

# Legislative Council

Tuesday, the 5th September, 1972

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

## BILLS (2): ASSENT

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills:—

1. Supply Bill.
2. Bulk Handling Act Amendment Bill.

## QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

### POLICE

#### *Request for Inquiry*

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH, to the Minister for Police:

Referring to my question of the 23rd August, 1972, and the Minister's reply thereto—

- (1) Has a decision been made on the request from the Australian Labor Party seeking an inquiry into certain conditions prevailing in the Western Australian Police Force?
- (2) If so, what is the decision?
- (3) If no decision has yet been made, when is it expected it will be made?
- (4) Will the Minister inform the House of the particulars of the decision, and the nature of the inquiry, if any, to be held?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for giving me notice yesterday of his intention to ask this question. The reply is as follows:—

- (1) A request for an inquiry to be construed as a genuine objective approach aimed at improving job satisfaction and making it more attractive to recruits and not to be taken as an attack upon the Police Force, was received from the State Executive of the Australian Labor Party and a decision has been made thereon by the Government.

- (2) As Minister for Police, I decided to obtain the views of the Western Australian Police Union and the Commissioner of Police to enable me to evaluate the various aspects of the matter. These were then submitted to

Cabinet and resulted in a decision that an inquiry was not requisite.

(3) and (4) Answered by (2).

## QUESTIONS (7): ON NOTICE

### GRAIN

#### *Bulk Handling*

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) What percentage of the total grains handled by Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. is—
  - (a) wheat;
  - (b) barley;
  - (c) oats;
  - (d) linseed;
  - (e) rape; and
  - (f) other seeds?
- (2) What are the charges to farmers to handle each of these crops?
- (3) Do all these crops require long term storage?
- (4) Is there a different charge for grain exported compared to home consumption?
- (5) Will all these grains be using the new facilities at Kwinana?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

- (1) For 1970-71 percentages were:
 

Wheat—68%	
Barley—21%	
Oats—11%	
Linseed	} less than 0.02%
Rapeseed	
Other seeds	
- (2) The costs associated with the handling of all crop types delivered to Co-operative Bulk Handling in the 1970-71 season were averaged out at 10.513 cents per bushel of grain delivered.
- (3) There has been some carryover from one year to the next, mainly wheat, which faced an oversupply situation in world trade in recent years. Most grain is, however, shipped from storage within 12 months of harvest.
- (4) No.
- (5) It is envisaged that most grain types will pass through the new terminal at some stage in the future.

### FLOODS

#### *Prevention at Carnarvon*

The Hon. G. W. BERRY, to the Leader of the House:

With reference to my question on Thursday 3rd August, 1972, regarding the extension of the Levee

Bank at Carnarvon, will the Government give consideration to the acquisition of land required from people who are prepared to negotiate now?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

The detailed design and exact location of the levees has not yet been finalised and, therefore, it is not possible to give consideration to acquisition of the land required at present.

### 3.

#### TRAFFIC

##### *Greenmount Sign*

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER, to the Minister for Police:

Referring to my question of Wednesday, 23rd August, 1972, regarding the road sign at Greenmount reading "Traffic Control Area"—

- (a) can the Minister inform the House if signs with the same wording are used in other States of Australia;
- (b) why did the former "Metropolitan Traffic Area" sign not provide for realistic traffic speeds because of geographic reasons?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

- (a) No. Generally the application of a 35 miles per hour speed limit applies in other States to "built up areas" where street lighting is provided.
- (b) Some sections of the Metropolitan traffic area extend into the rural areas where a 35 miles per hour speed restriction was inappropriate. For example, the whole of the Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale is within the Metropolitan traffic area.

### 4.

#### TAX COLLECTORS

##### *Obligation*

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) Where a person who is obliged to collect a tax under a State Statute on behalf of the State, does he commit an offence if he retains the amount of the tax and uses that amount for his own purposes?
- (2) If the Minister's interpretation of Erskine May's "Parliamentary Practice" indicates that the question in part (1) is inadmissible, will he name the responsible person in this State who will answer "yes" or "no" to this question?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

- (1) This question is inadmissible on two counts: it seeks an expression of opinion on a question of law and it is hypothetical.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I thought you would have used the word, "suppositious!"

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: I repeat, the word is, "hypothetical."

- (2) If details are supplied by the Hon. Member of any actual case which appears to him to indicate unlawful retention of moneys due to the State, the matter will be investigated.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Road maintenance is a start.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

### 5.

#### PROBATE

##### *Payment on Shareholdings*

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) Does the Minister know that a number of companies which whilst not technically carrying on business in Western Australia nevertheless derive their profits from this State through a subsidiary or associated company thus avoiding the necessity of the parent companies having to register here?
- (2) Does he appreciate that this means that Western Australian residents holding shares in such companies have to hold their shares on Eastern States Registers thereby entailing the payment of one or more additional lots of probate duty as well as Federal and Western Australian probate duty?
- (3) What concessional fees operate to encourage companies which do not carry on business here to open share registers in Western Australia and thereby save Western Australian residents from being unnecessarily involved in high rates of Eastern States death duty?
- (4) Will the Government give consideration to extending these concessions in the interests of local citizens?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

- (1) Some companies registered outside Western Australia derive profits in this State through subsidiary or associated companies.
- (2) Yes, but the rebate provisions in respect of death duties paid in other jurisdictions will apply.
- (3) Section 349 (1) of the Companies Act provides a maximum fee of \$1,000 on the registration of a foreign company which has established a share register in Western

Australia and satisfies the Registrar that it is not carrying on or does not propose to carry on business in the State.

- (4) The provision is uniform with other States but consideration can be given to the matter at the appropriate time.

6.

## HOUSING

### *North-West: Eligibility*

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) Further to my questions on 17th and 23rd August, 1972, concerning discriminatory calculations of rentals against State Housing Commission tenants in the North, is the Minister aware that a tenant at Balga earning \$96.89 plus \$1.92 per week for each dependent child can qualify for a two bedroom brick flat at a standard rental of \$13.40 per week and that a tenant in Karratha earning \$102.89 plus \$1.92 for each dependent child will qualify for a two bedroom, fibro flat at a standard subsidised rental of \$28.30 which is more than double the rental of his city counterpart?
- (2) Will the Minister confirm that the large number of State Housing Commission rental units built in the past six years would not exist with their relatively low rentals if it were not for the income provided by the companies and residents in the North of this State?
- (3) Will the Minister consider equality of rentals throughout the State in the cause of development and decentralisation?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

- (1) Yes. The construction and servicing costs on which the Metropolitan Standard Rent of \$13.40 was based, when fixed in March, 1969, differed greatly from the current costs from which the rent of \$28.30 for a two-bedroom apartment at Karratha was assessed. This latter rent is an assessed, not a standard rent. The rent is further subject to rebate on application by an entitled person.
- (2) The State Housing Commission has always endeavoured to keep rents down in the North by various building subsidies and special rebate arrangements additional to the ordinary rental rebate scheme. It has always allowed a much higher level of income eligibility, as compared with the Metropolitan Region and Southern Country Centres.

- (3) This matter has never ceased to be considered by the present Government and the system of rents charged and rebates is currently under comprehensive review.

7.

## EDUCATION

### *Teachers' First Aid Qualifications*

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH, to the Leader of the House:

In view of their responsibilities particularly in country areas, what first aid qualifications are attained by graduates of Teachers' Training Colleges?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

All students in teachers' colleges are given basic training in First Aid as part of their compulsory course in Health Education. Some students do further training in depth. All students reach a level approximately equal to that of the St. John Ambulance Course.

## ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [4.47 p.m.]: I move, without notice—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Wednesday, the 6th September, at 2.30 p.m.

Question put and passed.

## PRISONS

### *Classification of Films: Ministerial Statement*

THE HON. R. H. C. STUBBS (South-East—Chief Secretary) [4.48 p.m.]: Mr. President, I desire leave to make a ministerial statement.

The PRESIDENT: There being no dissentient voice leave is granted.

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS: On Wednesday, the 16th August, 1972, I undertook to obtain answers to several questions concerning the type and number of films shown to inmates of correction institutions, which were asked by Mr. Wordsworth. Now, having obtained the information, I believe this subject would be of general information to all members. Accordingly, and with your permission, Mr. President, I give the answers to those questions as follows:—

- (a) There are no restrictions on classification of films.
- (b) No. The prisoners are not divided into groups.
- (c) The films are selected by inmate committees with the approval of the institution superintendents.

- (d) The list of films shown over the past six months is—

*Entertainment*

Donovan's Reef.  
Eldorado.  
Madigan.  
The Carpetbaggers.  
The Subterains.  
Follow that Camel.  
Carry on Cleo.  
They're a Weird Mob.  
Zulu.  
Cat Balou.  
McHale Joins the Air Force.  
Seven Guns for McGregor.  
The Magic Stone.  
New World Holiday.  
Grand Prix.  
Holiday Starts Tomorrow.  
Carry on Doctor.  
Maya.  
Stalag 17.  
Guess Who's Coming to Dinner.  
The Sheepman.  
The Great Locomotive Chase.  
The Plainsman.  
Knock on Wood.  
Fall Safe.  
Under the Yum-Yum Tree.  
Fort Utah.  
Coogan's Bluff.  
True Grit.  
Henry V.  
In Enemy Country.  
Barbarella.  
Global Affair.  
Sons of Katie Elder.  
Seven Ways from Sundown.  
Imitation General.  
Journey to Shiloh.  
House of Cards.  
Genghis Khan.  
Carry on Nurse.  
Westward Ho the Waggon.  
Court Jester.  
Ambushers.  
Man's Favourite Sport.  
A man Called Dagger.  
Yangtze Incident.  
3 Worlds of Gulliver.  
Nurse on Wheels.  
War Lover.  
Boeing Boeing.  
Alfie.  
Quiller Memorandum.  
Hellfighters.  
Hootenany Hoot.  
The Girl—The General.  
A Very Private Affair.  
The Revenge of Frankenstein.  
Jack of Diamonds.  
Age of Consent.  
Lord of the Flies.  
Kim.  
Flight of the Phoenix.  
Lemon Drop Kid.  
The Longest Day.

*Educational*

Safety in the Home.  
Safety on the Roads.  
Treatment & prevention of V.D.

Child Rearing.  
Child Birth.  
Household Sanitation.  
Australia's Aborigines.  
Integration.  
Travel Films.  
The Arts—Music.  
Drug Addiction.  
Alcoholism.  
Billy Graham—Religious.  
Rothman's Sports Library.

**LOTTERIES (CONTROL) ACT  
AMENDMENT BILL**

*Introduction and First Reading*

Bill introduced, on motion by The Hon. R.H.C. Stubbs (Chief Secretary), and read a first time.

**TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL  
(No. 2)**

*Second Reading: Defeated*

Debate resumed from the 24th August.

**THE HON. S. T. J. THOMPSON** (Lower Central) [4.54 p.m.]: Let me say at the outset that I am rising to oppose the Bill before us. After having listened to some 20 speeches which have been made in this debate it is quite possible that I will repeat some of the things that have been said. My reasons for opposing the Bill will be outlined as I proceed.

In moving the second reading of the Bill the Minister said that the main reason for the Government bringing the Bill forward was that this was in line with Labor policy. I was rather surprised at that comment. I should have thought that more emphasis would be placed on the reduction of the road toll. There was very little reference in the Minister's speech to the reduction of the road toll, other than the mention of the views of two eminent surgeons. That was the only occasion in the Minister's speech when the road toll was mentioned.

In fact, a large portion of his speech was taken up in countering the suggestion that a separate traffic control authority be set up. I believe that at the present time our aim should be to do something as quickly as possible to help in reducing the road toll.

Over the past two weeks I have made a careful check of many of the speeches that have been made in this debate, and it has been evident that not a large number of speakers have much confidence that this piece of legislation will achieve the desired result. Some suggestions have been made as to how a reduction in the road toll could be effected; and in the main the emphasis was placed on driver education. I agree this is very important; but with all due respect to those who have put forward this proposal I say that despite the best possible driver education being given to a

young person, after he has spent a few hours at a cabaret or night club all he has learnt from such driver education is disregarded in a very short while.

I feel a lot of training has to be given to the individual and this is more than just driver education, before we will achieve any success in the reduction of the road toll. From a quotation made by Mr. Logan in his contribution to the debate, it would appear that even the most ardent supporter of this piece of legislation—*The West Australian*—now has some reservations as to how much effect the legislation will have.

My reasons for opposing the Bill are in the main the views held by my electors; they are absolutely opposed to it. This is borne out by the large number of telegrams and communications I have received in respect of this matter in the last few days. These were from—

Mt. Marshall Shire  
Trayning Shire  
Wyalkatchem Shire  
Beverley Shire  
Geraldton Retail Traders Association  
Sixty members of a Farmers' Union branch  
Two private individuals of Wagin.  
A business proprietor in Geraldton  
A resident of Manjimup.

The last mentioned communication is interesting. It states, "I see no obvious advantages in police traffic takeover." To continue with the list of communications I have received—

Dumbleyung Shire  
Narrogin Shire  
Broomehill Shire  
Cuballing Shire  
Gnowangerup Shire  
West Arthur Shire  
A private individual of Wagin  
Shire Clerk of Corrigin  
Donnybrook Shire  
Kalamunda Shire  
Woodanilling Shire  
Wagin Shire  
A gentleman from Katanning  
A lady from Katanning  
Carnamah Shire.

So, we can see that a large percentage of the electors in the country areas are opposed to the measure; and this is also one of my reasons for opposing it.

My main reason for opposing it is that I think at the present time we have in the country areas the foundation of an excellent system of traffic control. In some country districts, particularly in my electorate, we find a joint system of traffic control. By that I mean the country traffic inspectors act with the co-operation of the police. I must point out that they have received full co-operation from the police, and they have worked very well together in the area that I represent.

I have a feeling that perhaps if we were to foster this proposal throughout the State it would prove to be much more economical, both financially and with regard to manpower. It would achieve the result we want. I can visualise that we would need to hold seminars to train inspectors, and to co-ordinate the system of training. It is also possible that some shires will require financial assistance. It seems that some of them might be handing over control of traffic for financial reasons.

I visualise the situation where we will eventually have a central traffic control which will be more costly than the present system. However, there would not be the constant issuing of infringement notices.

I think it was Mr. Dellar who mentioned the idea that we would reach the stage where traffic inspectors would not have to prefer charges. However, human nature would need to change somewhat before we achieved such a situation in Western Australia. I feel that the joint control we have at present is the most suitable for Western Australia, especially when one considers our financial and manpower situation.

Regarding the manpower situation, in a recent issue of *The Sunday Times* there appeared reference to the ever-growing rate of violence in Western Australian towns and cities. The figures for murder were up 60 per cent., from 10 to 16. Those for attempted murder up 110 per cent., from four to nine. The figures for manslaughter were up 100 per cent., from four to eight, and those for serious assault were up 63 per cent., from 96 to 157. The figures for rape were up 120 per cent., from 15 to 33; and those for robbery with violence were up 44 per cent., 76 to 112.

It seems quite obvious that our manpower resources in the Police Department are taxed to the limit at the present time, without the imposition of the additional burden of the absolute control of traffic in country areas.

The Bill now before us will provide for the incorporation of some of the existing traffic inspectors in the Police Force, but a large number will be excluded. Mr. Dans said he was not opposed to the setting up of another authority, but we have to realise that we would require time to effect a takeover because we would need to consider the question of working out the seniority of the officers affected. Many of the traffic inspectors would be inducted into the Police Force but what will their position be with regard to seniority? Perhaps this is something which the unions could look at. Many inspectors have had long experience in traffic matters and I think it would be a poor situation if, overnight, they were inducted into the Police Force on a junior constable's wage.

The Hon. N. McNeill: They also have to be under 45 years of age.

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: Yes, they also have to be under 45 years of age.

A comment in the Minister's second reading speech rather bears out my idea that the system of joint control which we now have in Western Australia is not such a bad one after all. The Minister did not intend to imply this but he referred to the fact that New Zealand has a rather good scheme. He went on to say that, in fact, there was not a single traffic authority in New Zealand because apart from the Transport Department there is a good deal of police involvement, as well as the power vested in 17 local authorities. The Minister said that, in point of fact, there is no single traffic authority in New Zealand. He said there are many probable reasons for the favourable road accident situation in New Zealand.

Perhaps the reason for the favourable situation is the fragmentation of control—the joint system of control, which I am advocating now for our country areas. I feel that this would be the quickest and easiest way to achieve what we desire. I would not like to be too optimistic of the results at this stage.

An article appeared in yesterday's Press as follows:—

#### CONCERN OVER CAR 'ADDICTION'

MELBOURNE, Sunday—The Minister for Shipping and Transport, Mr. Nixon, said today that Australians had to get rid of their drug-like addiction to cars.

Though everyone was making a conscious effort to reduce the road toll, people would still be killed on Australia's roads.

I want to emphasise that point—

... people would still be killed on Australia's roads.

To continue—

"An accident can happen to anyone anywhere at any time," he said. "The only sure way in which it can't happen is to leave your car in the garage.

"The road toll is one of man's greatest social problems of the 20th Century. It will be changed only by human action.

"Everyone has his role to play, even if it is to walk to the shop instead of taking the car."

Mr. Nixon said that cars were safer now than five years ago but a combination of ego, frustration, tension and alcohol caused accidents.

It would appear I am not the only one who thinks alcohol is the cause of many accidents. To continue—

The young driver was another problem.

Because of the high death rate among teenagers, who could drink and drive legally when they were 18, his department's experts were studying the suggestions of training programmes for young drivers and the fitting of governors to their cars to prevent them from going fast.

Although we are the only State which does not have a single traffic authority it is apparent that the same problem exists throughout Australia. Another newspaper article to which I will refer was published on the 26th August, 1972. It is a notice regarding the licensing of ex-country vehicles, and it sets out the various places at which the vehicles can be licensed. However, the advertisement omits to state the days on which inspections can be carried out.

I was rather shocked to find that the hours during which vehicles can be licensed at the Lake Grace traffic office are between 9.00 a.m. and 12 noon and between 2.30 p.m. and 3.30 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: That area is under police control.

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: Yes. I think the advertisement to which I have just referred should have included the hours during which vehicles could be examined. It is quite obvious that many people will be disappointed when they turn up at the office to register their vehicles.

The Hon. C. R. Abbey: That is the present position. It could change for the worse.

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: I hope it does not change for the worse because conditions are tough enough already in a place like Lake Grace.

I received a very interesting traffic summary from the Shire of Swan, portion of which I propose to read to the House. I will not read all of it because it is a rather lengthy screed. It is as follows:—

1.1 Traffic Road Patrol Staff. A total of 101 full time uniformed Traffic Inspectors are employed by country Local Authorities in road patrol duties whereas 113 Police Patrol Officers are attached to the Road Patrol Section of the Police Traffic Branch.

The Minister for Police has advised us that the Police Department will be increased by an estimated 139 officers. To continue—

1.2 The effective road patrol time of the Country Traffic Inspector is approx 60% after allowing for General Court appearances, escort duties, attendance at traffic accidents and office reports. The effective road patrol time for a Police Patrol Officer was 39.94% during the 1969/70

financial year. (a rise of 5% on the previous 68/69 year. This 5% increase is the result of the introduction of Traffic Infringement Notices)

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: Is the honourable member aware that Mr. Heitman arranged for the submission from the Shire of Swan to be incorporated in *Hansard*?

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: If that is so, I will not read all of the submission. An interesting portion is that which refers to expenditure. It is as follows:—

7.1 Traffic Control Expenditure. During the 1969-70 financial year Local Government Authorities in the country contributed \$841,413 towards Traffic Control (Salaries, Wages, vehicle running and replacement costs etc. Figures taken from Annual returns of all Country Municipalities, presently carrying out the function of Traffic Control and held by Local Government Department).

That is particularly interesting because the Minister for Police has stated that the cost of the takeover, on a State-wide basis, would be \$591,990—not including housing—and the estimated annual running cost would be \$689,500. It can be seen that the whole operation could be carried out much cheaper under joint control and co-operation, and that is what I am advocating for country areas.

One member in this House made play of the nonexamination of vehicles before licensing. However, the situation is very much the same in the metropolitan area once the first license has been issued. We passed legislation a few years ago dealing with this particular matter but nothing much has eventuated as yet. To my knowledge, no attempt has been made to implement the provisions of that legislation and perhaps that is because of the cost of setting up inspection centres.

The matter of the inspection of vehicles is rather a sore point in country areas, and much play has been made of the number of vehicles which have been rejected by the police. There has been little mention of the trivial nature of the faults which have been found. The faults have been minor—a cracked glass in a tail-light, a side light not working, and so on.

With all due respect I would like to say that the so-called unroadworthy vehicles used in the country areas are very seldom involved in accidents. I ask: How often is a farmer's truck involved in an accident? It is the farmers' trucks which are usually the hardest hit when examined by the police when there is a takeover of traffic. However, very rarely is one of those vehicles involved in an accident. Too much emphasis is placed on this point.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: They are very trivial matters.

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: Yes, I agree; they are very trivial.

The manpower which is now available could be used to far greater advantage than is the case now. The Minister, by way of an interjection, said that there was no difficulty in getting recruits for the Police Force. I believe that a significant number of resignations have been lodged and I would like the Minister to comment on the resignations when he replies, because if we have no difficulty in obtaining recruits, it is hard to understand why so many of the police stations are understaffed. There is a shortage of officers who can be used for replacement purposes. It is just not possible to replace a man who happens to go on leave, or who is transferred from one area to another. There does not appear to be the men available to fill the positions that exist at the moment.

I would point out that in my area there would be a shortage of police officers—I am now talking about those who should be spread over the various districts. It is for these reasons, added to which is the saving of expenditure and finance generally, that I honestly believe we would have a better system of control by allowing the present system to continue and improving it.

I realise and appreciate there are some who are hostile towards traffic inspectors because of convictions they might have suffered. When a person is stopped by a traffic inspector it tends to annoy that person; people do not like being pulled up after having passed over those nasty strips across the road. I think it was Mr. MacKinnon who said that these are generally placed only in the most difficult spots. It is amazing, however, how these strips can be left at the same spot for a considerable time and yet continue to trap people who may be speeding.

By the same token, it is possible that we do have some traffic inspectors who are inclined to be difficult, but the opposite would also apply, and there is little doubt that some policemen could also be difficult. This is very natural where one has to contend with the human element. It does not matter what legislation we introduce, this problem will continue.

I return to my main point. If we are to do something about reducing the road toll, we must do something about improving our roads. That is the first essential. With those few remarks I support the Bill.

THE HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan) [5.18 p.m.]: I have not had the advantage of having received a large number of telegrams as has Mr. Syd Thompson. None of the local authorities in the electorate I represent have seen fit to send me telegrams on this subject. I daresay

this is because they are in the metropolitan area and they are not quite so concerned as are the country shire councils as to what will emerge from this Bill. In fact I have only had one communication from any member of the public during the passage of this legislation.

That, however, does not in any way derogate from the seriousness of the measure so far as some of the people who may be affected by it are concerned. I am now referring to traffic inspectors from some local authorities who may find their jobs and futures are prejudiced as a result of the action which may flow from this Bill. I say this because of the suggestion that men over 45 will not be employed by the Police Department and also because of the fact that their superannuation and other items of pay and remuneration would not in any way be identical with those which they enjoy at present.

This is a very serious matter for a family man in a country town; one who might have given long and faithful service to a local authority. Not only is it a serious matter for such a man, but it is a serious matter for all of us, because I do not think we want to be party to an Act which will result in persons having their future jeopardised for reasons not attributable to them.

But although this may be important to the people concerned, and to all of us, in a sense this is a side issue of the Bill. I admit it is an important side issue, but nevertheless it is a side issue.

After having listened attentively to the comments made by members—and I must be one of the last members to speak to this Bill—I have been impressed by the fact that the members who have spoken appear to believe that a separate traffic authority is a better solution to this problem.

Mr. Syd Thompson who has just spoken has indicated, as have other speakers, that he favours the retention of the present system; that is to say, he believes the present system as administered by local authorities is an equally desirable system as that suggested by the Minister. I certainly gained that impression from listening to Mr. Syd Thompson in combination with other speakers. The suggestion they make is not for a separate traffic authority at all, but for a system whereby the police operate in respect of the metropolitan area, and, apart from those local authorities who elect to transfer their authority to the police, the remaining local authorities operate and accept responsibility in respect of their particular areas.

I gather there are few members who agree that the present system should remain absolutely unchanged. As I understand it that does not appear to be the view of the majority of the country local

authorities. Generally speaking the Country Shires Councils' Association favours the creation of a separate authority.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: That is not necessarily so.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: The Country Shires Councils' Association favours a separate authority.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: That is the body to which I was referring. I, personally, favour the creation of a separate authority for the entire State and not just for the country areas. I believe it should take over the traffic control in the metropolitan area; and I believe it will. I feel this is an inevitable step which will be forced upon the Government of Western Australia no matter what its political colour may be; because it seems to me to be quite essential that there should be some standardised procedure which applies throughout the entire State; some standardised procedures in respect of registration, licensing, traffic control, organisation, and what may be called interception and the enforcement of traffic control.

We have examples in Western Australia of local authorities who have used traffic control purely as a means to obtain revenue. This, of course, is a most deplorable situation. It is quite deplorable to think that any local authority will so prostitute the duties entrusted to it that it will use traffic control for the purpose of obtaining revenue.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: None of them has done that.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: They have.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: They have not.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: They have. As I was saying to you, Mr. President, there are occasions of which I know where local authorities have used traffic control for the purpose of obtaining revenue. I can quote examples where this has occurred.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Well, quote them.

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: I will quote them to the honourable member privately because I believe this is a side issue and I do not want to be sidetracked.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Quote them now.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: Thank you, Sir. As I was saying, the main issue is whether the police or a separate independent traffic authority should control traffic throughout the State. To me that appears to be the main issue.

I come down firmly on the side of having a separate traffic authority because I believe the police at present are seriously overworked. I was interested in the comments made by Mr. Syd Thompson when he quoted the figures concerning the increase in crimes of violence; those of manslaughter and of other crimes that have occurred recently.



I know from my own knowledge that it is becoming very difficult for the Police Force successfully to investigate not only the major crimes of which the honourable member spoke but also many of the minor and petty crimes that occur in our community.

I know a number of offences that have been reported to the police over the past few years, in respect of which they have been unable to apprehend the offenders. I say that without in any way attempting to criticise the Police Force at all; indeed, I greatly admire the manner in which the police go about their work; I admire their capability but there is little doubt they are seriously overworked; and if we are told the true story by the Press, and the media generally, and by commentators, concerning crimes that occur in our community being on the increase, I think it is true that the police will have more and more difficulty and will be under greater pressure to perform their tasks with every day that passes.

I do not believe it is reasonable to give the police more tasks; tasks which are not really the concern of the Police Force at all. I now refer to traffic control which is probably not a proper task for the Police Force.

I am aware of the fact that the police should be available in areas where elements of crime exist in traffic accidents. I know the Minister is aware of the burglaries and violent crimes that occur in connection with traffic matters—some of which are not yet solved—where it may be desirable for the police to take some action. There is no reason at all why they should not.

My friend, Mr. Williams, said this when talking to the Bill; and I too believe that the police can quite easily make it their business as a crime detection force to come in where there is a criminal element involved. I do not believe that crime detection will suffer in any way.

I feel, however, it is important that we do not overload the Police Force and give it more work than it can conveniently handle, and I think this is the tendency in the Bill; that the police will now be asked to perform more duties than they have ever performed in the past; that they will have to make more use of their already depleted manpower.

It is possible the force may be able to recruit more people in the lower echelons, but it will have to make use of the manpower in the higher echelons when handling the matters to which I have referred and, accordingly, the force will be disadvantaged by having to carry out these additional tasks.

I know it is quite easy for us to talk about increasing the number in the Police Force, but the control eventually comes back to the few at the top who will be burdened with work to such an increasing

degree that the ordinary and proper crime detection of the Police Force will be affected.

As I have said, at the moment the Police Force is under increasing pressure from criminal elements, and as the years go by we will find the men will have their work cut out trying to keep up with the crime rate and other offences which occur and which they are required to investigate and solve.

It is not enough to merely investigate a crime; it must be solved. We all know that there are a great many crimes which are unsolved; there are hundred and hundreds of such crimes in our community. I say this without in any way meaning to reflect on the ability of the Police Force.

I want to make it clear to the Minister that what I say is no reflection whatever on his department or on the Police Force which I believe does a very fine job under most difficult circumstances. But I would not want to see the force overburdened or loaded down with work in the future.

For that reason alone I feel this is essential; that the Police Force itself will find it necessary to have a separate authority established. For those reasons I am afraid I cannot support the Bill as it stands at the moment, unless the Minister is able to indicate in some manner that he himself proposes to establish a separate authority.

I cannot really expect the Minister to say he will do that because I am aware that he takes his instructions from Cabinet and it would be too much for me to ask him to say that. However, if the Minister suggested that a separate authority would be established, then I would be delighted and I would immediately give my support to the Bill.

I have looked at this measure carefully to see whether it is capable of amendment in some way. I believe it is capable of amendment but only in such a way that a further Act would have to be passed in order to implement the provisions of the Bill. I believe this is undesirable for two reasons. The first is that we, as legislators, should try to amend Bills in a meaningful way so that the amended legislation will be coherent and capable of being understood by everyone. The second reason is that I believe we would end up confusing the public because they have not examined this legislation as carefully as have the many members who have spoken to the debate in this House. I want to make it clear that most members who have spoken to the debate have been more closely associated with this issue than I because the country authorities will be the ones affected by the legislation. For these reasons I believe it is undesirable for us to attempt to amend the Bill. This is unfortunate because, if it were possible to amend the measure decently and cleanly,

in such a way as to make it clear that we do not wish to burden the Police Force further but that we intend to set up an independent group, branch, department, or authority which would administer traffic throughout the State, then I would be the first to propose such an amendment.

For those reasons I cannot support the Bill as it stands. I shall be interested to hear the Minister's comments in reply.

**THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH** (North Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [5.32 p.m.]: The importance of this Bill can be measured by the number of members in this Chamber who have taken part in the debate. Mr. Medcalf was probably the 22nd or 23rd member to speak and the debate has even brought some of the usually more silent members to their feet.

It is not my intention to rehash everything that has been said. It is as clear as a pikestaff that although we seem to be a long way apart in words, we may not be so far apart in fact if we consider the remarks made by the Minister and some of the members on the Government side of the House.

It is clear that the Liberal Party favours the setting up of an independent authority. As Mr. Medcalf said, it must be stated clearly that this opinion is expressed without casting any aspersions on the Police Force. In fact, Mr. President, you have heard me stand up in this House to defend the Police Force of Western Australia. I have been joined in this defence by the Minister for Police because the Police Force means law and order in the community.

Before I proceed further with my remarks on the Bill, I would like to return to the proceedings of the House on Wednesday, the 23rd August. On Tuesday evening, the 22nd August, I scribbled out a question which I handed to the Minister for Police as the House adjourned. I asked him whether he would be good enough to answer the question which I intended to ask without notice the following day. He took the piece of paper upon which I had scribbled the question and on the 23rd August I rose in my place and I restated from memory the question I had written out. I asked—

I gave the Minister for Police notice of this question yesterday evening. It arises from the debate that took place last night on the Traffic Act Amendment Bill (No. 2). I will put my question in simple terms, as follows:—

- (1) Can he tell me whether there is anything to prevent an officer, who was employed in the Police Force and who resigned to become either a traffic inspector

with some local authority, or for some other reason, from rejoining the Police Force?

- (2) If not, what are the reasons for his being unable to rejoin?

The Minister said that I had given him notice of the question but I had couched the question in terms different from my written note of the previous evening. He then proceeded to answer the question I had asked him on the Wednesday night; and in doing so he anticipated the reason for my question and answered it in that way. I then attempted to say how much I appreciated the fact that he was able to see through what I was asking him when it did not really matter whether he saw through it or not. From my reading of *Hansard*, I realised that I couched my further question without notice very clumsily. I was then stopped by you, Mr. President, and I now find that the final remark I made that afternoon could have been taken as being disrespectful to the Chair. For that I would like to apologise. I do not make it a practice to be disrespectful to the Chair and I am sorry for my remark, but I was a little upset. The Minister was trying to lead me along by saying I did not ask the question that way and he then gave me what I referred to as a "Dorothy Dix" answer to the question that I did not ask.

This afternoon I asked the Minister for Police another question without notice and I am grateful to him for his answer. The question asked whether the Government intended to accede to the request by the Australian Labor Party for an inquiry into the Police Force. It was a straightout question but its purpose was anticipated and the answer was in the form of an excuse rather than a direct answer. I asked—

Has a decision been made on the request from the Australian Labor Party seeking an inquiry into certain conditions prevailing in the Western Australian Police Force?

And the Minister decided to answer in the following terms:—

A request for an inquiry to be construed as a genuine objective approach aimed at improving job satisfaction and making it more attractive to recruits and not to be taken as an attack upon the Police Force, was received from the State Executive of the Australian Labor Party and a decision has been made thereon by the Government.

I did not want to know that; I wanted to know whether the Government intended to succumb to the pressure put on it by the A.L.P. for an inquiry into the Police Force.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I thought the House should know what the actual request was from the A.L.P.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Minister did not tell us the actual request.

The Hon. J. Dolan: It is in the beginning of the answer.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Minister did not tell us what the request was.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I told you that.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Minister did not tell us what the request was. I presumed that the answer to my question would be "Yes" or "No." However, the Minister stated that after he had looked into the matter and submitted it to Cabinet, Cabinet decided it was not necessary to have an inquiry. I am very pleased indeed with that decision. This is the second time that the Minister has foiled an approach by the A.L.P. for an inquiry into the Police Force, and I am very happy about it.

I would have been very displeased if Cabinet had decided to instigate an inquiry because it would be an inopportune time with the proposed police takeover of traffic. I mention this because the answer I received today is in keeping with the answer given on Wednesday, the 23rd August.

I feel compelled to state that the remarks I intend to make during this debate are in no way affected or activated by the comments of a traffic inspector or policeman about my behaviour on the roads. These men, whether they be traffic inspectors employed by the local authorities or policemen, have a job to do. In my experience they do their job very efficiently. I am not persuaded one way or another on this issue because I am in the bad books of some traffic officer or policeman. To the best of my knowledge I am in nobody's bad books at the present time.

I favour, as does Mr. Medcalf, total control of traffic by a separate authority. I repeat my earlier remarks: I do not think we are very far away from this. I feel that some members on the Government side who spoke to this Bill are not very far away from this line of thought. Mr. Dans commenced his speech with these words—

I rise to support the Bill, but I do so with mixed feelings. I certainly believe that at some stage this State should have a separate traffic authority, but we are not considering that aspect tonight.

I asked him how long he thought that will be and he replied—

Give me time to come to that and I will tell the Leader of the Opposition in due course.

I then said—

You will not forget to tell me before you sit down?

And Mr. Dans replied—

No. Do not worry about that. I have made a note of it.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I hope I did not forget.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is as near as we ever got to it.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: He must have lost the note.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: To the best of my recollection the honourable member did forget. I am sure he did not forget purposely, but nevertheless he did forget.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Perhaps he could tell you now by way of interjection.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Interjections are very unruly, as you would tell us Mr. President. Mr. Dans is a man of common sense, and he knows that whether traffic is controlled by a separate authority or by the Police Force, the takeover cannot be achieved overnight—in fact, it will take some time.

Mr. Dellar made his contribution to the debate and he indicated his intention of supporting the Bill. He then said—

The debate on this legislation has been very interesting. I have observed that the Liberal Party does have a policy which it did not have before.

I am sorry that the honourable member was not told this before, but he could not be expected to know all our policies. However, we did have a policy and we have reaffirmed that policy. In 1971 we stated that traffic should be controlled by one central authority.

Then, I think the last honourable member on the Government side who had something to say was Mr. Leeson, and among his remarks he said this—

The final point I want to make is that at this stage I oppose the setting up of a separate statutory authority.

So we can believe that at some other stage the honourable member will not be opposed to the setting up of a separate statutory authority to control traffic. Mr. Leeson continued as follows:—

My reason, firstly, is because of the cost involved.

I will stop my quotation at that point. Last year I asked the Minister a question as to what costs would be involved. Somewhat trenchantly he had taken a local shire representative to task for something which, in the opinion of the Minister, was ridiculous and completely irresponsible. I am now referring to an article which appeared in *The West Australian* of the 24th July, 1971, when a Mr. N. E. King said that in seeking to take over control of traffic, there was nothing further from the Government's thoughts than the saving of lives. Mr. King also said that the Government wanted to increase its revenue.

The Minister became irate over this statement, and in the same article he was reported to have said—

This is a completely irresponsible statement. It is ridiculous to suggest that the Government would put revenue before the saving of lives.

We are not going to make money out of this—it's going to be an expensive proposition.

After reading that article, I asked the Minister the following question:—

In view of the statement reported to have been made by him in *The West Australian* dated the 24th July, 1971, concerning the proposed takeover by the Police of the control of traffic in which he said "We are not going to make money out of this—it's going to be an expensive proposition"—

- (1) What does the Minister consider the additional annual cost to the State will be?
- (2) Could he enlarge generally on the statement "it's going to be an expensive proposition"?

To that question I received a typical Minister for Police reply.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I think a Minister has the right to answer a question in the way he thinks it should be answered.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I did not say that the Minister had not done so.

The Hon. J. Dolan: You are insinuating that.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: No, I am not.

The Hon. J. Dolan: Oh yes, you are!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am simply referring to the way the Minister answers a question.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I do not mind.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not mind how the Minister answers the question. I have found that when the Minister wants to say "Yes" or "No" he does so, but when he wants to say something else he does that, too.

The Hon. J. Dolan: As you used to do.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes, as I used to do. In his reply, the Minister said—

As the Hon. Mr. Griffith is well aware, the passage which he quoted was part of a statement which I made, criticising completely irresponsible allegations by the President of the Wickepin Shire as to the Government's motives in seeking to take over the control of traffic in country areas.

I was aware of that. Then the Minister went on to say—

The answers to the questions are—

Estimated additional costs of traffic control on a State-wide basis—

- (1) Establishment costs (exclusive of housing)—\$591,990.
- Annual running costs—\$689,500.

- (2) Costs include staff, buildings, motor vehicles, radio and traffic control equipment, but do not include the cost of providing additional housing which cannot be estimated at this stage.

I have no quarrel with that. But, Mr. President, do you not think that, in a speech composed of 38 half-foolscap pages, the Minister would have given the House some indication of what the cost to the State would be if the police were to take over traffic control in country areas?

The Hon. J. Dolan: That is not the only answer to a question in which I gave figures. Members can find such information for themselves from previous answers to questions I have given.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Does the Minister mean to tell me that when he introduces a Bill, the purpose of which is arbitrarily to take over the control of traffic from local authorities and place it under the control of the police, that members can find information for themselves?

The Hon. J. Dolan: I always did.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Did the Minister?

The Hon. J. Dolan: Yes.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: When the Minister has a little spare time I would like to go through two or three *Hansards* with him to show him that when I sat where he is now sitting and the Minister sat on this side of the House, the Minister for Police even used to tell me how to spell.

The Hon. J. Dolan: Will you be quite honest and say who is correct; you or I? Be perfectly honest about it.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I have always found that, in the opinion of the Minister, he is always correct.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I do not say that at all.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The point I am trying to make here is that in a matter of such great importance to the State would it not have been reasonable for the Minister, uninvited, to have told the members of the House what the police takeover of traffic control in country areas was going to cost the State? Would that have been unreasonable?

The Hon. J. Dolan: I do not know. You have queried so many things in that statement. You have referred to those things I would not have even dreamed of. I am not a seer.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Minister is not a what?

The Hon. J. Dolan: A s-e-e-r.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: My wife often tells me that quite often I do not always hear what she says, and I just wanted to make sure of what the Minister

said and, once again, he spelt the word for me. In my opinion I think it would have been reasonable for the Minister to give the House the information we sought. One can look through the speeches of Ministers in this House when they have introduced many Bills affecting the expenditure of the State and one will find details of what the cost of a particular proposition will be, but I could not find any details of expenditure in this Bill. So I think it would not have been unreasonable for the State or the Government to justify, on a question of expenditure, what effect the Bill would have on the public purse, but we did not get that information. So I will have to leave it at that.

The Hon. J. Dolan: If you can be patient I will tell you in my reply now that you have asked me.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: If this is the way we have to extract information from the Government, in the future I will have to be prepared to use extractors and to plead with the Government to tell us this, that, or the other concerning the legislation it brings forward. All through the debate on this Bill the Minister has refrained from interjecting, but as soon as I rise in my seat he cannot refrain from doing so.

The Hon. J. Dolan: You started it.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: There the Minister goes again! As soon as I start to speak the Minister just cannot help himself; I do not know why.

The PRESIDENT: Order, please! The Minister will please address his remarks to the Chair.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Did the Minister hear that?

The Hon. J. Dolan: The President was speaking to the Leader of the Opposition.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: What the President said was that if the Minister addresses his remarks to the Chair I can get on with what I want to say.

The Hon. J. Dolan: He was speaking to you.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It will not be long before I am back where the Minister is sitting, but I do not want to hurry it that much. A little good humour does not hurt on occasions. We do not lose sight of the important aspects of the matter we are discussing and it does no harm to have a little bit of humour on occasions. However, I make the point that up till now members are unaware of what it will cost the State for the police to take over the control of traffic in country areas.

Some days ago when, I think, Mr. Heitman was speaking, mention was made of the fact that the Northam Town Council had indicated it would hand over the con-

trol of traffic to the police. Mr. Logan interjected at this point by saying that the council was going to change that.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: I said that the council was going to change its decision.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I thank the honourable member. In reply to that interjection the Minister said, "That is what you think." At least, I think that is what he said. I made a few inquiries about this and I found that the Northam Town Council had met on the 8th August and decided to hand over the control of traffic to the police. The council wrote to the Minister's office acquainting him of this decision on the 9th August. I understand that some officer in the Minister's office telephoned the council to find out what its decision was, and the official order was signed by the Minister on the 18th August. I am not certain of the date, but if members will look at the *Government Gazette* of the 25th August they will find the order there. I am not suggesting there is anything wrong with this.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I will tell you about it afterwards.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Minister will tell me about it?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I thought the Leader of the Opposition was telling us about it.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I was merely relating that I had made some inquiries and ascertained one or two facts. I do not want to be told about it. I compliment the Minister on the speed at which his office worked. The Northam Town Council had another meeting on the 19th August, the day after the papers were signed, if that date be correct, and I understand that the council did not alter its decision, because there were insufficient votes to effect this. I merely mention that in passing.

Mr. Medcalf, when speaking, said that he had not received a great deal in the way of communications from shires or from people. I cannot say the same. I must say that up till about 10 days ago I had received little or no communication. I had certainly received a letter from the Swan Shire which indicated to me the approach that had been made to the Minister when he had been asked to consider the matter from the point of view of the Country Shire Councils' Association, and one or two members have referred to this letter, but the Minister's attitude was indicated in his reply to the Swan Shire, when he said—

As the appropriate Minister it is my obligation to carry out the Government's policy as indicated. The 'take-over' plan has been prepared and when completed it will be implemented.

At present there is no necessity to debate the pros' and cons' of the question.

The only thing that was left out was the full stop, but I can understand this. I think, as Mr. Medcalf has said, the Minister is following the policy laid down by the Government, but I have a feeling that if the Bill happens to be defeated the Minister will feel somewhat relieved.

It is true that some local authorities have voluntarily handed the control of traffic in their areas over to the police, but it is also true—I think probably as a result of one or two of my own colleagues indicating some qualified support for the legislation—that shires, organisations, and people have started to communicate with me, and whilst it is not my purpose to bore members with all these details, I feel I have to bring to the notice of the House and of the Minister, to some extent, the communications I have received. Why do you smile, Mr. Dolan?

The Hon. J. Dolan: I was just talking to the Leader of the House.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: He cannot help smiling when he looks at me.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I can understand that.

I want to bring these to the notice of the Minister because, after all, local government is the voice of the people it represents. I have heard it said in this Chamber that members to whom people protest are their voice in the Parliament of the land, and that we make the law of the land, and so these people have sent communications to me, and what a pile I have received!

One bundle comprises telegrams and letters from between 40 and 50 shire councils throughout the State asking me to oppose the Bill before Parliament.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Are they to oppose the Bill or to set up a separate traffic authority?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The honourable member himself can be the judge of that when I have read some of the telegrams. Would he pose his question again?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Perhaps I should rephrase the question. Are they supporting a separate authority or do they want to retain the *status quo*?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I think it is fair to say that the honourable member can judge the situation from some of the communications I will read. However, I have gathered that the message the local authorities desire to get through to me is that they are opposed to this Bill, and they seem to have stated that in quite clear terms.

The following telegram is from the Municipal Officers' Association of Australia, Western Australian Branch:—

This Association is opposed to the proposed extension of police traffic control into local government areas and request your support in defeating this Bill Stop

The next one is from the Eneabba Progress Association, and reads—

We strongly disapprove of proposed police takeover of country traffic. We support decentralisation

Another is from the President of the Country Regional Councils, while the following is from the Shire Clerk of the Goomalling Shire Council:—

Strongly opposed to police takeover of traffic control.

The President of the Institute of Highway and Road Patrol Officers sent the following telegram:—

Road patrol officers are opposed to police control of traffic extension into country local government areas.

The next one reads—

Consider your action on traffic takeover deplorable Stop Respectfully suggest police control backwards step Stop Metro area accident rate not lessening. . .

That telegram is addressed to "Hon. Arthur Griffiths, M.L.C.," and I think there was a mistake in identity.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: I do not think so. I think he is right on the ball.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: At that stage I had not spoken, but, like the Minister, had been intently listening to other members.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: It's funny. I did not receive any telegrams.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Another telegram reads—

Have noted with regret your support of Labor's traffic Bill and sincerely urge you to reconsider all arguments before taking this step.

Another case of mistaken identity!

I have received from shires all over the place telegrams similar to those I read first. I do not think I should bore the House by reading them all, but I would like to make them available to the Minister if he wishes to see them.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I have read so many of them.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I have no doubt the Minister has, and he has turned a cold shoulder on the whole jolly lot.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I would not say that.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Minister has said to these people, "I am here to put Labor Party policy into effect," and they have got the message. So they

are starting to communicate with me as Leader of the Opposition in this House—perhaps as a last resort. If the Minister has had the benefit of these messages before, I am not surprised he does not want to see those I have received.

I received a letter from the Coorow Coastal Ward Ratepayers Association in which similar views are expressed; and likewise a letter from the Northern Branch of the Municipal Officers' Association. Similar letters were also received from the Shire of Plantagenet and the Institute of Highway and Road Patrol Officers. They are all here.

I have divided the letters and telegrams I have received into several bundles, and the one I have in my hand now contains letters and telegrams from private people, many of them traffic inspectors. One letter indicates that 150 employees of the Wanneroo Shire object to the police takeover of traffic, and Wanneroo is one of the few areas which partly comes into my province. I just mention that in passing. This bundle includes a letter, dated the 1st September, which reads as follows:—

We, the undersigned, seek your co-operation and assistance in defeating the Traffic Act Amendment Bill No. 2, which is currently before the Legislative Council.

Should this Bill be passed, we feel that a grave injustice will have been perpetrated on the rural communities of this State. . . .

The letter has appended to it a large number of signatures.

The final two groups of communications which I received were in the form of copies of letters written by shires to the Shire of Swan which apparently has been fairly active in its opposition to the Government's proposal. The Shire of Swan wrote letters to those shires which had not already been taken over by the police, and I have been provided with copies of the replies which add to the opposition to the Bill.

This afternoon at quite a late hour I was again given another bundle, which I have not had an opportunity to count. This morning I received a telephone call from the A.B.C. and I was asked whether I had received a petition from an organisation which calls itself the Association for the Preservation of Local Government. I indicated I had not. In fact it was the first I knew of it. However, this afternoon I was given a bundle of letters, each one signed by an individual. The text of the message is—

I am very concerned with the move to pass through Parliament the "Traffic Act Amendment Bill". This Bill is another attempt to erode the powers of Local Government, and a further centralisation of those powers.

As Local Government is the Government closest to the people, its preservation is of paramount importance, and if one is to believe in decentralisation, we must start with retaining power within the Local Government structure.

It has not yet been proved in the Shires where the police have already taken over the traffic, now have a better type of traffic control, and that it has resulted in a decline in the country road accident toll.

I would ask you to do everything in your power to "STOP THE TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL", and make certain that the control remains in the hands of LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

They are obviously roneoed sheets, and have come from addresses all over the State, including the metropolitan area. One comes from Three Springs. One or two have no address at all, but in the main they are signed by individuals who apparently desire to register with me that they are opposed to the Government's proposals of takeover. In addition I have another letter which at the moment I am having a little difficulty in locating.

*Sitting suspended from 6.10 to 7.30 p.m.*

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, just prior to the suspension for tea you assisted me very greatly by leaving the Chair when I was trying to find a further communication from which to give the House some information. It is a long letter and, because of this, I do not propose to read it all. I have the permission of the person who wrote the letter to quote from it and that is what I propose to do. The letter is from the South-West Regional Council of Western Australia and is signed by Percy C. Payne, President of that organisation. Mr. Payne telephoned me the other day and expressed his concern and anxiety regarding the fate of this Bill. I suggested that if he wished to convey anything to me concerning the Bill it would be best for him to do so by letter. I also told him that members of this House generally have very closely examined the legislation and a great deal of argument both for and against has come from both sides. I said I would be pleased to hear from him if he thought he had anything which would be of use to us when considering the measure.

Mr. Payne wrote under date the 4th September, and I propose to quote some of the passages of his letter which is addressed to me. It says—

Dear Sir,

re: Traffic Control.

Further to our telephonic conversation in which I expressed anxiety regarding the fate of the Bill on Traffic control now before the House.

As you are doubtless aware the Bill is bitterly opposed by the Shire Councils' Association, the Country Town Councils' Association, The Regional Councils' Association of W.A. and all organisations interested in the future of Traffic Control in the major portion of this State.

The proposal before Parliament had its origin as part of the Labour Party's political platform and as such received very little publicity or consideration by Western Australians.

When it became clear that the Government intended to introduce legislation to implement their election promise extensive opposition was declared against the proposal.

The Country Regional Councils' Association of W.A. made exhaustive investigations into the suggestion now before the House. At a meeting held in Perth on 30th April, 1972, convened by the Association the present Minister for Police and Traffic by invitation attended, as did representatives of the Local Government Association and the Country Shire Councils' Association. It was my privilege to present to that meeting a paper on the subject (a copy of which is enclosed). At the request of the Country Shire Councils' Association 150 copies of the paper were made available to them for distribution to all Local Authorities in Western Australia.

The paper was read by me in the presence of the Minister for Police and Traffic at the meeting held on 30th April, 1972. The Minister declined to discuss the question of traffic control or matters arising from the paper. He stated that as Minister he was duty bound to introduce a Bill for Police take over of traffic as he considered the Government had a clear mandate from the people on being elected to office to place traffic under Police control. The Minister stated that a 3 man Government Committee had been appointed to examine the New Zealand system and when asked by me to name the personnel of the committee he refused to comply with the request. The Minister's statement is again the subject of Parliamentary questions.

To ascertain the view of Local Authorities on the proposed change over of Traffic control to the police, some 60 Local Authorities were contacted. The Shires of Lake Grace, Merredin, Denmark and Victoria Plains advised they preferred a Police takeover of traffic. A number supported retention of control by Local Authorities.

A big majority of the Local Authorities strongly and vigorously oppose take over of traffic control by the Police.

As certain Local Authorities had already handed traffic to the Police, namely—Manjimup, Busselton, Merredin, Esperance and Ravensthorpe, a circular letter (copy of which is attached) was forwarded to the Local Authorities concerned. Attached herewith are the actual replies received in connection with the takeover in the Shires concerned.

I think I can stop at that point. I have a copy of the replies mentioned which are in keeping with the sort of comments which I have read out from other correspondence that has been forwarded to me. The rest of this letter talks of the Minister's refusal to discuss with the association requirements regarding traffic. It also talks of the statement that the Government appointed a committee of three to examine the New Zealand proposal which, Mr. Payne said, the Minister later refuted. Mr. Payne quotes *Hansard* page 1194 dated the 3rd May, 1972, which apparently contains the Minister's refutation. I admit I have not examined that proposal but I think the Minister would remember that occasion, would he not?

The Hon. J. Dolan: I think so.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I thought the Minister would. Mr. Payne goes on in his letter to talk about the New Zealand situation including the number of vehicles in that country and the number of people. He also mentions the fact that New Zealand led the way, to some extent, with this sort of thing. He then conjectures that a single traffic authority in Western Australia would, upon establishment, produce a certain amount of revenue and he has given me certain figures. He suggests that the total collected in license and transfer fees in 1971-72 was \$16,380,095 and an estimated \$1,500,000 respectively. He also says that the amount collected in traffic fines was an estimated \$1,700,000, making a total of \$19,580,095. I cannot make any comment upon the correctness of those figures. He goes on to say—

"Traffic control is one phase of transport that has received more than its share of publicity over the past weeks. It would appear transport by road, rail, air and sea are phases of transport deserving very close attention by both the Government and Opposition parties.

He says more about New Zealand, but I do not think I will read the rest of the letter to the House. Suffice it to say that this letter from the President of the South-West Regional Council to my mind confirms the opposition in country areas to the Government's proposal which is now before the House.

What am I to do in these circumstances, Mr. President? Am I to heed certain remarks, some of which are, "As the appropriate Minister, it is my obligation to carry out the Government's policy as



indicated. The takeover plan is being prepared and when completed will be implemented. At present there is no necessity to debate the pros and cons of the question?" As I have said, am I to have regard for those remarks or am I to have regard for the fact that my own party has a policy on this question and that it considers that, in the best interests of the whole of the State, an independent authority is by far the better proposition? Am I not to take into consideration the remarks made by the Minister himself to the effect that he feels that one day this may be achieved? Mr. Dans feels that he will vote for the Bill reluctantly and has the thought in mind that a separate traffic authority would be in the best interests of the country. Am I to take notice of the amount of correspondence and appeals addressed to me in the last 12 days on this question? The country local authorities are opposed to the Government's Bill. Some 45 or 50 of them—I am not quite sure of the number—have sent communications to me asking me to oppose the legislation.

Mr. Dans asked: What do the telegrams contain? Do they offer outright opposition and objection to the legislation before us? My answer is: They do. In the main they do not contain any alternative suggestion. Primarily they say, "Defeat the Bill."

As a matter of fact, Mr. Payne says in one of his quotations that he feels the country shires are entitled to any protection which the Legislative Council can give them from the Government. That is one of his points of view.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Did the previous Government ever make any estimation of the cost of a separate traffic authority?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Not to the best of my knowledge. It is fair to say we did not do it as a Government. I could, perhaps, anticipate the Minister who may say that we did not do it when we had the opportunity. I admit we did not, but there were reasons for this. The coalition was not at one on the question at the time.

As late as this morning, between 10.00 and 11.00 a.m., in company with some of my Liberal Party colleagues and some members of the Country Party I met delegates from the Country Shires Association who reconfirmed their opposition. This, to my way of thinking, entirely answers the question for Mr. Dans and other members who may be interested. The Country Shire Councils' Association told us they were aware that something should be done, but they do not think this Bill is the answer, because it arbitrarily takes over control of traffic, which they now have, and places it under police control. This is done by one clause in a very short Bill. Further, they said that although they wanted to see the Bill defeated they also wanted to see the introduction of an independent authority to control traffic.

As I said when I commenced to speak, it is safe to say that the Country Shire Councils' Association were resting upon the fact that the Liberal Party has a policy which it would put into effect at this point of time if it were the Government. However we are confronted with the fact that we must deal with the Bill which is before us. As Mr. Dans said, that is what we have to deal with at the moment.

I would be encouraged—and I am sure the people who are listening to me at the moment would be encouraged—if I could hear from the Minister that the Government would not resolutely pursue this mandatory takeover. Mr. MacKinnon referred to it as a callous takeover, and I am afraid that is what it is. I cannot find any other expression which fits it better. It is a definite statement by the Minister that, "I am here to put into effect the policy of my party." I think it would be correct to say that has been the attitude of the Government.

The people who are listening to me are concerned and worried about their jobs, and I suppose that is a natural state of affairs. I do not blame them for being worried about their jobs. Some of them have told me they do not think they can fit into the pattern. In spite of the answer given by the Minister to the question in relation to re-employment, some of those people do not think they will fit in and others do want to fit in.

Be that as it may, and although I am sympathetic to a man who wants to protect his own interests by way of his bread-earning capacity, I do not think that is necessarily the all-important factor. Although at the present time section 11(a) of the Traffic Act provides that those people can go over by choice, they do not want to be told, "You shall go over." I do not blame them for that, either.

I will let the matter rest at that and merely sum up the situation as I see it. The Minister has been very patient in listening to this debate. I am quite sure he will be able to get up tonight and reply to the debate and to the remarks I have made. I am sure he has well implanted in his mind what he intends to say. I hope he will add some words of encouragement to the effect that the Government might relent and see its way clear to do what the Country Shire Councils' Association has almost pleaded with the Government to do; that is, to introduce legislation providing for an independent traffic authority.

There would be no harm in a Labor Government seeing value in a principle of the Liberal Party. I am sure we recognise some parts of the platform of the Labor Party which are well-intended. The correspondence I have received in regard

to this matter from the representatives of people in country districts—who are the voice of the people in country areas—amounts to a large file. They sent messages to me, as the Leader of the Opposition in this House, and asked that something be done. I can do no more than appeal to the Minister to hear the views of these people and not say to them, as he has done so far, "The door is shut; Labor Party policy is more important than what you think about your own district." I hope the door will be re-opened, that the Minister will not proceed with this Bill, and that he will persuade the Government to introduce legislation to establish a State-wide traffic authority. He will then find that members of the party to which I belong will assist him, and I think members of the Country Party will do likewise.

In the meantime, we must stand opposed to the Bill before the House for the reasons I have given. The measure represents a callous approach by a Government which says to people who do not want to have taken from them something which they now have as a statutory right, "Whether you like it or not you will hand over the control you have to the Police Department."

I do not know whether or not the police can handle it. I do not think the Minister would suggest to us that in a week or a month or at any definite time the police could move in. He foreshadowed that more people would have to be employed; I think the figure of 150 was mentioned. The recruitment of those people will take some time.

The Government sees fit to cast aside the men employed by the Country Shire Councils' Association who have been performing their task for a long time. To the best of my knowledge they are performing their task effectively. That has not been contradicted, although a red herring has been drawn across the trail to suggest the police will handle it better and the death rate on the roads will not be so great when all traffic is controlled by the police.

In his second reading speech the Minister for Police asked, "Who will look after the Royal visit? Who looks after law and order? Who does this and who does that?" We now know it is the police who do those things, and whatever the outcome of this Bill the police will still do them. Those remarks were made purely and simply to pad the speech and make the situation sound better than it really is.

I conclude my remarks by saying I am not prepared to vote for this Bill and I hope when the Minister replies he will give us some assurance that he will not proceed with it because he anticipates support from this side in the event of his producing for the consideration of Parliament legislation which would provide for the setting up of an independent traffic authority in Western Australia.

**THE HON. J. DOLAN** (South-East Metropolitan—Minister for Police) [8.52 p.m.] : Before I commence my reply I would like to make a few comments in regard to the remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition. He referred to a couple of questions he asked without notice. They were questions of a type which is very difficult to answer—one of those "Do you still beat your wife" questions. If I said, "Yes, I beat her every time; I play her euchre," he would be offended about the way I answered and say I was begging the question.

Today, the Leader of the Opposition asked whether an agreement had been made to hold an inquiry into the Police Force. The question was not put as directly as that, and it would not be possible to consider that as being the question he really wanted to ask. If I varied it, I feel it was my privilege to do so under parliamentary practice. Members are quite entitled to ask questions at any time, and the Minister is quite entitled to answer them so that he conveys the meaning which the questions really merit.

I commence by saying to the Minister—

**The Hon. A. F. Griffith:** Whenever the pressure is on you refer to me as "the Minister." Why?

**The Hon. J. DOLAN:** I am sorry. It may be a long while before I make that mistake again.

**The Hon. A. F. Griffith:** A week.

**The Hon. J. DOLAN:** It does not matter what I say, it still offends the Leader of the Opposition.

**The Hon. A. F. Griffith:** It does not offend me.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. J. DOLAN:** The other night, when the Leader of the Opposition was in one of his benevolent moods, he said—

At this point, however, let me say that in the last two or three days the Minister has shown commendable restraint. He has listened to many speeches on the subject of traffic—and of course there are still more to come—and he has refrained from interjecting. Having sat here and watched him I felt sure he was dying to get stuck into the debate that was ensuing.

His words made me feel as poor old Lazarus felt when the crumbs were dropping from the rich man's table. It is nice to receive a kind word now and then, and I say to the Leader of the Opposition that I appreciate it. He also complained that I did not put before the House all the costing associated with this Bill.

**The Hon. A. F. Griffith:** You did not put any.

**The Hon. J. DOLAN:** If the Leader of the Opposition would be kind enough to listen, I can remember when he introduced the

Traffic Act Amendment Bill (No. 2) in 1969, which allowed local authorities' powers in this regard to be taken over on a voluntary basis. He did not even tell the House the basic object of the Bill.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Did you question it?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I did not. There was no need to do so because it was in line with part of our policy.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You had a duty, as the Opposition, to question it.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I had no duty whatsoever to get up and question a Bill.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I ask members to refrain from interjecting. Members have already paid a tribute to the Minister's silence while they spoke. I would now like them to give him an opportunity to speak.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Thank you, Mr. President. When Bills are discussed here it is not obligatory for every member of the House to get up and state his views one way or another. If that were so, what sort of a position would we have? We would never get any business done if every Bill were debated by every member of the House.

This Bill has been widely debated and there has been criticism about the length of my second reading speech and about the fact that some things were omitted from that speech. That may be so, but no Minister can anticipate what points members will raise in debate on a Bill of this nature. I am not a seer; I cannot divine the future or anticipate what members will say. During the debate mention was made of firearms and guns. I could not have anticipated that. Some members mentioned personalised plates which was a worthwhile comment because they were trying to line up this point with inefficiency as far as computerisation and so on is concerned.

Members raised many aspects and I hope I will not miss any of them in replying. If I do miss any points, I apologise in advance. If the member or members concerned would like to see me privately I will make up for what I missed.

I think the members of the Opposition have presented against this particular legislation one of the weakest cases I have heard by comparison with the debates I have heard on other legislation. During my period as a member here, there have never been so many contradictions in the course of debate. We heard one tonight when two members on the Opposition side were arguing with one another as to whether or not shires used traffic control as a means of raising revenue. I have never made a statement such as that. I have no intention of criticising the actions of traffic officers associated with the shires. Perhaps the most apt way to describe what has happened and what was said is to say

there were a terrific number of shibboleths. Members can look that word up in the *Oxford Dictionary*.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Are you implying you are the only one who knows what it means? Don't be so conceited!

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I am giving advice. I now refer to Mr. Logan's remark in connection with the Swan Shire. He insinuated that I was dictatorial. That, of course, is very far from the truth.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: That is what they thought.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: After I have told the story, the honourable member will find the facts are not as he tried to present them. There must at some time be an end to discussions between the Minister and those who are opposed to a matter of policy which is about to be implemented. It may be thrown out; but that is neither here nor there.

I received innumerable deputations, submissions, and letters from people associated with local government. This went on for a considerable time and I found that the matter was occupying the greatest part of my working day—which was very often 16 or 17 hours.

I was invited to the quarterly meeting of the Country Shire Councils' Association held at the Rural and Industries Bank building on the 22nd April, 1971. I duly attended at the specified time—it was 12.45 p.m.—so that I could speak to the representatives of local government. Mr. Payne has since referred to the fact that he read his screed at that meeting. He did not read it whilst I was there; possibly he was at the tail end of it when I entered. The president seated me alongside him at the table and explained to the meeting that I had been invited so that members could hear the position in regard to the takeover of traffic control.

I told the meeting I had received innumerable deputations, submissions, and letters on the matter and that I felt the time had come for something to be done because we were getting nowhere by debating the issue. The shire councils were making submissions and I was making counter submissions and we had reached an impasse. It was rather like the case of the fellow who used to bump his head against a wall. When he was asked why he did it he said, "It is bonza when you stop doing it." We were simply debating the issue without reaching finality, and it did not appear likely that we would. I told the meeting that, as the responsible Minister, I had been told by the Government that the legislation was to be introduced. I could have said, "Well, I feel it ought to continue as it is"; but members know what would have happened had I said that. The Government would simply have said, "We will get someone who will introduce it because this is the policy of the Government."

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I think you have made that abundantly clear.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I am merely emphasising it in case some have not heard it, and for the sake of the record. When I sat down after addressing the meeting the chairman thanked me for my frankness and said that I had cleared the air and that the Country Shire Councils' Association knew exactly where it stood in the matter. Subsequently, when I wrote to the Swan Shire Council I was merely repeating a summation of the words I used on that occasion.

I introduced this legislation with certain aims. Firstly, I hoped to present the case for police control fairly and, if possible, convincingly. Secondly I hoped the matter would be debated fully—at least that aim has been accomplished. I even went to the extent of assisting members of the Opposition to make their arguments clear during the debate. For example, members may recall that Mr. McNeill had some difficulty in finding a copy of *The Police News* which contained an article he wished to quote. He mislaid his copy somewhere and, as I had a copy, from the goodness of my heart I pushed the button and gave my copy to an attendant to give to Mr. McNeill so that he could make his point. I had only one desire: to make the position perfectly clear. If members opposite were missing something and I was able to furnish them with it I was quite prepared to do so.

Even the Leader of the Opposition mentioned this in association with the takeover of traffic control from the Northam Town Council. As members may know, at a meeting of that council a vote was taken as to whether or not traffic control should be taken over by the police, and the vote was eight to four in favour of takeover. An application was made to me, and the council stated that it wished its traffic control to be taken over as quickly as possible. That is why I acted so expeditiously and on the 18th August I signed the notice which was to appear in the *Government Gazette*. Before that notice appeared I received a request from the Country Shire Councils' Association to withhold the publication of the notice because an attempt was to take place in Northam to reverse the original decision. That is where Mr. Logan bought into it.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: I said I had notice of a motion of rescission; I did not say what it was going to be.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The honourable member felt fairly confident about it.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: I did not. I just said there was a notice of rescission. You state the truth.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I always do.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: No you don't. You stick to the truth and look up what I said. I said a rescission motion had been moved.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: If the honourable member cares to look in *Hansard* I doubt whether he will find he said that. I received notice that the Northam Town Council was again to discuss the matter. In the meantime pressure was applied to those who voted in favour of the original motion in an endeavour to get them to change their minds. The result was that when the rescission motion went to the vote six councillors voted for it and six voted against it; so two councillors had defected.

Whilst I may not have many good traits in my character, if I form an opinion when a matter is debated I still hold that opinion the following week; and not all the urging nor all the lobbying in the world will make me change my mind. However, on the casting vote of the chairman of the Northam council it was decided to continue with police takeover. Subsequently I received a letter from the Secretary of the Country Shire Councils' Association thanking me for withholding the gazettal of the notice.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: On what date did you sign the order?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The order was signed on the 18th August. It was submitted last week for gazettal on the 25th August—after the decision had been reached and after the Secretary of the Country Shire Councils' Association had informed me that it was all right to proceed.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Wasn't the meeting held on the day after that—the 19th?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The day after the 18th is generally the 19th. As a matter of fact, the 18th is the day after the 17th.

Criticism came from some quarters regarding the size and contents of the Bill.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You will get nowhere by trying that sort of thing. What do you think we are, gigs or something?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The Leader of the Opposition started it.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I did not. I merely asked you a simple question. I asked whether the council held its meeting on the 19th, but you wanted to get smart.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Criticism came from some quarters about the size and contents of the Bill. It is, of course, a small Bill. However, I would remind members of this fact: when the voluntary takeover Bill was introduced, it was introduced as an amendment to the Traffic Act, along with other amendments. Yet it was almost exactly the same size as this Bill—within a line or two. The Leader of the Opposition introduced that Bill when he was a Minister, and he did not say one word about the takeover of traffic on a voluntary basis.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What has that to do with this Bill?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The Bills are almost analogous. They both refer to the takeover of traffic, one on a voluntary basis and the other on a compulsory basis but under the same conditions as the first.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: The first concerned voluntary relinquishment, and you know it.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Of course I know it.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Then why call it a takeover? What power is contained in section 11A to take over an authority that does not want to be taken over?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: None whatsoever.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Then why say it is a takeover?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Because shires asked to be taken over.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That is a relinquishment of control, and not a takeover.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: All right; evidently we are going to split straws over the meaning. It is the same thing; although there may be a slight difference in interpretation. Evidently the size of the Bill led Mr. Ferry and his leader to make certain statements about regulations. Mr. Heitman and Mr. McNeill also fell into the same error. The Leader of the Opposition said that because there are only two clauses in the Bill the administration of this amendment must be carried out through regulations. Mr. Ferry said that his understanding of the Bill was that it empowers almost anything to be done by regulations. Other members subsequently bought into the issue.

Let us see what is the position. Of course, we find there is no question of regulations associated with section 11A. If members care to look at the Traffic Act they will find that certain sections—for example, section 32D—refer to the Governor making regulations. We find that there is power in the Act for regulations to be made in connection with traffic infringements, and so on. However, there is no reference to regulations being made in connection with section 11A, and there is none intended.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: "None intended" is right!

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I repeat: No regulation-making powers are associated with section 11A of the Traffic Act and none are envisaged.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: No, because they are already there.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I think we will probably agree on one point raised by Mr. Ferry; that is, both political parties—or,

if one likes to put it another way, the Government and Opposition parties—believe in a single traffic authority. Mr. Ferry said that his party believes in a traffic control authority. The main difference is that the Government believes that the police should be that authority.

I intend to comment on the various speeches made during the debate, not necessarily in the order they were made, so that we may be perfectly clear about the statements made by members speaking against the proposition. Mr. Ferry said that the Country Shire Councils' Association is in complete accord and harmony with the proposal for a separate traffic authority put forward by the Liberal Party. He said he felt it has been quite an achievement to get to this point.

I will say it is an achievement! I have before me a copy of the minutes of the annual conference of the Country Shire Councils' Association held in Perth in the Town Hall on the 20th July, 1971. At that meeting the pressure started to go on to those councils which had surrendered traffic control to the police. The following motion was presented:—

That those Councils represented at this Conference which have not yet handed over licensing and traffic control to the Police, affirm that they are not prepared to hand over their traffic functions to either the Police or any other Government Department.

In other words they were put on a spot. The atmosphere was Antarctic when the representatives of country shires got up to express accord with the policy of police control of traffic. The first speaker—I suppose I can refer to him by name—was Councillor Scott, who moved the motion I have read out. He had quite a lot to say about what the previous Government would have done. He said—

In 1966 the Inter-departmental Committee reported that all traffic licensing and control should pass to the Police.

We immediately argued against that proposal and submitted as a rejoinder a suggestion for a State-wide authority other than the Police and under the control of local government to co-ordinate traffic. . . . This was rejected by the Government, which decided to do nothing.

We then considered a second alternative, that of a Statutory Authority for the country alone, which had been suggested some years earlier. Now, after some encouragement from the then Minister, this was again put forward but was rejected by the Government at the time.

Eventually that motion was carried. The people who were present and who spoke against the motion did so for varying reasons. The atmosphere was very chilly.

The Hon. J. Heitman: I thought it was hot.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: In some quarters it was running hot. Councillor Tonkin from Menzies opposed the motion. The following is recorded in the minutes:—

Councillor Tonkin (Menzies) opposed—should be considered above party politics—we are dealing with people's lives—Menzies, Leonora, Laverton too small to employ traffic inspectors—don't have the resources—we have a lot of heavy large through traffic—not only our own people—we have tried, but failed—Shire Clerk unable to do much—cannot chase offenders, or check oversize loads—local policeman has some spare time, and could do it—talk of loss of status is absurd, when compared with loss of lives—discussion at Kalgoorlie showed only Coolgardie against police control.

That was in 1971, but now Coolgardie has accepted the offer for the police takeover. The minutes continue—

Councillor Tuckey (Carnarvon) said previous speaker had said did not have enough money to pay inspector—if we had our proper right to license fees, etc., he could afford to pay—how many did the local police catch?—they can do it now if they like—Mr. Dolan's plan to take over by stages will mean the bigger profitable places first—Menzies etc. will be last.

The whole matter is absolutely ridiculous. The minutes record the views of Councillor Hinds of Merredin as follows:—

Councillor Hinds (Merredin) as an explanation—he had previously been against police "takeover" but control was now better—Police had good psychological effect on younger people—traffic more orderly—financially problem, but Police now visiting farms where groups of tractors inspected—Council had had good deal of trouble with and between inspectors.

There was another speaker at the meeting, and he was Councillor Paterson of Esperance. The minutes record what he said as follows:—

Cr. Paterson (Esperance) said when Esperance was receiving \$120,000 was happy to spend \$24,000 on traffic, but when this reduced to \$14,000, with loss of \$10,000 decided could not afford to saddle ratepayers with this burden—alternatives were more fines, more rates, or hand over—previously had 2 Inspectors—these now Policemen, with 6 others—they were more effective as Policemen—he was against a Statutory Authority—it meant setting up another Government Department.

I want to quote the views of Councillor Nanovich of Wanneroo. His comments are recorded in approximately 10 lines in the

minutes but nearly every line contains one or two mistakes. The minutes read as follows:—

Cr. Nanovich (Wanneroo) said his Council had traffic control by the Police only for a trial period of 6 months—it was unsatisfactory, and Minister was glad to hand it back to Council—we want to control traffic—we want to save lives—with health services as well as traffic—to serve the community—in the 6 months trial period, Wanneroo had a lot of criticism—we use 3 ex-Policemen, who agree that Police cannot do as good a job as the Councils are doing—

I thought it was Cassius Clay who was speaking! I will refer to the Wanneroo representative's comments later and I will tell the real story. Members will be able to see that many of the things which he said have very little foundation. They have very little foundation, when we take into consideration the file that was kept by the previous Minister for Police against whom I offer no criticism, because I thought he did an excellent job.

From the minutes we find that the following motion submitted by the Morawa Shire was withdrawn:—

That the Country Shire Councils' Association adopt a positive attitude in pressing for a single Authority, divorced from the Police Department, to handle licensing and traffic control throughout Western Australia.

This motion was withdrawn by Councillor Croot of Morawa with the permission of the conference.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I received a telegram from the Wanneroo Shire and 150 people employed by that shire; and they all said they opposed the Bill.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I heard that when the honourable member read it out.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I did not read it out. I told you about it. I also received a telegram from the Kalgoorlie Town Council and the Boulder Shire.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Now I want to bring Mr. Heitman into the picture. In his contribution he started by saying a great deal about an interdepartmental committee that had been set up. I do not subscribe to anything he has said about that committee, and I am very much surprised he has not been put on the mat by some of his own colleagues; because had I done the same thing in a similar vein I would be placed on the mat by people from many quarters and I am sure members opposite would also be shooting at me left, right, and centre.

If members opposite listen very carefully they will see how Mr. Heitman has stepped out of line. This interdepartmental committee comprised top-ranking civil

servants—people who served previous Governments and this Government equally well, because that is their job. This inter-departmental committee was set up by the previous Government. This was what Mr. Heitman had to say about that committee—

Of course that committee was loaded.

Imagine using such an expression to describe a committee set up by his own Government! I have heard this expression being used many times. People talk of the danger of a gun being loaded, and of dice being loaded for dishonest purposes in gambling. Mr. Heitman referred to this committee set up by his own Government as being loaded. In his contribution to this debate he went on to say—

There is no chance of the country areas getting a fair go in view of the personnel on the committee.

Surely he is not saying that his Government set up a committee, the personnel of which was such that the country areas would not get a fair go. That is an indictment of the civil servants who comprised the committee.

The Hon. J. Heitman: If you wanted the country shires to take over traffic control would you put the country shire councils or the police on it?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The honourable member was insinuating that the previous Government did what I have just referred to. The honourable member went on to say—

They were committed to police control in the country areas right from the start. We have all read the report and we all know what was attempted by it.

I disagree completely with the views he expressed, and I am sure the honourable member would not be a party to anything that was loaded. The committee to which he was referring comprised Mr. White who was then the Secretary of the Local Government Department, and Mr. Paust who was then the Assistant Secretary of the Local Government Department. At the present time Mr. White is still associated with local government because he is the Secretary of the Country Shire Councils' Association. I have the greatest respect for him.

The Hon. J. Heitman: So have I.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I found him to be a gentleman. When he was appointed to that committee he could be relied on to carry out its functions.

The Hon. J. Heitman: He put in an independent minority report.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I accept that as an expression of opinion by Mr. White and by Mr. Paust who is the present Secretary of the Local Government Department.

These two gentlemen put in a minority report. I respect them for what they have done, and what they did was quite legitimate and fair. If I were in their position and faced the same state of affairs I would have done what they did.

One would assume that Mr. Davies, the Assistant Commissioner of Main Roads, and Mr. Parrick, the Secretary of the Main Roads Department who, incidentally, are still serving the Government and who were on the committee, would ensure that the country shires did have a fair go.

On the committee there was Chief Inspector Salter of the Police Traffic Branch. I might concede that, in view of the fact that this matter is related to the police control of traffic, he might perhaps have been unconsciously biased. Another member of the committee was Mr. Darch, Secretary of the Police Department. A member who, I think, would be completely independent was the Assistant Under-Treasurer, Mr. McCarrey. Surely with men of that calibre on the committee, it cannot be said that the committee was loaded.

I assume Mr. Heitman believes that the single authority which he has proposed will give a fair go to everybody; and he goes along with that committee. I have obtained pulls of his speech, and I have read his comments. This single traffic control authority is the one that has been served up to us as Liberal Party policy.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What do you mean by served up?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Mr. Heitman has served it up to us. The single authority which Mr. Heitman has suggested as being Liberal Party policy is to comprise—

Two representatives of the Country Shire Councils' Association.

One representative of the Country Town Councils' Association.

One representative of the Local Government Association.

One representative of the Perth City Council.

One person nominated by the Secretary for Local Government.

One person nominated by the Commissioner of Main Roads.

One person nominated by the Commissioner of Police.

The chairman is to be a person nominated by the Minister for Traffic and Road Safety as his representative.

The representatives from the local authorities are to be selected from a panel of names submitted to the Minister. Of course, I imagine they would be representatives of the Country Shire Councils' Association or the Local Government Association. We will not find a stray in the paddock being appointed.

One of the recommendations made by the Liberal Party is that the amount of reimbursement to be made to the shire councils shall be agreed to between the councils and the authority. That is to say, the shire councils and the authority will get together and decide what reimbursement they will get out of the traffic fees.

When Mr. Heitman was putting forward that proposition Mr. Ferry interjected by saying this about the recommendations—

It was mentioned in Sir David Brand's policy speech.

To that interjection Mr. Heitman replied, "Yes." I have made some inquiries and I have obtained copies of that policy speech.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I could have supplied you with half a dozen copies.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: That is strange. I thought the honourable member would have returned as a *quid pro quo* the services I rendered to Mr. McNeill the other evening. I would expect members opposite to know what their policy is, and I would expect Mr. Ferry to know what Sir David Brand did say in his policy speech.

I have been through that policy speech, and marked out some portions which are relevant. In the policy speech Sir David mentioned that if returned to office his Government would appoint a special commissioner of traffic and road safety with State-wide powers, and that he would be given authority by legislation to act directly in the interests of road safety anywhere in the State. However, in the policy speech I found the following interesting reference:—

The committee will examine the possibility of accrediting driving schools on the basis that their certificate of competence automatically qualifies drivers for a licence.

The aim here is to relieve traffic police of driver-testing duties and free them for road safety work.

Evidently that was what Sir David Brand had in mind. If Mr. Ferry has not read that policy speech closely I suggest he should do so. What Mr. Ferry said by interjection was not the policy enunciated by Sir David Brand before the last election.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Will you read out what Mr. Tonkin said in relation to the same question?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I said it at the beginning of my speech and if members care to listen I will read it again.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Read it again; we have the time.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Evidently the honourable member is not too sure about it, so I will read it again. Mr. Tonkin enunciated in 1969—when the Traffic Act was amended so that country shires could voluntarily surrender their powers—some

views which were part of our policy. In his policy speech delivered on the 3rd February, 1971, the present Premier said—

As the present system of multiple traffic control and vehicle licensing is incompatible with State-wide efficient traffic management we shall place complete control of traffic with the Police Department which we propose to restructure.

That is as plain as it could possibly be, and that is what I have told numerous deputations, and what I have said in answer to the numerous submissions and letters which have been sent to me. That is the sort of thing which indicates that I am dictatorial!

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Perhaps not really; perhaps the Minister just sounds as though he is.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I will now refer to remarks made by Mr. Heitman. He really had a second go at this subject when he spoke because during the Address-in-Reply debate last session he referred to a Mr. Drysdale, who was the shire clerk at Broome. Mr. Heitman referred to the fact that Mr. Drysdale talked the Broome Shire Council into having police takeover of traffic. Mr. Drysdale was accused—and I have read out what was said—of fooling the Broome Shire Council in connection with the amount of money it would receive.

Mr. Drysdale later transferred to Esperance, and Mr. Heitman claims that he was not there very long before he talked that shire council into handing over the control of traffic to the police. I think that is cheap criticism of the members of the two shire councils concerned: That they could be talked into something of this nature by an individual. Surely the shire clerk is not the man who dictates to any shire council.

If I am in the Esperance area in the near future I shall call on Mr. Drysdale because I feel I must meet him.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: I will be happy to introduce you.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The honourable member will get a mention if he is patient! I think Mr. Drysdale must be a wonderful man because one of the members of the Esperance Shire Council, at the time when the police took over, was Mr. Wordsworth himself.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: That is correct.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I ask: Can members imagine anyone talking him into anything? They would not get a chance; he would be talking so much that no-one would be able to get a word in edgeways.

Mr. Heitman read an article from the *South Western Times*. For sheer impertinence that statement took the bun, in my book. I could tell members who supplied the information for the article, and his



name has been quoted here this evening. On many occasions I have read out confusing statements from him.

I would complement Mr. Heitman on his excellent choice of words. It might be remembered that Mr. Heitman received permission to have incorporated in *Hansard* a communication which he received from the Swan Shire Council. He referred to the communication on three occasions as a screed. It is quite interesting to look at the interpretation of "screed" contained in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*.

The Hon. J. Heitman: What number is this one?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The definition of the word, "screed" is a "Long tiresome harangue. . . or letter. . ." I am pleased he saved us the agony of having to listen to it. Of course, the author of the communication was the senior traffic inspector at Middle Swan. I suppose he is one of those unbiased individuals to whom reference has been made during the debate! I will refer to that again shortly.

I agree completely with what Mr. Willmott had to say—and I think Mr. Syd Thompson said the same thing tonight—that we have to start with driver education. We have to get better drivers on the roads. I made that statement at the university 12 months ago when I said I thought that about 75 to 80 per cent. of our drivers were not fit to be on the roads as drivers. An interjector said that my figures were wrong and when I queried the interjector he said that the figure was more like 95 per cent. So some people have a poor opinion of those who drive on our roads.

As I said, Mr. Willmott spoke about the necessity for driver education. He envisaged the day when driving instruction would be part of the school curriculum. I would inform the honourable member—although he is probably aware of it—that this is a policy which has been introduced into many of our high schools throughout the State principally, of course, through the efforts of the National Safety Council. The instruction is done on a voluntary basis at the schools, and at various times of the year the students attend the National Safety Council school where they receive additional driver training.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I think I can remember introducing that legislation. I am not sure.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Well, I would compliment the Leader of the Opposition for it. If he introduced it during the time I have been in this House I will bet my last penny that I supported it.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Just the same as you supported the inclusion of section 11A in the Traffic Act.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: That is right, but in this case I would have had some comments to make.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You should have had some to make on 11A.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Would the honourable member like to make up for it now? He did not mention anything previously.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I bet you had a look to see if I did.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Of course I did.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I did my homework and the Minister knew what the answer would be when he asked the question.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: "The Minister" again.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I mean, of course, the Leader of the Opposition. I am surprised that neither Mr. Willmott nor Mr. Ferry—as co-province members—did not mention the excellent work done in this particular field in the heart of their province. I refer to the Manjimup High School, and also to the work done by Rotary.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: I did not have sufficient time.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The honourable member spoke for 40 minutes and I suggest he could have cut out other matters to which he referred so that the rest of the members in this House could have benefited from his remarks.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. J. DOLAN: It would have been worth while making up the time by referring to other matters.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: What! Something worth while from Mr. Ferry?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I am attempting to make up for what he omitted. The driver education programme at the Manjimup High School has been carried on for many years now. That school is teaching what Mr. Willmott and Mr. Syd Thompson advocated—driver education.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: But plenty of schools are not carrying out such a programme.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The education programme is carried out on a voluntary basis by teachers, the police, and interested citizens. The result is most encouraging and members have my assurance that I will continue to encourage the National Fitness Council in its work.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I think the Minister means the National Safety Council, and not the National Fitness Council. That was a slip of the tongue.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: That is so. I want to emphasise the excellent results of a scheme of this nature. Not one student who has taken the course at the Manjimup High School—and very careful records have been kept by the school—has ever had to face a traffic charge. I think that is a compliment to the school, the police, the citizens, and Rotary.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: As a matter of fact, the situation is even better because the same record applies to all country schools which have driver-training classes.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Rotary has established a training centre for the younger children—the cyclists and so on. The local shire council provided a block of land and I believe the area is called, "The Rotary Safety Park." I was at Manjimup for the opening of the park, and I was really thrilled by the work being done.

The park has bituminised roads, and every traffic sign one can imagine. Responsible citizens and the police talk to the children and assist them with their driver education.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: They must be kept busy changing signs because we are busy changing regulations.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I think they are really up with the situation at the park. I will join issue with Mr. Willmott on another matter he raised, and I refer to his argument against computerisation. He claimed that he had never had any trouble with his firearms license until the licenses were issued under the computer system.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: That would be right, too.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I want to put the record right because we have a department which keeps good records.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: It was not good with my firearms license.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: If the honourable member will be patient I will explain the situation. I would suggest that he contributed to the error which he found in the records. He did not mention that the card record showed that he disposed of four firearms to his son, Jack Riches Willmott, on the 30th June, 1971.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: I think that information is wrong.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Mr. Willmott also retained his license and this is where the clerk made a mistake. The four firearms were not only added to the son's license, but they were removed from Mr. Willmott's license whereas he wished to retain his license for those firearms.

The point is the computer did not make a mistake, it was the clerk. It was a human error and it could not be attributed to the computer.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: A computer is only as good as the person who operates it.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I will now refer to the comments of Mr. Williams. He did not have much to say in his contribution. I have a great admiration for what Mr. Williams has to say but he referred to a recommendation to the Victorian Police Force by Sir Eric St. Johnston. Sir Eric St. Johnston was the top police officer in Great Britain and the Victorian Government asked him to report on its Police Force. I would say that most of the recommendations Sir Eric made are gradually being implemented.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: In Victoria?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Yes. Some of the recommendations made in the report have already been implemented, and others are in the process of being implemented.

Sir Eric St. Johnston expressed his view on traffic and I regard him as a dedicated man. He was commissioned to do a certain job, and he would have done it with a certain amount of professional pride. Mr. Williams said—

One can hardly expect Sir Eric St. Johnston to be unbiased when he gives his view on traffic. After all is said and done, one does not destroy one's own child.

I have debated the latter argument in this House previously, and I am prepared to debate it again.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: On a different Bill.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: That is correct. Mr. Williams referred to the fact that Sir Eric St. Johnston would not be unbiased when he gave his report. Well, I wonder what Mr. Williams' feelings were when he listened to the reports and the telegrams from the shire councils. I wonder whether he considers those people to be unbiased, and whether any more notice could be taken of them than of Sir Eric St. Johnston when he reported on police control of traffic in Victoria.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: In Victoria.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Mr. MacKinnon commenced his speech by using some adjectives to describe our faults, and he expressed his views about centralisation. I have always felt that in the event of police takeover of traffic more policemen would be stationed throughout the State. The number will not be decreased. The process which has followed the voluntary surrender of traffic control to the police will be repeated.

Mr. MacKinnon referred to a letter from the Commissioner of Police to the Secretary of the Police Union. He indicated that there must have been a rift or a lack of communication between the Commissioner of Police and myself.

That is not at all accurate. The commissioner and I enjoy the best possible relationship so far as his job and mine are concerned.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Are you going to answer the question I asked?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: If I omit to answer the question and it has not been included in all the other matters to which I have referred, I shall be happy to answer the question for the honourable member.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It is a human question. It has to do with the jobs of the men.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I can assure the honourable member that the answer I will give him will cover the question he asked.

Mr. White had quite a number of things to say as can be seen from his speech which will be found on page 2773 of the paper-bound volume of *Hansard* No. 13. Mr. White said, "It appears that there is a shortage of police officers, and a shortage of recruits." I think Mr. Syd Thompson also made reference to that during his speech. Mr. White then continued to say—

The Minister, when he replies, will be able to refute or substantiate that statement. I can only present what I am aware of, and on the basis of the information available to me.

I can assure the Minister that some of the statements I have made have very solid foundation. I do not want anybody to try to pull the wool over my eyes—and I do not suggest the Minister would—because I may bounce back with a few facts and statistics which could not be disproved.

Let us consider these points one at a time. We are first told there is a police shortage. I do not think anyone can say there is not a police shortage. It would not matter whether we doubled the Police Force tomorrow and sent the men to various parts of the State, there would still be complaints of a shortage of police officers.

In an article I saw yesterday the spokesman of the A.M.A. said that there was a serious shortage of doctors. Of course there is a shortage of doctors, as there is of teachers. These shortages will continue. The ratio of pupils to teachers dropped from 40 pupils per teacher to 35. It later dropped from 35 to 25, and even though it may continue to drop I daresay we will only reach Utopia when we have one pupil to one teacher or we have the teachers outnumbering the pupils. If one can believe what is said on television there is a very real shortage of bricklayers. There is no doubt that these shortages exist and I am sure they will continue to exist. The crux of the matter is, however—and this is where I would like to enlighten Mr. White—what is the Minister and the Government doing about the shortage?

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I will tell the Minister what he is about to do now. If he is not careful he will be sitting on Mr. Stubb's knee in a moment.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I feel sure Mr. Stubbs will be delighted to have that happen. It is not often he gets a thrill of that kind!

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: How do you know?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: He does not look particularly thrilled at the moment.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I would like to read the advice given to me by the Acting Commissioner of Police in the last fortnight. He said that during this financial year 162 new policemen will be inducted into the force. That is the highest number of policemen to be inducted into the force in its history.

I can say with some pride that this has been done with the full co-operation of the Government. So that is something we are doing to overcome the shortage. Let us now consider the question of the shortage of recruits.

It is a strange thing that despite my extreme care to try to put my papers together in the correct order I discover that at the moment I am not able to find what I want. I daresay I can be excused for this because even Homer has been known to nod; indeed, the Leader of the Opposition also nodded a bit before tea when he misplaced something he required for his speech. In his case, this is most unusual.

In dealing with this question of a shortage of recruits I feel sure that what I present to the House will answer any criticism that has been made in regard to the matter. I would also like to say that if Mr. White has any official figures which may disprove what I have to say, and he makes them available to me, and they are found to be correct I will, of course, have to accept them. I will then tell the people who provided me with the figures I have that it may be necessary for them to go back to school and do a course in arithmetic or computer programming. I stress, however, that there is no foundation at all for the statements made by Mr. White. He indicated he could bounce back with a few facts and statistics which could not be disproved.

From the 1st July, 1971, to the 31st August, 1972—this covers the period of our full financial year and the figures could not be more up to date—there were 907 male applicants for admission to the Police Force. The applicants who were not acceptable, for various reasons, numbered 286, which left 621 potentially acceptable recruits.

It is possible in these cases that the character references may not have been good enough or the men may not have been able to measure up to the physical requirements or the necessary educational

standard. So there were 621 recruits who stood up to the test from among whom 100 were selected.

Accordingly there are over 500 whose applications will be considered in the future. There were 75 female applicants of which only 5 were accepted as a result of the vacancies that occurred.

The Hon. F. R. White: You have just said that 100 recruits have been taken in so that is the true figure. Those are recruits; the other 500 are applicants for recruitment.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is during the time of unemployment since this Government has been in office.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Members appear not to want to accept even the facts I present. Mr. White also said that many of our police stations are understaffed and that this all builds up to the argument as to how it is possible for the police to take over traffic when they have not sufficient men to do jobs already on their plate. This is the basis on which it was argued and it is on the same basis that I am replying. Mr. White also said—

I recently made a request through the Minister for an additional policeman to be stationed at Kalamunda. I am very grateful for the fact that the strength of that police station has been increased from two policemen to three.

The honourable member asked for one policeman and he got one.

The Hon. F. R. White: That was about two years ago.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I do not know what more I could have done for the honourable member. He then continued—

However, as a result of many judicious inquiries I am led to believe that the strength of the station should be five.

I can only say that the honourable member asked for one policeman and he got one policeman. His request was granted. He then made some judicious inquiries and found that the Midland area was greatly understaffed. I cannot understand why the honourable member did not first make the inquiries and then the application, or does he want me to believe his requests were not authenticated before presentation?

The Hon. F. R. White: I will make an application tomorrow if you wish.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The honourable member asked for one policeman, he got one policeman, and he is still grizzling. The honourable member then made a reference to crosswalk attendants.

The Hon. F. R. White: That's a beauty.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: It certainly is because the honourable member does not know what he is talking about. Mr. White further said—

In the field of safety we find that if a local authority desires to appoint a crosswalk attendant, to establish a road crossing, or to have traffic signals erected, it must go through the monotonous procedure, as I outlined in my contribution to the Address-in-Reply debate in August, 1971, of having to obtain permission from the Main Roads Department. If the department does not agree, the local authority will not be able to do what it seeks.

Later the honourable member said—

If we had an authority or authoritative persons who are charged with ensuring traffic safety, surely the authority or such persons would not have waited for so long a period of time before appointing a crosswalk attendant or relocating the crosswalk?

The job has been done even though it may have been done late and I will explain why this was so. But here again the honourable member is a long way off the beam.

The position concerning school crosswalks is governed by a procedure which operated—and I think successfully—during the regime of the former Government, and it still operates during the regime of the present Government. It is something that has been going on for many years.

In the metropolitan traffic area there is at present a special School's Crossing Reviewing Committee comprising a police officer assisted by a Main Roads Department engineer—traffic service—an Education Department officer and a representative of the Parents and Citizens' Association.

This committee makes an on-site visual inspection of the position and subsequently the Police Department reports the committee's findings to me and recommends whether or not a crossing should be established. When such a report is made to me I generally sign it because I know that the committee can be relied upon.

So it is not a question of making an application to the Main Roads Department. This special committee is established for this specific purpose; and I repeat it is a committee which operated successfully under the previous Government, which was quite happy with the work it carried out. I am also happy with the work that is being done by this committee. The only one who is not happy with the committee is Mr. White.

The Hon. F. R. White: That is in the metropolitan area. What about the other areas?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: In a moment I will try to cover the matter as it relates to the country areas. If a crosswalk is recommended the Minister grants approval and

the Police Department employs and trains an adult guard to control the school crossing for the required short daily periods. I think this represents one hour in the morning and one hour in the afternoon.

The Hon. F. R. White: If recommended.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: So far as school crossings are concerned in the country, as the local authority is the traffic enforcement authority, it should undertake on-site inspections similar to those conducted by the on-site committee in the metropolitan area—and this will always be granted—possibly with the assistance of the divisional engineer of the Main Roads Department, and subsequently make the necessary recommendations to the Minister.

As Minister I will always give my consent to the establishment of school crossings, particularly when the lives of children or of anyone else are likely to be at stake. The local authority should employ and train the necessary adult guard for a school crossing.

The Hon. F. R. White: Who wrote that answer for you?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: People who know these things and who are responsible for the setting up of these crosswalks. I will give the honourable member the names if he wishes and I will tell him the authority who wrote it.

Mr. White also referred to the Wanneroo Shire Council as having handed the control of traffic over to the police for a period of nine months and then requested that the control be handed back to it. He understood that one of the reasons given was the lack of patrols. This is one of the occasions on which Mr. White could well have made some judicious inquiries. Had he done so I would have enlightened the honourable member about the disadvantages experienced by the Wanneroo Shire Council.

I obtained the file which was prepared when Mr. Craig was Minister for Police and Traffic. He was also the member for Toodyay in which electorate the Shire of Wanneroo lies.

I repeat that I have no complaints whatever to make so far as Mr. Craig is concerned. The police alleged takeover of the Wanneroo Shire Council traffic control has often been referred to as an example of police inefficiency.

The Hon. F. R. White: For how long?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Control was handed to the Police for a while, but the job could not be done properly and control was passed back again to the Shire. If the honourable member is patient I will tell him the story. The documents are available in my office and the honourable member can look at them and determine whether or not I have reported the matter accurately.

The story goes back to the 2nd December, 1966—a long while ago. I may skip a few letters which are repetitious, but the first letter is written to the then Minister for Police. It reads—

re: Traffic Control.

My Council is giving consideration to the control of traffic in this district by the Police Department and would appreciate your receiving a deputation to discuss the financial aspects of this.

Information is also desired regarding what arrangements the Police Department would make to effect adequate control.

I do not wish to weary the House with figures. Mr. Craig, ever obliging, met the deputation from the shire and he then wrote to Mr. Ferris, the Shire Clerk, as follows:—

In reply to your letter of the 2nd December, and relating also to the discussion in my office on the 8th inst., the Accountant of the Police Department has prepared a statement of the financial aspects of including the Wanneroo Shire district in the Metropolitan Traffic Area.

It will be seen on the basis of the present formula of distribution that your Shire would benefit considerably in income from any changeover but, as I explained to your deputation, I can give no guarantee that the existing formula of distribution could continue as it may be found necessary later to devise a different basis.

I can only reiterate the Government's assurance that any Council accepting a police takeover will not lose financially . . .

This is not I, this is Mr. Craig. To continue—

. . . and there is every indication that their present income would be exceeded.

As to traffic control, the police would extend their patrols to give the same coverage to the Wanneroo district as the rest of the metropolitan area.

The eventual establishment of a Police Station at Wanneroo would add greatly to the provision of traffic control as well as normal police protection.

Further details would need to be worked out after a decision is made by your Council.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What was the date of that letter?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: It is dated the 13th December.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Of what year?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: 1966. We now move on to the 14th December, 1966—this is a very quick reply. The letter to Mr. Craig reads as follows—

re: Traffic Control.

Thank you for your letter of the 13th instant.

At a meeting of Council held last night the following motions were passed:—

1. That control of Traffic and licensing of vehicles be handed over to the Police Department.
2. Because of its local knowledge Council requests:—
  - (a) the opportunity to make any recommendations considered necessary from time to time.
  - (b) the opportunity to review any major changes contemplated by Metropolitan traffic control in this district.

In view of the fact that the Council is without a full-time Inspector at present, . . .

I understand there was some trouble with the inspector who was previously employed. To continue—

. . . it would be appreciated if immediate action could be taken to provide Police traffic patrols in this district.

The shire requested that the police take over traffic control, or stated that the shire would hand it over, whichever terminology members prefer. One of the reasons for the application was that the shire did not have a full-time inspector and it asked that the patrols be started immediately. Now, of course, Mr. Craig did the right thing—he advised the Commissioner of Police as follows:—

The attached request from the Shire of Wanneroo follows a deputation to me on the 8th instant, at which an undertaking was given that the Metropolitan Police Traffic patrols would be extended immediately to the district pending consideration of their request.

Would you please arrange for this to be done (including attendance at serious traffic accidents) and advise me of your recommendations regarding their general request for a Police takeover.

The Commissioner of Police replied in a long two-page letter which members can read in my office if they wish. It really does not alter the picture I am presenting to the House.

The Hon. F. R. White: You have not refuted anything I have said yet.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The next letter was from the shire on the 10th February, 1967. I would remind members that from the time of the application the police were carrying out traffic patrols and these continued for 10 months. I will give the exact

dates later on. During the whole of that period the area was being patrolled in the same way as the metropolitan area. The shire did not pay one penny towards the cost of the patrols although traffic control had not been taken over by the police. The next letters are simply a repetition—

The Hon. F. R. White: Had the shire handed the control of traffic over to the police?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Not at that stage.

The Hon. F. R. White: Did it hand control over?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: To the best of my knowledge, no. We then get the criticism of the Police Department by the Shire of Wanneroo. This has been frequently referred to and appears in an article in *The West Australian* dated Wednesday, 7th June, 1967. It reads as follows:—

A Wanneroo Shire councillor claimed last week that the Police Department had misled councillors and done them an injustice regarding traffic control in the district.

I will not repeat the names, but members may read them if they so desire. The councillor moved that the shire should withdraw its application to be taken over by the police but his motion was lost by three votes to six, that is two to one against. So members will see there was not much merit in the grizzle of this councillor. There will probably always be somebody in every shire with a grouch about something.

Mr. Craig was inclined to complain about this attitude, and I agree with him. He had organised the patrols the shire had requested and these patrols had carried on. Mr. Craig then wrote to Mr. Ferris as follows:—

I refer to a report of a meeting of your Council as published in the "West Australian" on Wednesday, June 7th.

I must say I am surprised to hear of a Councillor alleging that the Police Department has misled Councillors and done them an injustice regarding traffic control in the district.

Referring to traffic fees distribution, a Councillor has reported to have stated that, four days after giving the Council information as to the figure the Council would receive under the existing formula of distribution, the Police Department had denied the revenue figures and had told the Council it was working on a new formula which would be ready in four weeks.

These are Mr. Craig's words. To continue—

The Police Department has not been engaged in working out a new formula. An investigation has been conducted by Treasury officials concerning the distribution of traffic fees and the effect

on these fees of extending the Metropolitan Traffic Area. This investigation is almost completed and a decision will soon be made by the Government as to what changes, if any, will follow. Investigation admittedly has occupied some time, but there were so many features that required close examination that it was inevitable the report was delayed.

In the meantime your Council has had, at no cost, the services of a traffic control car in its district, for sixteen hours per day, seven days a week.

Besides this, a motor cycle patrol has been detailed from two shifts each day for duty in the Marmion-North Beach, Balcatta, Nollamara and Wanneroo townsites areas.

When the conditions under which the Shire district could be included in the Police Traffic area are decided upon by the Government, you will be immediately advised. In the meantime the same police coverage, which I consider is very adequate, will continue to be given to the Wanneroo district.

The letter then quotes some statistics about accidents which are of no importance in this context. Eventually the shire reached the stage where it decided not to continue with its application. The shire clerk then replied to Mr. Craig's letter as follows:—

Thank you for your letter of the 5th instant regarding a report published in the "West Australian" newspaper of June, 7th, 1967.

The Councillor concerned was not present at the last meeting when your letter was discussed.

I have been instructed to pass the letter to him and Council has noted the contents.

The patrols had commenced on the 16th December, 1966, and were discontinued at 12 midnight on the 13th October, 1967. The shire said that it wished to resume the control of traffic but it would be a month before it could obtain the services of officers, etc., and it asked whether the Police Department would carry on during this period. Mr. Craig, in his efficient way, said, "Yes, we will see that the district is not without patrols. The patrols will be provided for the next month until you are ready to take it over." The officer in charge of the traffic control section had this to say—

Since the notification from the Shire of Wanneroo of the resumption by them of traffic control on the 20th September, 1967 commensurate with other duties, intermittent patrols in conjunction with patrols of adjacent

patrol sections within the Metropolitan Area were continued until the 13th October, 1967.

That is the story associated with Wanneroo. I claim, in all fairness to the previous Minister and to the police who controlled it during that time, that they did everything possible. I feel the Shire of Wanneroo has been very well treated. I am not concerned with its views of the police takeover of traffic. If the Bill is carried the police will take over these duties in the course of time, unless the shire decides to voluntarily hand over control.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You are not concerned with the fact that it now wants to stay outside police control?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: That is the shire's own business. If it has an opinion of that nature, I respect it.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I wondered what all this was about.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Some members have talked about central licensing authorities, computerisation, and so on. The question of personalised plates has also been raised. I had no reason to imagine that this particular matter would be raised in the debate. I could have included many other things in the second reading speech but I would probably have been criticised for including irrelevancies. I am criticised if I include things of this nature and criticised if I do not.

Members are familiar with the personalised plates and I will not describe them again. They have been in vogue for some time in New South Wales using numbers allocated to New South Wales. A person is able to ask for and obtain his own initials but he pays quite a sum for these plates—\$25 a set. This has brought in a considerable amount of money—\$50,000 or \$60,000 a year—and the authorities like it. Members may ask why a sum of \$25 a set. This is necessary because there is no computerisation in either New South Wales or Victoria. Consequently all that is involved is the clerical recording of altered numbers and the exercise is quite a money-making affair.

I used the word "sentimental" to describe these plates. Last weekend it became possible to obtain these plates in Victoria also, and this was the comment in *The Australian* of the 30th August, 1972, under the heading of "They're just fashion plates." This is a little different from my mild term. The article reads as follows:—

THE vanity of Victorian motorists has already netted the State Government \$40,000, for personalised, pick-your-own number plates, the first of which will be seen on Melbourne roads at the weekend. Yesterday the plates, which range from AA000 to ZZ999, were a great success and 1600 people had paid \$25 a set.

So, from that, it can be seen the Victorian Government obtained \$40,000 for the first weekend. If Victoria is able to do this it is because the registrations of the number plates as is the case in New South Wales are not computerised, otherwise that State would have encountered some of the troubles that we have already experienced.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Are you going to deal with the point that we raised in regard to the use of district plates by various country shires?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: If the honourable member will only exercise a little patience I will deal with that point shortly.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I thought we were being extremely patient in listening to the Minister.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: In many country districts throughout the State the shires issued their own plates on which are shown a letter or letters which indicate the particular shire that has issued the plates. These plates identify a person with a particular district. Letters such as "WA" or "MO" do not mean anything to the average motorist, but they do mean something to a person who belongs to that particular district. However, plates such as the example I am holding up for members to see can be purchased.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I think you should describe the plate so that those people who read *Hansard* will know what you are talking about.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Perhaps I can get *Hansard* to publish a photograph of it. However, I will describe it. This is a metal surround, on the bottom of which is shown the name of the particular district where the plate is issued. As a matter of interest the person who manufactures these plates was a well known tennis player a few years ago. His name is Clive Wilderspin. I will also point out that they are much cheaper than \$25. In my opinion, if the town "Warooka" were shown at the bottom of the registration plate it would mean a great deal more to a particular motorist than would the letters "WO".

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The only town you have not mentioned is Busselton, which is the name of the town shown at the bottom of the metal frame you displayed to the House.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I have a story to tell about the Busselton takeover. It is one well worth repeating. I think the honourable member would feel a little disappointed if I did not say something about it. Reference to the Busselton Shire was made in a letter. One of the arguments put forward was that traffic control in Busselton was so bad that when it was handed over to the police they could not help making a better job of it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Who said that?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: That was said in the letter read by Mr. Heitman.

The Hon. J. Heitman: It was in a newspaper article.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Anyway it is recorded in *Hansard* so members will be able to read it there. I visited Busselton at the beginning of this year. The shire had a few worries and it wanted to bring a deputation to meet me in my office. However, I thought I would go down and see the members of the shire at Busselton. I did so and my wife went with me. After meeting some members of the shire and after they explained what they wanted to see me about, I said to them, "Before we go any further, how have you found the traffic control by the police?" They said, "That is the best day's work we ever did; that is, when we handed over the traffic control to the police." I then said, "You are quite satisfied with it?" And they replied, "Yes, this is where we have real traffic control."

I then went to see the local inspector in charge of police and after telling him what the shire members had told me I asked him for a few figures to substantiate the statements made by the shire members. I said to him, "For instance, how do the number of accidents compare with what they used to be?" And he replied, "The records show that we have decreased them by 90 to 95 per cent." I said, "Are you sure the figures are right?" And he said, "We can guarantee them." I then asked, "How have the fatalities been?" And he said, "We have not had a fatality since we took over." I would mention that a fatality has occurred during the holiday period since my visit to Busselton.

I went a little further and asked him, "Have you any other statistics to present?" And he said, "Yes, the people say that the police get great respect here." Later, I asked some people in the street what they thought about traffic being controlled by the police and they said, "It is wonderful."

I also asked the police in Busselton whether they could give me any other indication that the control of traffic by the police would instill and encourage good driving habits in the area. They replied, "Last week we carried out an amphotermeter check on the Bussell Highway. Four hundred motorists went through it and we had to pull up only one. The rest obeyed the law."

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Did you meet any psychopaths down there?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Should the honourable member so desire, I will go down to Busselton with him one weekend and he can ask the same questions that I did whilst I was there. I am sure he will get the same answers. I will be very surprised



if the honourable member picks a winner and finds that somebody is unhappy with the police control of traffic.

Mr. Withers indicated his support for the Bill. The reason he gave was that all the shires in the Pilbara and Kimberley districts had handed over the control of traffic to the police.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: All bar one.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I will make the honourable member happy. On the day after the House rose on the 24th August we received an application from the Halls Creek Shire requesting that traffic control be taken over by the police. We will be happy to oblige and the honourable member can then say that not even one shire has been left out in the Pilbara and Kimberley districts.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: What place will I be given in the class; first or second?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Only second place. I will have to give pride of place to Mr. Clive Griffiths, my co-member in the South-East Metropolitan Province. I thought he was one of the few members who made a realistic and reasonable approach to the measure. He said, "We will not get anywhere unless we have co-ordinated control." He is a good co-member. His action shows a sense of responsibility.

Mr. Clive Griffiths can see that in this Bill we are aiming at co-ordination. I asked one honourable member his opinion of a regional council, and he replied he was in favour of a regional council; that it could do a better job because traffic would be under one control. That is already done in many parts of the State. Therefore, if that applies to a small group, or a number of small groups, will not the same apply equally well when we have one control throughout the State?

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: That is what we want.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: That is what we want, too. The Liberal Party is seeking a single authority divorced from the police and we claim, of course, that the control of traffic should not be divorced from the police.

During the course of my research last week I came across a report of a speech made by Mr. Syd Thompson. It was made by him during the Address-in-Reply debate and the report of his speech can be found in volume 1 of the 1969-70 *Hansard*, at page 239. Mr. Syd Thompson was referring to a point that had been raised by the Minister for Traffic (Mr. Craig) at that time and which had been reported in *The West Australian* of the 7th August, 1971. The quotation made by Mr. Syd Thompson was as follows:—

According to Traffic Minister Craig, opposition to police control of country traffic is rooted in local authorities'

reluctance to surrender revenue from traffic prosecutions to the State Government.

I wish to commend Mr. Syd Thompson for his consistency. His opinion of what he considered was the correct thing then is the same today, and I respect his views on the matter. At least he does not have one set of thoughts one week and a different set the next week. During the same speech, the following is what Mr. Syd Thompson had to say on the subject:—

The reason country shires are anxious to retain traffic control is that they feel the authority of the country shires is being sapped; and that the handing over of country traffic control is the last straw. If it were not for this reason they would be glad to hand over traffic control immediately. This is the last ditch stand by the country shires to retain the little authority that they now have.

I have had a few words to say about registration plates, and so on, and I am now approaching the semi-final.

I wish to make it quite clear that no-one supporting the Bill—I include all members of my own Party, and also Mr. Withers and Mr. Clive Griffiths—would be so rash as to prophesy that the result of the passing of the Bill will lead to any immediate drastic reduction in road accident fatalities as against the present system.

A number of times in the debate we have heard of the rising road toll. If members have a copy of tonight's *Daily News* handy, they will notice, from the special page dealing with traffic safety, that there have been fewer fatalities on the road during this year than during the corresponding period of last year. Therefore the number of fatalities is decreasing and the number of accidents is dropping proportionately.

I have received letters from various authorities such as hospitals and ambulance drivers who have commented on the reduction in the accident rate. They have seen this reduction reflected in the number of calls they have received.

The Hon F. D. Willmott: Does this apply only to the metropolitan area?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: In yesterday's newspaper there is a report which states that the number of road fatalities and accidents in the country is rising. I think I have said before that every time I pick up a newspaper and read that somebody has been killed on the road I feel really sad, and I will never be satisfied until the day arrives when these fatalities will end. I doubt if they ever will, but should that day ever arrive I will be very happy; I do not care which Government is in office or which Minister is in control of traffic.

A great deal of play has been made of the fact that we need dedicated men to control traffic. Let members pick up this evening's newspaper and read a report of how the police had to chase a motor cyclist who was driving at 108 miles per hour.

When the police eventually caught him they found that the cycle had a bald tyre and other defects. In my opinion this gives the lie to all the balderdash one hears about the police creating a bad image for themselves because they book a person for driving at five miles over the speed limit. Men such as the motor cyclist who was driving at 108 miles per hour, and motorists who drive across intersections when the traffic lights are showing red, or who do not stop at "Stop" signs, are potential killers. Therefore no-one can tell me that any policeman who apprehends such a motorist with a view to putting him off the road does not have courage and is not dedicated to his duty. The only trouble is that these types of motorists are put off for only 12 months. Some of these people are an absolute menace on the roads.

I think someone stated that I was wrong when I said that 75 to 80 per cent. of the drivers should not be on the roads. I repeat that the only thing wrong with that figure is that I should have said that 95 per cent. of them should not be on the roads.

The Hon. F. R. White: If the policeman had not been chasing that person he might have been doing only 60 miles an hour instead of 80 or 100.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The honourable member talks some awful bunkum at times. The training of efficient staff to this end is a more feasible proposition than the present fragmented control whereby traffic inspectors are employees of numerous local authorities governed by people with no expertise in this great problem despite all the good intentions in the world.

The lack of consistency and application in traffic control between the various local government bodies is quite obvious to any unbiased observer and it is a situation that, in fairness to the motoring public, should be terminated as soon as possible.

No matter what is said to the contrary, the fact remains that control of moving traffic and the conduct of our motoring population is, and always will be, inevitably linked with the normal functions of the Police Department.

It is useless to say the police should concern themselves with criminal law enforcement and not be associated with the enforcement of laws relating to moving traffic so as to have some bearing and influence on the murder and mayhem that takes place on public roads. The killing and injury of persons in and by vehicles is police business.

Given the strength of numbers and the facilities, the police can do the job as well as, if not better and certainly more economically than, the existing fragmented system permits, and certainly just as well as the fanciful statutory body so strongly advocated by some opponents of the Bill.

Advocates of a separate authority to control traffic—I would like members to listen carefully to this—seem to have ignored the cost factor in implementing such a system. A very important aspect of the voluntary takeover so far has been the ability to absorb traffic control and licensing into the police system with a minimum of inconvenience and very little cost. Generally a changeover of traffic control and licensing requires only the addition to the existing police facilities of a vehicle inspection area together with modest equipment, extra vehicles, and associated staff. It was estimated in April, 1971, that the total outlay of a changeover to police control would be in the vicinity of \$1,176,000, with an annual running cost of \$960,000, which would be offset by an expected increase in revenue of \$930,000.

To set up a completely separate system of licensing and traffic control with an operative force, accommodation and housing, equipment, and all other necessary things without making use of existing facilities as controlled by the police, would cost millions in capital outlay. All of this would have to come out of the pockets of the motorists in additional charges or, alternatively, would result in less money being available for road funds.

At some future date it might be possible to consider separation of vehicle licensing from traffic control, but what the Government proposes in this measure is to bring traffic control and licensing under the control of the Commissioner of Police. This is all that should be considered at this point of time and perhaps members should ask themselves what they are likely to achieve by defeating the Bill, as it seems quite obvious that if the current rate of handovers continues, there will be few local authorities controlling traffic within the space of two years.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What you are saying is that by letting the police take over, it will cost virtually nothing—

The Hon. J. DOLAN: No, I did not say that.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith:—in comparison with a separate authority which will cost—millions, you say?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: That is right.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Could you expand on that?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I gave the figures originally.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Could you expand and tell us why it will involve millions?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I can only repeat what I said previously, which was that to set up a completely separate system of licensing and traffic control with an operative force—that is what is proposed under a separate authority divorced from the Police Force; do not get off the beam; I cannot answer one argument and then be faced with another—accommodation and housing, equipment, and all other necessary things without making use of existing facilities as controlled by the police, would cost millions in capital outlay. I will leave it at that and the Leader of the Opposition can formulate his thoughts on the matter.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I think that is quite wrong.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Those people who talk of separating traffic control from the Police Department fail to realise how closely traffic law enforcement is associated with enforcement in criminal areas, and the number of apprehensions made by traffic personnel which lead to an important breakthrough in the detection of serious crimes. This is particularly noticeable in reading the daily unusual incidents reported by the traffic police. For example, one reads of a traffic patrol picking up a stolen car occupied by several young offenders wanted for breaking and entering offences. Frequently through the agency of their radios, traffic officers attend signal alerts and apprehend breaking and entering offenders and even safe breakers.

At other times vehicles are stopped for traffic offences and found to be loaded with stolen goods, and recently illicit drugs were found in a vehicle stopped for a traffic offence. All this stems from having fully trained police officers carrying out traffic work and having an avenue of contact with the motoring public. One cannot expect similar versatility from traffic inspectors or other organisations not connected directly with the police. It is ridiculous even to consider that two separate organisations, one for traffic and one for crime, could possibly be as efficient as one body under one control, at anything remotely approaching the same total cost.

As I said previously, the rate of progress of voluntary handovers will, within a few years, leave only small pockets of hard core resistance to police control of traffic. Already 19 local authorities have handed over to police control and four are negotiating to do so.

Mr. White, the Secretary of the Country Shire Councils' Association, said that 73 per cent. of the people in the State are now under police traffic control.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That 73 per cent. represents the metropolitan area in the main.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Of course it does. I assumed that when Mr. White made the remark.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: There is not a great deal of strength to that argument.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The whole of the north has been taken over. We have received applications from numerous sources and it will not be long before the small pockets of hard core resistance, which are fostered by certain people are taken over.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Hard core resistance of 50 local authorities.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: That is right.

In no area where the police have taken over control has there been any dissatisfaction expressed. I have not received one complaint—I say that truthfully and honestly—from any shire or any person. During the debate those members who have in their provinces a shire which has been taken over by the police have not referred to one complaint.

The Hon. F. R. White: What about Mundaring? Have they complained?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Is Mundaring under the control of the police?

The Hon. F. R. White: Yes, part of it is.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: And that is what the complaint is about. They feel there should be unified control, I agree. The sooner the rest of the area comes under police control, the better.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Is your Government placing the road safety department with the Main Roads Department or the Police Department?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Part of our party's platform is that a Minister for Traffic Safety should be appointed. I was not appointed as Minister for Traffic Safety because it is in the platform that that portfolio must be divorced from police control. It was felt that the appropriate Minister was Mr. Jamieson who is in charge of the Main Roads Department which controls signs, road construction, and so on. That was why I was not given the portfolio, plus the fact that I have plenty on my plate at present.

As I said, in no area where the police have taken over control has any dissatisfaction been expressed. On the contrary, a recent survey indicated local authorities were well pleased with the manner in which the police were carrying out these duties.

Police strength has increased in various country areas; marked police vehicles with radio communication have been established, and despite fears expressed about the future employment of persons engaged by local authorities in traffic work—and this will answer Mr. MacKinnon, I hope—takeovers have been executed quite smoothly and many traffic inspectors have been inducted into the Police Force and,

as far as it is known, only one has been rejected as a police employee and he was able to secure other acceptable employment.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You still have not answered my question which was specific and simple enough to understand, surely to goodness.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: What was it?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: What happens to a good, competent officer over the age of 50 years who has given 15 to 20 years to traffic inspection?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I have indicated the conditions before. It is against police regulations for anyone over 45 to be brought into the Police Force.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I think that is quite inhuman.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The honourable member had an opportunity when in Government to do something about it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: We did. Whenever there was anything like this, we did something about looking after people, with a grandfather clause. We did not throw them on the scrap heap.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I have heard that tale before. I still have to be convinced about it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Do not mumble to yourself. Speak up.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The only civilian who was available for employment other than with the local government body, has been taken into the Public Service and additionally four clerks have been employed at various country centres.

I repeat that this legislation is favoured by the R.A.C., the Chamber of Commerce, the Royal Australian College of Surgeons, and *The West Australian* newspaper.

Before I conclude I wish to say that I did not previously mention the association of the Royal Australian College of Surgeons, headed by Mr. Bedbrook and Mr. Stokes. Mr. MacKinnon stated that they were pontificating and that people, expert in one field, should not enter another.

By virtue of the fact that these two gentlemen are executive officers of the Trauma Committee of the organisation, and because of their association with similar organisations in other States, they know more about traffic accidents and their results than any member in this House. I am prepared to bow to their knowledge. They were, of course, responsible for the setting up of Shenton Park where they see the results of accidents and where they make inquiries from those involved as to the cause of the accidents and how they could be prevented.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Who do you think helped them to set up Shenton Park?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: They have taken the initiative in these matters. Of course they had to receive assistance, and they will continue to do so. I commend the honourable member for his part. I do not bury my head in the sand and say that the honourable member did nothing. I acknowledge those things.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I know the competence of those two doctors.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: And so do I; and I feel they have every right to be respected for their views. That is why I quoted them. They feel local authorities should be phased out of traffic control.

The views of *The West Australian* have not changed one bit. It believes it is time we got on with the job of setting up the authority under the police and claims that the sooner it is done the better. I had intended to read the article which appeared only within the last fortnight, reaffirming its opposition to the present system and recommending the takeover, but I cannot locate it readily.

I apologise to some members for having taken so long to reply, but as I felt the Bill was so important, and as practically every member spoke on it and queried many aspects, I felt it desirable to go to some length to explain what it proposed.

My Government believes—and I was instrumental in bringing the Bill before Parliament—that the co-ordination of traffic under the police has some chance of effecting considerable improvements in road safety and of lowering the road toll.

The Government honestly and sincerely believes this will happen. Of course different views have been expressed. I say once again that I have no quarrel whatsoever with traffic officers who are doing an excellent job. However I consider that it is most desirable to have one authority and that this one authority should be the police. For this reason, I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and a division taken with the following result—

#### Ayes—12

Hon. R. F. Cloughton	Hon. J. L. Hunt
Hon. D. K. Dans	Hon. R. T. Leeson
Hon. S. J. Dellar	Hon. R. E. C. Stubbs
Hon. J. Dolan	Hon. W. F. Willsee
Hon. Lyla Elliott	Hon. W. R. Withers
Hon. Clive Griffiths	Hon. R. Thompson

(Teller)

#### Noes—17

Hon. C. R. Abbey	Hon. I. G. Medcalf
Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. T. O. Perry
Hon. G. W. Berry	Hon. S. T. J. Thompson
Hon. V. J. Ferry	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. F. R. White
Hon. J. Heltman	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. D. J. Wordsworth
Hon. G. C. MacKinnon	Hon. R. J. L. Williams
Hon. N. McNeill	

(Teller)

Question thus negatived.

Bill defeated.

**LAW REFORM COMMISSION BILL***Receipt and First Reading*

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by The Hon. W. F. Willesee (Leader of the House), read a first time.

*House adjourned at 9.50 p.m.*

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## Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 5th September, 1972

The SPEAKER (Mr. Norton) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

**BILLS (2): ASSENT**

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills:—

1. Supply Bill.
2. Bulk Handling Act Amendment Bill.

**COUNTRY HIGH SCHOOL HOSTELS AUTHORITY ACT AMENDMENT BILL***Message: Appropriations*

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriations for the purposes of the Bill.

**QUESTIONS (22): ON NOTICE****1. ALBANY REGIONAL HOSPITAL***Blood Bank*

Dr. DADOUR, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has he reviewed the site for the new blood bank at Albany Regional Hospital?
- (2) If so, what is the decision?
- (3) If not, when will the review be completed?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

- (1) to (3) The review is in progress but no date can be given for completion.

**2. HIGH SCHOOLS***Hall-Gymnasiums*

Mr. THOMPSON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is it intended to build a hall/gymnasium at any State high school this financial year; if so, at which school or schools?
- (2) Which State high schools have been provided with a hall/gymnasium, and when were they built?

- (3) What was the enrolment at the respective schools mentioned in (2) when this facility was provided?

- (4) What is the present enrolment at Kalamunda high school and what is the anticipated number for the start of 1973?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) Yes, at the Belmont and Tuart Hill senior high schools. In addition halls will be incorporated in the designs of the new Carine, Kelm-scott and North Lake high schools.

- (2) (a) Separate halls—

Perth Modern school—1911.  
Eastern Goldfields senior high school—1914.

Northam senior high school—1921.

Bunbury senior high school—1923.

Albany senior high school—1925.

Governor Stirling senior high school—1956.

John Curtin senior high school—1958.

Applecross senior high school—1958.

Hollywood senior high school—1958.

- (b) Covered assembly areas—

Balcatta senior high school—1967.

South Fremantle senior high school—1967.

Rossmoyne senior high school—1968.

Como high school—1969.

- (c) Halls incorporated in new schools—

Morley high school—1970.

Thornlie high school—1971.

Rockingham high school—1971.

Hedland high school—1972.

- (3) Applecross senior high school—1,476.

Hollywood senior high school—842.

Belmont senior high school—1,381.

Tuart Hill senior high school—1,270.

All other halls have been built when the school was established and therefore enrolments at the time were not complete.

- (4) 1,060.

1,282.

Mr. O'Neil: I think the date of 1958 for the Applecross senior high school is incorrect.