

The function of that department will be to study continually the problems of transport, and the aim of the department will be to provide the State with the most efficient, co-ordinated, up-to-date, and economical services possible.

The department will have to deal with all phases of transport—for example in the case of farmers from the farm to the oversea port. It must aim to have all the various forms of transport acting where they can best serve the interests of the community, and all co-operating and co-ordinating for the common good. Freights to be at a rate comparable to direct route to destination.

The object of the department will be not to deal with any one phase but with all phases combined, so that the total costs may be kept to the minimum.

The following departments will be under the control of the Minister for Transport:—

Railways, Tramways, Ferries;
Transport Board;
State Shipping Service;
A State Harbours Board with local Harbour boards at the most important ports;
Main Roads Board;
Air transport.

The permanent head of the Department of Transport to be a Commissioner or Director of Transport. Under him will be—

Commissioner of Railways;
Chairman, State Transport Board;
Chairman, or General Manager, of State Harbours Board;
Commissioner of Main Roads;
Manager, State Shipping Service.

A Transport Council to be appointed and to consist of the following:—

Minister for Transport (Chairman);
Commissioner (or Director) of Transport (Deputy Chairman);
Members: Commissioner of Railways; Commissioner of Main Roads; Chairman, State Transport Board; Chairman (or General Manager) State Harbours Board; Manager, State Shipping Service or other shipping man; representatives of commercial interests; representatives of primary industries; representatives of industrial interests; representatives of Defence Department, and Airways.

The functions of the Transport Council will be:—

To consider any matter affecting more than one form of transport;
To consider all major harbour work, the development, extension or otherwise dealing with any port;
To consider the extension, construction, or closing of any railway;
To consider the developmental roads policy;
To co-ordinate all forms of transport including airways as far as possible.

I fully realise that the Minister for Transport—when we have one—will have a Herculean task, because whenever reform is suggested someone must be called upon to make sacrifices; and when that call is made, there is always opposition. In conclusion I would like to point out that the task of the proposed Minister for Transport will be to consider the State as a whole, and not as a parochial scheme of different localities; to plan so that we can catch up with our past mistakes; to call modern science and invention to the natural advantages which we have at hand. The policy must be based on the needs of the future, and not on the mistakes of the past. We must consider not what our grandfathers did, but what our grandchildren require. Our Minister for Transport—when we get one—will need to be a statesman, and not a politician. He will need to consider the next generation, and not the next election.

Vote put and passed.
Votes—State Batteries, £65,882; Cave House, £10,335—agreed to.
Progress reported.

House adjourned at 7.29 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Friday, 11th December, 1942.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 11 a.m., and read prayers.

BILL—MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS ACT AMENDMENT.

Assembly's Message.

Message from the Assembly notifying that it had disagreed to the Council's amendment now considered.

In Committee.

Hon. V. Hamersley in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill.

Clause 3—Delete paragraph (b) :

The CHAIRMAN : The Assembly's reason for disagreeing is—

The circumstances of the employment of the officials mentioned in the deleted subclause justify the proposed provision, which is in keeping with the practice generally in operation in the other States of Australia, and was introduced at the request of the West Australian Municipal Councils' Association.

THE HONORARY MINISTER : I move—

That the amendment be not insisted on.

Perhaps I did not properly explain the objects of the Bill, but it has been found that a similar provision in the Road Districts Act has met with great success over many years. The Country Municipal Association recently discussed the matter and passed a resolution asking for a similar provision to be included in the Municipal Corporations Act. That motion was forwarded by the association to the Minister. In New South Wales provision is made for an appeal board. Victoria has a similar provision, but, in addition, town clerks and valuers are included. New South Wales has a provision for a committee to be appointed by the Governor-in-Council. The Country Municipal Association favours the provision because it would strengthen a town clerk's position in the event of trouble with a disgruntled ratepayer.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH : I trust the Committee will insist on the amendment. No good reason has been advanced for a departure from the Committee's previous decision. The Honorary Minister has quoted the opinion of the Country Municipal Association, but not his personal views. It is 30 years since I had direct association with local government. At that time the higher officers employed by municipal councils had complete confidence in the men whom the ratepayers had elected to conduct the affairs of the municipalities. If the proposals and arguments used in favour of the provision in the Bill indicate that that condition of affairs has been altered, then in my opinion it is a change for the worse.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS : Up to date I have supported the Government on this question. Some of us supported the Government, but not because we agreed with the Honorary Minister. Years ago the engineer of the Boulder Council carted hundreds of loads of material and dumped them on to a road, and then had to cart the stuff away again. According to the

amendment the council would not be able to sack him. We are in politics and know the political pull that can be exercised if the Minister can be seen, in districts where it counts. I hope that the Council sticks to its guns.

Hon. H. TUCKEY : I have had long association with local government in this State and am opposed to this amendment. Some local authorities may have approved of it, but I have yet to learn of any that agree with the amendment mentioned by the Honorary Minister. The road boards and municipalities are elected by the ratepayers and have the right to govern their own affairs. They should not have to apply to the Minister if they desire to dispense with the services of an officer.

The Honorary Minister : It was put in at their request.

Hon. H. TUCKEY : Although it is in the Road Districts Act it should not be included in the Municipal Corporations Act. It is news to me to know that it has been inserted at the request of the local governing bodies concerned.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER : I hope members will insist upon the amendment. Road boards get into difficult positions because of unsatisfactory servants. I know one case which has been of concern to the people of the district for many years.

Hon. C. B. Williams : Not Subiaco ?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER : No. Finally the local governing body resigned as a whole and the central authority at the Public Works Department appointed a commissioner. He was not satisfied with the officer but could not get sufficient charges against him to satisfy the Minister. Surely people who are prepared to give their time in an honorary capacity and are selected by the ratepayers of the district should have the power to discharge unsatisfactory servants.

Hon. J. Cornell : They vent their spleen, too.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER : That may be so. We should stand firm.

Hon. J. CORNELL : Since this amendment was agreed to, I have made inquiries and am given to understand that the country municipalities at their conference were almost unanimous that this protection should be given to the town clerks and engineers. It is ridiculous to say that men elected to an honorary position on a local governing body become the personification of right.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch : Is the Minister ?

Hon. G. W. Miles : They are just as liable to make mistakes as members of Parliament, you, or anyone else.

Hon. J. CORNELL : Yes, or Mr. Miles.

The CHAIRMAN : Order !

Hon. C. F. Baxter : This is getting personal.

Hon. J. CORNELL : The No. 1 man in the council is the town clerk and the No. 2 is the engineer.

Hon. C. F. Baxter : And the chairman afterwards.

Hon. J. CORNELL : Are members not prepared to give these men the privilege railway porters have ?

Hon. C. B. Williams : Those men have an appeal board to go to, not to one individual.

Hon. J. CORNELL : Under the Railways Act the porter has final recourse to the Commissioner of Railways.

Hon. A. Thomson : If the appeal board goes against him he has no chance.

Hon. J. CORNELL : Members are not prepared to give these men anything. I know of a road board which sacked its secretary and went to the Minister.

Hon. C. F. Baxter : He reinstated him, I bet.

Hon. J. CORNELL : No, he sacked the board which went for re-election and the electors sacked it and stuck to the secretary. A Labour council reduced the mayor by £100 a year and if the town clerk opens his mouth he will be tramped, too ! For many years there was a minute on the books of the Kalgoorlie Council to the effect that the electrical engineer had the right to employ and dismiss men in the power house.

Hon. C. B. Williams : That is not a Labour council.

Hon. J. CORNELL : I am dealing with another one now. Within the last three weeks a fitter enlisted and the council resolved to put a certain man in his place in the power house. The engineer in charge considered him unsuitable, and he resigned. I know of a road board that has carried a resolution that the secretary issue summonses against ratepayers in arrears with their rates and license fees, and the secretary did the right thing. A road board secretary, on taking over, found that almost everyone in the district was related to a member of the board, and the rates were in a shocking state of arrears. He said, "I am after the board first." But

for a provision of this kind in the Road Districts Act, would he have gone after the board first ? The Minister can be trusted to give a fair decision. Without this provision the highest officer in a municipality has no protection whatsoever. A public servant may not be dismissed without having the right of appeal. Even a navy in the Works Department has protection of this sort.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS : Mr. Cornell has no right to insult the Boulder Council.

Hon. J. Cornell : It would be impossible to do so.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS : The Boulder Council, which does not consist entirely of Labour men, unanimously agreed to reduce the mayoral allowance by £100. We could not sack the mayor.

Hon. L. B. Bolton : You have tried to do so lots of times.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS : The mayor takes what the law does not allow him ; he takes the £300 a year allowance into his own pocket. The council sought to reduce the amount by £100. The hon. member knows that the mayor has made a permanent job of the position. The town clerk pointed out that the rates having declined brought him into the £25,000-£30,000 category and that his salary should be reduced by £48 a year. It has not been reduced. The electrical engineer at Kalgoorlie said that a certain man should not have a job in the power house, although he had been for 21 years an enginedriver from steam to oil and had had to carry out his own repairs. When a vacancy occurred, the engineer said this man was not a qualified fitter. I understand that he is a fitter. The council resolved to give promotion to one of its own men and the engineer said he was not capable. The council insisted on giving the man a trial and the engineer resigned.

Hon. A. Thomson : I think the people would have supported the council.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS : Yes. I regret that the names of certain municipalities have been dragged in. The mayors of Kalgoorlie and Boulder are making special jobs of their positions. If a council chooses to reduce an allowance, surely it has the right to do so. The Kalgoorlie Council, in making the appointment it did, is answerable to the ratepayers. It is useless to compare the position of a municipal officer with that of a railway man or civil servant, because these employees have appeal boards.

To provide for an appeal to a political head is not right.

Hon. G. W. MILES: The Committee should insist on the amendment. Without casting any reflections, I could wish that Mr. Cornell was in the Chair, and then he could not insult members of local governing bodies as he has done.

Hon. J. Cornell: I ask for a withdrawal of that remark.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I withdraw, and say he has made statements that are reflections on members of local governing bodies. He said they were not competent to handle their affairs.

Hon. J. Cornell: Again I have to correct Mr. Miles. I said "some." Now he is making it appear that I included all.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I will adopt the word "some." He said the power house engineer had the authority to dismiss the men under him, but now he wants to deprive members of councils, who give such valuable honorary service, of the power to dismiss a servant without reference to the Minister. The man might be a political friend of the Minister and the Minister might protect him. A vote recently taken should serve as a recommendation to the Government to repeal a similar section in the Road Districts Act, thus allowing members of road boards to control their own affairs without going cap in hand to the Minister.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Mr. Baxter was somewhat unfortunate in his reference to a certain road board. The Minister only administers his department and does not get down to the consideration of the details suggested by Mr. Williams. An appeal to the Minister is really one to a number of departmental experts. Every local authority of reputation is only too anxious to profit by the assistance and advice of the department. Any dispute that arises between the local authority and its officers would be dealt with by the experts of the department and justice would be meted out. There is no question of political influence. A splendid feeling exists between country road boards and the Local Government Department. It would be an expensive job to set up an appeal board that might have to visit all the local authorities in the State. I am sorry there has been some heat during the debate. The men concerned are entitled to protection and the Country Municipal Association desires that this provision should be em-

bodied in the measure. I hope the Committee will not insist upon its amendment.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I point out that the Honorary Minister has only a few weeks' experience of this work through having acted in place of the Minister for Works during the latter's recent illness. That does not entitle him to take up an authoritative attitude on this question. He went off at a tangent concerning alleged reflections on departmental officers. I have had a longer ministerial experience than has the Honorary Minister. I say there has been no reflection on either the Minister or his officers, but I contend that local authorities should be allowed to control their own affairs.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The Honorary Minister feels that the officers of local authorities should have someone to whom they can lodge an appeal in case of dismissal. There have been happenings that should never have occurred. In such instances the town clerk or the professional officers of the council should have the right of appeal against any action taken to their detriment. I am opposed to placing further power in the hands of the Minister. An excellent substitute for that would be to vest the necessary power in the Public Service Commissioner.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: The Bill as it stands does not contemplate the establishment of a board of appeal. There could be no objection to provision being made for setting up such a board. I suggest that a board consisting of a resident magistrate, a representative of the organisation to which the dismissed officer belongs, and a representative of some adjoining municipality would give ample protection to the officers concerned. What we have here is not an appeal board of any kind. The Bill does not mean that a dismissed officer can appeal to the Minister, but that the officer cannot be dismissed without the consent of the Minister.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Apparently Sir Hal Colebatch objects to the Minister constituting a board of appeal. Members seem to think that the officers concerned are not entitled to any protection. I am in favour of appeals being made to the Minister only because no other alternative has been put forward. Either the Committee should refrain from insisting on this amendment or a conference with another place should be asked for. In the latter event we might be able to do something for those officers who had no right of appeal at the moment.

Hon. H. TUCKEY : I always understood that members of local government authorities were regarded as being men of capacity and integrity. Notwithstanding that, members seem to think they cannot be trusted to deal justly with an unsuitable officer. In some cases it is necessary to appoint a secretary-engineer. Such a man might have to be on the pay-roll for some time before he became acquainted with his work, and meanwhile might prove to be quite unsuitable for the position. It is wrong in principle to lay down that the power to dismiss an employee should be handed over to the Minister. The officers of the department cannot know as much about these matters as do the local authorities. I hope the amendment will be insisted upon.

Question put and negatived ; the Council's amendment insisted on.

Resolution reported, the report adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Assembly.

BILL—INCOME AND ENTERTAINMENTS TAX (WAR TIME SUSPENSION).

Assembly's Message.

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

BILL—MORTGAGEES' RIGHTS RESTRICTION ACT CONTINUANCE.

First Reading.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY [11.48] in moving the second reading said : This is another continuance Bill. Measures for a similar purpose have been discussed at length in this Chamber on numerous occasions. The Bill deals with the question of the calling up of mortgages and it provides that a mortgagee shall not, without the leave of the Supreme Court, call up or demand payment from a mortgagor of the whole or any part of the principal moneys secured by mortgage, etc., and where an agreement has been made in connection with the sale of land, the Court must be approached by the purchaser, the onus being placed upon him to do so ; otherwise the vendor of the land concerned can exercise his rights after the expiration of one month from the service of notice of his intention to take such action. I think it is generally

agreed that if this Bill is not continued it will create much difficulty and trouble for a large number of people.

Hon. L. CRAIG : You have been saying that for about 11 years !

THE CHIEF SECRETARY : Yes. Of course, this House has insisted from time to time that it should be a continuance Bill from year to year. It was the intention of the Government on this occasion to provide relief for certain persons. Members have pointed out many times that persons have invested in property or mortgages the sum total of their capital, and on account of this legislation it has not been possible for them to secure a return of that capital, even though they might be in straitened circumstances. Unfortunately, the Government, while desirous of giving some relief in that direction, has found considerable difficulty in doing so and, a question being raised in another place on the Bill as introduced there, it has been decided to make this a continuance Bill only at present, and to give consideration in the New Year to finding some satisfactory solution of the point I have mentioned. The Government is anxious that something should be done in that direction, but so far has not been able to evolve a satisfactory method. I would like members to accept my assurance that efforts will be made to provide ways and means of tapering off this legislation at an early date. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. L. CRAIG (South-West) : I find I spoke on the wrong Bill the other day. I thought I was speaking on this one. You were very generous, Mr. President. I am glad we have the assurance of the Chief Secretary that consideration will be given to the "tapering off" of this measure, as he calls it. That is a very good term. The time has come when it should be tapered off, so that in time it will be eliminated altogether. There are some very difficult cases, and I am happy to have the Chief Secretary's assurance that consideration will be given to alleviating the position of certain mortgagees under this Act, which was passed in 1931.

HON. J. CORNELL (South) : This Bill is a continuance measure. I understand that when it was introduced in another place it was an amending Bill as well, and provided the easement that Mr. Craig has asked to be given in certain cases now barred by law. If they were barred by law,

they are still barred. This is only a measure to continue the Act, and we should know whether or not the easement provided in the amending Bill can still be given. If it can be given, we should be told why it was not given long ago. My own impression is that a case bound by the Act over the last 11 years is still bound by it.

The Chief Secretary: That is so.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Then we should not let it go out that the legal position of any person has been altered by the passing of this measure. He should know that he stands just where he has stood during the last 11 years.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (in reply): I thought I had made it clear that this is just a continuance Bill, and that the position is not altered in any shape or form. It is perfectly true that when the Bill was introduced in another place it provided easement for certain people, but, as a result of the debate that occurred in that House, it was found that there are many legal problems associated with the matter. Consequently, the Government has agreed to drop its proposals with regard to easement, and has given the assurance, which I have passed on to the House, that early in the New Year the respective parties will get together with a view to solving that problem and giving relief to certain categories of people who are deserving of consideration. I cannot give more definite assurance than that.

Hon. L. Craig: Can we amend the Bill in the New Year?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Bill read a third time, and *passed*.

BILL—MEDICAL ACT AMENDMENT.

Assembly's Message.

Message from the Assembly notifying that it had agreed to amendments Nos. 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 made by the Council, and had disagreed to Nos. 1 and 3, now considered.

In Committee.

Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 2, paragraph (a):—Add after the word "practitioners" in last line, page 1, the words "the seventh member shall not be a member of the public service."

The CHAIRMAN: The Assembly's reason for disagreeing is—

If the proposed words were included it would limit the choice of a representative by the Governor-in-Council.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move—

That the amendment be not insisted on.

The reason submitted by another place is that which I suggested to members of this Chamber, but members did not agree with my contention. The choice should be left open to the Governor without any limitations. The Medical Board controls the medical profession and the Government in selecting the seventh representative will undoubtedly exercise discretion and appoint some person whose services will be of value in that position.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: The more that I consider this matter, the more convinced I become of the necessity to insist upon our amendment. The Government will have the right to appoint six representatives and surely should be satisfied with that.

Question put and negatived; the Council's amendment insisted on.

No. 3. Clause 13: Proposed new Section 25A:—Insert before the word "treatment" in line 14, page 8, the words "diagnosis, examination, and the."

The CHAIRMAN: The Assembly's reason for disagreeing is—

If the proposed words were inserted it would mean that before any person, say a chiropractor, commits an offence under that wording the authorities would have to show that in one case he used x-rays for the "diagnosis, examination, and treatment."

The Bill as printed simply puts a prohibition on treatment and the effect of the wording of the amendment will widen the use of x-rays by non-medical people.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move—

That the amendment be not insisted on.

In all fairness, I should point out that when the clause was amended we did not appreciate that, as amended, it would be as comprehensively worded as another place suggests. Probably Dr. Hislop will tell the Committee that the clause, as amended, did not really carry out his intention, which was to insert the word "or" between the words diagnosis, examination, and treatment.

The CHAIRMAN : If the Council's amendment were altered to that effect, would it be acceptable ?

The CHIEF SECRETARY : I could not give any assurance on that point. Speaking personally, if the Council's amendment were altered accordingly I could not see much objection to it.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP : My intention was as indicated by the Chief Secretary. The object I had in mind was that the type of person referred to would not be permitted to use x-ray for the purpose of "examination or diagnosis or treatment." If the Council's amendment is not insisted on, it should be subject to the proviso that we suggest the alternative amendment I have indicated. Unless that is done, it would simply bring us back to where we were, and that would mean nothing at all. I hope that at some future date the Government, or perhaps a private member, will introduce a Bill that will lay down the qualifications for, as it were, unqualified medical practice. I move—

That the amendment be amended by inserting after the word "diagnosis" the word "or," and that after the word "examination" the word "and" be struck out and the word "or" inserted in lieu.

Amendment put and passed ; the Council's amendment, as amended, agreed to.

Resolutions reported, the report adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Assembly.

MOTION—TRAFFIC.

Government Petrol Buses and Stands.

Debate resumed from the 9th December on the following motion by Hon. C. F. Baxter :—

That the Government is deserving of strong censure for using petrol-driven omnibuses to supplement the transport service to South Perth and Como when the conservation of such fuel is a national necessity and other fuel can be used ; and, further, this House objects to the regulations of the Perth City Council, as to bus stands, having been ignored, and the over-riding of the parliamentary decision in rejecting the State Transport Co-ordination Act Amendment Bill of 1941.

HON. G. W. MILES (North) [12.10] : I do not intend to say much on the motion, but after listening to the remarks of the Chief Secretary it struck me that the starting point for the buses should be altered. I think the Government should, as it were, provide a reserve in Barrack-street so that the buses could run down Barrack-street to drop passengers and pick them up, and

thus avoid the necessity for crossing the intersection. That point should be taken into consideration. The buses would not then be a hindrance to traffic. I regret it was necessary to put the buses into service with the consequent use of tyres and so forth. According to what we have heard, the buses are taking traffic away from the tramway service, but the Minister suggests that the trams were overloaded and therefore the buses have relieved the congestion. I do not know if that statement is correct, although, presumably, it is.

Hon. C. F. Baxter : The trams are running half empty now.

Hon. G. W. MILES : That is so. Therefore the buses would seem to be running in competition with the State-owned trams. I notice that two of them are run on producer gas. I do not know if those vehicles were put on the run after Mr. Baxter had moved his motion. Certainly most of the buses use petrol. I do not know if I would be in order in referring to other forms of transport in South Perth, but it seems to me that the South Perth residents must be some special body of people in Western Australia. They get all the concessions.

For instance, they have a new boat on the ferry service. It is very nice to travel on, but, from an economical point of view, I am afraid the losses on the service will increase month by month. Instead of building a vessel along up-to-date lines, they have put on the run a boat that takes three hands to run it. The Government could have bought several launches of the "Val" type that can be controlled by one man. Proper consideration has not been given to the running of the service. The new boat looks like a couple of trolley buses hitched together and floating across the river. I understand that the manager of the Tramway Department was the designer. We had another experience—it referred to the State Shipping Service—of interference on the part of the manager, who went against the expressed opinion of the engineers, with the result that the State lost £100,000. If a practical shipping man had designed the boat for the ferry service, it would have been far better.

The PRESIDENT : I think the hon. member is getting rather far from a mere incidental reference that may be allowed to other forms of transport.

Hon. G. W. MILES : Quite so, Mr. President. I was only going to add that instead of the boat being called "Duchess

II.," it should have been dubbed "Cross's Folly."

Hon. W. J. Mann : It is a very comfortable boat.

Hon. G. W. MILES : Yes, but it is not satisfactory from the taxpayers' point of view. We should appreciate that position. Apparently it does not matter about the poor old taxpayer so long as Mr. Mann and other residents of South Perth have a comfortable boat to travel on.

HON. W. J. MANN (South-West) : I did not intend to speak, but as Mr. Miles has dragged in my name I wish to point out that he uses the South Perth Ferry. I am not sure he does not use the buses as well. There are occasions when I go to South Perth, and of late I have been using the new buses. I wish to tell the House—and Mr. Baxter cannot deny it—that the South Perth people are extremely grateful to the Government for having provided this convenience. The people are receiving a much better deal from the men who conduct the Government buses than ever they got from those who are in control of the private buses. Before the advent of the Government buses, I have stood on the Canning Highway for as long as an hour and seen two or three buses go by. The drivers of those buses either were quite oblivious of intending passengers or did not seem much concerned with the shorter distance travellers—the freight which they were concerned about was the better paying through-freight from Fremantle. The figures published in today's issue of "The West Australian" afford a very reasonable reply to criticism of the Government in this respect.

As regards the starting point of the Government buses, the position is, in my opinion, ideal. I have used the Government buses daily during this session, and I have not seen the slightest inconvenience on the routes covered. The starting point chosen represents a very distinct advantage to elderly people. They have not to cross the road at the corner of St. George's-terrace and Barrack-street, one of Perth's busiest intersections. If it is insisted that intending passengers shall go to the south side of the road, they will have to proceed a good long way down the Terrace, quite half the distance to Christian Brothers' College, in order to reach the starting point. The position, I repeat, is ideal. If Mr. Baxter wanted to move a want of confidence motion against the Government, he would

have done better had he based his attack on their administration of the betting laws ; but, apparently, he is quite satisfied in that respect. So he picks out this business of buses. The hon. member did not mention that there are two other services, both run by petrol, inaugurated quite recently. They did not concern the people for whom Mr. Baxter speaks.

HON. C. F. BAXTER (East—in reply) : Mr. Mann has asked why I did not take up the subject of starting-price bookmaking. I have taken up that matter often enough. In this case I am concerned with an annual consumption of 33,000 gallons of petrol and 78 tyres, which materials are required for the war effort. With the services rendered by drivers of motor vehicles I am not concerned at all. With regard to the bus stand, there is much more in that matter as to the suitability of the north side. Mr. Miles suggested a stand in Barrack-street. There is room for a bus to come the opposite way in Barrack-street. However, that stand would involve the liability of all traffic to be held up at the corner of St. George's-terrace and Barrack-street, one of the busiest crossings in Perth.

As regards the Chief Secretary's speech, I never knew the hon. gentleman to be more weak. The department concerned has had a fortnight or more to formulate a reply. But the Chief Secretary, in what he stated, left my charges unanswered and completely failed to justify the annual waste of 33,000 gallons of petrol and 78 tyres which arose from the inauguration of the Canning Bridge bus service. The hon. gentleman asserts that for many years the transport position in South Perth has been most unsatisfactory, and that a large number of the residents had to travel long distances in order to reach the tramway services or the old bus route.

The fact of the matter is that prior to the inauguration of this Government bus service, no person within the area which it serves was more than half-a-mile from an existing tram or bus route. The Chief Secretary, to demonstrate how popular the service is with the people of South Perth, quoted figures which showed that the new service carried about 31,000 passengers per week. But the Minister very carefully refrained from furnishing the House with information as to the corresponding reduction which had taken place in the number of passengers carried by the trams and private omnibuses.

The fact is that those 31,000 passengers represent largely passengers lost to the tramways; and notwithstanding the call for austerity and also notwithstanding the imperative need to conserve petrol and tyres, such passengers now ride on petrol and rubber instead of on electricity and steel. Government buses can now be seen coming over the Causeway fully loaded, while bogey trams which previously carried the passengers are now very often more than half empty.

The assertion was made by the Chief Secretary that the route to Canning Bridge was approved in consultation with the Transport Board, and that the board raised no objection to the route. With great rhetoric the hon. gentleman inquired whether it could be asserted, in view of that fact, that the Transport Board was ignored in regard to the question of the route. I shall furnish the Chief Secretary with an answer to his question. The answer is to be found in paragraph 14 of the recently-tabled report of the Transport Board for the year ended the 30th June last, wherein the board states that in its opinion the terminus of this route should be at Cale-street and not at Canning Bridge. I quote the paragraph from the report—

The only additional services provided recently are those conducted by the Government Tramways Department, the latest addition being in regard to the South Perth area, where a Government omnibus service has been inaugurated to operate between Perth and the central section of South Perth, and as far as Canning Bridge. The institution of this service arose originally due to representations for facilities to cater for residents of the central portion of South Perth, wherein convenient passenger transport facilities did not exist. Following consultations between the board and the Government Tramways Department, and an inspection of the district, arrangements were made to establish an omnibus service. As the terminus of this service is at Canning Bridge, the southern portion has the effect of duplicating the existing service, although the board at the time considered that a service as far as Cale or Henley street only, would have met the requirements of the district.

The statement is incorrect. The people who make it know absolutely nothing about the matter except what they have been told. The Chief Secretary says that the route to Canning Bridge was approved in consultation with the Transport Board and that the board raised no objection to the route. "How, then, can it be said that the Transport Board was ignored in regard to the question of route?" the hon. gentleman asks. The Chief Secretary admits

the question of fuel and tyres to be extremely important. That being so, I say, firstly, that this new service—it is not really a new service, but merely the duplication of an existing service—which wantonly absorbs 33,000 gallons of petrol and 78 tyres per annum, ought never to have been inaugurated, and that the Chief Secretary has wholly failed to justify its inauguration. Secondly, I say that whatever plausibility may be displayed in an attempt to justify the inauguration of the service, the taking of the terminus beyond Thelma-street and the running of the service along the same road as that traversed by the old-established private bus service—and this particular section of the route, which the Chief Secretary admits to be a sheer duplication, represents an annual bus mileage of 50,000 miles, requiring 5,000 gallons of petrol and 12 tyres per annum—constitutes nothing less than a grave dereliction of duty. It represents an utter disregard of wartime necessities, inspired solely by a wholly unwarranted and indefensible attempt to attack the existing bus service, which is privately owned.

Hon. J. Cornell: Why not cut out the Nedlands-Fremantle bus service and make it join up with the trolley-bus service?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The Chief Secretary's reply regarding the bus stops is only half the story. It would seem that the desire of the Government was to shift the buses back on to the north side, where they had formerly been, so that in the general shuffle it might seize the best position at the corner of Barrack-street for the Government buses, as the Government did, in fact, when re-arranging the sites for buses at the western end of St. George's terrace at William-street and King-street. It must be remembered that the Government appointed a committee to deal with bus stops in St. George's-terrace. It was comprised of a representative of the Traffic Department, a representative of the Transport Board, and a representative of the City Council. The committee recommended that all buses should be shifted to the south side of St. George's-terrace. That was done and no trouble has occurred since. Everything has worked well. Now the Government, of its own volition, ignores the committee's recommendation, which it had accepted and acted upon for a considerable time. The Government has shifted the bus stand to the north side, and Inspector Campbell—to suit the Government

policy—agrees that the buses should be shifted to the north side again.

In January last, the Transport Board forwarded to the City Council a letter which had been received from Inspector Campbell, in which he stated that the Tramway Department desired to add five buses to the transport service to and from Como and Canning Bridge. This would necessitate the allocation of an extra stand in St. George's-terrace east of Barrack-street. Personally, I think the stand could have been fixed in Barrack-street, as the site there is now only used for the parking of cars. Inspector Campbell recommended that all the bus stands at present on the south side of the street should be removed to the north side. The matter was fully considered by the City Council, which was unable to agree to the proposal for various reasons detailed to the Transport Board.

Nothing further was heard until about the middle of September, when, without reference to the City Council, the general manager of the Tramways Department advertised in the Press that the buses for the South Perth service would commence from a point outside the old G.P.O. on the northern side of St. George's-terrace. This left the private buses on the south side and established the Government buses on the north side near the corner of Barrack-street. Under the Municipal Corporations Act, the City Council is empowered to appoint and fix places in streets or ways to be used as public stands for licensed vehicles plying for hire. The bus stands in the city are therefore fixed from time to time by the City Council, always after consultation, I think I may say, with the Traffic Department. It would be imagined that the Government, which now runs tram and bus services in the metropolitan area, would conform to the same rules as apply to the private bus companies, but no!

Hon. J. Cornell: The Government is not licensed.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: That is no reason why the Government should not conform to the same rules as apply to the private bus companies. There is no provision in the Municipal Corporations Act that the council's power to fix stands binds the Crown. The Government takes advantage of this omission and insists on being a law unto itself. Why there should be one law for the Government buses and another law for private vehicles is beyond me. The Government, however, apparently does

realise that it has a duty to consult the City Council in respect to this matter of stands, as in May last Inspector Campbell, of the Traffic Department, approached the council's chief health inspector as to the position of additional stands in Stirling-street to accommodate two buses which the Tramway Department proposed to operate on the Maylands service. What a difference! No consultation as to St. George's-terrace! But in regard to Stirling-street, the Government said, "We will do the right thing; we will approach the City Council." The chief health inspector referred the matter to the Health Committee, and a recommendation for the provision of these stands was made to the council and approved.

The Minister was greatly concerned about the necessity for improving transport facilities for South Perth, in which district there is a Government representative. Consequently, he would seem to have removed the petrol and producer-gas vehicles from the Nedlands route, where they were badly wanted to cope with the enormous traffic on that line, and to have placed them on the South Perth run. That, I think, was the whole trouble. The result is that the Nedlands-Claremont route is more congested than ever before. It is interesting to note from the Minister's reply that an inspection was made of the South Perth route by the Minister for Railways, the Commissioner of Railways, the Chairman of the Transport Board, an inspector of the Transport Board, and Mr. Cross, M.L.A., the member for the district. The Government could not decide upon the route without consulting Mr. Cross! It had to get the member for the district to help to select the route.

The Chief Secretary: He was doing his job.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The Government was doing the job. Perhaps it had in mind that an election would be held in March. That is the sting in the tail.

The Chief Secretary: No.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The Chief Secretary himself said that eight new buses had been put on the run to South Perth. He explained that these buses were run on producer-gas. My complaint is that the new buses are all petrol-driven. Why could not the Government put producer-gas units on those buses? That is the essence of my complaint, and it is why I brought the matter up. The other matters are side issues. Tyres and petrol are required for the new buses. Why not instal producer-

gas units? I recently read an interesting account in the "Daily News" of a deputation to the Minister for Justice with regard to bus stands. I shall not read the whole account, but shall quote the following extract:—

Mr. Nulsen: Turning through traffic just west of the Causeway is more dangerous.

There is a danger there. The report continues—

Mr. Read: We have taken statistics over four years. There are 150 buses a day going out and there has been only one minor accident.

Mr. Nulsen: You have been very lucky. There have been plenty of hairbreadth escapes.

Mr. Read: Would you count luck against the experience of four years?

Mr. Nulsen: Passengers approve of the present arrangement.

Mr. Read: Bus passengers have approved the previous arrangement for four years.

Mr. Nulsen: Well, give us a four-years' trial.

Mr. Read: We want you to give our system a trial.

Mr. Nulsen: I am afraid Mr. Taylor has made up his mind.

What a lovely position for a responsible Minister of the Crown to be in! He told the deputation representing the City Council that he could say nothing more, because an officer under him had determined upon a certain course. As I said in my opening speech, Mr. Taylor can do just what he likes in this respect. Why did not the Minister assume responsibility? Why did he allow a public servant to dictate to him to that extent? I shall leave the motion in the hands of members, except that I wish to point out that country people are finding it almost impossible to carry on their work because of lack of petrol supplies. For this I do not blame the State Liquid Fuel Control Board, which is rendering wonderful service. My complaint is not against the board; but it is hard to think that country people are placed in such an unfortunate position. With regard to the 78 tyres per year, I have had that number verified.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: An enormous quantity of rubber will be required in that service. Had the buses been used for the district beyond the termination of the tramway service, it would have been a different matter. They would then, however, not be available for the rush traffic from the city. My main point is that producer-gas units should have been fitted to the buses. The Government did wrong

in establishing this line of buses, which will consume fuel and use up rubber badly wanted for the war.

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

Ayes	7
Noes	11

Majority against	4
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AYES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch	Hon. H. V. Plasse
Hon. E. H. H. Hall	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. V. Hamersley	(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. L. B. Bolton	Hon. E. H. Gray
Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. J. G. Hislop
Hon. C. R. Cornish	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. J. A. Dimmitt	Hon. W. J. Mann
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. L. Craig
Hon. F. E. Gibson	(Teller.)

Question thus negatived.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

Commonwealth Powers Bill.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY [12.47]: We have no further business to proceed with at the moment, and I would like to advise the House that the Premier has requested that members of this Chamber be present in the Legislative Assembly to hear the statements to be made by him and the Leader of the Opposition in connection with the recent Convention held at Canberra to deal with alterations to the Constitution. The Premier is expecting to speak at 2.15 p.m., and it would be well if members from this Chamber, who were available, attended at the Assembly at that time. After the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition have made their statements I am hopeful that we will have further business to deal with here, and that will mark the conclusion of these sittings.

The PRESIDENT: I shall leave the Chair pending the arrival of business from the Legislative Assembly, when the bells will be rung.

Sitting suspended from 12.50 to 4.55 p.m.

BILL—APPROPRIATION.

First Reading.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY [4.58] in moving the second reading said: This

is the annual Bill to formally appropriate the amounts required for the services of the year as detailed in the Estimates of Expenditure from the Consolidated Revenue Fund and the General Loan Fund which have been passed by the Legislative Assembly. Two Supply Bills have been passed this session granting in all £3,200,000 from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, £200,000 from the General Loan Fund, and £300,000 from the Public Account for Advance to Treasurer, and Clause 2 of this Bill grants further supplies as set out in Schedule A.

The total amount required from the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the year is £12,428,312. Of this sum, £4,629,131 is permanently appropriated by Special Acts, and Clause 3 appropriates the balance, £7,779,181, as summarised in Schedule B. The estimated expenditure from the General Loan Fund is £1,089,062, and from the Public Account for Advance to Treasurer, £500,000, and these amounts are also appropriated by Clause 3, for the purposes set out in Schedules C and D. Clause 3 further confirms the appropriation of expenditure from "Advance to Treasurer, 1941-42," the details of which are set out in Schedules E and F.

I do not propose to enter upon details as I have done on previous occasions, mainly because when dealing with the Loan Bill, I gave a considerable amount of information to convey to members a full appreciation of the various departmental requirements and the purposes for which the money has been raised and is being appropriated by the Bill. On some previous occasions we have had fairly long discussions on the Appropriation Bill and I have found it desirable, after the House has risen, to supply information that members were anxious to possess. If members feel there is something they would like elucidated, I shall be pleased to follow the same procedure this year. It has been customary for members, too, to initiate discussion on particular items, but I have given what information I could. However, there are two matters that were mentioned during the debate on the Loan Bill that I should like to deal with.

Speaking on the Bill, Mr. Seddon drew attention to some remarks of his in connection with the establishment of the alunite industry at Lake Campion. He insisted that I had unwittingly supplied the House with information which, to his way of thinking, could not be correct. I

have consulted the department again and the departmental reply is as follows:—

The figures supplied by the Chief Secretary in respect to potash production at Lake Campion refer to potassium sulphate, the form in which potash will be marketed, and are quite correct.

In the Geological Reports of 1928 and 1931 the potash content of Lake Campion alunite has been expressed in terms of potassium oxide.

The figure quoted by Mr. Seddon for potassium oxide recovery—9 tons from 130 tons of alunite—assumes 100 per cent. recovery, which is not attainable and not claimed.

The estimated percentage of recovery by the process proposed for Lake Campion is based on actual pilot-plant results and the recovery from 130 tons of alunite expressed in potassium oxide would be nearer 7 tons than 9 tons, as quoted by Mr. Seddon. The figures quoted by me—13 tons from 130 tons, are correct, but they refer to potassium sulphate and not to potassium oxide. I hope Mr. Seddon will appreciate that explanation.

I wish to dispel an impression created by Mr. Baxter when speaking of the egg industry. The hon. member went so far as to say that the department has been asleep and that, as a result, the industry had suffered to a great extent. I have been supplied with a considerable amount of information on the subject and it would appear that the people most concerned in the egg industry—the producers—have been working in harmony with the department for a considerable time and that, so far from lack of action on the part of the department having had serious results on the industry, it is apparently recognised that only through the action of the department has the industry in this State been saved. Mr. Baxter quoted somewhat extensively from some communications he had received. The chairman of the Voluntary Egg Stabilisation Committee, Dr. Sutton, wrote to the Minister for Agriculture on the 13th November and admitted that a mistake had been made. I will quote portion of his letter—

I was very pleased to learn that you found the report of the committee of some interest, but regret exceedingly that you found on page 4 a statement that was not correct.

I trust you will accept my assurance that this was not intentionally made, and steps are being taken to correct it on any further copies that may be sent out. I can only assume that the inaccuracy was not detected because the producers and agents and the committee were so very closely associated during those negotiations and working with such complete co-operation to avoid disaster that the correct official relationship between the committee and the department was overlooked.

A very definite statement was made by Mr. Baxter that, but for the pressure exerted

by the committee, the department would have done nothing and disaster would have resulted. As a matter of fact the exact opposite is the case. There was no pressure from the committee and the action which saved the industry at that time was taken by the department, recommended to the people concerned, and accepted by them. I am informed that, but for the action taken by the department and the Government only a little while ago, instead of eggs being the price they have been, they would have been down to 8d. or 6d. a dozen for export. That is the price the people concerned were offering to producers in the conditions then existing. In view of the fact that prices for local eggs are governed by the prices obtainable for export eggs, one can see that if the department had not stepped in and given the guarantee it did on behalf of the Government, the industry would have been in a very parlous condition. I feel sure members will appreciate the fact that I have given considerable information on the Loan Bill which it was unnecessary to duplicate on this Bill. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Bill read a third time and *passed*.

Sitting suspended from 5.13 to 5.20 p.m.

COMPLIMENTARY REMARKS.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY [5.21]: Mr. President, once again it is my privilege to wish members the compliments of the season and to thank one and all for their help and assistance. The session just concluded has been dominated by an air of anxiety and expectancy arising out of the war situation, and this appears to have cemented such a desire for the utmost co-operation and effort as to give all members a great deal of satisfaction. The legislation which has been submitted has not been of a very controversial nature—most of it has been confined to matters arising out of the war—but members have been keen to get things done. I extend to you, Sir, our best thanks for the way

in which you have conducted the business of the House. I desire also to express my personal thanks to you for the many kindnesses and courtesies which have been extended to me by yourself from time to time.

To the Chairman of Committees and his deputies I extend our thanks for the efficient manner in which they have conducted Committee work. I must also record our appreciation of the thoughtful manner in which the Clerk of the Council (Mr. Leake) and his assistant (Mr. Sparks) have discharged their duties. As usual, we are indebted to "Hansard" for the extremely efficient way in which it has discharged its duties. The other officers of the staff have given loyal and cheerful service, which has been appreciated by us all. For myself, I wish to express my sincere thanks for the many courtesies—indeed, tolerance—and the utmost co-operation which have been extended to me by all members during the session. I wish one and all the compliments of the season. I express the sincere hope that next year the war position will have improved and that the time is not far distant when we shall meet in these legislative halls in times of peace and in the spirit of peace.

HON. V. HAMERSLEY (East): I join with the Chief Secretary in the good wishes extended to you, Mr. President. I also wish to extend to the Chief Secretary, the Honorary Minister, the "Hansard" staff and the officers of the House my best thanks for their kind and generous help during the session. Owing to black-out regulations, we appreciate this year that the session is closing at an hour more convenient to members than is usual. I understand we are to be called together early in the New Year, and I hope the Minister will in the meantime get into touch with the Meteorological Department with a view to securing some cool weather during the period we shall be sitting. To one and all, I wish as cheerful a Christmas and as happy a New Year as is possible in our present circumstances.

HON. J. CORNELL (South): Mr. President, on behalf of the Deputy Chairmen of Committees and myself, I thank the Minister for the nice things which he said about us. I desire also to thank you, on my own behalf, for the many acts of kindness and

consideration extended to me during the session. I also thank the Clerk, the Assistant Clerk, the members of the "Hansard" staff and the other officers who are called upon to minister to our wants, our welfare and very often our shortcomings. I have been informed by one member that I was better out of the Chair than in it, and by another member that I was better in the Chair than out of it, so that I have been complimented by at least two members.

I think the House should extend its congratulations to the Clerk of Records, Mr. John Roberts, who has obtained his majority in the A.I.F. That is a big achievement, especially when we take into consideration the fact that he left this House as a very young man—he is not more than 23 years—to join the A.I.F. as a sergeant. To become a major within three years is a wonderful achievement and a splendid advertisement for the training that he has received in this House. I wish the same success to Mr. Len Power. In conclusion, we ought not to let the war situation get the best of us. We should accept events day by day and each morning wake up with a firm resolve that we shall still keep on trying.

THE PRESIDENT : I wish to express my thanks for the many kind, perhaps too kind, remarks that have been passed regarding the way in which I have endeavoured to carry out the duties of President of this Chamber. If those remarks be deserved, it is due entirely to the assistance received by me from members themselves, who have always given me the greatest possible help. They are extremely desirous of maintaining the high traditions of this House for good order. It is the oldest institution in the State, having been established in the very early days of its existence. From this Chamber have come all the other institutions that today exist in Western Australia. I wish further to say that if the remarks made regarding myself are deserved I have to thank the Chairman of Committees and the Deputy Chairmen, together with the officers of the House, for the assistance they have rendered me. To one and all I wish as happy a Christmas as circumstances will allow. If the New Year does not bring us victorious peace I hope, at any rate, it will bring us closer to it. Once more I thank members and officers of this House who have rendered me assistance during the year.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY [5.32] : I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 2.15 p.m. on Tuesday, the 26th January, 1943.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 5.33 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Friday, 11th December, 1942.

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The **SPEAKER** took the Chair at 11 a.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (3).

RAILWAYS.

As to Re-grading.

Mr. **NORTH** asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Approximately how much money could the department use to advantage in re-grading the Western Australian Government railways? 2, What proportion, approximately, of the coal used on the railways is absorbed through uneconomical grading? 3, Would the money spent on regrading more than meet debt service in operational savings?

The **MINISTER** replied: 1, Prior to the war, re-grading propositions then estimated to cost £70,000 were being investigated. At the present time their construction would not be feasible, and will be considered as an employment job in post-war re-construction period. 2, This would be almost infinitesimal and has not been calculated. 3, This is one of the conditions deemed to be necessary when re-grading propositions are being considered.