

The purpose in having these particulars on the label is to protect an uninformed person from an unknown or unrecognised hazard. A pharmacist and his staff in the dispensary are aware of these hazards and it would be impracticable to have every container in the dispensary labelled with all these particulars.

Furthermore, a mixture, partly made, containing poison, might be left on the dispensing bench for a short time whilst the dispenser is attending to something else. Without this exemption, he would be required to attach a "poison" label to the measure, mortar, or container.

Section 50 of the Poisons Act is based on section 39 of the now repealed Pharmacy and Poisons Act, 1910, which contained a similar exemption for pharmacists. It provided that any person, other than a pharmaceutical chemist, in charge or possession of any poison who left it in any place had to label it. Of course, we have many chemists who do put this label on some of their containers, but not on every one.

The Poisons Advisory Committee, recognising that similar difficulties apply in chemical laboratories, has recommended an amendment to permit exemption to other approved persons. It is a fact that many pharmacists attach a "poison" slip to containers of very toxic substances, but it appears unreasonable to compel them to label all poisons with the particulars I have mentioned.

"With the permission of the Minister" means that this morning I rang Dr. Samuels, who was one of those who requested this exemption because he has about 40 chemists working in a closed shop, to which the public has no right of access. These chemists are using all sorts of poisonous substances; and if this exemption is not given, every container in that establishment would have to comply with the legal requirements. These people are handling chemicals all the time and are well aware of their hazards. It is only people generally who do not have an appreciation of the hazards who tend to be cavalier about the risks involved.

I trust the explanation I have given will completely allay any fears which Mr. Willesee may have had. I think it quite likely that many pharmacists will continue to label their most toxic poisons with the word "poison." However, it will only be necessary for them to use the word "poison" as they will not have to meet the full requirements of the Act as would be the case without this exemption.

In the hope that I have allayed the worries of honourable members who have obviously given this measure their careful consideration, I commend it to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (The Hon. N. E. Baxter) in the Chair; The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Minister for Health) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 11 put and passed.

Clause 12: Section 50 amended—

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: I thank the Minister for his reply. I will submit his remarks, together with mine, to the pharmacists association and leave it at that for the time being.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Thank you.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 13 to 17 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 9.23 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 31st August, 1966

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

QUESTIONS (20) : ON NOTICE

ELECTORAL

Polling Places: Minimum Voters for Establishment

1. Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:
What is the minimum number of voters required before a polling place is established on a
(a) Federal basis;
(b) State basis?

Mr. COURT replied:

The minimum number of votes required before a polling place is appointed under the State Electoral Act, 1907, (as amended) is not defined. Polling places are appointed on their merits and heed is taken of the number of voters anticipated at each. I understand the same applies to the appointment of a polling place under the Commonwealth Electoral Act, 1918 (as amended).

PARLIAMENTARY SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES

Review: Appointment of Permanent Statutory Authority

2. Mr. DAVIES asked the Premier:
What action has been taken to appoint a permanent statutory authority to regularly review the salaries and allowances of members of Parliament in accordance with the suggestion contained in the report of the Committee on Allowances and Reimbursements, 1965?

Mr. BRAND replied:

This matter is still under consideration.

DECENTRALISATION

Use of Funds Allocated to Civil Defence

3. Mr. HALL asked the Premier:
Will he make approaches to the Federal Government to have all funds made available to this State for civil defence diverted into a fund for the decentralisation of industry and population?

Mr. BRAND replied:

At the present moment no money is being made available to States from Federal funds for purposes of civil defence planning and organisation, this cost being met from State funds. The Federal expenditure on civil defence is being incurred on three major aspects—

- (a) Operation of the Civil Defence Directorate in Canberra.
- (b) Conduct of Australian Civil Defence School at Macedon, Victoria.
- (c) Purchase of equipment for issue to State organisations.

As I consider the organisation of civil defence an important safeguard for the future, no funds at present allocated to civil defence will be diverted for other purposes.

GOVERNMENT APPRENTICES

Payment of Percentage of Tradesman's Rate

4. Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister for Labour:
(1) Is he aware that Federal Labour Minister, the Hon. L. H. E. Bury, stated on the 17th May, 1966, that an impediment to apprentice recruitment existed in that the job might not last and the pay was not good enough at the start?
(2) In view of the fact that the recent \$2.30 margin increase makes trades to that extent more attractive, and as an added incentive to recruitment, will he recommend to the Government the granting to apprentices in Government employ a percentage of the tradesman's rate while training, rather than the present percentage of the basic wage?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) Until brought to my notice by the honourable member, I was unaware of the statement.
- (2) Rates of pay for apprentices is a matter for the consideration of the Industrial Commission.

FORRESTFIELD SCHOOL AND KALAMUNDA HIGH SCHOOL

Playing Fields: Commencement of Work

5. Mr. DUNN asked the Minister for Education:

Can he advise when work will commence on the levelling and preparation of the playing fields at the Forrestfield Primary School and the Kalamunda High School?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (a) Forrestfield Primary School:
No definite date can be given at this stage. Funds have been allocated and as soon as possible the work will be carried out.
- (b) Kalamunda High School:
Specifications are now being prepared for the construction of a new sports oval and tenders should be called in September. It is anticipated that the work will be completed by February, 1967.

6. *This question was postponed.*

STATE SCHOOLBOYS' FOOTBALL TEAM

Rail Travel Concessions

7. Mr. EVANS asked the Minister for Railways:

- (1) As a means of encouraging country lads who have been invited to vie for selection in the State school-boys' football team, to travel to Perth (where selection takes place, and the process of it may require a lad from the country to travel on more than one occasion) will he have the commission grant a concession rail fare in such cases so that in the case of a boy under 15 years of age there will be a saving in excess of that derived by purchasing return fare?
- (2) As an alternative will the commission consider allowing the circumstances outlined in (1) to be deemed equivalent to travelling during vacations—for the purposes of a concession fare?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) It is considered that such a concession is hardly the responsibility of the W.A.G.R.
- (2) The difference between the ordinary second-class return fare and the vacation concession fare for a child under 15 years of age for the return journey Kalgoorlie to Perth is 70c, which does not justify departure from existing provisions.

ORD RIVER SCHEME

Commonwealth Conference: Details of Commonwealth Ministers Attending

8. Mr. RHATIGAN asked the Premier:

- (1) Who were the Ministers representing the Commonwealth Gov-

ernment at the recent Ord River Commonwealth conference; what electorates do they represent; and have any of these Ministers on previous occasions publicly expressed opposition to the Ord scheme?

- (2) Could it be said that the Commonwealth Government is making a political football out of this project; if not, will he give detailed reasons?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) Treasurer—The Right Honourable William McMahon, M.P. (Member for Lowe, N.S.W.).
Minister for Primary Industry—The Right Honourable C. F. Adermann, M.P. (Member for Fisher, Queensland).
Minister for National Development—The Honourable David Fairbairn, D.F.C., M.P. (Member for Farrer, N.S.W.).
Minister for the Interior—The Honourable J. D. Anthony, M.P. (Member for Richmond, N.S.W.)
I am not conversant with the many and varied statements made by Federal Ministers.

- (2) No.

WYNDHAM MEAT WORKS

Negotiations for Disposal: Secrecy

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

- (1) Did he read the sub-leader in *The West Australian* newspaper of the 29th August, 1966 with the heading of "Secrecy at Wyndham"?
- (2) If "Yes", does he not agree that this article is factual and that there is not the slightest need for secrecy and will he name those interested in the purchase of the Wyndham Meat Works?
- (3) If he will not name those interested, will he give the House detailed reasons for the continued secrecy?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) and (3) The Government is not observing unnecessary secrecy in the matter of the Wyndham Meat Works.

The simple facts have been clearly and publicly stated, viz.—

There are no negotiations currently being carried on. Approaches have been received.

No decision has been made to undertake negotiations.

If and when the Government decides to enter into negotiations it will be time enough to determine

what information should be made public.

10. *This question was postponed.*

BARRACKS ARCHWAY

Costs of Retention and Removal

11. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) What is the estimated total sum of costs involving the following—
 - (a) the cost of buttressing and strengthening the archway portion of the old barracks building, prior to demolition of the balance;
 - (b) the amount, if any, which has been spent on the remaining portion of the structure since then;
 - (c) the additional amount involved in the successful demolition tender due to the archway being left standing;
 - (d) all other expenses already incurred or likely to be incurred if the archway remains?
- (2) What is the estimated cost of demolition and removal of the existing structure?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) (a) \$2,500.
(b) Nil.
(c) \$350 (estimate).
(d) \$16,000.
- (2) \$1,500.

PRISONS

Appointments of Comptroller-General and Deputy Comptroller-General

12. Mr. TONKIN asked the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Why was the vacancy of Deputy Comptroller-General of Prisons not advertised and filled during the past 12 months?
- (2) If the position of Comptroller-General of Prisons recently advertised is filled by the appointment of a person who could not possibly have succeeded against applicants of higher grade for the position of Deputy Comptroller-General had such been advertised, would it not be a misuse of power?
- (3) Is it intended to defeat the spirit and intention of the Act relating to appeals when filling the position of Comptroller-General of Prisons without first filling the position of Deputy Comptroller-General?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) To enable consideration to be given to the possibility of reorganising the administration of the Prisons Department.

- (2) It would be wrong for me to conjecture as to who will receive the appointment, but the honourable member can be assured that it will be the applicant considered to be the best qualified to carry out the duties of the position.

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

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MARINE ACT

Exemptions at Dampier: Effect on Meals

13. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) Does he recall making a Press statement which was published in *The West Australian* of the 22nd June, 1965, to the effect that the regulation which had been framed to give the Harbour and Light Department power to exempt vessels from compliance with provisions of the Marine Act "had been framed to overcome formal obstacles which could hinder big port development programmes"?
- (2) Did he see on Tuesday, the 30th August, in *The West Australian* a report that 27 dredge workers and deckhands at Dampier had stopped work on Sunday and were returning to Perth after a dispute over meals; also, that there had been continued friction over meals served to the men since work had begun about a year ago?
- (3) Does he realise that his action in framing a regulation exempting from the Marine Act certain vessels operating on port development programmes for north-west iron ore ports has deprived the men working on the ships of the protection with regard to the quality of meals supplied which the law had provided for them?
- (4) Was it his intention to do this?
- (5) Will he restore the protection?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) to (5) No. Part VII of the Western Australian Marine Act which deals with the engagement, discharge, and conditions of employment of seamen and others applies to coast trade ships of 80 tons registered tonnage or over. The definition of a coast trade ship is "every ship employed in trading or going between any ports within the jurisdiction, also every steam tug." A dredge working within a port does not come within this definition. Therefore the Marine Act does not have application in this case.

Mr. Tonkin: Well it would under section 7!

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON No; it does not.

Mr. Tonkin: Yes it does.

NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINING

Minor Offences: Erasing of Convictions

14. Mr. HALL asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

- (1) Is it possible to have erased from the records convictions recorded against youths for minor offences?
- (2) If "Yes," will he have investigations made for the purpose of erasing from the records minor offences recorded against youths called up for national training and overseas service as the recorded convictions could be detrimental to service promotion and life adjustment?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) Yes, but only by exercise of the Royal pardon.
- (2) It would be undesirable to take any action for this particular purpose. It is for the Commonwealth to decide whether there should be any relaxation in requirements for national service trainees.

SHIPPING

Minister for Shipping: Appointment

15. Mr. HALL asked the Premier:

- (1) Is there a Minister for Shipping in this State representing State-wide shipping interests; if so, what is his name and through what department would approaches be made?
- (2) If not, would he undertake to take the matter up on Cabinet level and appoint a Minister for Shipping for the whole State, bearing in mind changing circumstances in shipping and the opening up of new ports?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) These matters are generally handled by the Minister for Transport, who is also the Minister in charge of The Western Australian Coastal Shipping Commission. The Minister for Industrial Development deals with matters of trade.

WOOL SALES AT ALBANY

Road Transport: Exemption from Permit Fees

16. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Transport:

With a view to stimulating wool sales at Albany and as an aid to-

wards decentralisation of industry, would he agree to cancellation of permit fees charged at the rate of 40c per bale by the Department of Transport on all wool carted by road from the Esperance-Ravensthorpe area to wool sales at Albany?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

No. The rate of 40c per bale is in accordance with the standard scale applicable throughout the State. The previous charge of 4s. 6d. per bale was reduced to 4s. (or 40c) in May, 1964. Discrimination between one area and another as regards permit fees is not desirable.

YOUTH OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Club Requirements: Survey

17. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has any survey been made into current or future youth club requirements in this State?
- (2) If so, can the information be made available to Parliament?
- (3) If not, is any work in this direction proposed, and if so, when?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) A survey is being carried out jointly by the Youth Council and the Youth Education Branch of the Education Department.
- (2) and (3) A preliminary account of this survey will be published in the annual report of the Youth Council to be tabled in Parliament next month.

IRON ORE

Mt. Newman Project: Assertions by the "Australian Financial Review"

18. Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

According to the *Australian Financial Review*—

- (a) the higher capital costs have severely affected profitability of the Mt. Newman consortium project;
- (b) the sharp price cutting which was carried out by Mt. Newman to gain large contracts has also limited profitability;
- (c) profitability of the Mt. Newman venture would have improved by the proposed pellet plant and B.H.P.'s commitment to take a large quantity of ore for internal use;
- (d) Japanese purchasers are now talking not only in terms of

reducing the quantity involved in the 100 million ton ore contract but also are attempting to reduce the price of the old Cleveland-Cliffs pellet contract to the level of Hamersley pellets;

- (e) if the pellet plant is further delayed or abandoned and the quantity of ore being transported over the railway line falls, some careful costing would be necessary to convince Australian institutions that the scheme is workable.

Does he agree with these assertions?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (a) to (e) These assertions are an oversimplification of a very complex development and trading project of great magnitude.

Higher capital costs, in a capital intensive industry, must have an effect on overall profitability. Likewise price must influence profitability.

Against this, increased tonnages assist profitability.

In any case, price is mainly governed by what the market will pay especially in a highly competitive field where there are adequate supplies.

The revised Mt. Newman consortium is currently at an advanced stage of negotiation. It is in the best interests of this important project that I make no further comment at this stage on the several points referred to in the honourable member's question.

19. *This question was postponed.*

SUPERPHOSPHATE

Prices

20. Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is it a fact that the price of standard superphosphate in new bags in this State is now the highest in the Commonwealth?
- (2) If not, what are the present prices for standard superphosphate—
 - (a) in new bags;
 - (b) in bulk;
 in each of the following States—
 - (i) Western Australia;
 - (ii) Victoria;
 - (iii) South Australia;
 - (iv) New South Wales?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) No. Queensland is the highest at \$25.81.

- (2) The present prices on a comparable basis (list price less 50 cents cash discount) are:

State	Date	Bulk Price	New Bag Price
Western Australia	15/7/66	19.40	25.00
New South Wales	27/7/66	20.10	24.90
Victoria	14/7/66	19.45	24.55
South Australia	12/8/66	19.25	23.70

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

BARRACKS ARCHWAY

Demolition: Government's Decision

Mr. GRAHAM asked the Premier:

Has a decision yet been made as to the demolition of the Barracks Archway? If so, what is the decision; and, if not, when can it be anticipated that a decision will be made?

Mr. BRAND replied:

No decision has yet been made as to if, in the first instance, and when the demolition will take place.

BILLS (6): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Agricultural Products Act Amend-Bill.
2. Fruit Cases Act Amendment Bill.
3. Plant Diseases Act Amendment Bill.
Bills introduced, on motions by Mr. Nalder (Minister for Agriculture), and read a first time.
4. Swan River Conservation Act Amendment Bill.
5. Public Works Act Amendment Bill.
6. Builders' Registration Act Amendment Bill.
Bills introduced, on motions by Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Minister for Works), and read a first time.

WUNDOWIE WORKS MANAGEMENT AND FOUNDRY AGREEMENT BILL

Third Reading

MR. COURT (Nedlands-Minister for Industrial Development) [4.49 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

I wish to report to the House on the two points I promised to have followed up at the request of the Leader of the Opposition. The first is on page five of the Bill, in clause 2(1)(b) of the agreement. The Leader of the Opposition queried the inclusion of the word "to" before the word "ensure". At the moment the paragraph reads—

From time to time to ensure that the Management Company is provided with sufficient funds . . .

etc. I talked this over with the draftsman and he agrees it is grammatically incorrect as it is, but he has studied it from a

legal point of view and it has no legal effect. It neither improves nor destroys the clause in any way, and no correction is necessary.

On the other question, the use of an unusual number of block letters in the course of drafting—and I refer specifically to an example on page nine, and to the words "it being acknowledged"—as I suggested last night this is a drafting quirk. I understand it is customary when a particular type of drafting is used in the original agreement to make an effort to reproduce it in the printed agreement presented to Parliament. Hence, what I consider are an unusual number of capital letters, are reproduced in the course of printing the agreement under consideration. It has no other significance.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILLS (3): THIRD READING

1. Painters' Registration Act Amendment Bill.

2. Main Roads Act Amendment Bill.

Bills read a third time, on motions by Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Minister for Works), and transmitted to the Council.

3. Wood Distillation and Charcoal Iron and Steel Industry Act Amendment Bill.

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Court (Minister for Industrial Development), and transmitted to the Council.

TRAFFIC ACT

Disallowance of Regulation 1613 (2):

Motion

Debate resumed, from the 24th August, on the following motion by Mr. Jamieson:—

That clause (2) of regulation 1613, part XVI—Miscellaneous, made under the Traffic Act, 1919-1965 (cited as the Road Traffic Code, 1965), as published in the *Government Gazette* on the 30th December, 1965, and laid upon the Table of the House on the 2nd August, 1966, be and is hereby disallowed.

MR. CRAIG (Toodyay—Minister for Police) [4.53 p.m.]: With his motion the member for Beeloo seeks to delete the portion of the Traffic Act regulations dealing with the use of "L" plates, or learner plates, on vehicles that are being used to teach persons to drive. The regulation requires that such a pupil must be accompanied by a licensed driver, and that the vehicle being used must have on it a plate measuring 10 in. by 10 in. with the letter "L" in black on a yellow background.

Professional driving schools, of course, have proper metal plates for this purpose.

A private person using his own car, generally improvises with, say, a sheet of cardboard which he attaches by various means to the vehicle.

The honourable member does not disagree with the part of the regulation which makes this requirement. He does object, however, to the portion of the regulation which makes it an offence if the "L" plate is left on a vehicle when a pupil is not being instructed; and he quoted the case of a friend of his who, in a private capacity, was teaching a member of his family to drive in a car on which an "L" plate was displayed. On returning home the gentleman in question was required to go to the nearby store to purchase some commodity or other, and he was unaccompanied by the pupil. He forgot to remove the "L" plate and, in the course of his journey, he was apprehended by a patrolman and told of his offence. Whether or not he was prosecuted I do not know, because the honourable member did not mention this aspect.

I can only say that the police are very tolerant indeed of an offence against this part of the regulation; so much so, that when a person is apprehended in such a manner a warning does suffice. I might also add that the actual number of prosecutions would not average one a week, and in those cases the instances would have been so glaring as to make it necessary to prosecute.

I would like to stress that this particular regulation is part of the National Traffic Code and, in consequence, it is applicable in all States of the Commonwealth. The police have very definite views on this matter, and they consider that the requirement to carry an "L" plate on a car is necessary, bearing in mind that the person behind the wheel is generally inexperienced; is probably quite nervous; and is liable to fall into error in simple traffic manoeuvres.

The "L" plate is there to indicate to other road-users that they should take care and extend some courtesy to the learner. This is most beneficial to the pupil, because, as a result of this courtesy and consideration shown by motorists, he tends to gain confidence much more quickly; and, goodness knows, with today's traffic hazards one needs all the confidence in the world on occasions.

It is also considered that other motorists expect the "L" plate to be indicative of the true position; and unless the plates are used only in the circumstances designed for them any benefit from their display is nullified, and the tendency to treat the driver with caution lessens considerably.

If it is good enough to compel the use of a device in certain circumstances, it follows that the device should be prohibited when the circumstances are not present. In cases where drivers of motor

trucks and other vehicles display an over-length sign, it has been found that other motorists have due regard for the warning conveyed by the sign attached to the vehicle carrying it.

I recall the member for Balcatta asking some questions, either last week or the week before, in connection with the use of white sticks by the blind. He wondered whether this matter could be incorporated in our traffic regulations. In my reply I said that arrangements were in hand for this to be done.

Adopting the same line of reasoning as that put forward by the member for Beeloo, it could be construed at the present time motorists will observe the use of white sticks, because they signify that they are in the hands of blind persons. The reasoning of the member for Beeloo would suggest, however, that anyone can avail himself of the use of a white stick, and eventually motorists will come to treat with contempt the particular obligation expected of them. I feel no good purpose will be served by deleting the portion of the regulation referred to.

The member for Beeloo said that professional driving instructors are put to a great deal of inconvenience by having to remove the "L" plate from their vehicles when not accompanied by a pupil. Indeed, I think he said that an instructor might drop a pupil, after which he would have to hop out of his car and remove the plate, go down the street a couple of hundred yards to pick up another pupil, and again have to replace the plate.

I have had no complaints at all from the driving schools in this regard; and I would advise the House that most of the vehicles on which "L" plates are used are fitted with a slotted bracket on the front and rear bumpers into which the "L" plates can be fitted quite conveniently and reversed as required. Contrary to what the honourable member possibly thinks, there are some people who take a perverse delight in breaking rules, and if the honourable member's motion is agreed to it will mean that any larrikan with a car—goodness knows there are now enough larrikans around our streets—could display one of these "L" plates for the purpose of confusing other motorists. In this case, nothing could be done to have the plates removed.

The offence is treated as a minor one; and, as I said previously, the attitude of the police to the misuse of these plates is very tolerant indeed. I have no alternative but to oppose the motion submitted by the honourable member.

MR. DAVIES (Victoria Park) [5.2 p.m.]: I listened with interest to the Minister's remarks and until he reached the last half minute of his speech I thought he had completely misunderstood the substance of the motion. He dealt at consider-

able length with the use of "L" plates on cars being used to teach learner-drivers; and I do not think anyone could cavil at the action taken by the police. The only complaint I have is in regard to it being an offence to display the plates if the person in the car is not a learner-driver.

I think the member for Beeloo gave ample instances where a private person could be instructing a driver and forget to take off the plates when the lesson was completed. This is an offence as set out under regulation 1613 (2). The Minister said that perhaps some hooligans or young people would take advantage of the fact that learner plates could be displayed, but he did not tell us what advantage they would obtain by doing this. If some advantage or disadvantage were to be gained by the displaying of "L" plates, naturally we would require a regulation such as this, but the fact is that the Minister's advisers have given no reasonable answer to the motion moved by the member for Beeloo.

Although the breaking of this regulation may be treated as a minor offence, as far as the public is concerned it is a regulation which we need not have. I have expressed in this House before my feeling that there are too many regulations and we should do away with any of them that we can. In this way, we would be doing the public a service. The case presented by the member for Beeloo has not been answered by the Minister; and, for that reason, I think the Minister should have another look at it. Perhaps he misunderstood the argument submitted by the member for Beeloo because, as I said earlier, it was not until the end of his speech that he tried to answer the point the honourable member had made.

I am not concerned with professional driving schools, although I have had some complaints about them from time to time. Unfortunately, the people who make the complaints are not prepared to substantiate them, and until such time as they are, I do not propose to take any action. My concern is in regard to the individual who, out of the goodness of his heart, may be teaching a member of his family or a friend to drive a car. He may give a lesson in the evening and another in the morning. If he uses his car between those times and is not teaching a learner-driver he then commits an offence if he has not removed the plates.

Through my local police boys' committee I have had some experience in trying to have these "L" plates made available at police stations for sale or for hire. I should imagine the Minister, or the Police Department, would be only too anxious to have these plates made readily available at police traffic offices, but unfortunately this is not the case. The plates can be made available there under quite a number of conditions, some

of which I, and the other members of the local police boys' committee, think are rather harsh. If the police officers themselves are prepared to co-operate, and the other conditions are complied with, then the plates could be made available at the police traffic offices.

Seeing the funds from the suggested hire or sale of these plates are to go to the police boys' clubs, we would have liked to see a direction from the commissioner that these plates be made available at police stations at the time a person takes out a learner's permit.

Mr. Craig: Have you made a request for this?

Mr. DAVIES: Yes, but the reply we received made it almost impossible to satisfactorily comply with the conditions; and the situation finally got down to the fact as to whether or not the local policeman wanted to take part. However, this was the least of our worries, because we could get the local policeman to co-operate. Imagine the position of a learner-driver. He obtains a learner's permit and is told he must display "L" plates on his car. Where can he obtain them? The chain stores do not sell them, and the local hardware stores do not sell them; he has to get a piece of cardboard, paint it yellow and then paint a black "L" on it. The other alternative is to go to a professional driving school, the cars of which are properly fitted up.

It would be an advantage to the public if arrangements could be made for these "L" plates to be obtainable from the local police station. We have suggested they be hired for 5s., or a dollar, depending upon the time for which they are taken out, and that the money go to the local police boys' club.

Although the enforcing of this regulation could be regarded as a minor matter, it is one that can be annoying in the circumstances which I have already explained. A person could be teaching a relative or a friend to drive a car and find that the first requirement he had to meet when he completed the lesson was to take the "L" plates off his car and replace them again when he gave the next lesson. There might be only a short interval of time between the lessons, and this is putting the person concerned to unnecessary inconvenience. Most of the private citizens who do teach driving do not have their cars properly equipped to carry "L" plates; and it is fairly difficult to have them affixed to many of the modern cars. Therefore it could be quite a nuisance for these people to have to take the plates off every time they complete giving a lesson.

I do not see that any great harm would be done by leaving the plates on the vehicles, and the regulation could well and truly be amended as requested. I repeat: The only answer the Minister gave to the evidence advanced by the member for

Beeloo was that some hooligans may obtain some advantage or disadvantage.

Mr. Craig: I did say that, but I also said that other motorists would treat the "L" sign with contempt.

Mr. DAVIES: The Minister has said that other motorists would treat cars displaying "L" plates with contempt. I do not know what evidence he would have on which to base that statement; it must be purely an opinion. Rather than treat cars displaying "L" plates with contempt, I think motorists would tend to treat them with more courtesy than might be normal.

Mr. O'Neill: Only if you are certain a learner-driver is in the car. Under the member for Beeloo's proposition there may not be.

Mr. Hawke: Who is to know?

Mr. DAVIES: If a person is being instructed, there must be a driver and an instructor in the car; and if there is only one person in a car, obviously that person must be a licensed driver. However, if a vehicle is displaying "L" plates and the driver is not licensed to drive, then he is breaking the law; and the displaying of the plates would no doubt assist the police to apprehend that unlicensed driver.

The fact remains that this is a little bureaucracy we can do without; and, in the absence of any good defence submitted by the Minister, I find I have to support the motion.

MR. JAMIESON (Beeloo) [5.12 p.m.]: Unfortunately this Parliament seems to be reaching a state which will make its existence unnecessary before too long if motions of public interest are to be taken as a guide. Over the last few years, members have not taken very much interest in them and it is about time we shut up shop and handed in our cards.

Mr. Craig: Your "L" cards.

Mr. JAMIESON: When a motion such as this is before Parliament, some consideration should be given to it by private members. Obviously very few have taken any notice of it. No doubt the Minister has had his departmental officers carry out research in order that a screed might be drawn up for him. Possibly he expressed some of his own views to the House; but the stage has been reached where members do not seem to care one iota what regulation is laid on the Table of this House, even though it deals with the people members are supposed to represent. This is a very bad situation. If we treat regulations that are laid on the Table of the House in a contemptuous fashion, we deserve all the criticism we get.

Mr. Craig: How do you mean the regulations were laid on the Table of the House in a contemptuous way? When an amendment was made to the Traffic Act,

I drew the attention of the House to the Traffic Code Regulations that were tabled. I encouraged the interest of members in them.

Mr. JAMIESON: I am not denying that the Minister may have done that; I am saying that the majority of members in the House could not care less what was laid on the Table of the House in connection with the Traffic Code Regulations. This is very bad; and we are getting to the stage where laziness is creeping in. We are too concerned with the wood and water jobs of the constituents and not concerned enough about the job we are paid to do; that is, look after regulations and that sort of thing that come before the House.

To me, one prosecution a week seems to be fairly high. The Minister said the offence is treated rather leniently.

Mr. Craig: I said they would not average one a week.

Mr. JAMIESON: I do not think it should be any average, because the situation is very clear. The second part of the regulation makes it mandatory for the traffic patrolman to apprehend any such person. This is obvious because it is a clear instruction to him. If he does not do that, he is not carrying out the law. He is entitled to take as much action against a person offending against the provision concerning the "L" plate as he is against a person offending in connection with a "Stop" sign. Now I come to an important feature, and the Minister for Housing interjected about this.

Mr. O'Neill: Showing an interest!

Mr. JAMIESON: This type of thing is apt to make people become contemptuous of the law. If no vehicles are approaching an intersection at which a "Stop" sign has been erected, does this lead to contempt of the law? The same thing applies to the "L" plate. As the member for Victoria Park clearly stated, if two people are in a vehicle, displaying an "L" plate, it is natural to assume that one of them is a learner. However, if only one person is in that vehicle, anyone driving another vehicle, if he is aware of the regulations at all—and all drivers should be aware of the traffic regulations—would know that the person in control of the vehicle with the "L" plate was not a learner.

With regard to larrikins using these plates, I dealt with that fully when moving the motion. I indicated that such plates would attract the attention of the police and, if larrikins were using them, this would assist the police. As a matter of fact I feel that drivers with a provisional license should possibly have a "P" plate or something of that nature on their vehicles in order that the police and public might more easily watch them. That would be a good idea because the circumstances

would warrant it. However, it is unnecessary to harass a person who, having given a driving lesson, has, for some reason, not removed the "L" plate.

The Minister said that this regulation was part of the uniform traffic code. So much for that argument. We heard what the member for Balcatta had to say about our uniform traffic code when he was giving us a dissertation on his experiences in Europe. He gave us a comparison of our code with the code in force overseas, and illustrated how bad ours really is.

It seems more than passing strange that the Minister introduced this regulation this year, and it has been in force in the Eastern States for goodness knows how many years. I would like to investigate fully the provisions applying in the other States, but I have not had time to do so. I doubt very much whether this provision in its entirety is in force in the Eastern States.

Mr. Craig: That is the full text of the particular regulation.

Mr. JAMIESON: If I find this is not a fact, will the Minister be prepared to amend this regulation?

Mr. Craig: You carry on with your debate, and I will think about it.

Mr. JAMIESON: I knew the Minister would not agree, because I had more than a passing suspicion about it.

Mr. Craig: You find out first.

Mr. JAMIESON: I will do so and make the information available to the Minister, because he has not fully availed himself of such information.

Mr. Craig: I beg your pardon.

Mr. JAMIESON: Is it part and parcel of the provision in every other State?

Mr. Craig: Yes.

Mr. JAMIESON: The Minister has no doubt about it; but we will see. The Minister said he is worried about false information, but he has not, under this regulation, made it mandatory for driving schools to remove the advertising they have on their cars. One would expect that if two people were in such a car, one of them would be under instruction; but this might not necessarily be the position, and the public could be misled. This is the very thing the Minister claims will be done if this section of the regulation is disallowed; but he is doing nothing about it. He is not even interested in that feature. He is more interested in the gallery.

Mr. Craig: You would be too, if you were on this side, because you would be able to see the gallery!

Mr. JAMIESON: The Minister is not interested in whether the regulation should or should not apply, or in what circumstances it should be applied. He does not show any interest in determining whether this should apply only to private persons

or to everyone, including driving schools. All he is interested in is maintaining the regulation as is, whether or not it is justified.

The matter will have to be left to the good sense of members; but unfortunately, as I indicated earlier, I doubt very much, judging by the reaction during this debate, whether private members, apart from a handful, have given this question any consideration at all since the motion was introduced. However, the matter must be determined by the House, but I feel it will be given little consideration and little support.

Question put and negatived.

Motion defeated.

MITCHELL FREEWAY

Re-examination of Proposed Cutting:

Motion

Debate resumed, from the 24th August, on the following motion by Mr. Tonkin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):—

It is the considered opinion of this House that the section of the Mitchell Freeway which is to pass in front of Parliament House should not be in cutting as is at present proposed, but in tunnel, and accordingly the Government is requested to have the proposal re-examined with a view to its alteration.

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe—Minister for Works) [5.22 p.m.]: The proposal for enclosing a vital section of the Mitchell Freeway in tunnel, as envisaged in the motion of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, was given very careful consideration in years past when early decisions were made on this and related matters of a town planning nature, and it has been reviewed again in more recent times as a result of the motion itself.

The Government is convinced that the decision to proceed with the building of the relevant section of the freeway in a landscaped cutting is the right one—

Mr. Graham: Surely not!

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON: —and the information I am about to give will indicate to all but the most unreasonable that the decision was not made lightly, but was backed by sound reasoning.

Mr. Graham: Hopeless!

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I want to comment on the proposal for tunnelling under the following headings:—

1. Capital cost.
2. Annual cost.
3. Damages to contractor.
4. Delay in completion of work.
5. Traffic operations.
6. Appearance.
7. Traffic noise.
8. General comment on other points raised by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Jamieson: What is No. 9; that you don't like it yourself?

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON: That might be the ninth. All these factors have been given due consideration, and perhaps I should point out at this stage that the comment which follows is couched deliberately in terms that are based on fact, and are not, in my view, in any way extravagant.

Firstly, I will deal with the capital cost. As advised to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition some little time ago, De Leuw Cather and Co. advised the department in 1962 that, based on simple cut-and-cover type of construction, the cost of covering the freeway in front of Parliament House was estimated at approximately \$1,700,000. This cost was exclusive of landscaping, lighting, and ventilation, and of a portion of the costs to cover over adequately the off-ramp to Hay Street. Actually when moving this motion, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition mentioned some of these facts by quoting a letter I wrote to him.

The De Leuw Cather estimate was a very rough preliminary estimate taken out to give a broad idea of the magnitude of the cost involved. The more detailed estimate prepared by the Main Roads Department this past week shows that the comparable figure today would be of the order of \$2,600,000; and, in addition to this, there would be a sum of approximately \$1,100,000 required for the following additional works not included in De Leuw Cather's rough estimate:—

Roof structure at Hay Street off-ramp. (This would be for the purpose of making smaller the hole which has been referred to in an earlier part of the debate.)

Ventilation.

Ventilation substation.

Lighting.

Auxiliary power plant.

Backfill over the tunnel.

Landscaping.

Internal wall and ceiling treatment.

Reticulation.

Thus the total cost of covering the freeway in front of Parliament House, and providing suitable landscaping and all the appurtenances necessary for safe operation in tunnels, would be of the order of \$3,700,000 in capital cost.

I now will deal with annual costs which, of course, are a feature; and I would like to explain that in the landscaped cutting an annual cost would be involved in keeping gardens, and so on, just the same as if the cutting were covered.

Mr. Graham: Have you the figures for the open cut so we can measure them against the figure of \$3,700,000?

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I have not the exact figure, but it is just over \$2,000,000.

Mr. Graham: So the difference would be about \$1,500,000?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: An additional \$3,700,000.

Mr. Graham: Like the lady when she saw a giraffe, I do not believe it.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: That is, of course, the honourable member's prerogative; but I am not lightly giving the House this information, and I hope he will have regard for this fact.

Mr. Graham: On what you are telling us, the Canterbury Court car park would have cost \$100,000.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: If I were giving this information to the House and trying to mislead members, I could be criticised very much indeed.

Mr. Graham: I do not blame you personally.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: To the best of my belief I am giving the House the correct information as given to me by responsible Main Roads Department engineers.

Mr. Graham: Someone is trying to justify a point of view.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: The interjections really do not bear examination. I tried to point out that what I am giving this House is information based on fact, and it is not extravagant in any way.

I now proceed to the annual cost. Additionally the sum of \$134,000 would need to be found—

Mr. Davies: Pounds or dollars?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Dollars.

Mr. Graham: Probably cents!

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Additionally the sum of \$134,000 would need to be found each year for the following items:—

	\$
Electric power for ventilation	51,000
Electric power for tunnel lighting	42,000
Maintenance of lighting and ventilation	7,000
Depreciation of ventilation, lighting and auxiliary equipment	34,000
	<hr/>
	\$134,000

I proceed now to the third heading of damages to contractor. Because there would be a delay in preparing new plans and going out to tender for the central section of the freeway between Malcolm and Hay Streets, this portion of the work would have to be excluded from the current contract; and, assuming that the contractor could claim a loss of profit of 10 per cent. of the capital cost of the existing contract for this section, damages of approximately \$50,000 would be payable to the contractor.

Mr. Davies: Pounds or dollars?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Dollars.

Mr. Davies: It makes a difference, you know.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: The fourth heading concerns the delay in the completion of work. The present staff of the Main Roads Department is not adequate to handle the complete redesign of the central section which would be required if the freeway were to be put in tunnel or to be covered and if the department is still to continue its full schedule of work. Thus the redesign of the central section would have to be put out to consultants. Having regard to the magnitude of the job and the detailed work associated with those factors of which I have been speaking, such as ventilation, lighting, and internal finishes, it is likely to be about two years before a new contract for the amended central section could be concluded. This delay, to say the least, is highly undesirable.

Mr. J. Hegney: What is the distance these estimates are based on?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: From Malcolm Street to Hay Street.

Mr. J. Hegney: How far is that? Surely an engineer from the Main Roads Department would be able to give you these details.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I could not tell you—we will have to pace it out one day.

Mr. J. Hegney: What advisers do you have down there?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I do not have the information off my cuff.

Mr. Hawke: You changed your shirt today?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: The next item with which I am concerned is that of traffic operations, and this is a very important factor in the list of factors which have been taken into consideration.

I have learned from Main Roads traffic engineers that it is accepted experience that motor vehicle traffic in enclosed areas, such as tunnels, suffers from the restricting effects of the enclosure. The sense of being closed in and the results of traffic noise being confined within a small area have effects on drivers which make them less safe and efficient in carrying out traffic manoeuvres.

This experience is, of course, not so evident in tunnels which are of a straight-forward-and-go type of construction, where each side of the tunnel has a straightforward single entrance and exit. However, where traffic manoeuvres are supposed to take place under cover, this experience of driver-frustration and bewilderment is accentuated. This sense of being closed in and the results of traffic

noise being confined in a small area have effects on drivers which make them less safe and efficient in carrying out traffic manoeuvres.

This point is so well appreciated that in some highway administrations in the United States, vehicles are prohibited from changing lanes within tunnels. Thus traffic engineers will always advise against enclosing vehicular traffic in tunnels if it can be avoided, and this is the advice which was given to the Main Roads Department by the consultants, De Leuw Cather and Co. Of course, as I have already intimated, it would not be unique advice, but rather the attitude of most traffic engineering consultants.

It is emphasised that because drivers are more inhibited in their judgment inside tunnels, the changing of lanes in tunnels is likely, as I have said, to add to hazard. Having regard to this, it is normal in modern practice, when traffic is to be carried in tunnels, to avoid entrance and exit ramps inside the tunnels, because these facilities demand that traffic shall weave and change lanes. These facilities are, however, provided in the section of the Mitchell Freeway in front of Parliament House where there is an off-ramp to Hay Street and an on-ramp entering from Murray Street. The existence of these ramps sets up traffic movement of a kind which may be called "turbulent", and this was what De Leuw Cather and Co. was conveying to the Main Roads Department when it spoke of this as being an area of intense traffic activity.

Mr. Jamieson: Do you mean to say that, if there is no room to cross over, they can go up?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: They have not done that yet. It has sometimes been found desirable in the central areas of some large American cities, where land values are extremely high, to sell air rights over sections of freeways; but there is only one case reported upon in a recent publication of the Automotive Safety Foundation of the United States where such cover over a freeway has been associated with the provision of entrance and exit ramps, and this is in downtown Boston. The publication dated August, 1964, and entitled, *Urban Freeway Development in 20 Major Cities*, states, *inter alia*—

The Central artery forms the eastern portion of the proposed inner belt and serves as a collector-distributor for downtown Boston . . . One portion of the road descends into a tunnel section, which is on a long curve and contains within the tunnel area the terminals for both an entrance and exit ramp. This is the only such arrangement of tunnel geometrics and access in existence in the country (U.S.A.) on a divided controlled access freeway.

Unfortunately, the Main Roads Department has no firm information as to the operational characteristics of this section of the Boston Central Artery. However, the point is that such treatment is the exception and not the rule, and the advice given to the Main Roads Department by its consultants is to avoid such treatment in Perth. That is to say, the department will avoid it if this is at all possible.

The next heading concerns appearance, and I refer generally to the remarks made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and by others who have spoken to me in conversation.

At no point has the freeway in front of Parliament House been designed with a retaining wall of approximately 40 feet in height. The design of the freeway in this section has been carried out in such a way that no retaining wall is higher than about 20 feet; but, where additional depth is called for, it is obtained by building two walls, one set back and above the other in such a manner that the area between them can be terraced and landscaped in order to beautify it.

Mr. Jamieson: It could be a nice recurring cost.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Yes; but much less of a recurring cost than maintenance of a tunnelised form.

Mr. Jamieson: You would not be able to estimate the cost of the former but you would be able to estimate the cost of maintenance of the tunnelised form.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: The freeway retaining walls are to be specially treated to give an attractive finish, and the whole scheme for landscaping the terraces will be integrated with the scheme for the development of Parliament House gardens between Parliament House frontage itself and the edge of the freeway. Because of the level of the freeway, it will be impossible to see into the freeway from the steps of Parliament House. Similarly, because the freeway is depressed in cutting, and because its fringes are landscaped, persons looking up St. George's Terrace will not be aware that the freeway is there until they come closer to Parliament House. In short, the view from Parliament House steps and the view up St. George's Terrace towards Parliament House will be virtually the same whether the freeway is covered or not.

In addition, it is my opinion that the two fly-overs at Malcolm and Hay Streets, together with the footbridge over Mount Street, will assist in presenting from height, and even from close view, a lively, an exciting, and an animated scene both by day and night.

Mention has been made of traffic noise. The front of Parliament House is set back at least 170 feet from the edge of the freeway, and with the freeway depressed and the tree plantings proposed, it is most un-

likely that any excess noise from the freeway will penetrate Parliament House.

The problem of reducing traffic noise by depressing freeways and planting vegetation contiguous to them has been researched in the United States, and literature on the subject is available in the publications of the American Highway Research Board. Highway Research Board Bulletin 110 of 1955, referring to this problem, states in relation to a similar facility that—

highway noise was almost inaudible 100 ft. behind the retaining wall and top of the slope.

Further, it states—

Depressed road level plus planting caused a large reduction in freeway noise. Further reduction may be obtained by increased building set back.

Furthermore, a tunnel would tend to concentrate the noise and funnel it out at either end at peak periods, if not at any other time.

Now I would like to refer to several matters about which the Deputy Leader of the Opposition spoke specifically. He stated that he does not accept at all that the traffic characteristics of a covered section would compare poorly with those of an open cut. This is a very categorical statement and not in conformity at all with traffic engineering experience in tunnels. This matter has already been discussed; and when I spoke on traffic operations, I gave the House the benefit of the advice I have received.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition compares the covering of the freeway with the proposal to lower the railway in Perth and place it in a tunnel. In the first place, the lowering of the railway through Perth would not place it in a tunnel. Some sections of it would be roofed over, but not the whole of it by any manner of means. If this is ever done, great care will be taken to avoid a complete roofing over.

Mr. Jamieson: What is proposed is only 750 feet—it is not miles.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I appreciate this fact, and I do not know whether the honourable member's figures are correct.

Mr. Jamieson: They are taken from the drawing made by your department. These figures are shown on the board just outside the Chamber; so, if they are wrong, it is the department's fault.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: As I say, I do not know for sure whether these figures are right; but I am prepared to accept them, subject to my checking them.

The comparison made is a misleading one since railway operations are so completely different from those of motor vehicles, or the behaviour of motor vehicles. Railways run on fixed lines and the

problem of weaving and lane-changing, and the consequent and constant hazard to vehicles in enclosed areas, does not arise.

Another point is that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition quoted the letter received from me which mentions the limitations on the complete coverage of the road in front of Parliament House because of the requirements of the ramp up to Hay Street. He was somewhat at a loss to understand what was meant by this.

However, from the time I first learned that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was to propose this motion, I asked the Main Roads Department to reinvestigate the possibilities of enclosing this section of the freeway by the construction of a tunnel.

So, in re-examining this part of the problem, the Main Roads Department agrees that by raising the retaining walls of the ramp—with consequent additional costs, of course—it would be possible to reduce the open area on the Hay Street off-ramp southward of the Hay Street frontage line to approximately 150 feet long, and between 90 feet and 150 feet wide.

The motion put forward by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition implies the expenditure of an additional \$3,700,000 and a delay of about two years in the completion of the work, all of which will achieve little in the way of improvement in the matter of appearance. I am speaking conservatively and not extravagantly, and, on the best advice that can be obtained, this would lead to unsatisfactory traffic operations and increased hazard in the tunnel.

In fact, because of the location of the Murray Street on-ramp and the need for additional supporting columns between this ramp and the southbound major carriageways, drivers entering on the on-ramp would lose visibility to traffic on their right on the main carriageways; and, because of this and the other characteristic effects of the tunnel to which I have referred, it is likely that effective traffic operations in the weaving section between this on-ramp and the diverging ramps and turning roadways of the Narrows interchange could be seriously influenced.

Already the distance between the Murray Street on-ramp and the Narrows interchange is critically short for good weaving operation, and any new feature which would shorten its effective length could destroy efficient traffic operation.

Of course, this does not only militate against efficient traffic operation, but also complicates the whole principle of road safety. This kind of situation is well exemplified in the weaving section at the foot of William Street which, at peak periods, is too short for effective operation, and, as a result, traffic enters on a

stop-go basis. The cost of freeway construction is too high to take chances of the nature of which I have spoken, and at the same time pay an additional \$3,700,000. I oppose the motion.

MR. JAMIESON (Beeloo) [5.50 p.m.]: I support the motion because, in the first place, I consider that whoever worked out the estimate of \$3,700,000 for this project was overstating the anticipated cost. I do not know whether the Minister is aware of it, but this amount is far in excess of the total cost of the Narrows Bridge, where all sorts of problems were encountered including suitable foundations for the piles. Such problems would not be met in an undertaking to cover over a cutting 750 feet in length.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: In effect, you are saying that you disbelieve me. I have taken the member for Balcatta to task for this, and the remarks that I made to him apply to you also.

Mr. JAMIESON: These estimates are inclined to be a bit extravagant. For instance, the earth fill that would be required for the roof of the tunnel would be worked out at so much per yard.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Could I interrupt you again for a moment?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. JAMIESON: I do not think I am allowed to be interrupted, Mr. Minister.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You interrupted me a number of times whilst I was speaking.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. JAMIESON: I am sorry that you did not see fit to take me to task at that time, Mr. Speaker, but we are at cross-purposes, with you as the referee. Members will be aware that from the very outset of the extensions to Parliament House, when the House Committee had the advice of architect Van Mens, there was the conception that, when a roadway was constructed along the front of Parliament House, it would be a covered overway so as to complete the concept of a pleasant vista into the parkland and so round off completely the appearance of the land in front of Parliament House.

This was the type of salesmanship used by the architects in charge of the planning from the time the extensions were first mooted. I have been a member of the House Committee over the whole of that period; and other members of this Chamber have been on the House Committee for some time. The Minister for Housing, in fact, was on that committee for a time, and he will recall that, very often, the question of this overway was discussed. I certainly do not recall any strong objection to it. In fact, I am doubtful whether any objection to it was expressed by any member of the House

Committee at any time when the question of the provision of a covering for this cutting was before them.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Can I suggest that when you are Premier you do this, at a cost lower than \$3,700,000?

Mr. JAMIESON: Yes; and if I could not do it for less than that price there would be some officers seeking employment; because what the Minister always forgets is that this costing is made on a false premise, unless tenders are called. The tendency, when one estimates the cost of any undertaking, is to give the highest maximum estimate, because one does not want to be made a fool when it is found the tenders which are called are greater than the estimated cost. However, if the tenders are lower than the estimate, the person making the estimate is regarded as being efficient at costing. The Minister for the North-West knows something about this practice.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: The experience is that tenders are higher than the estimate.

Mr. JAMIESON: Not in every case.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Almost invariably.

Mr. JAMIESON: Not in every case.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Almost invariably.

Mr. JAMIESON: Not very many years ago the Minister's Department built dams at a cost far less than the estimate, so I do not know on what the Minister bases his statement.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: The honourable member should find out the cost of the Albany Hospital.

Mr. JAMIESON: Of course, that is an instance of a mistake being made. I was citing instances of major undertakings where the actual cost was less than the estimate. The fact of the matter is that, by this motion, we have decided that further consideration should be given to this undertaking. It is not an impossible task such as that which might have been faced by the then Minister for Works in New South Wales when the construction of the Cahill Expressway was suggested. With that project a distance greater than 750 feet was covered; and there is a great deal more traffic to be handled in that city than there is in Perth.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: But we do not have to do that.

Mr. JAMIESON: But that is an instance of how such work can be done. The Minister has said that the only case he knows is in Chicago in connection with some downtown road in that city. I am only quoting an instance. The Minister knows that with the Cahill Expressway there are off-ramps that lead to underground car parks, and other ramps which lead in various directions.

Mr. Rushton: Don't they deal in different materials?

Mr. JAMIESON: Materials have nothing to do with this question. It is a matter of simplification. It is in this regard that the costing is all haywire. It is not necessary that blasting should be done to the rock formation, and after that is completed a concrete cocoon should be constructed to ensure the tunnel does not fall in, as occurred in the construction of the Cahill Expressway.

With this project a roof would be formed supported by concrete pillars. It would not need a good architect to work out that it would take the loading to be placed on top of it.

Mr. Williams: I suppose you have worked out the stresses and strains?

Mr. JAMIESON: I am not a moulding expert like the member for Bunbury. However, having had experience of the weight the natural terrain has held by way of building construction in the vicinity, and not having heard of any complaints that the specifications of the architects on those occasions were at fault, I would suggest the terrain in this particular area is quite suitable to take an extremely heavy load.

No-one has expressed any doubt on that score. If this had been a problem it would have ranked high on the list of costs and other matters which the Minister had placed before him.

I suggest the Minister could have a second look at the project in view of the suggestion contained in the motion. If this were done I do not think it would mean any additional expense to the contractors; I do not think the expense would be as high as the Minister envisages. Also, I cannot see how it would take two years to replan this cutting, because it is not an undertaking as complex as the Narrows Bridge. It is not an undertaking which involves boring at depth for the purpose of ensuring suitable foundations exist. In my opinion it is a comparatively simple construction job. The building of a tunnel will not mean that 50 feet of fill will be on top of it. It is proposed to have less than that.

Mr. Graham: It is only three feet of sand.

Mr. JAMIESON: As an exercise on costs, the House Committee called for an estimate for the proposed underground car park alongside Parliament House, which would be tantamount to the construction under discussion. You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that it was proposed by the Main Roads Department that this car park could be constructed, on a full estimate of costing, for less than £300,000. We are now faced with a lot of malarkey in regard to the cost of a similar structure which would have to hold earth fill in the same way as that proposed with the construction of the car park alongside Parliament House. The advice was that the earth fill would be about four feet or five feet in depth.

Having due regard to the width and the length of the proposed car park, there would not be much difference—in view of the overall set-up—between that and the construction of a tunnel over the Mitchell Freeway. In fact, there would be far greater problems associated with the construction of the underground car park, because it would be necessary to take the earth out and place it on top of the car park after it had been constructed, whereas with the undertaking in question the cutting is already under construction and portion of the cost already accounted for. So I cannot see how the cost would be very great in the ultimate.

If the cost is excessive for the construction of a roof over the freeway, then the costs estimated by the same department for the proposed Parliament House car park must have been at fault when the estimate was made. The Minister is silent on this. He should be able to picture a similar type of structure; because, fundamentally, the two structures would be much the same. The only difference would be that the roof structure would have to be built sufficiently strong to hold the load that would have to be placed on it.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Are you putting yourself up as an expert on costing?

Mr. JAMIESON: No, I was just making a comparison of the cost estimate put forward by the Main Roads Department for the construction of a car park at the side of Parliament House with this proposed construction.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Even the Deputy Leader of the Opposition would not do that.

Mr. JAMIESON: I do not know about that. Probably he was not aware at that stage of the estimated cost of the proposed underground car park which was to be constructed on the site of the existing car park. However, I am sure if he had been aware of that estimate he would have compared it very closely with the figures given to him in the letter that was sent out a few weeks or a few months ago.

So I would point out that the Government at this stage, through the Minister, is endeavouring to suggest that the cost will be excessive; and it is doing this with a view, apparently, to frightening the public and swaying their opinion, and, indeed, to turning parliamentary representatives away from any suggestion that they should reconsider this proposal on the basis that it would be more aesthetically suitable to fit in with the present planning for the City of Perth.

We have to base our argument on the proposal as envisaged by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and not on the overall cost. We cannot use up unlimited funds on this project; but I do not think that unlimited finance will be used. Our

estimates on this basis have not been as high as those indicated by the Minister. I suggest to him that it would be worth while for him to remind his officers that they gave the other estimate, to which I have referred, about 18 months ago for a similar project on the same sort of terrain in the Parliament House area.

I realise the members of the Joint House Committee have expressed their views on this question at various times. They were in the process of considering it again at the last meeting, but they decided it was not worth while doing so while the matter was before the House in the form of a motion. If not all, a very large majority, of members of the House Committee think this is a desirable proposition.

MR. DAVIES (Victoria Park) [6.1 p.m.]: I feel it is a matter for regret that the reply given by the Minister is couched in the terms it is. As the Deputy Leader of the Opposition explained when he moved the motion, it was not to gain any political advantage; it was moved with a view to bringing about the best possible surroundings for Parliament House, and the best possible feature at the top of St. George's Terrace.

The Minister appears to have approached this question in the belief that we, on this side, are not seeking to achieve what I have just said. He asked where our arguments were for saying it was not reasonable or possible. Before the Minister denies it, I might explain this was the impression he gave me when he spoke in this debate. I say it is a matter for regret, because no-one is trying to gain any political advantage out of the motion. The move has been made because we consider it to be the best possible solution for all concerned.

In my view just as good a case could have been put up had the Government decided it was a good suggestion, in the opposite direction to the one it is taking. The fact that the costs, quoted by the member for Beeloo, for the development of an underground car park alongside Parliament House are far apart from the costs given for the construction of a roof over the freeway in front of Parliament House, does indicate that a second look should be given to the figures which have been put forward.

On the figures quoted for covering the freeway for a distance of approximately 750 feet—as can be seen from the scale map outside this Chamber—it would appear that the cost is about \$5,000 a foot. The costs have been set out for the work in various stages, but I understand these are all costs over and above those that would be incurred in building the roadway, as envisaged at the present time. Since the matter was first under consideration, the cost for a single cover has increased from \$1,700,000 to an estimate of \$2,600,000. On top of

that, other costs amounting to \$1,100,000 will be incurred under the present scheme. I think I am correct in quoting those figures.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Reasonably correct.

Mr. DAVIES: Those costs cover the provision of a roof structure to Hay Street, ventilation in two directions, lighting, auxiliary power, back-fill, internal wall, and ceiling treatment. Some consideration should be given to the costs which will be incurred under the present plan. Obviously there will be lighting; obviously there will be some kind of landscaping; and obviously there will be some kind of retaining wall built. The costs for these features should be set off against the additional costs which were quoted by the Minister. The Minister said further that the additional annual cost is likely to be in the vicinity of \$134,000.

On a quick calculation the figure works out at approximately \$5,000 a foot for constructing a roof over the roadway. The damages to the contractors have been estimated at \$50,000. I am sure that the contractors who are now doing the work will, in future, do a great deal more of the work associated with the Mitchell Freeway and ring road project. The same people will be only too delighted, for a consideration, to extend some concession to the Government. The \$50,000 is no doubt regarded as the maximum figure; but, as obviously no discussions have taken place with the contractors on the question of damages, we can only take this figure as being the maximum estimate by the advisers to the Minister.

I am not setting myself up as an authority in any way. These are just the thoughts which occurred to me after listening to the statements made by the Minister in the House this evening. I do not claim in any way to be an engineering or a roadway expert; I am looking at the matter purely from the point of view of what would be aesthetically desirable for the city.

The costs which have been given can be regarded as being correct, but I would like to see an independent survey made. We should not rely entirely on De Leuw Cather and Co. Apparently the whole traffic system to be set up in and around Perth will be a monument to that company, because it is the only party carrying out the major part of the survey; and it certainly is making a considerable amount of money out of the work.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: But it is a company of consultants of world-wide repute.

Mr. DAVIES: I am not doubting the ability or the qualifications of the company. What I am saying is that the whole traffic system will be a monument to it. I am sure this company of consultants is of world-wide repute; and I am sure it will

be only too pleased to give an estimate of the cost of putting a roof over the freeway in front of Parliament House, as suggested by us. I would like to see the roadway covered over, but unfortunately it is beyond the capacity of myself and those on this side of the House to obtain the necessary quotes.

As the Minister does not set himself up as an authority on these matters, I am sure he accepts as gospel truth the rather fantastic figures which he quoted tonight, and which alter in no small measure the figures given by him in his letter dated the 4th July to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Once again, on the next point raised, concerning the delay in completion, I cannot comment very much. The Minister told us that the staff of the Main Roads Department is not adequate to deal with the changed plans and designs which would be necessary and that consultants would have to be engaged. I am sure the consultants would be rather distressed that the Minister should suggest that they would take two years to draw up new plans and arrange a new contract. I honestly cannot believe that this could be the case; but, here again, I am at a debating disadvantage because I have no authority to quote.

The traffic operations, it is said, would suffer from restricting effects because the roadway would be closed in; the drivers, it is considered, would be less safe and less efficient. The Minister went to some considerable trouble to justify his argument in this regard. If the closed-in section is only 750 feet long, and the car is travelling at 35 miles an hour, it would be in the covered-in section for a maximum of 24 seconds—according to my calculations, anyway. Of course, cars using freeways travel in excess of that speed, so it would not be unreasonable to say that the maximum time a car would be in the covered section would be 15 to 18 seconds.

I do not know that we can justify a great deal of loss of efficiency through a covered-in section for this relatively short time. The Minister said this had been proved overseas, but to substantiate his claim he went on to quote only one article which had appeared in one road journal during one month. This was the same with the article he quoted in regard to the air space above covered-in freeways. The instance quoted concerned a freeway in downtown Boston and it was only an isolated case; and, from the tone of the Minister's remarks, it was the only one that could be found to justify his claim.

The Minister said that the restricting effects do become something of a traffic hazard, and once again we can only accept this as fact in the absence of any evidence with which to refute it. All I can say is that I do not believe it is as serious as has been claimed by the Minister.

Some concern has been expressed that there will be a 40-foot wall as one of the retaining walls of the freeway outside Parliament House. I am not quite certain whether the Minister denied that this would be so. He mentioned a 20-foot wall at one stage, but I do not know whether this was the total depth to which he was referring or whether it was the maximum wall to be erected in any one part. As I understood it initially, the freeway was to be sunk to a depth of something like 40 feet in front of Parliament House.

The Minister said the freeway would present an animated scene. I do not know whether this is considered to be a tourist attraction, but I thought this animated scene was something we wanted to cover up; something we thought was undesirable.

He also mentioned that authorities maintain that a roadway sunk to the depth that is proposed would eliminate a great deal of traffic noise. I cannot agree with him entirely on this and can quote my own experience. I have the use of an office at the front of the building on the top floor, and since the deviation road has been built at the back of the Old Barracks, the traffic noise that comes into my office is considerably greater than was the case before the deviation road was built. As the deviation road is, in a manner, sunk down in front of Parliament House, I wonder whether the freeway which will ultimately be built there will have this minimising effect on the noise as claimed by the Minister.

I point out that the effect of the traffic noise on members should only be a secondary consideration as far as we are concerned; because, after all, we are all only temporarily here, as changes occur from time to time and from election to election. We must consider whether we will be here in the future or not. We should ensure that as little noise as possible worries those who work here. Unfortunately the design of the building is such that it attracts noise. It is quite astounding to sit in my office sometimes and hear the noises which appear to come from somewhere in the Terrace.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. DAVIES: During the tea suspension, many members had the opportunity to examine the scale model of the freeway design which is on display in Parliament House and which particularly shows the roadworks in and around the building. Taking a measurement of the proposed area which we suggest should be roofed, we find that the distance down the centre of the roadway is something like 540 feet, and not 750 feet, which was the figure with which we were dealing before tea. Of course this will mean that the sum of \$5,000 per foot, which is the estimated cost of covering the area, and the figure

which I quoted before dinner, will be substantially increased. Conversely, it will mean that the time a vehicle takes to travel through the proposed enclosed area will be reduced.

The Minister made considerable mention of the restricting effects of closing in a freeway and particularly stressed the fact that drivers needed room to manoeuvre and that their driving—if I can recall the words he used—was less safe and efficient under any closed-in conditions. On this point, he made mention of on and off-ramps and freeways. However, after examination of the model, I do not think his argument will stand investigation because one finds that, in coming from the Narrows Bridge, the off-ramp—or what would be the off-ramp to Hay Street—starts its off-course before the freeway reaches Malcolm Street; that is, before entering the proposed roofed-in section.

There will be only two lanes of traffic, and I should not imagine there will be any manoeuvring by drivers. It will be plain, straight driving, and I do not think there will be any danger at all, particularly in view of the short distance; and the need, almost, to follow the line on the road reduces any element of danger as far as I can see.

Similarly when coming from Murray Street and going on to the freeway, the entrance to the proposed closed area would start at the other side of Murray Street in the open air. The road would then proceed under Hay Street and into the proposed covered section, and it would not enter the freeway proper until it had covered at least one-third of the area which it is suggested should be roofed.

Here again, I do not believe there is any element of danger from a driver's point of view. He will be required merely to stick to the road as marked. In fact there will not be any room for him to manoeuvre; and, furthermore, because of the speed at which no doubt he—or she, as the case may be—will be travelling, he will be out of the covered area before he has had a chance to change lanes.

I think that anyone who has examined in detail the very fine model which has been made available in the main lobby for members to view would only agree with what I have to say in that regard. Whilst the Minister's statements may have sounded reasonable before dinner, upon examination I do not think they are anywhere near as true, or as reasonable, as he suggests.

Before the suspension, I was dealing with traffic noise and had told of my own experience of the noise which drifted up into my office, even with the windows closed. Now that the finer weather has come and the windows are open during the day, I find this noise has increased five or sixfold, at least.

I have also noticed, when standing at the top of Jacob's Ladder, that the noise from the freeway seems to funnel up at that point, and it certainly is very loud indeed. I imagine the same effect would result from any road running in front of Parliament House. As I said before, I do not believe this is a major consideration, although it is one which we cannot afford to ignore.

This noise does exist at present, although Parliament House is set back approximately the same distance as it will be from the proposed freeway roads. Any member who cares to examine the situation will see there are trees and shrubs lining the bank and these could be expected to break the noise but, apparently, they do not do so as well as one might hope.

Frankly, I cannot believe that the figures quoted by the Minister are accurate. I do not say, in any way, that the Minister deliberately gave inaccurate figures to the House. These figures have been given to him by his experts and he has accepted them. However, if any member has the time to examine the figures and compare them with the cost of other buildings, with the cost of the estimate given for the covered-in car park alongside Parliament House, with the cost of the Narrows Bridge, and with the cost of other major roads and constructions, I think he will find they are much greater than they need be.

I would also draw attention to a statement which appeared in *The West Australian* on Monday last. In this article it was stated that gardeners who met in conference in the Eastern States pressed the need for additional open space to be provided in cities. They pointed out that, even if it is not developed at this stage, it is essential that reservations be made. I think that one of the city gardeners instanced the fact that freeways seemed to go straight ahead through any parklands and the Governments did not seem to pay as much attention as they should to preserving open space.

The freeway as proposed by the Government at present will naturally leave some open space, but it is not usable open space in the generally accepted sense of the word. When I talk of open space, I think of parklands and gardens where people are able to sit and eat their lunch or sit and enjoy the weather—or just sit. Of course, the public certainly could not sit on the freeway in front of Parliament House.

This area would be an ideal position for a garden. When one considers the many buildings which are already in the area and the many more which will come, and the fact that parkland in the area is greatly restricted, I think it would be statesman-like planning to provide for parkland at this site.

I once again make reference to the plan which is on display. As the Minister has said, there are to be gardens and there will be banks which will be grassed and shrubbed and suitably landscaped. However, the public will not have any access to this land, because of the very great danger which will be involved. Indeed, the area will have to be fenced off to keep the public away from the gardens. These gardens might be very agreeable to look upon but they will not be very useful as far as the public are concerned. Just what will be the position? Have any members of this House tried to imagine the Government's proposal? The Barracks Archway will either be there, or it will not be there. This is yet to be decided and, as yet, is not known. However, I think it would be a safe bet to say that the Barracks Archway will not be there.

This will mean that cutting across the top of St. George's Terrace will be an eight-lane roadway sunk to a depth of something between 20 feet and 40 feet. This will obviously have to be fenced off. When looking up St. George's Terrace, whilst one will not be able to see the freeway itself because of the fact that it will be sunk down, one will be able to see some kind of fence, which will be very necessary to protect the public from having access to the freeway.

One has only to go down the Kwinana Freeway—as we now know it—to see that there is a fence along its entire length. When looking up St. George's Terrace, it will not be a very imposing panorama—if I can use that word—to see a fence at the end. I do not think it will be suitably landscaped but that it will be just a fence or wall—something functional to the extent of keeping the public away from the freeway.

If the proposal that has been advanced by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is proceeded with, I can imagine gradually rising gardens which will provide a very pleasing vista at the top of St. George's Terrace. Indeed, the Barracks Archway could well be left where it is provided the area is suitably landscaped, suitably restored, and an explanation placed on the archway to tell the public—and particularly visitors from the Eastern States—just what the building is and why it was left there. I, personally, am in favour of the Barracks Archway remaining, and I am in favour of its being incorporated in some suitable kind of garden which will gradually blend with the grounds of Parliament House.

If the roads that are now proposed by the Government are constructed, one will find that Parliament House will become something of an island ringed by roads carrying fast moving traffic; and, indeed, it is going to be fairly difficult for people to have access to Parliament House.

Mr. May: What kind of flowers?

Mr. DAVIES: I could go into details as to the flowers.

Mr. J. Hegney: That is a question for the botanist.

Mr. DAVIES: I think that the Minister and most members of the Cabinet have been overseas, and surely they have seen, and appreciated, many of the public squares in some of the larger overseas cities. I can remember one in Pittsburg which covered a car parking area which went down some 12 or 13 levels into the ground. One of the most delightful gardens I have seen in any city was the one which covered a car park area in Union Square in San Francisco. This is the type of thing which I say could be developed in front of Parliament House.

I do not suggest that a car park should be built, but I am sure that gardens could be provided; and, as the Minister and other overseas travellers are aware, this would provide a very fine concept for the surrounds of Parliament House and the top of St. George's Terrace.

Although it is no reflection on him, I cannot accept the figures that have been advanced by the Minister, because he estimates a sum much higher than could possibly be the actual cost.

I regret to say, Mr. Speaker, this has become a motion to be decided on party lines. When it was moved, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition indicated he would be pleased to have the issue debated as a non-party question. I know that several members on the Government side of the House have expressed themselves as being in favour of the proposal. Even if the motion is carried, it does not mean the Government has to proceed with the proposal contained in it. It is merely an indication of the opinion of the House.

At no time has the Minister indicated that a covered area was ever considered. The entire planning has been for an open freeway.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: It was considered about eight years ago when the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was Minister for Works.

Mr. DAVIES: After hearing that advice from the Minister it just shows what a change of Government can do. Probably we would not be discussing this problem now had there not been a change of Government. I believe that if the motion is carried it will give the Government an opportunity to show some thought for the future. I am rather horrified at the likely effect on the City of Perth in view of the plans being made. Most certainly traffic will be able to move at a faster rate, and this probably is the main requirement. I can imagine the future city ringed by a road with fast moving traffic which will limit access to and from the heart of the city, and this is something I will regret.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: It will improve it.

Mr. DAVIES: Whilst it will improve the traffic flow, I have yet to be convinced that greater accessibility through the centre of the city as we know it at the present time will be made available to us. However, the matter contained in the motion before us is one well worth considering. I regret I cannot accept the figures and the arguments advanced by the Minister for Works. I also regret I have no authority to which I can refer to obtain facts and figures to refute the Minister's case. Lastly, I sincerely regret the motion has been debated as a party issue rather than as an issue to improve the City of Perth for the benefit of the public of Western Australia.

MR. J. HEGNEY (Belmont) [7.48 p.m.]: As the motion before the House is couched in general, simple terms, I would have thought that members on the other side of the Chamber would see fit to express an opinion on such an important proposal as this. It is a non-party issue. The motion, if carried, will affect the future and the aesthetic value of the City of Perth, and it would have been interesting to hear thoughts expressed by members on the Government side of the House.

As I have said, the motion is couched in simple language because it merely asks the House to express its opinion that the section of the Mitchell Freeway which will pass in front of Parliament House shall not be in the form of a chasm, but shall be in the form of a tunnel; and the motion points to the disabilities that will be met in the vicinity of this portion of Perth if the construction of the cutting, instead of a tunnel, is continued.

This afternoon the Minister has given us a great deal of information on the undertaking in question. I am not competent to dispute his arguments on that aspect of the proposal, but I can recall that when the construction of the Narrows Bridge was first mooted, a suggestion was put forward that to overcome the difficulties with which we are now faced, a tunnel should be constructed under King's Park instead of a bridge being built over the river. The person who discussed that proposal with me was an architect of some standing in Perth for many years, and he was the chairman of a town planning commission as far back as 1929. That was the plan that he had in mind; namely, that instead of bringing the Narrows Bridge, together with its ramps, to the present bottleneck in the city, an access should be made by constructing a tunnel through Kings Park and making more open space available in the vicinity of Parliament House.

However, that plan did not eventuate. But I am certain that had the planners of the Narrows Bridge envisaged the construction of a cutting through this portion of the City of Perth, they would have

reconsidered the plan for the building of a tunnel through King's Park. Over the years we have made many plans in an attempt to achieve the city beautiful. I can remember that many years ago the late Mr. McCallum, who was then Minister for Works, sponsored the Town Planning and Development Act and constituted a town planning commission at that time to plan the future of Perth. I am certain that in those years the town planners would not have put forward a plan for the construction of a cutting in front of Parliament House.

We have several eminent town planners in our city, but I have not heard any opinion expressed by them on this proposal. It would be extremely interesting to hear their views. There is no doubt that a layman, when considering these problems from a commonsense point of view, would realise an open cut would not be as aesthetic as a tunnel.

A short time ago the Minister was asked the length of the proposed cutting but he did not have the information at hand. It was then suggested that the length of the cutting would be 750 feet, which is one-seventh of a mile. However, on further examination of the proposal the estimate of the length was corrected to 500 feet. So, when it is considered the tunnel would be only 500 feet in length, the many difficulties that have been expressed this evening might not be half as great as we have been led to believe.

Tunnels have been constructed in all parts of the world. Those members who have just visited Sydney know that there is an underground railway system in that city, and the traffic tunnel to which the Deputy Leader of the Opposition refers, is under the Sydney Domain. That would be greater in length than a tunnel to be constructed for the Mitchell Freeway. Therefore, the proposed tunnel would not be impractical and would be quite possible of accomplishment.

Some twelve years ago I had the opportunity to travel through many tunnels both in Europe and in the north of England. One of these was the Mersey Tunnel, which is built under the Mersey River. That is a fairly long tunnel. There are traffic lanes in the centre of it and there are other means of ingress into the main tunnel. On the afternoon I passed through it, it did not pose any difficulties in my mind. I was advised by a friend, with whom I was on tour at the time, that I should go through the tunnel during off-peak hours. This gentleman was an Australian who had been associated with transport companies in Perth, and who afterwards became the Chairman of the Transport Board.

I followed his suggestion and I found that it was a very fine tunnel indeed. I visited another tunnel in Holland. It suf-

fered greatly during the war from bombing, and the portion of the city through which I travelled had been laid waste, but in the meantime many flats and other types of buildings had been constructed. The tunnel through which I passed had many passageways, not only for motor traffic, but also for cyclists. Members are probably aware that in Holland, particularly, bicycle pads are constructed because of the large number of cyclists in that country. That tunnel would be much longer than one-seventh of a mile, which was the original estimate of the length of the proposed tunnel in front of Parliament House. The tunnel in Holland did not seem to present many difficulties.

The motion before the Assembly is to express the opinion that it would be more suitable to have a tunnel built in the position where a cutting is being constructed because, in the main consideration, it would be more aesthetic. A driver passing through the tunnel would hear noise, but I doubt that by the time he reached the end of it, the noise would have had a very great effect on him.

Suggestions have been made as to the cost of the tunnel and other aspects of its construction, but during the years I have been in Parliament a great deal of money has gone down the drain in different directions because of hasty planning. Therefore, at this stage it would be wiser, in my opinion, to plan for the construction of a tunnel instead of a cutting. In fact, it would have been better if the initial planning had been for a tunnel instead of the cutting which is now under construction. In my view the construction of a tunnel would be a worth-while contribution to the town planning of Perth, and I support the motion.

MR. DURACK (Perth) [7.58 p.m.] I oppose the motion and I do so for fewer reasons than the Minister has given in his speech. Indeed, I so fully agree with the detailed reasons the Minister has given to the House that I hesitate to take up any further time by speaking to the motion. Nevertheless, as this undertaking is being built in the centre of my electorate, for several reasons I might be able to add something to the debate, not the least of which is the fact that the members opposite who have spoken have suggested there is apparently some conspiracy of silence among members on this side of the House and that we are just dumb supporters of the Minister.

The Minister has listed no less than eight different reasons against the proposal contained in the motion before the House. The most compelling reason for opposing the motion is the time at which this House has been invited by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to consider the matter. It seems to me rather extraordinary that at the eleventh hour a proposal should come

from a man such as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, who was the Minister for Works in the Government when the complete Stephenson Plan, and the whole of the plan now being carried out before our very eyes, was put forward and debated.

Mr. May: And altered a dozen times, too.

Mr. DURACK: This is something which has become a familiar pattern from that quarter because we have already heard what he had to say about the reclamation and filling-in of the river—and this was also part of the Stephenson Plan. The reclamation and filling-in of the river was commenced by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition when he was Minister for Works; and the plan now before us, together with the roadway associated with it, which passes in front of Parliament House, is part and parcel of the Stephenson Plan.

The honourable member has already so repudiated his own plans that he has been reported as saying that he would like the filling to be dug out of the river. It does not seem to me to be surprising that he should at this late hour bring before the House a proposal which is contrary to the results of those plans in relation to the freeway.

The Minister has said quite rightly—it is so obvious—that these plans cannot be altered at this stage. The tender has been let, the contractor has commenced work, and, as the Minister estimated, damages which would have to be paid to the contractor alone would amount to \$50,000. Apart altogether from that consideration there would be the extraordinary reflection upon the Government to stop operations of this character; and, if it did, I would have no hesitation in saying that in future contractors would be particularly wary of tendering for Government jobs.

Furthermore, there is the factor of delay, which the Minister has estimated at possibly two years. I am prepared to accept that; but whatever the period is, it is patently obvious there will be a very serious delay. Whatever other considerations there may be, the delay will involve a substantial amount of time. For that reason alone I cannot see how this House, acting responsibly, can possibly pass the motion that is before us.

That is the first matter which weighs heavily on my mind, but there are also some arguments which have been mentioned by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and other speakers on this motion.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition seemed to attach great significance to the provision of gardens and open space around Parliament House. A number of times in his speech he referred to the position that Parliament Houses occupy in other parts of the world. He said that when he went overseas in 1958 he found it was

common practice for visitors to be shown around the Parliament Houses in the countries they visited. He said he was most impressed with the situation of the Parliament House in Washington and the one in Ottawa. I agree that it is most desirable for a Parliament House to be situated in a commanding position, but I would think that Parliament House in this State already occupies a commanding position.

Mr. Graham: It did.

Mr. DURACK: It occupies a position which is outstanding among the locations of Parliament Houses that I have seen in Australia. It is certainly far superior to the position held by the Parliament House of South Australia, the Parliament House of New South Wales, or, for that matter, the Federal Houses of Parliament in Canberra; although that is only a temporary position. There are very adequate open spaces and gardens around Parliament House in Western Australia.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition went on to express some rather mystic notions about the position which a Parliament House should occupy in the country where it is situated. In moving the motion he said—

However, the Parliament House in any democratic country is regarded as the focal point. As I have already said, in other countries the authorities go to some lengths to point out what they have done to beautify the surroundings, and people go to those Parliament Houses and picnic in the grounds in front of them. They spend hours in the grounds, and go in and out of the Parliament House. Parliament House is shown to those people as being something which really belongs to them and something in which they should take an interest. That is the sort of spirit I would like to see developed in this State.

I agree with those sentiments up to a point, but I am inclined to query whether the endeavour to set up Parliament House in this sort of manner can justify the great expense, or the complete lack of consideration of expense, in which the Deputy Leader of the Opposition seems to believe.

We have spent a considerable sum of money on Parliament House; I think we have spent as much as can justifiably be spent in the present stage of the State's economy. The extensions which have been made, and the construction of the eastern facade do satisfy the demands which the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has enunciated. In my view, any further expenditure at all—expenditure much less than that which is contemplated by the motion and with which I shall deal later—on Parliament House will take the conception of what we should demand for ourselves, as members of Parliament, much too far.

I think it would exhibit a lack of perspective about who we are, and what we deserve to have. We are very well provided for, and I do not consider that one can justify any further expenditure on elevating the physical status of Parliament House in the way suggested by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Davies: This not only concerns parliamentarians and Parliament House; the public also has some rights.

Mr. DURACK: I am concerned with the rights of the public. What I am saying is that we should not, as members of Parliament, arrogate to ourselves anything more than the limited financial resources the State can stand, in order to elevate to any greater extent the status of Parliament House.

Mr. Davies: The position of Parliament House is only incidental.

Mr. DURACK: The position of Parliament House in this State is a commanding one; it is quite satisfactory as it is now situated. Reference was made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the member for Beeloo, and the member for Victoria Park to this fact, but in a somewhat different way. They referred to the desire and demand that Parliament House should provide the end of the view from St. George's Terrace and the city, and that there should be an uninterrupted vista from St. George's Terrace ending at Parliament House.

Mr. Davies: The Barracks Archway should be left there.

Mr. DURACK: The honourable member has just anticipated a few words I proposed to say. I do not intend to be stampered by him, because I am not prepared to deal with that question at the moment. The argument advanced by the members to whom I have referred is that the vista from the city will be affected by the cutting. This argument is based upon a wrong conception of the physical laws of nature, because one would be looking up from St. George's Terrace towards Parliament House; and as one proceeded up St. George's Terrace one would not see the cutting until one was practically right on it. The talk about the vista being affected is not in any way valid.

The member for Victoria Park has reminded me a couple of times—and he seems to be most anxious about the matter—about the Barracks Archway. I thought this was rather interesting, because a week or two ago I heard him say in this House that he favoured the retention of the archway.

Mr. Davies: I still do.

Mr. DURACK: I have no doubt he still does, but I find it somewhat difficult to see how these great works of covering the cutting in front of Parliament House are consistent with the retention of the Bar-

racks Archway. I do not know whether I am right or wrong.

Mr. Kelly: We do!

Mr. DURACK: The Minister for Works might be able to tell us, but I would have thought if one was concerned about the retention of the Barracks Archway one would certainly have second and third thoughts about embarking upon the type of construction which is required to satisfy the demands of the motion before us. It seems to me most improbable that works of this character can be carried out with the Barracks Archway being retained.

Looking at the model of the proposed work one sees that the Barracks Archway will just be surviving by the skin of its foundations, with the cutting located as it is. How all these big works can be carried on around the archway—with the building of a tunnel and the retention of the archway—is really beyond my conception. But as the point has been raised, I consider the Barracks Archway is possibly the very best part of the vista that has been discussed. I am still somewhat in two minds about the matter, but I am rather favourable to the view of the archway from St. George's Terrace. I do not, however, favour it so much when I see it as I come down Malcolm Street or Mount Street; and it will not look so good as one comes along the freeway from the Narrows Bridge.

Mr. Norton: You are having two bob each way!

Mr. DURACK: I have not yet been called upon, nor has any member in this House, so say what should ultimately be done.

The final consideration which I think arises in regard to this motion is the cost. It may surprise you, Mr. Speaker, to know that I am much more prepared to accept the estimates of cost of the Main Roads engineers than I am of the member for Beeloo, or even the member for Victoria Park. I might be wrong, but I think it is reasonable to accept the estimates of the engineers who are experts in these matters; and the Minister has given us a very detailed account of the costs.

This is not something which these experts have considered in the past week. It is quite clear from the letter the Minister wrote to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition on the 4th July that consideration was given to these costs back in 1962, albeit some general consideration. But we are asked in this motion to agree, "It is the considered opinion of this House that the portion of the Mitchell Freeway to pass in front of Parliament House should not be in cutting but in tunnel."

The motion uses the words, "in our considered opinion" and yet the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has moved this motion, and will no doubt press it tonight, without consideration of costs at all. He

has not brought forward any estimate himself. He did seek some estimate from the Minister and was given it, but I would like to quote something he said, which indicates he does not have any consideration for the cost whatsoever. In his speech he said—

That will be a permanent eyesore and scar, in my opinion, and if it can be avoided it should be; and I do not think the cost should enter into this.

Those are his own words. Continuing—

I believe it is far more important, taking the long range view, than would be the saving of some dollars, maybe \$1,000,000 or \$2,000,000.

Apparently \$2,000,000 is neither here nor there. That is the sort of consideration we, in this House, are asked to give. We are asked to give a considered opinion without regard to cost at all. In my opinion, the question of cost is highly relevant and is a vital consideration.

The Minister did give a figure of about \$2,000,000 to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition; but he has now been able to get a much more detailed consideration from his expert advisers, and the figure—the capital cost—he gave us tonight is approximately \$4,000,000. To that figure has to be added the cost of damages. Apart from the annual cost, the total capital cost will certainly be \$3,750,000. These considerations to me appear to be of vital importance; yet, just for the sake of adding a few more flowers and shrubs to the area surrounding Parliament House, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition says, "What is a million dollars here or there; what does it matter?"

Only last night we heard the Deputy Leader of the Opposition speaking about the cost to the State of writing off some losses that had been incurred at Wundowie. I do not wish to get into that debate, but surely these are vital considerations. Therefore I would have expected the Deputy Leader of the Opposition also to consider them to be vital. Even if the Minister's figures are on the high side, and the cost is around \$3,000,000 or less, as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition considers, how many houses could be built for that amount of money? How many high schools could be built?

Mr. Graham: Out of Main Roads funds?

Mr. Hawke: Wake up!

Mr. DURACK: I think it behoves the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to consider what these figures amount to in terms of responsibility which the Government has in deciding how these moneys shall be expended. Apparently the honourable member considers this is completely irrelevant. My argument is that when thinking about this cost, one should think in terms of the benefits which can be derived for the people of this State. There-

fore I oppose this motion for the reasons which I have advanced.

We have the cost factor which is a most vital matter; we have the consideration of the time factor; and we have the situation as to how this proposal has developed. It has developed from a plan which was approved in 1957 or 1958 by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition when he was Minister for Works. What is being done now is the result of a plan which was presented and adopted by the Government in those days; and it seems to me a most illogical and surprising proposition that we should be asked at the eleventh hour, and even later, to support the motion which the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has introduced. For those reasons I oppose it.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Brady.

BILLS (3): RECEIPT AND FIRST READING

1. Health Act Amendment Bill.
Bill received from the Council; and, on motion by Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Minister for Works), read a first time.
2. Legal Practitioners Act Amendment Bill.
3. Bills of Sale Act Amendment Bill.
Bills received from the Council; and, on motions by Mr. Brand (Premier), read a first time.

LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading—Defeated

Debate resumed from the 24th August.

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Premier) [8.28 p.m.]: I have not given a great deal of study to this measure. As you know, Mr. Speaker, the provisions of the Bill are bound up in some controversy, because whenever an amendment is brought to this House in respect of the Licensing Act it always creates a great deal of interest.

The matter which has been raised by the member for Kalgoorlie is, no doubt, one which is of interest in the local sphere and has been raised by him because it is of more direct concern to the goldfields than to any other area.

With those few words I cannot say I propose to support the Bill.

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Minister for Industrial Development) [8.29 p.m.]: I offer my apologies to the House, and to the honourable member who introduced this Bill, for my temporary absence.

Mr. Graham: And to the Premier.

Mr. COURT: I thank him. I appreciate his effort.

Mr. Graham: It was a very good impromptu effort—much ado about nothing.

Mr. COURT: This measure has been studied by the Government and, at the

outset, let me say we cannot see our way clear to support it. I have personally made a study of the speech of the member for Kalgoorlie when he introduced the Bill, and due consideration has been given to the various points he put forward.

However, on an analysis of the situation, we cannot see that a good case has been made out for extending the trading rights of these particular wine saloons. The honourable member placed considerable emphasis on the fact that these places were frequented and wanted by Italians, Yugoslavs, and other people of European origin; and I do not think this is a very strong argument in favour of extending this privilege, if it could be called such.

After all, it is not as though these people are without reasonable facilities for obtaining liquor on a Sunday. If there were a complete ban, it would be an entirely different picture. But we consider this in the atmosphere of the considerable concessions which have been made over the years—and special provisions have been made for the goldfields. If the people want wine in preference to beer, there are facilities readily available in close proximity to the normal places they would frequent. Therefore, the argument that they are denied something they need is not one that can be sustained.

Another point raised was the question of elderly people. I do not think it was a happy thought to bring those people into this particular argument, because I cannot imagine they would be particularly concerned whether Australian wine saloons—the three in Kalgoorlie and Boulder—could be opened for part of the day or night. There again, it is not as though they are denied wine if they want it in preference to beer on a Sunday.

The other point raised was the question that some of the business proprietors, in acquiring the licenses for their Australian wine saloons in Kalgoorlie and Boulder—and for that matter, any other place likely to be affected by the Bill—had paid something by way of goodwill on the assumption that they would be allowed to trade during restricted hours on a Sunday—that would be an extension of the trading period beyond the normal six-day trading hours—and, as a result, would get some additional income.

We do not feel that is an argument which can be taken into account. Some of those people might have acquired their businesses in recent times when they knew they had no legal right to trade on Sunday. Others might have acquired their businesses a long time ago when there was some tacit understanding about their trading hours. Whilst one feels some regret for the person who might have paid more than he need have paid, I do not think this Parliament could take that into account when considering the Bill before

us. We have to consider it on the principles involved.

Over the years we have, in this Parliament, little by little, extended the various trading sessions on Sundays, and it is the Government's view that we should not go any further, particularly in respect of these particular licenses to which the Bill before us refers. In the circumstances, the Government opposes the measure.

MR. EVANS (Kalgoorlie) [8.33 p.m.]: May I open my remarks by paying a sincere tribute to the Premier for the very gallant manner in which he sustained this debate rather than allow it to be postponed and, by agony, be extended for a further week? I also mention the possible agony of many persons in Kalgoorlie who are concerned with the fate of this legislation.

I do pay a sincere tribute to the Premier and I congratulate him on his ingenuity. I think such ingenuity has only been surpassed on one occasion in my experience in this House. It was surpassed by the Premier's counterpart on this side of the House: the Leader of the Opposition. That experience is well known to members, and there is no need for me to mention the details on this occasion.

I cannot say that I appreciate the remarks of the Minister for Industrial Development, but I do thank him for his contribution, although I regret the tenor of it. I feel it is regretful that, as the Minister representing the Minister for Justice, the duty to announce that the Government could not see its way clear to support this measure, came to the Minister's undertaking, particularly as he is the Minister for Industrial Development.

I have mentioned that there are only three wine saloons concerned, two of which are in Kalgoorlie, and one of the two Kalgoorlie saloons sells only Western Australian wines. It is a saloon which is owned by the Western Australian Winegrowers' Association; and it does not speak well for a Minister, whose main purpose as a Minister is to sponsor West Australian industry, to stand up and oppose something which would help to improve one particular industry of Western Australia.

However, the people whose interests I have tried to advocate in this Chamber are entitled to have their views aired; and they are entitled to have their views determined by this Assembly. It is for that purpose that, despite the remarks of the Minister representing the Government, I still urge members of the Assembly to treat this Bill in the light of the remarks with which I introduced it. I conclude by saying again I commend the Bill to the House for its earnest consideration.

Question put and negatived.

Bill defeated.

LESLIE SOLAR SALT INDUSTRY AGREEMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 23rd August.

MR. HAWKE (Northam—Leader of the Opposition) [8.37 p.m.]: The member for Pilbara, in whose district this proposed solar salt industry is to be established, is, and has been for some time, in his electorate on important urgent district business. Consequently he is not present at this time to participate in the debate covering a Bill which seeks from Parliament the ratification of the agreement made between the Government, on behalf of the State of Western Australia, and the Leslie Salt Company of San Francisco, U.S.A.

The major proposal in this agreement covers the proposed establishment by this company at Port Hedland of a large-scale industry for the production of solar salt. All of this salt, or practically all of it, will come from the sea and it will be produced by the use of the solar evaporation method. The estimated amount of capital to be invested in the industry by the American company is \$7,000,000.

The State is to make available to the company on lease 48,000 acres of now useless salt marsh near Port Hedland. The currency of the lease which is to be given to the company initially is for a period of 31 years. The agreement contains the right of renewal for a further period of 21 years, and another right of renewal for a further period of 11 years.

The company's initial target for the export of this solar salt is 1,000,000 tons per annum, and it anticipates reaching this target by the 30th June, 1975. The company will pay a royalty of 5c per ton on the first 500,000 tons of salt produced in any one year; 6.25c per ton on the second half million tons produced in any one year; and, thereafter, 7.5c would come into operation for production over and above 1,000,000 tons in any one year. On the basis of the production of 1,000,000 tons per annum, the State would receive in royalty \$56,000, approximately.

Whenever salt prices increase on the world market, the royalty to the State is to increase in accordance with the rise in the price of salt. This will also apply to the rent and wharfage charges which are to be paid by the company to the State. The royalty charges as set down in the agreement are to be the minimum and will not, in any circumstances, be reduced even though the price of salt is reduced to the company at some period or other.

The proposed industry is one which has developed out of thin air, so to speak. The marshland, or marsh area, which is to be used for the operation of the industry is completely waste at the present time, I understand, and therefore not capable of being used productively, especially on the primary industry side.

There can be some regret that this proposed industry for the production of solar salt at Port Hedland is not to be established by a purely Western Australian company, or, as a second choice, by an Australian company. However, it is clear from what we have been told, this American company is the one which has shown the necessary interest and initiative, and is the one which is prepared to put capital in for the purpose of developing the industry to the extent which is envisaged in this agreement; and I am sure we hope it will come to fruition to the maximum extent estimated in the appropriate clauses of the agreement.

There are two parts of the agreement which cause me some worry, and I shall now refer specifically to the two problems which could develop out of those provisions. The first one has to do with clause 17 of the agreement, which is on page 20. This clause deals with the right which it is proposed to give to the company to use the services of its employees outside of this solar salt-producing industry. The worrying part of the clause reads—

To avoid this so happening and to maintain so far as practicable full employment for all its employees at all times the Company proposes to use employees whilst not engaged in the performance or discharge of their respective duties to assist in the loading of ships at wharf with salt produced at the work sites and in the supervision thereof and to perform or discharge such other duties as may be assigned to them from time to time by the Company. To enable the foregoing objectives to be put into practice the State will at the request of the Company made to it from time to time use reasonable endeavours to assist in the implementation and achievement of these objectives.

The wording of this clause, by legally giving to the company the rights which are referred to in it, could easily establish dangerous situations from time to time, speaking in the industrial sense.

Those who heard me read that part of the clause will realise immediately it will give to the company the legal right to use its employees—when their services are not required in the salt-producing industry—on the wharf, loading company salt into ships which are to take the salt overseas. I think we all know the history of waterside work in Australia, and this applies, as far as I know, in other countries of the world as well.

The work of loading and unloading ships is exclusively the industrial right of what are known as waterside workers. Those workers are solidly organised and jealously safeguard the right of exclusive employment in the loading and unloading of ships. We also know this type of labour—waterside labour—is not full-time employed.

Therefore the men who seek to obtain a livelihood by carrying out the work of loading and unloading ships need every hour of work which it is possible for them to obtain. This would apply, I think, even more particularly at ports in the north-west than at, say, ports such as Fremantle, Port Adelaide, Port Melbourne, and so on.

It appears to me that the exercise, by the company at Port Hedland, of the powers which this clause proposes to give to the company could easily create unfortunate situations; and that would be the last thing which I hope any member of this Parliament would wish to see happen up there. There is also the fact that in this solar salt-producing industry not only labourers, in the ordinary sense of the term, but also semiskilled and fully-skilled men will be employed. In addition, undoubtedly a number of tradesmen will be employed in the industry.

I imagine there would immediately be industrial trouble from the tradesmen themselves if the manager of the company said to these highly-skilled men, "You go up on the wharf tomorrow and help to load salt into the ships." I cannot imagine that skilled tradesmen would submit to a direction of that type. It might be argued the company would be very careful not to call on fully-skilled—or even semiskilled men—to do wharf labouring work. However, the worry to me in relation to this clause is that it gives the company unrestricted and unqualified legal rights to use men, irrespective of their skill, if any, to do work completely outside of their normal duties.

Undoubtedly, the regular waterside workers at Port Hedland would take a poor view of a situation in which the company's employees were used to load and unload company ships if, in the process, the regular waterside workers there lost employment and consequently received an income, in any particular week, which would be far less than it would have been had those employees of the company not been directed by the company to do work which would normally be the exclusive right of the regular waterside men at that centre.

The Trades and Labour Council of W.A. discussed this particular point earlier this week. At the meeting, delegates to the council were very concerned about this dangerous proposition, and, on the surface, it certainly appears to be dangerous. They decided to seek a deputation to the Minister in charge of the Bill, and the Minister gave me to understand this evening he was willing to meet a deputation from the Trades and Labour Council.

Therefore I have no doubt the deputation will take place, and I hope that in the very near future, in order that the matter may be clarified and, if thought necessary, some alteration, mutually agreed upon between the Government and the company,

to this particular part of the agreement could be made before it is finalised by Parliament; or, if that be not possible, then a suitable amendment to the agreement could be introduced into Parliament some time later, and I hope not very much later, this session.

The other worrying clause, or part of a clause, in the agreement is at the bottom of page 25. I refer to clause 20 (2) (e) which reads—

- (e) during the currency of this Agreement and subject to compliance with its obligations hereunder the Company shall not be required to comply with the labour conditions imposed by or under any Act in regard to any lease of any land within the work sites.

I frankly admit this part of the agreement does not worry me nearly as much—not anywhere nearly as much—as the other part I have been discussing. There could be a satisfactory explanation as to why the paragraph I have just read is in the agreement, and why it is necessary for it to be there. I do not know; I am not well enough informed as to the labour conditions which are imposed by particular Acts already in operation in regard to any lease of land at Port Hedland to the company to enable it to establish the industry, and later on go ahead with the production of solar salt.

However, in view of the wording of that part of the clause, I think the fullest information possible should be made available to members to enable them to assess the justification for putting wording of this kind into the agreement. At first reading it would appear that all Acts of Parliament which are now in operation in Western Australia, and which impose minimum labour conditions in relation to any of the land to be leased to the company, are to be non-enforceable upon this company in its operations at Port Hedland.

It has been suggested to me that the Acts which might be referred to in this clause—and the only ones—would be the Mining Act and also the law which covers pastoral land in the north-west part of the State. In any event, we should have the fullest information possible, and we should have a detailed description of what the labour conditions from which this company is to be exempted are, and also the names of each and every one of the Acts to which this part of the clause will apply.

Unless we are given the fullest possible information in connection with those two matters, members on this side of the House will be put into a position where it will not be possible for them to support the second reading of the Bill which, on every other count, or nearly every other count, we are anxious to do. Naturally we wish to see this industry

established at Port Hedland. Undoubtedly it will be a valuable industry for that part of the State, and for Western Australia as a whole. Nevertheless, we would not be prepared to sacrifice our anxieties to have the industry established by giving away, as it might seem to be from a reading of the two clauses to which I have referred, the industrial rights which have been built up over a large number of years and which have been established only after great struggle and sacrifice by industrial workers and their organisations in Western Australia.

At this stage I support the second reading of the Bill with qualifications in regard to the two clauses to which I have referred.

MR. W. HEGNEY (Mt. Hawthorn) [8.59 p.m.]: I do not want to duplicate the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition; suffice it to say that with him I hope this industry will be successful and that in the years ahead it will continue to employ quite a number of men and, consequently, increase the population in that part of the north-west.

However, as the Leader of the Opposition has mentioned, I, too, am concerned with regard to the clause dealing with the employees who will work for this company. As a member of the Australian Workers Union for 50 years—and the A.W.U. will be directly concerned—I would certainly be recreant to my trust if I did not sound a word of warning to members of the Government in this connection.

As the Leader of the Opposition has shown, the proposal in clause 17 states that where the employees are not fully employed the company will have the right to employ them on the work of loading salt on the wharves at Port Hedland. That is a distinct and definite departure from existing custom.

The clause further provides that the State shall, at the request of the company, from time to time do all things reasonable to achieve the objective to have the employees working on the wharves. I would like the Minister to inform me whether he can envisage the kind of support that would be given to achieve that objective.

As far as I know—and I think I am correct in saying this—the A.W.U. under the provisions of the Commonwealth or the State Arbitration Act or both of those Acts, will have jurisdiction over the industrial conditions of this particular concern. This union has industrial cover at all northern ports for wharf work, and at present there are either agreements or awards in operation at all the ports along the north-west coast.

Wharf labour is of a casual nature, and there are certain rates of pay superimposed on the normal rates of pay because of the

casual or intermittent nature of the work involved. For instance, what is the company going to pay wharf labourers who are employees of the salt company when they are not otherwise fully employed?

The Industrial Commission may be affected in this connection, because the union, undoubtedly, will—and I hope it will—take steps to ensure certain industrial standards are maintained for the particular work, especially if the company is able to quote that the Government of the day has agreed to do all it possibly can to ensure that if the workers are not fully employed on the salt works—either at the stockpile area or the production area—they will be employed on the wharves to the detriment, perhaps, of the normal wharf workers at Port Hedland.

This could lead to industrial trouble, and I would be very surprised if the workers affected stood idly by and allowed an agreement of this nature to override their industrial standards. In any industry in Western Australia where there is intermittency of employment there is usually, because of the casual nature of the work, a rate of pay fixed, and this is superimposed on the ordinary rate of pay; and if there is going to be intermittent work for certain employees on the salt works they would be entitled to receive that additional rate of pay. That would be for the Industrial Commission to determine. But if the Industrial Commission is to be influenced by the provisions of the clause in this particular agreement I have no doubt this will germinate industrial trouble; and I certainly would not blame the working people, or the unions at Port Hedland, if they did everything possible to ensure a continuation of their present standards and practices.

As the Minister knows, it is purely an industrial matter which is wrapped up in this agreement, and I would like to be informed whether the Minister for Labour, or the Minister for Industrial Development, or any member of the Government, saw fit to consult with the representatives of the Trades and Labour Council, whose unions will be affected by this measure. Did they seek consultation with the legal representatives of the Australian Workers Union with a view to securing its reaction as to what might happen to the proposals? As far as I know no such approach has been made to the industrial union.

This is not the way to foster happy relations in a concern of this nature which is in its infancy. The Minister may have a complete answer to my question, but I will take a lot of convincing that this particular clause of the agreement is one which cannot lead to industrial trouble in the very early future. I hope the Minister will take another look at this provision.

What will be the position if the company has a number of men employed and circumstances arise in which there is no

full employment for them for the time being, and they are transferred from their work in the stockpile area or the production area, as the case may be, to the wharves at Port Hedland, where the award and industrial conditions set down that certain employees are recognised wharf labourers and are paid certain casual rates of pay? Will the company determine what it will pay the men on the wharves; or will this be determined by the Industrial Commission?

What kind of support does the Minister envisage the Government being able to give the company to ensure that the men who are employed for the time being—not fully employed—by the company will work on the wharves at Port Hedland? Furthermore, have any consultations been held with the organisations to which I have referred; because, as far as I know, no such approach has been made?

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Minister for Industrial Development) [9.7 p.m.]: I thank the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Mt. Hawthorn for their comments and for their support of this Bill. It would appear that the two main points outstanding are the provisions of clause 17 and the question of the labour conditions in the areas that are to be leased.

Perhaps I can deal with the second matter first, because it is very simple of explanation. Normally when these agreements are before the House for ratification the labour conditions only refer to mining areas, and therefore it is only necessary to refer to the Mining Act. I think all members are aware of the provisions laid down in the Mining Act for the manning of mining leases. In the case of the gold-mining leases this was a comparatively easy situation, but with the entry of these large-scale industrial-type mineral projects, the manning conditions become quite unmanageable, and the only way to handle them is to exempt the company from the manning provisions; but, of course, at the same time provide other commitments in the way of industrial development, and mining and transport development, which would mean much greater employment in total than would otherwise be the case.

In this particular instance the situation is different, because it is quite possible that some, if not all, of the leases will be under the Land Act instead of under the Mining Act. When this matter is finally resolved and the lease is issued under the terms of this agreement, it could be that some of the leases will in fact be under the Mining Act and some under the Land Act, and provision is made accordingly. For this reason it is necessary to go beyond the normal provisions and provide that any other Act which has labour conditions in it will also be covered.

I must apologise to the Leader of the Opposition for not being able to put my hands on the relevant section of the Land Act, but I hope to be able to get the actual section before tomorrow. It provides for two men for every 200 acres which are to be leased. There are 48,000 acres of otherwise useless marshlands, and it will therefore be seen that the manning conditions would be impracticable, because where these large areas of marshland are used for solar salt production, we cannot have that number of men employed. That is the significance of the particular clause.

The other question which is causing some concern to the Opposition is in respect of clause 17. I want to confirm with the Leader of the Opposition that I have agreed to receive a deputation from the Trades and Labour Council, and I have asked my office to arrange this straightaway on the basis that I will receive the deputation before the Bill is decided in another place. I think this is fair and proper so far as the T.L.C. is concerned, because it will give it a chance to express its views and, in turn, receive an explanation from the Government.

I want to invite the attention of members to the particular clause, because I think more is being read into it than does exist. When this agreement was being negotiated, the company was at pains to point out that some of the operations of this industry were essentially seasonal, and it was hopeful that it could devise, in consultation with the appropriate industrial machinery, an award or arrangement whereby the men concerned could be given permanent employment.

In other words, the company did not want the men to be put on and off on a seasonal basis. The company has had a lot of experience in this type of work and it was hopeful it could devise some arrangement whereby its employees, or at least a large percentage of the employees, would be given regular work.

The last thing the company wants to do is to offend any of the local industrial practices. However, the company requested, and we agreed, that this should be stated in the agreement; and I would like to stress that there is no direction in this particular clause which states that any industrial laws can be overridden.

The lawyers acting for the company were at pains to insert provisions to ensure that neither the Government nor Parliament would be forced into the position of over-riding the Industrial Arbitration Act. However, I repeat, the company was anxious that a declaration of its intention and desire should be expressed in this agreement. In my opinion this is commendable.

We must realise when we talk of loading ships in this particular industry that we

are not talking of lumpers in the normal way, as we know them on the wharves, in relation to general cargo. This is highly mechanised cargo.

The member for Mt. Hawthorn made the point that those workers are quite unique inasmuch as the wharf work is under the A.W.U. To the best of my knowledge this will continue. I know of no reason why it should change. This matter, however, will no doubt be decided from time to time by the industrial arbitration authorities, both State and Federal.

I want to assure the House that there is no desire or intention to interfere with the established machinery, nor does the clause in question seek to do that. It is the company's request, which we conceded, that it be made known that it was very anxious to have as many permanent employees as possible.

I think most members in this House would like to see permanent employees in all industries. Those who have had experience of seasonal and intermittent work know how devastating it is to plan a household budget. It will be competent for the union, the company, and the industrial arbitration authority to work out something that is sensible and practicable so that a sensible award can be arrived at to enable this to be done. It will be of advantage to the town, and it will certainly be of advantage to the employees. I suppose from a company's point of view, apart from having a regular work force, it would not matter whether it did have seasonal labour put on and off; but this company felt it would like to build up a regular team of employees.

It has a commitment to provide housing for a set number of employees and this is indicative of the fact that it is very anxious to have a static work force which will be employed over a long period of years in steady, regular, full-time employment.

Mr. Davies: Does that mean the Government would go to the arbitration court to support the company in an award application?

Mr. COURT: We could not do any more than that; and this is not a very great thing to ask of a Government, anyhow. We have only to use reasonable endeavours and they do not involve any great legal commitment on any Government now or in the future.

I think most members will, on reflection, realise that as long as we do not interfere with the industrial arbitration machinery as such, or impinge on the rights of the workers and unions, there is nothing wrong with expressing an opinion that we want to have, where possible, permanent employment; and this type of industry should be encouraged by some means or other to devise a system of permanent employment.

I want to emphasise also that the clause is at pains to refer to the fact that these men are only to be employed within the industry. It is not as though they can be employed at the general purpose port or the iron ore port or for manganese loading, but only in the ambit of the industry itself. This principle is one we should embrace rather than condemn, bearing in mind there is no provision here which overrides the established arbitration machinery as expressed in the Statutes of this State.

I think members will be pleased to know that the company has, in fact, commenced work on the construction within the permitted terms of entry. It has given notice it has completed its contracts for the sale of salt and, in fact, has arranged the finance necessary for the project to proceed. In other words, subject to the ratification of this Bill, the project is to proceed. In that regard it is further advanced than most projects of this kind which are covered by Bills of this nature.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair; Mr. Court (Minister for Industrial Development) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 5 put and passed.

Schedule—

Mr. HAWKE: I listened with interest to the Minister when he was speaking about clause 17 of the schedule. Without any doubt at all every member of the Committee would favour full-time, regular employment for all the men who are to be employed in this salt-producing industry to be established at Port Hedland. Our worry is that under this clause the giving of full-time employment all the year round to these men, or to as many as possible, might act detrimentally to the volume of employment which would be available to the regular waterside workers at Port Hedland. We gain nothing, surely, in this situation if, on the one hand, we ensure as far as we possibly can regular full-time employment for one group of men by, on the other hand, depriving normal waterside workers at Port Hedland of work which would otherwise go to them.

It is important also that the normal waterside workers at Port Hedland are already established there with their families. For all I know some may have their own homes there or may be in the process of purchasing their own homes. They already have a vested interest, together with their families, at Port Hedland. Therefore, we have an obligation to protect at least equally the volume of employment to be available in future to those workers—a responsibility at least equal to that which should be upon us to ensure the greatest possible volume of employment to the new men who will go

to Port Hedland to be employed in this salt-producing industry.

I appreciate the fact that the Minister has agreed to meet a deputation from the Trades and Labour Council on this issue, because it is beyond any shadow of doubt a very important issue. It is true this clause would not override any industrial award or agreement. However, the fact that we include a provision of this kind does give it some strength and some standing. The additional fact that the Government has committed itself in this agreement to use every reasonable endeavour to achieve its objectives in this field also puts upon the Government a quite serious obligation.

The Minister told us there could not possibly be any objection to the Government indicating to the Industrial Commission its support of an application by the company to achieve as far as possible the objective of full-time employment for its own workers by giving to those workers the right to be employed in the loading of company ships. However, I think that would be an unfortunate situation for the Government to get into in the event of the union concerned, and the regular waterside workers at Port Hedland, being opposed to any approach along those lines which the company's representative might make to the Industrial Commission or to a single commissioner.

I am not able to appreciate the reason the Government included the last paragraph of this clause, which binds the State at the request of the company to use reasonable endeavours to assist the company to achieve its objective, that objective, in the main, being to have the company's salt industry employees permitted to load, or assist in the loading of, ships at Port Hedland. The Government is now committed in advance to use every endeavour to assist the company's applications even though the union concerned might be very strongly opposed to them. The Government would be bound in advance to take the side of the company against the union in the case of any dispute between the two organisations.

There does appear to me to be one saving provision, not in this agreement, but in the effects of the industrial situation which will exist at Port Hedland when this company becomes established there. The saving provision is the fact that the Australian Workers Union has industrial cover over workers on the waterside front and also in relation to employees working in the salt industry. A situation such as that could provide the safeguard which is needed when the situation develops, if it does develop, along the lines we have been discussing tonight.

It might be found practicable, by virtue of negotiations carried on between representatives of the company and the A.W.U., to mutually agree upon an industrial award or agreement which would be

acceptable to both parties concerned and to all workers whether they be in the salt industry or whether they be normal waterside workers.

I appreciate the assurance given by the Minister that no further action will be taken in connection with this Bill after it has passed the third reading stage in this House, until the matter has been thoroughly discussed and thrashed out by the Minister with the deputation from the Trades and Labour Council. I hope the situation will be thoroughly clarified at that meeting and that the Government will not hesitate to either include, with the approval of the company, an amendment to this clause when the Bill is in another place, or, if that be found to be impracticable, to introduce in the very near future a Bill to amend this particular clause of the agreement.

Mr. COURT: I do not think we need to have any great concern for the future of the established waterside workers in the area because the expansion that is taking place will more than look after them. We should realise also that because of this company's advent into the area, a major general purpose wharf will be established to service an expanding community, which, quite apart from the Leslie salt bulk handling, will bring with it a greatly expanded tonnage of general purpose cargo.

Mr. Hawke: Some of them might go into the salt mines to work.

Mr. COURT: The Leader of the Opposition anticipated what I was about to say. The type of labour employed in the salt industry, generally, as distinct from a few specialists, is the type of labour which might be attracted to the Leslie salt company, particularly if assured of some fairly regular or permanent employment. I emphasise this is additional work in the community up there. We hope there will be a greatly expanded tonnage of general cargo as distinct from the iron ore, manganese, and salt.

I can do no more than repeat what I said during the second reading debate. It does not in any way override the Industrial Arbitration Act. The Government can do no more—and would be expected to do no more—than use reasonable endeavours to put forward this point of view to the union and, maybe, to the industrial arbitration authority.

I am not quite sure of the position so far as the A.W.U. is concerned. I can assure the House that if there are two separate bodies I will make it my business to see that the representatives of the A.W.U. are made aware of the Government's intention; and this particular clause can be made clear to them, as well as to the T.L.C.

Mr. DAVIES: The Minister for Industrial Development does not sound as con-

fident as he usually does. I feel that this is a very bad principle to be written into any agreement. We have the industrial arbitration system where the employers and employees may go to the industrial arbitration court. Now the Minister states that the least the Government can do on this occasion would be to intervene on behalf of the employers. It does not matter how it intervenes; it must carry some weight with the court. This is breaking down one of the first principles of the Arbitration Act. There are other ways in which the difficulty over which the company expressed fears can be met. As the Leader of the Opposition said, no one would disagree with the principle that waterside work should be provided by the company.

The problem with the Leslie Salt Company could have been attacked in another way by using the casual labour which is available at the present time. In other words, instead of using the permanent staff which becomes surplus to the normal requirements, the company could get some of the present members of the A.W.U. in Geraldton and engage them as temporary staff when the need for additional staff became obvious. This is doing it the other way round and doing it the way which has been established in Western Australia for a very long time. The overall position would probably be better for all concerned.

I feel that a great many problems can be associated with the approach which has been sponsored here, and many of the problems will probably take a considerable time to be ironed out by the arbitration court. The real point of the agreement is the fact that the Government is prepared to go into the arbitration court on behalf of one of the parties concerned with the arbitration. If we were to do this on behalf of any of the trade unions, we would be open to the strongest criticism. But, apparently, we are to allow the Government to support the employers in the arbitration court. It will set a very bad precedent.

The Minister said he would have the matter ironed out between the Trades and Labour Council and the A.W.U., either by meeting them separately or jointly. I feel that this, having been written into the Act, will remain there. There is no doubt it has not slipped into the Act; it has been considered, and it is a very dangerous precedent.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: Before this schedule is adopted I want to sound a word of advice to the Minister. Up to date he has not consulted either the Trades and Labour Council or the A.W.U., and he has agreed to do so. I am pleased with that. It appears to me that if the company cannot arrive at an agreement with the appropriate unions, which can be registered in the arbitration court, the company, within its legal rights, can approach the arbitration court for an award embodying certain conditions. That is a distinct departure

from existing practices obtaining in Port Hedland with casual labour.

In connection with this clause the Government would be duty bound to get in the corner of the company against the union. I do not think that is fair and I do not think it would tend to increase happy industrial relationships between employers and workers.

The Government amended the Arbitration Act very drastically some years ago and in that Act it will be found that the Government may intervene in any proceeding in the public interest. I think that should suffice.

If the Government thinks that public interests are at stake in any particular negotiation between a company and a union, it can then intervene. If this clause is adopted as it stands and the company finds it necessary to approach the arbitration court, it will have the assistance and the co-operation of the Government against the union.

Whilst members of the Industrial Commission are independent of the Government, I believe—and I am not disparaging them or casting a slur on the members of the Industrial Commission in any way—that in such a case, with the Government spokesman being in the court assisting the employers, that would have a certain amount of influence on the members of the Industrial Commission.

I hope the Minister will have regard for the points raised by the members of the Opposition. I would feel much happier if the Government, or the Minister, could agree with the company to eliminate this clause altogether because there is a certain amount of doubt in my mind as to what will happen if it remains in the Bill.

Schedule put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 9.39 p.m.

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 1st September, 1966

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

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

Compliance with Standing Orders

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Mr. President, I would like to ask the Minister for Mines a question without notice.

The PRESIDENT: Does the question deal with a matter which is on the notice paper?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: No.

The PRESIDENT: I think that Standing Orders prohibit the asking of a question unless it deals with a matter on the notice paper.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It is in regard to something which was said in the House last evening.

The PRESIDENT: Could the honourable member give notice of the question?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Yes.

QUESTIONS (4): ON NOTICE

HOUSING

Collier Pine Plantation Area: Use for Project

1. The Hon. J. DOLAN asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) Did a meeting take place on the 16th August, 1966, between officers of the State Housing Commission and delegates from the South Perth City Council concerning the Collier pine plantation area?

(2) If so, did this meeting discuss the proposed East Manning State Housing Commission project on land adjacent to the Collier pine plantation?