed his seat.

The districts of Murchison and Pilbara will probably feel the impact of interstate vehicles which are carting goods from the Eastern States to the mining camps in the north-west to a far greater extent than the coastal district of the Gascoyne. Those who have been in a district such as Meekatharra or Port Hedland in recent months must be rather staggered by the number of oversize vehicles that are continually passing through the eastern part of Western Australia day and night transporting the tremendously heavy loads to the scene of mining operations in the north.

In 99 cases out of 100 those operators are not paying one penny of revenue to the Western Australian Government, because all the vehicles are licensed in the Eastern States and, as a result of the High

Court ruling given some years ago, there is no way of levying upon them any type of tax except by the method proposed in this current piece of legislation.

In order to ensure that the operators of the vehicles from the Eastern States contribute something towards the upkeep of roads, it is necessary, in view of the High Court ruling, to impose this levy on all trucks whether they are travelling interstate or intrastate. I have said that I support this measure with reluctance in the hope that we will shortly receive the benefits which I am sure this tax will bring. In other words, that an immediate result will be felt with improved highways throughout the whole of Western Australia. To me that is a tremendously important factor and it is covered by the High Court ruling in that all moneys obtained by this method of taxing must be used on the maintenance and upgrading of the roads concerned.

In my electorate, the Great Northern Highway, which stretches from Meekatharra to Port Hedland and further north, is the most vital link in the servicing of the north-west mining areas. I am of the opinion that the only real solution to the upgrading of a road is to seal it, and whilst we know that the cost of sealing a road in that area is approaching £10,000 a mile, I consider every effort must be made to start on this work immediately.

Firstly the dustbowl section should be tackled, and the bad creeks, and those areas which are difficult to cross either in the very dry or very wet season. If we can use the money which is to be reaped from the owners of the trucks using these roads, and the expenditure of it does have a good effect on the roads, to a great extent the cost of transporting goods through the remote parts of Western Australia will be reduced by a considerable lessening of the cost of the maintenance of the trucks; because, as we know, one of these hauliers will save a considerable portion of the amount of his tax if he can avoid one or two of the tyres on his truck blowing out by travelling over a good road.

The member for Gascoyne quoted some figures, particularly in relation to vehicles using the road from Carnarvon to Perth, but I must point out that that is an excellent bitumen highway and the maintenance and the cost of running vehicles between Carnarvon and Perth would be only a fraction of the maintenance and operating costs on trucks which use the dirt roads further inland. I can quote an example of a Bedford truck—to use a common make—with a registered capacity of 13 tons 4 cwt. and a tare weight of 5 tons 10 cwt., which is something of the size of a cattle train prime mover and which does 25,000 miles a year. The cost of running that truck works out at 3.693d. per mile, and doing an average mileage of what a cattle train would do

in the Murchison area, the additional cost would amount to £384 13s. 9d. per annum, less the license cost, which would reduce that figure to 328 3s. 9d. The cost of a couple of blow-outs on any trip would just about equal that extra tax, and I say again that if we can get this money spent on roads as quickly as possible, the overall cost to the transporter will be greatly reduced.

One great hazard of transporting heavy goods and overwidth loads in the Murchison and Pilbara areas is the dust menace. I refer to some regulations which are to be introduced shortly to compel drivers of large transport vehicles to pull up every hour, to get out of their vehicle, and to allow following vehicles to overtake them. Whilst the drivers of heavy transport regard this practice as somewhat of an inconvenience, I should point out that a motorist travelling behind one of these heavy vehicles is in a very unhappy position, due to the dust created. The motorist is completely frustrated in his attempt to pass the heavy transport ahead of him, although the latter might only be travelling at 25 miles an hour.

In many cases the motorist decides finally to take a risk, and to try to overtake the heavy vehicle. That means he has to drive blindly for 100 yards or so whilst overtaking the truck. By doing that he is sticking his neck out, because if another vehicle should be coming along in the opposite direction, he is faced with the prospect of a head-on collision, as he has no chance of seeing the oncoming vehicle. This proposed regulation should be tightened to compel the drivers of heavy transport trucks to pull up every half-hour.

Mr. Craig: It takes 10 minutes to get them started again.

Mr. BURT: It is the old story of the hare and the tortoise. A little extra time is not all that important. Impatience is one of the unhappy attributes of drivers, and personally I sometimes take a risk when I am following a heavy transport which is ploughing up dust.

I refer to another matter: Several contractors in my area—I mainly refer to Bell Bros. which carts manganese ore from the Horseshoe Mine at Peak Hill to Meekatharra—maintain the roads they use. They supply the equipment to maintain the roads, and they are authorised by the local authority to keep their roads in a satisfactory condition for the carting of ore. I am uncertain how the proposed tax will affect contractors such as Bell Bros.

If they maintain their roads in a good condition, it is illogical to expect them to pay a tax for maintaining those roads. I wonder whether the Government would consider paying the contractors for the work they do on the roads, or introducing



some regulation to exempt them from this tax. It is unfair for contractors who provide the necessary equipment and labour to maintain the roads over which their trucks run, to have to pay a tax for maintaining the roads. I trust the Minister will give some consideration to this aspect.

That is all I have to say on this measure. I repeat: I trust the money collected from this tax will be expended on roads to bring them to as high a standard as possible, and as soon as possible.

**MR. BICKERTON** (Pilbara) [3.34 p.m.]: I wish to discuss this measure briefly. First of all, I congratulate the member for Gascoyne for the way in which he presented his case in connection with this matter. He covered the position very fully, and pointed out the implications that would arise as a result of this measure. I do not know what knowledge the Minister had before he introduced the Bill, but if he had listened attentively to the member for Gascoyne he would now have a good knowledge of the position.

**Mr. O'Connor**: I made a fair study of it.

**Mr. BICKERTON**: As the member for Gascoyne has covered the matter very fully there is little for me to say on the technical implications of the Bill. I shall not cover the ground already covered by him, particularly in relation to the statistical information, but I want to comment briefly on some of the general aspects of the Bill.

The Bill will have a big effect on costs in the north-west, and this aspect concerns me greatly. No doubt the Bill will also have a big effect on costs throughout the State, but possibly not to the same extent as it will on costs in remote areas, because it is a well-known fact that road transport is the only type of transport which can be used in these areas. Remote districts are not served by railways, and even when ships are used to transport the goods to the ports, road transport is used to distribute the goods. Everyone—including those on wages and those engaged in business or industry—will be affected by any increase in road haulage costs.

In recent years these costs have increased and increased. I have thought for a long time that road haulage costs were quite high enough, but recently, as the member for Gascoyne pointed out, the road hauliers increased their freight charges by 10 per cent. This is a large increase, in view of the long distances which are covered. We now reach the stage where the Bill before us will increase further the cost of road haulage, and this must affect greatly the people living in remote centres, and those who rely entirely on road transport for their way of life and as the means of their livelihood.

The member for Gascoyne pointed out the increase could mean an extra £5 per ton to a centre like Port Hedland. The freight rate is already £30 a ton, and with the increase it will become £35 a ton. Most of the goods required in that centre have to be transported by road. When one travels to the north-west and reaches Port Hedland, one is not at the end of the journey, because there are inland centres hundreds of miles away and places like Kununurra, 1,000 miles north. Road transport is an absolute necessity to such places.

Many of the goods which normally would be transported by ship are now transported by road, owing to the increased activity in the area. Firstly, the people there have been forced to cart the goods which they require by road transport, then this measure which the Government is introducing makes the cost of such transport almost prohibitive. I do not know how the Government could gain by imposing this tax. There is no formula to work out how much the Government will receive in matching money, and what will be the overall gain. There is a limit on how much the State can raise to obtain matching money. One could ask this question: How will the funds required next year be raised to meet the matching money from the Commonwealth?

**Mr. Brand**: By natural increase.

**Mr. BICKERTON**: Natural increase in what?

**Mr. Brand**: Natural increase in growth.

**Mr. BICKERTON**: It seems that for ever and ever we will be chasing this matching money, and making it increasingly difficult for the people.

**Mr. Brand**: Not for ever and ever, because this agreement only runs for four years, after which time a decision will have to be made. It depends on how we face up to the position.

**Mr. BICKERTON**: I hope that decision will be more favourable than the one under which we now operate. This area to which I am referring should be developed, and for its development industry is required, and the most important requirement is an adequate labour force. However, the attraction of the area to labour is not the climatic conditions—although some people might enjoy the views there—but the money and the high wages which are paid.

Of course, these things take on a different aspect as soon as the cost of living is raised in proportion. If freight charges continue to increase in this area, surely it is the very reverse of what we require as far as the establishment of industry in the area is concerned.

Where the industry is completely established and operating as a self-contained unit, perhaps it would be in order to want something back from what had been put in earlier. But during development such as this, surely it is our job to keep costs as low as possible. We are told that the

increase is being made so that we can get some matching money. I understand that the amount for the full year will be £600,000. I do not know what proportion would go to the north-west; perhaps £200,000 of it. Spread over a quarter of a million square miles—if the Murchison area were brought into it then it would be an even greater area—£200,000 is not very much.

I cannot see the argument raised by my colleague, the member for Murchison, when he spoke in terms of bituminising. I do not think that the portion we get for the area is going to give us a great deal of additional bituminised road.

Mr. O'Connor: If you take the proportion according to the figures quoted, it would be £2,700,000 over the four years.

Mr. BICKERTON: Yes; I was dealing with a period of 12 months. How far are we to chase these matching moneys, and what advantage do we obtain from them in relation to the penalties imposed? Roads are not the only facility required. Everyone has to have food and a house to live in. Most of the houses are State Housing Commission homes. It is not always possible to have them shipped; much of the material may have to go by road. So with the additional cartage, the rent is increased. The Public Works Department brings in quite a lot of material by road, so the costs of that department must go up, and the cost of the houses must be increased. The wages of the men have to be increased as a result of the rise in the cost of living.

I want to know who has the formula as to the eventual advantage to the State Treasury of this particular money. It appears to me that we get a portion from the Commonwealth, then, by adding our own matching moneys, we increase our own cost loading so much that the Government has to pay ever so much more in labourers' wages on all Government projects. Surely one must balance the other. We do not seem to be achieving a great deal by that except to place a deterrent on those people who want to go to that area which we call the remote area.

Mr. Lewis: If we are not able to improve the roads, then transport costs will get higher.

Mr. BICKERTON: I am not saying that the roads should not be improved. But it comes down to a matter of: At what cost? For example, we could have the best road in the world going to those places; but if the cost of living, as a result of obtaining that road, was such that a person could not afford to live there, the road would be built for nothing.

The matter has to be looked at in proportion, and this is something which is going to affect this area greatly. It really is! The roads in the north are suffering from the larger flow of traffic. It does

not come under the scope of this Bill. But whilst we have more money going into the roads, it seems to me that increased costs are brought about by this type of taxation. The money has not the equivalent value which it had 10 years ago, as far as getting a mile of maintenance done, or something of that nature is concerned. This also has an effect within the electorate.

The Minister mentioned that other States had this type of taxation and he mentioned Victoria in particular.

*Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.7 p.m.*

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. Davies): The honourable member may proceed.

Mr. BICKERTON: Congratulations, Mr. Acting Speaker, on reaching your exalted perch! Before the suspension I was saying that the matter of implementing this tax in Western Australia has been compared in some respects to the position in Victoria. However, I do not think that all the legislation that applies to other States is necessarily beneficial to Western Australia; and I think this is a typical example of where it is not beneficial to Western Australia. Victoria is a small compact State; it has adequate railways running through it and across it and transport is not the problem that it is in this State. In round figures, there are 88,000 square miles in Victoria as compared with 1,000,000 square miles in Western Australia, and in the case of Western Australia most of it is not catered for by adequate rail services.

For all we know, Victoria could have introduced this tax with the object of forcing goods on to the railways rather than obtaining money from road transport. To say that if it is good enough for Victoria it should be good enough for Western Australia is a very weak argument so far as this taxing measure is concerned. In many portions of Western Australia we have no alternative forms of transport so that people will have to pay this tax whether they like it or not.

In his introduction the Minister also made reference to the fact that if hauliers were going to use the roads they would have to pay something towards their upkeep. Who are we trying to fool with that statement? It is not the hauliers who will be paying for the upkeep of the roads. A truck operator does not operate a truck from point A to point B for the enjoyment of being employed; he runs it to make a profit so that he can live. Naturally, if we place a tax on his haulage rates he is going to pass it on to the consumer. He is not going to be out of pocket; he cannot afford to be. He cannot afford to run his business at a loss. So do not let us get the idea that what we are doing is taxing the hauliers of Western Australia to pay for the roads. We are taxing the people of Western Australia to pay for the roads and I think that point should be clarified.

It will be passed on; and, in my view, it will be passed on with a vengeance. We recently had an increase in the tax on alcoholic liquor; but was just the actual tax passed on? No. The publican added a margin for himself, and the same will apply in this regard. When a haulier increases his rates I think we will find he will increase it to more than cover just the actual tax laid down in the Bill. I believe he will be entitled to increase the rates over and above the amount required as a tax because there is quite a bit of administrative work involved in keeping the records required.

Mr. Burt: Do you think the hauliers will increase it to the same extent as the publicans?

Mr. BICKERTON: I do not know, but I think the hauliers' association will get together for the purpose of deciding by how much the rates will be increased. If the haulage rate to the north-west is to be increased by 10 per cent. they will certainly get together and they will make sure they are not out of pocket. However, the person who will lose will be the one who always loses in cases such as this—that is, the person who consumes or uses the goods that are hauled.

Apparently we are passing this Bill to catch a few people who trade interstate. I could understand the authorities in Victoria imposing a tax with the object of getting something out of interstate hauliers, because interstate haulage in Victoria is ever so much greater than it is in Western Australia; and if, as we have been told by the Minister for Railways and others, the standard gauge railway will soon be completed it could have the effect of diminishing considerably the quantity of goods hauled by road from the Eastern States. Consequently road hauliers may wither on the vine and I think there is every possibility that they will not be able to compete with the railways when the standard gauge line is completed.

All we are doing by the passing of this Bill is to tax our own people so that we will have the satisfaction of saying, "We have caught interstate operators for a few bob, too." However, I think this sort of outlook is sometimes a case of "Cutting off your nose to spite your face." I do not know whether the Minister has worked out what the actual revenue from interstate carriers would be; but if he has it would be interesting to hear the figures so that they could be compared with the revenue that will be received from intrastate carriers. I believe they are the ones who will contribute best after having, of course, quietly taken the money off the people for whom they are carting. I believe a great deal more research should have gone into the means of raising money for these so-called matching moneys from the Commonwealth instead of using the method proposed in the Bill.

As I said previously, we rely so greatly on heavy transport, and we rely even more on this mode of transport in the north-west. The tonnages going north now are great, and they are going north for the purpose of establishing an industry. In view of the fact that the State is carrying out practically all the development in the north, surely the Commonwealth could have made some gesture in this regard. It is all part of the Commonwealth, after all. In this case I think the State could have been saved by the Commonwealth, in one way or another, from having to increase taxation on road transport, and, as a result of that, having to increase taxation as far as every individual consumer and user of goods is concerned.

I think the member for Murchison referred to whether or not this would apply to private roads. I sincerely hope that we do not have too many private roads. I would not like to see a private road being started by every Tom, Dick, and Harry in the north-west. Roads are made for people to travel on, and not for private companies to operate. How the Minister will get around that I do not know. I would not like to see a private road running parallel, or thereabout, to a main road; a private road on which people were not allowed, and the users exempt from taxation while others were paying it. I do not know how the Minister will work that one out, but I hope things do not get to that stage.

In the north-west we also have a lot of the smaller type of mining industries. We have those who have pioneered the mining industry long before the iron ore export embargo was lifted. Manganese and asbestos got the area going, and the people concerned have recently come up against a lot of competition, on the manganese side in particular—and this is a valuable industry—from other countries. It is rumoured also, that B.H.P. will be commencing exports with some of its manganese deposits. These people are at present in the middle of a paring-down campaign with the object of bringing their costs down as low as possible. They have many proposals for doing so, and these include better loading facilities, better dumping areas, and so on.

The result of this, of course, will be that it will add another £1 per ton to haulage costs, and the people who will be affected cart about 300 miles from the mine to the port. Perhaps the £1 or 30s. a ton extra is the very amount they are trying to cut down to compete with other manganese organisations, and other countries. The asbestos industry at Wittenoom Gorge, which has been kept going for many years on some form of subsidy, has just got itself into a little better shape than it was previously.

Here is another organisation that will have to cater for an extra £1 or 30s. a ton, and this could make the difference between a mining venture being a success or a failure. If that is progress, then I do not know the meaning of the word. I thought progress meant to go forward, but when we have a taxing measure that places such restrictions on people that it either stops them or makes them go backwards, then it is certainly not progress.

If we have to pay that penalty for matching moneys, then naturally we must ask ourselves whether the matching money is worth it. I do not know how the experts whom the Premier has at his disposal work out the reason why we should at all costs have this money. It seems to me that when one dangles the prospect of £4,000,000 over four years in front of financial experts, and says, "Unless you can match this you do not get it," they are prepared to get it at any cost. I dare say anyone would feel the same way, but there must be a stopping point.

Suppose that tomorrow the Commonwealth said, "Here is £150,000,000; match it." We just could not tax the community to the extent necessary to obtain that money. If someone gave me a grant of say £10 I could match it; but if the amount was taken up to £50 or £60 I would have to look the other way.

There is always a limit, I suggest, as to how far we can go to obtain this so-called free money. I do not think it is free at all, because the taxpayers of the State will soon know they are not getting £4,000,000 for nothing. Anyone buying apples, pears, cabbages, or cauliflowers, in Port Hedland, or anywhere else in the north will soon know they have not received £4,000,000 as a gift; not by any means.

The actual effect, statistically, on the community, and particularly on the people in the north-west, was covered adequately by the member for Gascoyne, so I do not intend to go through the figures, except to say that I am far from happy with this type of taxation which is to be imposed on a section of the community, in the main; and particularly on a section of the community which has no means of obtaining its goods other than by road transport.

**MR. CORNELL** (Mt. Marshall) [4.22 p.m.] : Might I join with the member who has just resumed his seat and congratulate you Mr. Deputy Speaker on your recent elevation and say that never in the history of this Parliament has the dais been graced by such a benign countenance. I feel constrained to say a little on the measure, if only to put right some aspects of Country Party policy as affected by this measure, and which appear to have been overlooked.

This tax is portion of a spate of increases, none of which were foreshadowed in the policy speeches either of the Premier or the Leader of the Country Party. Rail

freights, wharf dues, and vehicle licensing fees are some of the other increased charges, all of which are to be added to the cost of primary production.

Three speakers this afternoon have dealt at some length with the incidence of this tax and its effect on the north-west part of the State. Whilst its incidence there will be a lot more onerous than in the other parts of the State, I might also say that it will have a deleterious effect on the wheatgrowing areas of Western Australia as well as the north-west.

At the present time the incidence of payroll tax, for instance, takes no account of the profitability of the concern, or undertaking, called upon to pay it. This tax falls into the same category. Admittedly it can be argued that this is a service tax levied for a specific purpose; but here again no account is taken of the profitability of the concern that has to pay it and, obviously, the concern will pass it on to the consumer and, as the member for Pilbara said, he will also probably add a bit for himself.

Incidentally, the incidence of this tax in my view, cuts right across Country Party policy and thinking. The Country Party policy has always been to taper-off freight charges so that those living farthest away are recompensed for that disability. This tax does exactly the opposite. Those living farthest out will pay more for the privilege. The cockies in the Lakes district, for instance, will pay as much as 3d. a bushel more to have their wheat carted as a result of this tax. That is a considerable amount of money, particularly when we consider the existing high freight rates on grain. The cartage of livestock will also increase in cost, and it is reasonable to assume that all the commodities used by primary producers will increase if this tax becomes law.

Secondary industries receive a good deal of tariff protection. It is unthinkable to some that we should lower the tariff wall and permit the importation of cheaper commodities at a cheaper rate than is the case at the moment. This would be the obvious answer to decrease production costs for primary producers, but it is unthinkable; it would cause too much damage to secondary industry. Surely if a primary producer has his costs loaded in one direction he is entitled to some avenue whereby these can be downgraded.

I was hoping if this measure was introduced that some of the fees charged by the Transport Board would not be payable; but the position still obtains. I understand that the Transport Board charges a permit fee to north-west areas—for instance, Kununurra was quoted to me as 15s. a ton on the forward-loading and 13s. a ton on any loading brought back. But that is to continue. If I know the Transport Board setup costs will multiply considerably in a very short time when measures for the collection of this impost are implemented.

There are no efforts being made to reduce the work going on in Parliament Place. In my view the Transport Board is a particularly good example of Parkinson's second law that work expands to fill the time available.

Mr. Jamieson: They have Parkinson's disease now.

Mr. CORNELL: Parkinson's other law was that expenditure always rises to meet the income. That could be applied to the Transport Board as well. The member for Pilbara said the taxes in Victoria were channelled back to offset traffic losses on the railways. I notice that under this proposition the railways are still to be the sacred cow of the Government departments, and there is no suggestion that there will be any easing of restrictions on transport in respect of goods to be carried by rail.

Now we come to the very vexed question of matching moneys which, incidentally, is the guts of this measure, if I might use that expression. The Bill has been introduced specifically with the idea of attracting more matching money. It is a peculiar set-up. The user of liquid fuel provides the revenue and creates the source of the fund from which this money comes. Having done that he is taxed again for the privilege of receiving something from a fund he has created.

It is a peculiar system; and a dog chasing its tail has nothing on it. Having created a fund we must pay a little more to derive some benefit from our own creation.

There is a conference of shire councils at Merredin today, and had I not been assisting in guiding the destinies of Western Australia, I would have been there myself. One of the items on the agenda is that the State Government be asked to indicate what source it will tap in future to provide the funds which will obviously be necessary in, say, 12 or 18 months time to match the matching money.

That is a pretty fair question, and I do not know whether the Minister has a complete answer to it. The Premier said by way of interjection that additions would be matched by natural increase. I do not know whether it will or not. I think it is time the Commonwealth Government applied the use of the pill and stopped this business of the State having continually to raise money, to receive benefits from a fund which the liquid fuel user has created.

I think it was last October that the Under-Treasurer, in reply to a submission made by some members of this House when the question of matching money raised its head at that stage, produced figures and, if my memory serves me aright, said that all the matching money required for the next four years would be paid from loan funds. I am anxious to know why there should be such a change of heart in the brief period that has elapsed between now and last October.

At that stage of the game none of us had any idea—and were certainly not encouraged in that way of thinking—that there would be any suggestion of a tax of this description to make up the deficiency in matching moneys envisaged by this legislation. I am inclined to agree with the member for Pilbara that the rat race into which we have got over this matching money should be called to a halt. Some shire clerks in my area are now asking the question whether it is really worth the effort; is what they are getting out of this worth what is being put into it? There must be an end in sight to this business of dangling so many millions before State Treasurers or we will be in trouble.

The question of continuing to raise taxation on the transport industry must grind to a halt, because if that does not happen the transport industry will grind to a halt. To me this tax would seem in some respects to be a Treasury device to get something out of the Commonwealth. My understanding of the position is that the gross revenue from the tax will be applied in attracting matching money. The Minister, by interjection, can correct me if I am wrong.

Mr. O'Connor: That is correct.

Mr. CORNELL: Therefore, the costs of collecting the money would appear to be very incidental to the amount raised; and the costs of collection could rise to astronomical heights. The member for Gascoyne estimated collection costs would be 15 per cent. I venture an opinion that the Minister for Transport would wish the member for Gascoyne were right. I would say that by the time this is finished and inspectors are appointed—believe me, no Government department needs any encouragement to increase its inspectorial staff—the collecting costs could be 12s. to 14s. in the £1—and possibly higher than that. If that is to be regarded as an economic proposition, it is a poor lookout for us.

I notice in this legislation there are no exemptions whatsoever, and I feel some consideration should be given to their provision in certain categories. The fourth schedule of the Victorian Act provides exemptions as follows:—

The carriage of livestock to or from agricultural shows or exhibitions, or direct from farm to market or from market to farm or from farm to farm or to or from agistment.

In regard to stock transport, I think the Minister will concede that a good case could be pleaded for the exemption of that type of vehicle. It comes within the weight category because of its size, but the loading has no relation to the size of the vehicle. So it is obvious that damage to the roads caused by a number of livestock vehicles loaded as they are, would not com-

pare with the damage caused by the heavily loaded transporters which, incidentally, pay as much as the stock haulers.

As the cartage of livestock plays an important part in the primary production industry—it also plays a large part in the less affluent south-west—I plead with the Minister to make an exemption in respect to livestock carters. I suggest that if urgent consideration cannot be given to the matter here, then it be done in another place. I ask that he give this phase of primary production some consideration and that he will implement it.

Mr. Grayden: Or allow them to back-load to a far greater extent.

Mr. CORNELL: There is a feeling in some quarters that farmers are idols of the market-place. This Government certainly has that opinion.

Mr. Bickerton: Can it be done in another place? This is a money Bill.

Mr. CORNELL: The Government can seek an adjournment and do it here. As I have said, my principal objection to this Bill is that the Government has no mandate for it; and in my present frame of mind, if the House is divided and I am not given the assurance I seek, I will vote against it.

MR. O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Minister for Transport) [4.37 p.m.]: I thank members for the comments they have made in connection with this particular Bill. I am sure they are all aware of the actual reasons why this Bill has been brought before the House. Members know that last year the amount of funds the Commonwealth distributed amongst the various States was in the vicinity of £62,000,000 and of that amount Western Australia received something in the vicinity of £11,000,000. In other words, we are a State with approximately eight per cent. of the population and received 17.6 per cent. of the actual road funds.

This new system of matching moneys was brought forward on a five-year basis and I feel any responsible Government would certainly want to take advantage of the money offered by the Commonwealth. In this regard, certainly no Government likes to introduce taxation, but if we are to act in a responsible manner and endeavour to obtain the £3,800,000 matching money over the next four years I think we should do it. I think any other responsible Government would also do this.

If I may, I will now deal with the various points brought forward by members. The member for Gascoyne, who covered well most of the points in connection with the Bill and put forward the case on behalf of members in the north-west and in his particular area, claimed that the people from the Gascoyne area would be the people to pay most of this particular tax. The people to pay into this fund are those who

actually use the roads; and this is in accordance with a ruling given by the High Court and information taken before the High Court in 1955, because the disproportionate amount of damage they cause to the roads—

Mr. Tonkin: Won't the people who get the goods carried pay it?

Mr. O'CONNOR: Certainly some of this will be passed on, but not in all cases. I would have thought the member for Gascoyne could have brought this point forward. If we think of Carnarvon, we will remember it is an area where not so many years ago the road leading to that place was not good. It was a gravel road and one that caused quite a heavy amount of depreciation to vehicles; and, in many instances there were quite a lot of breakdowns. The member for Gascoyne—as I have done—will have seen trucks delayed for many days on that road on account of broken axles and they had to wait for other trucks to get the parts to them.

We know that prior to 1955 the cost of goods coming from Carnarvon to Perth was in the vicinity of £20 per ton. Now, I would say, because of the great improvement in road conditions, the cost of bringing goods from Carnarvon to Perth has been almost halved. The latest figure I have for bringing perishables to the metropolitan area is £10 10s. per ton.

Mr. Bickerton: Isn't the purpose of better roads to reduce costs?

Mr. O'CONNOR: Good roads treat vehicles better than gravel roads or roads in poor condition and this naturally helps to reduce costs.

Mr. Bickerton: You want to put the costs back to what they were.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I did not say anything of the sort. The honourable member is trying to put something into my mouth that I did not say. I had figures taken out in connection with this, and actually the figures quoted by the member for Gascoyne are pretty well right. He stated that a vehicle coming from Carnarvon to Perth with a 20-ton load would pay something in the vicinity of £40 towards road maintenance. However, if we went back to our road conditions as they were before 1955, when they were in poor condition and not bituminised, the figure would be in the vicinity of £200 additional for the same load.

Some mention has been made regarding Victorian exemptions. I would like to point out that while these exemptions do exist in Victoria on certain goods, there is no reduction in license fees whatsoever. Also, the Victorian people have had quite a lot of difficulty in connection with the policing of their particular Act. If, for instance, a truck taking berries, or something else not under the exemption list,

goes along a highway with a tarpaulin over it and is sighted by inspectors, it may not be possible to pull the vehicle up; and when those concerned are ultimately questioned about a month later they can claim they were carting exempt goods. So it is difficult to catch up with them in many instances, and a lot of evasion has been going on in Victoria because of the exemptions that exist there. I believe they are not happy about it and it is costing quite a bit of additional money to police.

Mention has been made about the costs of collection. Generally speaking the costs of collection are more in the early stages, because at that time people are evasive so far as payment of the charge is concerned, with the result that the collections normally go down for the first few months. However, after a settling down period, it has been found in the various States concerned that the costs of collection are in the vicinity of 7½ per cent. If we doubled this figure and said it was 15 per cent., that would be the figure quoted by the member for Gascoyne. However, as I have said, after a settling down period, fewer people will try to evade the law and more will pay this charge and there will then be fewer problems in regard to policing.

The member for Murchison mentioned that the Railways Department and the Main Roads Department would have to pay some of this money. That is correct. Where they have vehicles in excess of eight tons or where they have vehicles operating with a trailer, which would bring them into the category of this Bill, they will have to pay the charges in connection with the roads over which they operate.

Mr. Cornell: What about railway buses?

Mr. O'CONNOR: No; because they are not eight tons. However, in the High Court in Victoria when the case of Victoria versus Armstrong was being heard it was indicated that vehicles in excess of four tons caused a disproportionate amount of damage above these larger vehicles of somewhere between .37 pence and .41 pence per mile. The figure of one-third of a penny is generally accepted throughout all of the States and, as has been previously pointed out, Victoria first implemented this legislation in 1955. That State was followed by Queensland in 1957; New South Wales in 1958; South Australia in 1963; and we are the last of the States, with the exception of Tasmania, to introduce this particular charge.

Mr. Jamieson: I don't think Tasmania will be very interested in interstate haulage.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I do not think so either; but it does apply in all the other States. The point submitted, I think by the member for Murchison, concerning the private roads in the north requires some answer.

the road Bell Bros. are working on is, I believe, a gazetted road, but it is being maintained by Bell Bros. who are using it for the cartage of manganese. This Bill does not allow for exemptions in cases such as that; but I have referred their particular case to the Main Roads Department, and if they are maintaining the roads and continue to do so, there is a possibility that the Main Roads Department could contribute some of the maintenance charged to them to offset the maintenance they are doing on the roads. I do not say that this will be done, but it could happen. However, this legislation is not intended to make any exemption for them.

The member for Pilbara asked how much the Government hoped to obtain, and he says he hopes the next decision made by the Commonwealth will be a more favourable one. Overall the Government hopes to gain as a contribution to the roads in Western Australia £7,600,000, of which £3,800,000 must be obtained by this charge in Western Australia, the other £3,800,000 being the Commonwealth contribution. This is a large contribution so far as roads and their maintenance are concerned.

Mr. Bickerton: How much will other departments have to pay as a result?

Mr. O'CONNOR: This I do not know; but they will have to pay the same proportion as anyone else who uses the roads. They, too, cause damage.

Mr. Bickerton: The Treasury overall may lose.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Quite a lot of benefit will be received by people all over Western Australia for maintenance of these particular roads.

Mr. Norton: Why will passenger vehicles be excluded?

Mr. O'CONNOR: They are not. I did not say they would be. I said that the railway road buses were not in excess of eight tons and therefore would not come into the category. That is where the honourable member might have gone a little astray. The member for Pilbara went on to say that of the £600,000 a year probably only £200,000 would go to the north-west. Of course, this is not correct at all.

If we get £600,000 by taxation, we will get a further amount of money from the Commonwealth Government, and with the matching money, as we stated, the amount would run into £7,600,000 over four years. At the moment the north-west roads are getting somewhere near 25 per cent. of the total received for roads, and therefore the north would get £2,000,000 of this for their roads.

Mr. Bickerton: Over what period?

Mr. O'CONNOR: Four years.

Mr. Bickerton: We must consider the immediate effects of the Bill.

Mr. O'CONNOR: We must look ahead. We cannot say that nothing will be given today and a lot tomorrow. I am speaking of the four-year period which is the arrangement with the Commonwealth for the matching moneys.

One member pointed out—and I think it was the member for Pilbara—that a greater flow of traffic is into the north. This is quite right, and if the vehicles cause damage to the roads they should be made to pay for it.

Mr. Bickerton: It is the people of the area who have to pay for it.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The member for Pilbara can say that, but as far as we are concerned the tax is paid by the people who use the roads. The honourable member went on to say that this legislation was implemented because of a few interstate vehicles which are operating. Of these few interstaters operating, 6,000 came by pickaback from the Eastern States to Kalgoorlie last year. They averaged about 14 tons each and some came to the metropolis while others went to the north-west. Apart from those, a large number of others came across the Nullarbor under their own steam and therefore used the roads. In most cases they do not pay a penny to the roads in Western Australia.

Mr. Cornell: A toll could take care of that.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Not by way of license, or any other means.

Mr. Jamieson: They could pay a toll.

Mr. O'CONNOR: No; it can be got both ways. They are charged both ways.

Mr. Cornell: But you could get them on a toll.

Mr. O'CONNOR: If we charged a toll we could be up before the High Court again.

Mr. Cornell: They pay tolls in Queensland, and there is a toll on the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

Mr. Jamieson: There is only one way for them to come.

Mr. O'CONNOR: If we discriminated we could be in further difficulties because the High Court has already ruled that we cannot discriminate between locals and interstaters.

Mr. Jamieson: You would not need to discriminate.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The member for Mt. Marshall mentioned something about transport fees still being charged. This is so. The normal transport fees will be charged. I would like to point out, however, that in this particular field we charge nowhere near the amounts charged in the other States. For instance, in New South Wales the transport fees are 3d. per ton mile.

Mr. Cornell: They are not held in by restrictions there.

Mr. O'CONNOR: This is so. Members are at present complaining about a third of a penny per ton mile. If it was 3d. per ton mile here as in New South Wales we would have quite a lot more said not only by the member for Mt. Marshall, but by many others.

Mr. Gayfer: We might have to do that to get the matching moneys.

Mr. O'CONNOR: That was another point brought forward; but this is on a four-year basis. It was stated earlier that this legislation will cover the moneys for four years.

Mr. Cornell: Will you repeat that so that there can be no doubt as to the assurance?

Mr. O'CONNOR: That is what I have been told. I cannot give the member for Mt. Marshall an assurance, because I might not be here in four years, and he might not be either. The honourable member went on to say that exemptions were given on livestock. This is so. I have explained that the Victorian Government is not happy about this because of additional policing costs and the trouble in catching up with the various people given exemptions. This Bill does not propose to give any exemptions, and I hope members will support it and pass it as it is.

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

#### Ayes—23

Mr. Bovell	Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. Brand	Mr. Lewis
Mr. Burt	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Court	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Craig	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Crommelin	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Dunn	Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Durack	Mr. Runciman
Mr. Elliott	Mr. Rushton
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Williams
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. I. W. Manning
Mr. Hart	(Teller)

#### Noes—17

Mr. Bickerton	Mr. W. Hegney
Mr. Brady	Mr. Jamieson
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Curran	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Davies	Mr. Rowberry
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. Toms
Mr. Graham	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Hall	Mr. Norton
Mr. Hawke	(Teller)

#### Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr. Mitchell	Mr. May
Mr. W. A. Manning	Mr. J. Hegney
Dr. Henn	Mr. Evans

Majority for—6.

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mr. Crommelin) in the Chair; Mr. O'Connor (Minister for Transport) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 5 put and passed.



### Clause 6: Application of Act—

Mr. BICKERTON: During the second reading debate I mentioned the great effect by way of additional cost of living this Bill would have in the north-west for the reason that that area has no other alternative means of transport. Those concerned rely solely—except some people in the port towns—on road transport.

It does not appear, from the trend of the last few years, that the cost of road transport is going to decrease. In fact, the trend has been for it to increase. This taxing measure increases it further. If these areas were provided with efficient railway lines and other means of transport, then I suppose one could say that if people wanted to get their goods by road and heavy haulage vehicles they would have to be prepared to pay for it.

I am not denying, of course, that heavy haulage does take a heavy toll of road conditions, but people there are forced to use this method to obtain all their goods.

It is also an area that is developing, at the present stage, to a point where we hope that within a few years it may be able—to a very great extent, anyway—to stand on its own feet. However, until that happens I believe it should be helped. I therefore move an amendment—

Page 4, line 38—Insert after the word “tons” the words “or to vehicles carrying goods to or from or within that portion of the State described as the North-West-Murchison-Eyre-Area in the Electoral Districts Act, 1947-1965.”

My purpose is to relieve this area, which is solely reliant on road transport. Also, I point out that many of the heavy transports are registered in that area, and once they operate internally, in particular, the shires lose a great deal of revenue as the registration will be half; and, of course, that revenue goes towards road maintenance. Therefore, at this stage, what we gain on the merry-go-round we will lose on the spinning jenny. No doubt some of the shires use that money to attract matching moneys.

I believe that at least at this stage of the State's development the area to which I have referred should, for the reasons I have outlined, be exempted.

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

#### Ayes—16

Mr. Bickerton	Mr. W. Hegney
Mr. Brady	Mr. Jamieson
Mr. Curran	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Davies	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. Rowberry
Mr. Graham	Mr. Toms
Mr. Hall	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Norton

(Teller)

#### Noes—23

Mr. Bovell	Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. Brand	Mr. Lewis
Mr. Burt	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Court	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Craig	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Dunn	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Durack	Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Elliott	Mr. Runciman
Mr. Gayfer	Mr. Rushton
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Williams
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. I. W. Manning
Dr. Henn	(Teller)

#### Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr. May	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. W. A. Manning
Mr. Moir	Mr. Hart

Majority against—7.

Amendment thus negated.

Mr. BICKERTON: I was disappointed that the Minister did not reply to my submissions; and as a result we had to take a blind vote on the amendment. I think that was rather unusual.

I still do not know whether the Minister agrees with me or not. He could have supplied me with some reasons why he considered the amendment was not acceptable. Had he done so it is possible I could have rearranged the amendment so as to bring it more to his liking.

I am not sure whether the Minister is against the area I mentioned. Perhaps he considers it too large; perhaps he believes that part of the State above the 26th parallel should be exempted, and that the area which we now know as the North-West-Murchison-Eyre-Area is too large to administer. Maybe the thought ran through his mind that interstate vehicles would come through that area and therefore it would be wrong to include all of the Eyre district.

However, I am not in a position to know whether that is his way of thinking, or not. In order to give him an opportunity to let me know whether I am reading his mind aright, and that he has no objection to the higher area being exempted, although he does not want the southern portion included, I move an amendment—

Page 4, line 38—Insert after the word “tons” the words “or to vehicles operating within that area of the State above the 26th parallel.”

I have left out the words “to or from” Their inclusion could have been the reason why the Minister refused to vote for the last amendment.

What I am now proposing would greatly assist the industries that operate within the area mentioned—industries that are endeavouring to maintain and improve their standards. I refer to the manganese industry, which is battling to cut costs because of the competition which is likely to come from B.H.P., and that which is coming from other countries.

If this measure places on that industry an additional £1 or 30s. a ton, that could just be the difference between operating

and closing down. The asbestos industry is another one which is skating on fairly thin ice. Its returns are not exceeding costs of production by any great amount, and it is still receiving certain subsidies. We will be placing upon that industry an extra £1 or 30s. a ton, which could make the difference between profit and loss.

So as to overcome that position, and in order to enable that area of the State to be less reliant on the rest of Western Australia, we would be in order in exempting it.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I certainly had no reason to avoid replying to the member for Pilbara when he moved his first amendment. However, I do agree that if that amendment had been agreed to it would have given interstate operators an opportunity to come across the Nullarbor and go to the north-west where they would have had the benefit of our roads, but without having to pay anything towards their cost, whereas our local people would have to pay the fee; and on that basis alone I would have opposed his first amendment.

The amendment now before the Chamber is equally unacceptable to me. It could be classed as discriminatory, because it has the same effect as putting a border between two States. The tax is chargeable on all vehicles over a certain weight. What is suggested here could leave us open to a further High Court action and an unfavourable ruling as far as we are concerned.

Members may know that when the tax was imposed in New South Wales prior to 1955, the original case taken by the Australian Road Transport Federation, represented by people by the names of Hughes and Vale, was taken against the New South Wales Government.

The New South Wales Government lost the case and eventually had to return large sums of money to the hauliers concerned. However, I explained earlier in the afternoon that I did not propose to move any amendment to provide for exemptions from the payment of this tax. Even though the member for Pilbara has asked for exemption from the payment of the tax for this part of the State north of the 26th parallel, he would still be seeking the expenditure of large sums of money on the roads in the north for the benefit of some of those operating in that area. I oppose the amendment.

Mr. JAMIESON: I would have thought that the Minister for the North-West would interest himself in this amendment.

Mr. Court: I am very interested, because I know that the shires want to get the benefit from this money, and the member for Pilbara knows that.

Mr. Bickerton: What about the people residing in the area?

Mr. JAMIESON: What is motivating the Government in introducing this Bill is its desire to get matching money at all costs, regardless of who may be harmed by its effect, and particularly those people about whom we are always hearing that they need special encouragement to remain in the area in which they reside? As the constructional and developmental work in the north tapers off, I do not think the average amount of extra tax the Government would obtain under this Bill would amount to a great deal, but it would mean that ultimately the hauliers of goods consumed by people in the north would be the only operators paying the tax.

I cannot agree with the suggestion put forward by the Minister for Transport that the amendment would infringe the relevant section in the Commonwealth Constitution, nor can I agree with him that it would be discriminatory against the owners of trucks under eight tons. This Bill will apply to all road hauliers, as the Minister indicated earlier.

Mr. O'Connor: You think we could select an area such as Beeloo, and exempt that?

Mr. Tonkin: That has already been done in this Chamber many times.

Mr. JAMIESON: As long as it applied to everybody liable for the payment of this tax.

Mr. Tonkin: What about the land tax?

Mr. JAMIESON: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has specified the imposition of land tax in certain regions.

Mr. Court: That has not an interstate content in it.

Mr. JAMIESON: I agree. A particular area is specified, but I do not think it particularly discriminates. However, we should not argue the basis of discrimination in this case if we define an area in which everybody would be using the roads. That would conform to the Commonwealth Constitution and there would be no trouble.

Mr. O'Connor: You are of the opinion that we should knock back this matching money?

Mr. JAMIESON: No; I do not think we should knock it back; but the member for Pilbara and the member for Mt. Marshall have given a clear indication of their thoughts on the matter, and I agree with them. I do not agree that if £2,000,000 is to be made available by the Commonwealth as matching money the Government should tax the people of this State accordingly in order to obtain that amount, because, if that were done, the taxpayers of this State would all finish up broke. There is a limit to the capacity of the people to pay tax.

To relieve that section of the community which deserves some relief, the amendment by the member for Pilbara is worthwhile, and I applaud his attempt to have this amendment passed.

Mr. BICKERTON: In speaking to my amendment the Minister said he could not discriminate with it, but I think the Bill itself discriminates in the matter of haulage, and very greatly to the detriment of hauliers in the north-west. For example, there are vehicles below eight tons in weight which are not subject to this tax.

Mr. O'Connor: Precedents have been set in regard to this.

Mr. BICKERTON: Of course there have been, and they have been set in areas close to Perth, in the same way as they have been set in areas far distant. I have no doubt that a person operating a vehicle with a capacity exceeding eight tons, when faced with this tax would, if he were going to cart goods to Bunbury or Mandurah or places beyond—I do not know what the economic limit would be—probably decide that he could make more money by changing his vehicle for a truck with a capacity of eight tons or below.

The whole principle behind the use of large vehicles for long and heavy haulage is to reduce the cost of maintenance and operation costs. That is why one does not see eight-ton trucks coming from the Eastern States. It is because they would be uneconomical to operate. Therefore the north-west, due to its geographical position, attracts only hauliers who use large trucks. Those operators will gain no advantage from this legislation: instead, it will only add to the operating costs.

The Minister for Industrial Development stated, by interjection, that the shires in the north were keen to have this legislation passed. He must have been in touch with all of them, because I have not heard that expression of opinion from all shires.

Mr. Court: You were at a meeting the other day when I was most forthright about the position.

Mr. BICKERTON: One or two people at a meeting do not indicate the desires of all the people in that area.

Mr. Hawke: The Minister for the North-West always impresses people who hear him for the first time.

Mr. Court: I must be going up in your estimation. You said before that I did not impress them at any time.

Mr. BICKERTON: This Bill had not been introduced when the Minister for the North-West addressed the shires in the north, but he may have told them more than what was known by members of Parliament representing that district prior to its introduction. If one says to a shire, "Do you want matching money, or more money so that we can give you more roads?" naturally their answer will

be, "Yes"; but they do not know what they are going to pay for that money. This Bill will affect the price of every commodity that is carted into the north-west area. It is all very well for the Government to tell the people up there that they are going to benefit from the money that will be received from the Commonwealth, but if they are told what that money is going to cost them they may tell the Government what to do with the money. Further, the cost to industry will be greater because of this tax.

Mr. O'Connor: Better roads will help to reduce haulage costs.

Mr. BICKERTON: Of course they will! No-one is anxious to pay taxes, but they are necessary.

Mr. Dunn: Do you know how much of the money expended by the Main Roads Department has been spent in the north-west?

Mr. O'Connor: It is possibly 25 per cent.

Mr. BICKERTON: If the area is to be properly developed that money will have to be spent. If the Government introduces a Bill to collect tax to pay for better facilities, the people will naturally ask what they will get in return. I do not think the Treasury will finish up in front with this Bill, because the added cost to services alone in the way of an increase in the cost of living, and other taxes in the area to provide for these things will equal the money that is spent on the roads.

Reverting again to the shires, I could appreciate their eagerness at all times to obtain more money, because they are always asking members of Parliament to endeavour to obtain more money for them. I do not know what information the Minister gave the shires in regard to what they would lose on the registration of heavier trucks, and so on, and what would be their overall gain.

Mr. O'Connor: Would there be many trucks licensed in that area?

Mr. BICKERTON: Yes, many of the heavier trucks are licensed up there. All of the vehicles operated by Bell Bros. and one or two other large haulage contractors are licensed in that area, so the shires will lose revenue as a result of this Bill; and if they do they will look at this legislation in an entirely different light.

However, I am not so much arguing that point as the continual increase in the cost of living for the people in the north-west, which is an area that is not easy to populate; and by the time the haulier pays his extra taxes, the cost of other commodities will have increased. As I said previously, members must know we are not burdening the heavy road haulier with this tax; we are taxing the average person—the user and consumer of goods. The heavy haulier will merely add this tax to his charges and add a little more for himself in the same way as the shopkeeper

adds a little more for himself when there is any increase in the price of any commodity.

My main line of argument is that this area should be left alone at this stage of its development, and the road hauliers in those parts should be granted some exemption from this tax at least for a while so that the district can get on its feet.

Mr. Lewis: One could make out some sort of a case for every area.

Mr. BICKERTON: The Minister is quite entitled to put forward his case for other areas. My original amendment covered a greater portion of the State, but the Minister voted against it.

Mr. Lewis: Because it would have added to the maintenance cost of the roads.

Mr. BICKERTON: Some advantage would be gained by those hauliers operating trucks with a capacity below eight tons, but in the north-west most of the goods hauled would be carried in vehicles with a capacity of over eight tons. So I think the Bill does discriminate against the north-west, and the Government would lose little by exempting that area at this stage for at least a short period.

Mr. BURT: If we agree to this amendment, then it will be very difficult to tax the road hauliers. The amendment requires interstate and intrastate hauliers to pay the tax, until they reach the 26th parallel, where they are exempt. Under High Court decisions in respect of road taxes in the other States, the principle adopted is that the proceeds of such taxes must be devoted directly to the repair, upkeep, maintenance, and depreciation of the relevant highways.

If the amendment is passed, does the member for Pilbara think the tax will cease north of the 26th parallel, and maintenance of the roads in that area will not be undertaken? It is impractical to specify any area for exemption. I was reluctant to vote against the other amendment, but I realised the need for maintaining the roads throughout the State. In my particular electorate south of the 26th parallel there are many pastoral properties and mining companies battling for existence; but in the north the iron ore mining companies are spending millions of pounds, so surely the people there can afford to pay the tax.

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

## Ayes—15

Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Jamieson
Mr. Brady	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Curran	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Davies	Mr. Rowberry
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. Toms
Mr. Graham	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Norton
Mr. W. Hegney	

(Teller)

## Noes—23

Mr. Bovell	Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. Brand	Mr. Lewis
Mr. Burt	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Court	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Craig	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Dunn	Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Durack	Mr. Runciman
Mr. Gayfer	Mr. Rushton
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Williams
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. I. W. Manning
Dr. Henn	(Teller)

## Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr. May	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. W. A. Manning
Mr. Evans	Mr. Hart
Mr. Moir	Mr. Elliott

Majority against—8.

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 7 put and passed.

Clause 8: Contribution for wear and tear on roads—

Mr. NORTON: During the second reading I asked why passenger vehicles were to be exempted. I do not think these vehicles can be classified as commercial vehicles; if that is so then irrespective of the carrying capacity all passenger vehicles will be exempt. I would also like the Minister to give me the figures of the freight rates prior to 1955 and after.

Mr. GAYFER: Can the Minister inform me how an eight-ton vehicle is to be classified for the purposes of this provision? Will a different system of calculation be used?

Mr. O'CONNOR: I understand the member for Gascoyne was referring to railway passenger buses, which carry goods in special compartments. If they are under eight tons they will not be classified as commercial vehicles, but if they tow a trailer and the vehicle and trailer together exceed eight tons, they will be regarded as commercial vehicles and pay the tax.

Regarding the freight charges from Carnarvon to Perth. I pointed out that prior to the establishment of the bitumen road from Carnarvon to Geraldton the figure for cartage was £20 a ton. I obtained the relevant figures from the Transport Board, and the first tender called in 1955 for goods in lots of three tons was £15 a ton. Now there is a bitumen road from Carnarvon to Geraldton, and the latest figure for 1965 is £10 10s. a ton. This indicates that with the provision of bitumen roads the cost of transport is reduced greatly.

Mr. Bickerton: That would not necessarily be the sole reason. You are referring to vehicles of eight to 10 tons.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I am also referring to the time when wages were low. Taking into account the increased cost of petrol, vehicles, and wages, the transport costs at the present time are much cheaper compared to what they were 10 years ago. I am sure the member for Pilbara is keen to have bitumen roads in other parts of his electorate.

Mr. Bickerton: We got one bitumen road without matching money.

Mr. O'CONNOR: In reply to the point raised by the member for Avon as to the tonnage basis under which these vehicles are to be classified, the system is a complicated one, and is dependent on the axle load and other factors. As far as the tax is concerned the calculation will be based on what appears on the license.

Mr. CORNELL: As this clause levies the tax, it is appropriate for me to reiterate the point I made earlier. I appeal to the Minister to grant exemptions to stock-carrying vehicles. These are peculiar types of vehicles carrying a peculiar type of commodity, and they give a service which the railways do not normally give. These vehicles do not damage the road as much as other types of heavy transport.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I do not propose to agree to any exemption at this stage. I am sure the people in the outback areas who have to cart stock over great distances are appreciative of the provision of bitumen roads, and the maintenance of existing roads.

Mr. CORNELL: The argument of the Minister is very weak, because he cannot give a guarantee that we will have a particular road under this or any other legislation. The money is to be applied to all the roads. His argument is specious in the extreme.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 9 to 18 put and passed.

First and second schedules put and passed.

Title put and passed.

#### *Report*

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

### **BILLS (2): RETURNED**

1. Factories and Shops Act Amendment Bill.

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

2. Traffic Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).

Bill returned from the Council with an amendment.

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)**

#### *Council's Message*

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it continued to disagree to the amendments made by the Assembly.

### **STATUTE LAW REVISION BILL**

#### *Second Reading*

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Minister for Industrial Development) [5.48 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill was introduced in another place and is a further implementation of the plan to put the Statutes of Western Australia into a more convenient and up-to-date form. This plan received the approval of Parliament during the last session by the passage through both Houses of the Statute Law Revision Act, 1964, which provided for the repeal of 384 enactments passed during the period 1832-1900.

This current Bill provides for the repeal of a further 719 enactments. Most of these were passed during the period 1900-1963, and all are, for various reasons, no longer effective. They should, therefore, be excluded from the eventual reprint of the Statutes.

The form and procedure adopted in regard to the drafting and introduction into Parliament of the 1964 Bill have been adhered to in connection with the present measure. It is based on the recommendations contained in a further progress report on Statute Law Revision dated the 31st March, 1965. This report, as in the case of the two earlier reports, has been considered by the Law Society of Western Australia, and the society has supported the general recommendations contained therein.

There has been circulated with the Bill an explanatory memorandum giving some particulars of each enactment and the reason why it is thought to be no longer effective. This memorandum should facilitate study of the Bill. Both the Bill and the memorandum are arranged in substantially the same manner as those of last year. However, whereas in the 1964 Bill, part IV of the first schedule comprised Naturalisation Acts, in this Bill such part contains 93 enactments relating to roads and streets. The second schedule containing enactments relating to railways has been divided into four parts which are referred to in more detail in the memorandum.

The procedure of first referring enactments proposed for repeal to those persons, departments, authorities, or organisations thought to be, or to have been once affected by, or charged with the administration of the same, before making any recommendation for their repeal, has been continued in those cases where such reference has been thought either necessary or desirable. This has been done, if only as a matter of courtesy, and in at least one instance, appreciation of the opportunity to offer comments on the matter was expressed. Where such references have been made, the fact is referred to in the memorandum.

The provisions of the Interpretation Act, in particular sections 12 and 16 relating to repeals, must be borne in mind when considering the effect of the Bill. As was the case with the 1964 Bill, it has been thought necessary to include in respect of certain Acts which provided for the construction of railways, a saving provision additional

to those contained in the Interpretation Act. This is referred to on pages two and three of the memorandum.

The first three parts of the first schedule comprise Supply, Appropriation, Loan, and other money Acts which are no longer effective. Part IV of the first schedule contains the enactments affecting roads and streets previously referred to; while part V contains a large number of general enactments, which for the reasons given in the memorandum, are no longer effective.

The second schedule contains a number of enactments relating to railways and is divided into four parts. Parts I and II comprise construction Acts. The Public Works Act makes provision for the maintenance of a railway which has been constructed, but some doubt exists whether the provisions of the Interpretation Act are sufficiently wide to preserve the power to alter the line of the railway within the limits of deviation specified by the Act authorising its construction. Provision has therefore been made in the Bill to preserve expressly the limits of deviation authorised by the enactments comprising part I of the second schedule.

The third schedule contains two enactments each of which was intended to be repealed but which was incorrectly described in the repealing Act. The fourth schedule contains four enactments which ceased to have effect on the publication of a notice in the *Government Gazette* in 1913. The Bill provides a record of this date.

The single enactment comprising the fifth schedule was passed by the Legislature and reserved for Royal Assent which was never given and therefore this enactment never became law.

It is sufficient if this Bill be passed by a simple majority in each House. However, there are six additional Acts which were passed between 1943 and 1947 as part of the programme of post-war reconstruction, and the terms of which require that they not be repealed without the concurrence of an absolute majority of each House. Accordingly those six Acts are the subject of a separate Statute Law Revision Bill which will be introduced following this Bill. I should mention that the second Bill will require a constitutional majority.

My colleague, the Minister for Justice, has asked me to advise members that if it is the desire of any member of this House to take advantage of an interview with Mr. G. D. Clarkson or Miss Shirley Offer of the Crown Law Department—the two people engaged in this law revision work—such member is at liberty to contact either of them with a view to discussing any questions that might arise in relation to this Bill.

It is not the Government's desire that this legislation should be dealt with hastily. In another place the Minister for Justice

arranged for considerable time to elapse between the introduction of the second reading and the completion of the Bill in order that members might have an opportunity for a proper study of the contents of the schedules, and I desire to make the same conditions apply in this House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Toms.

## STATUTE LAW REVISION BILL (No. 2)

### *Second Reading*

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Minister for Railways) [5.55 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill has been passed in another place. It provides for the repeal of six Acts which were passed between 1943 and 1947 and cover certain matters which were referred by this Parliament to the Commonwealth to enable post-war reconstruction legislation to be passed by the Federal Parliament.

These Acts no longer have any force as the period for which the various matters were so referred has long since expired. Normally an expired Act may be removed from the Statute book by including it in a Statute Law Revision Bill providing for its repeal. However, this legislation contains provisions preventing its repeal except with the concurrence of an absolute majority of each House. It might be said that such a provision applies only during the effective life of the legislation and that once expired, it may be repealed in the usual manner. However, it is thought preferable to avoid any doubt by making such legislation the subject of a separate Bill, the second and third readings of which will require to be passed by an absolute majority of the whole number of the members of each House.

As with the previous measure, an explanatory memorandum has been circulated with the Bill. The same conditions as explained by me in relation to adjustment, in respect of the other Bill just dealt with, apply also in the case of this Bill.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Toms.

## ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Premier) [5.57 p.m.]: I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

In moving this motion I would like to remind the House we will be sitting after tea next Thursday and on every Thursday until such time as the session is completed.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 5.58 p.m.*