

Of course one never knows, but indications at present point to their continuing on the box seat until that time. This amendment could be introduced 12 months hence as it would then be just as effective in regard to Assembly elections.

Mr. Sleeman: You want to see the results of the Federal election first of all.

Mr. THOMSON: I have no doubt what the results will be; I am not worrying about them. I hope I am discussing this measure on broader lines than the bare consideration whether it will be advantageous to any particular section. We in this State have had no experience of compulsory voting. The Minister quoted figures to show that higher percentages had been recorded under compulsory voting in Belgium, Denmark, and Queensland.

Mr. Davy: What good did that do to anyone?

Mr. THOMSON: I do not know that those places are any better governed than is Western Australia. Viewed from the standpoint of good government, I am afraid that the quoting of Queensland as an illustration was not too apt.

The Minister for Justice: Queensland certainly has government by all the people.

Mr. THOMSON: And we have government by all those people who feel disposed to vote. If a man is not sufficiently interested to look after his own interests, he deserves to suffer if the Government returned to power is one of which he does not approve. He is to blame for his failure to exercise the franchise, and if he gets something he does not want, it serves him right. It is reasonable and fair to ask the Government to await the testing of the Federal Act and see how it affects the people. We want to know whether it will be advantageous, not to the Labour, Country or Nationalist party, but to the people and in the interests of the State. If it can be shown by the Federal elections that compulsory voting is beneficial, we will have sounder reasons for adopting it. There is no reason why we should adopt it at this stage simply because it is the law of the Commonwealth. Surely it is not going to become an accepted principle that, because the Federal Parliament has passed a certain measure, we as a State should do likewise. While I shall not vote against the second reading, I hope the Government will treat the Bill as a non-party measure and

will leave members free to vote upon it as they think fit.

On motion by Mr. Lambert, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.21 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 15th September, 1925.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the Group Settlers' Advances Bill.

PRIVILEGE—ALLEGED INTIMIDATION.

Hon. J. Duffell and the Minister for Works.

Debate resumed from 10th September on the following motion by Hon. J. Duffell:—

That the conduct of the Hon. A. McCallum, M.L.A., Minister for Works, in using threatening and abusive language in the precincts of this House to the mover was a gross breach of privilege and deserving of the censure of members of Parliament;

to which the Colonial Secretary had moved the following amendment—

Strike out all words after "that" and insert the following:—"This House having heard the statement of the hon. member, and the explanation put forward by the Leader of the House on behalf of the Minister for Works, while deeply regretting the friction which has occurred, passes to the next Order of the Day.

HON. A. LOVEKIN (Metropolitan) [4.35]: I am glad I moved the adjournment of the debate after the speech delivered by Mr. Kirwan, because the interval has enabled me to more fully consider the motion which Mr. Duffell brought before the House. I have tried to weigh the matter impartially and judicially, having regard, too, to what I conceive to be the best interests of the House. I will state the conclusions I have come to. In the first place, I regret, with other hon. members, that the matter was brought before the House at all. On the other hand, I can see, on looking at the facts, that Mr. Duffell could hardly have done otherwise in view of the position as he regarded it. Mr. Duffell was informed of certain facts respecting the construction of some roads in certain electorates. Efforts were made to check that information and a return was supplied which did not give those details which would have put the hon. member on his guard as to statements he might make. Rather did it induce him to come to the conclusion that the information he had received originally was correct in that the return set out not the details of the road construction, but particulars regarding the road construction lumped together for the metropolitan area. Mr. Duffell then, as he ought to have done, thought it his duty, in the best interests of his constituents, to bring the matter before the House. He drew attention to the subject, and pointed out that such things should not happen. On the other hand, the Minister for Works (Hon. A. McCallum), saw the report of the hon. member's speech and, knowing it was not correct, naturally felt irate and exasperated. The result was that the Minister made an attempt to challenge him and, acting not too wisely, made the journey to the Council end of Parliament House and made use of language to Mr. Duffell which I consider a Minister of the Crown should have refrained from doing. These being the facts—Mr. Duffell, on the one hand, trying to do his duty; and the Minister, on the other hand, smarting under a sense of injustice and making use of words that he should not have done—we might have allowed it to drop, had the matter stopped there. It has, however, gone further than that, because Mr. Kirwan drew attention to it as one of principle that affected the privileges of the House and the independence of members in connection

with debates. I put my hand on a precedent while the debate was going on, but I could not procure the volume of the British "Hansard" at the time. I have since obtained it, and I find that 101 years ago, in March, 1824, a case almost parallel with the one under review occurred in the House of Commons. On that occasion Mr. Abercromby, who was afterwards Speaker of the House of Commons and was later translated to the House of Lords as Lord Dumferline, made a speech in the House complaining of the fact that the Lord Chancellor had made use of certain words in the Lord Chancellor's Court. Lord Eldon, who was the Chancellor, appeared to have received a garbled account of Mr. Abercromby's speech and he used words from his seat on the woolsack charging Mr. Abercromby with having uttered a falsehood, or rather he imputed that Mr. Abercromby had sent forth a falsehood to the public. Thereupon Mr. Abercromby complained to the House of Commons, just as Mr. Duffell has done here, and sought to have the Lord Chancellor, then Lord Eldon, rebuked. There was a long debate, a report of which appears in the British "Hansard," which was participated in by many men well known in history. These included Mr. Searlett, afterwards Lord Chancellor, Mr. Brougham, afterwards Lord Brougham, the great Mr. Canning, then one of the Secretaries of State, the Attorney General and the Solicitor General at the time. On reading the reports of the debate, it seems to me that Mr. Brougham summed up the position exactly as I think this case should be summed up. I will quote from page 587 of the British House of Commons "Hansard" of 1824. I have looked through the text books and this is the only precedent I can find that is anything like a parallel of the present position. Mr. Brougham said—

If only the parties, Sir, here this night were Lord Eldon and my hon. and learned friend—if the only objects were, the putting of my hon. and learned friend in the right, and the putting of the Lord Chancellor in the wrong, I should be satisfied that justice had been done to both parties, and that both objects had been gained;—

That is what I say about this particular incident—

—the first object by my hon. and learned friend's own speech; the second by the admis-

sions of the Right. Hon. Secretary, in his defence of his noble colleague—

Here we have the admission by the Colonial Secretary that Mr. McCallum had used the words complained of—

—a defence, the candour of what was great—

That has been so here—

—the fairness not little, and of which the moderation and the skill are equally deserving of praise,—

I think we can all say that of the Colonial Secretary's speech here. Mr. Brougham continued—

—A defence indeed of the Lord Chancellor, it can hardly be called. It is an admission of the charge against the noble and learned Lord, and an humble, I will not say submissive, and by no means injudicious speech in extenuation.

We can apply that to the Colonial Secretary's speech. Then he proceeded:—

But, Sir, besides my hon. and learned friend, besides the Lord Chancellor, does it not occur to you that there is a third party, and my hon. and learned friend must forgive me for saying a more important one than either of the others? Besides his character across which not a shadow of a shade has been cast in the estimation of those who know him, and which now, by the confession of all, has been so unjustifiably attacked, besides this, is there not a higher interest concerned in the present question; namely, the privileges of this House of Parliament?—privileges which, if the gross attack upon them which has been brought under our notice be disregarded, can exist no longer, except to be laughed at by those who hate us—to be trampled on by those who would assail us—to be found powerful only against the weak, and impotent against the powerful.

I think that is the exact position here. The speech then goes on to show what would have been the position if it had been a newspaper reporter who had said the same thing instead of the Lord Chancellor.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: Or if he had ventured a joke?

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: That seems to put the position in its proper light. It is a misunderstanding between two parties. But as Mr. Brougham put it, we may well put that aside and deal only with the matter as it involves the privilege of the two Houses. I am afraid I cannot agree with Mr. Duffell's motion because it proceeds to adjudge Mr. McCallum guilty of contempt of this House, and seeks to censure him. I do not think the occasion warrants that. I cannot well sup-

port the amendment, either, because that indicates that it was a mere trivial incident, and suggests that we proceed with the Orders of the Day, which is another way of giving a backhanded rebuff to Mr. Duffell. There is no real need for adding "that we proceed with the Orders of the Day" because, as soon as the motion is disposed of, we do proceed with the Orders of the Day. I do not think we should waste more time over this matter. If members accept my view of the matter, they will vote with the Colonial Secretary to strike out all the words after "That" in the original motion. Then when the Colonial Secretary proposes his amendment, I shall move an amendment to this effect—

This House having heard the statement of the Hon. J. Duffell and, through the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, the explanation of the Hon. A. McCallum, together with the admission by him in respect to the expression complained of, regrets that a Minister of the Crown should have allowed himself to use words which constitute a direct and grave attack upon the security and freedom of debate and which are calculated to menace the independence of representatives elected to Parliament by the people.

The Honorary Minister: What about the other chap?

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Mr. Duffell is not concerned; it is the Minister for Works who was at fault for having allowed himself to use words which he should not have used. The words complained of by Mr. McCallum were used by Mr. Duffell in the course of debate and could have been replied to in the course of debate. No breach of privilege was committed by Mr. Duffell, but a breach was committed by the Minister, as Mr. Kirwan explained the other day, in using the words he admitted having used. If without adjudging Mr. McCallum guilty of contempt, we say we regret he used those words, we shall be going sufficiently far.

HON. A. J. H. SAW (Metropolitan-Suburban) [4.52]: I confess that I for one am in a considerable quandary as to the best method to deal with the somewhat involved situation that has arisen. I yield to no one in my regard and jealousy for the privileges of members of this House, and I certainly think that Mr. McCallum was undoubtedly wrong in invading the precincts of the Legislative Council and in interfering in any way with Mr. Duffell. But I cannot subscribe to the amendment of the Leader

of the House because it whittles away the offence of which Mr. McCallum was undoubtedly guilty. Nor can I altogether approve of the motion of Mr. Duffell. I point out to Mr. Lovekin that he is in error in saying that Mr. Duffell's motion contains anything dealing with contempt. I cannot find the word "contempt" in Mr. Duffell's motion. The difficulty I have with regard to Mr. Duffell's motion is that he appeals to the House under Section 8 of the Parliamentary Privileges Act, and I cannot see that the words of which he complains and which he alleges Mr. McCallum used bring Mr. McCallum within the purview of that section. What Mr. Duffell complains of is that Mr. McCallum threatened to deal with him——

Hon. J. Duffell: In more ways than one.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: And one of those ways, I presume, was physical force. Any other way that was intended I leave to the imagination of Mr. Duffell or of other members. I do not see that there was anything in Mr. Duffell's complaint to bring Mr. McCallum within the purview of Section 8. Let us analyse the section. It says, "The assaulting." He did not assault; he was rather in the position of one of those who say, "Hold me or I shall hit him." The section says obstructing." He did not obstruct him. The section says "or insulting." He did not insult him.

Hon. J. Duffell: He did.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: I cannot see that he did.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: What about "menace"?

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: I shall come to that. So far as I can judge, if one man says to another, "I shall deal with you in more ways than one," is it not an insult. I take an insult as meaning to treat with gross indignity or contempt by word or act. If any member had the imprudence to challenge me to fight, I cannot see that he would be insulting me. He would rather be putting me on a par with himself and treating me as an equal. Certain sections decline to fight with people whom they consider beneath them. I cannot see that Mr. McCallum was guilty of any insult in the words that he used. The section says "or insulting any member in his coming to or going from the House, or on account of his behaviour in Parliament, or endeavouring to compel any member by force, insult, or menace to declare himself in favour of or against any

proposition or matter depending or expected to be brought before either House." Mr. McCallum did not threaten Mr. Duffell and say that, if he did not change his views on a measure before the House, he would deal with him.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Yes, he did.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: He said that if Mr. Duffell did not apologise——

Hon. A. Lovekin: If he did not withdraw.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: But Mr. McCallum did not ask him to change his line of conduct in the House with reference to any measure before the House.

Hon. J. Duffell: He said I had to withdraw.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: To withdraw certain words that he regarded as provocative, but he did not ask Mr. Duffell to withdraw from any line of conduct with regard to any measure before the House. He did not challenge Mr. Duffell to alter his vote. In the circumstances I cannot see that Mr. McCallum's words bring him within the purview of Section 8.

Hon. H. Stewart: The whole thing depends upon the proper interpretation of the words, "any proposition or matter depending or expected to be brought before either House."

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: He did not ask Mr. Duffell to change his vote.

Hon. A. Lovekin: He asked him to withdraw what he had said.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: He asked him to withdraw certain words, but did not try to influence him with regard to any vote or division that would take place in this House.

Hon. H. Stewart: Section 8 says "any proposition."

Hon. A. Lovekin: The Minister said, "If you do not withdraw, I will do something." That is a menace.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: But it was not in relation to a proposition before the House.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Yes, it was.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: No, it was in relation to a statement made during the course of debate. It was not a matter of conduct with reference to any motion before the House.

Hon. A. Lovekin: The section says "or expected to be brought before either House."

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: What about the spirit of it?

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: The Minister was wrong in coming within the precincts of this

House and acting as he did, but I do not see that the words he used bring him within the purview of this section, and therefore I cannot support Mr. Duffell's motion.

Hon. H. Stewart: What about creating or joining in any disturbance in the House.

Hon. E. H. Gray: There was no disturbance.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: The particular paragraph mentioned by Mr. Stewart refers to creating or joining in any disturbance whereby the proceedings of the House may be interrupted. This occurred at lunch time; the House was not sitting. I cannot support Mr. Duffell's motion and, a priori, I cannot support Mr. Lovekin's amendment. Of the two I would prefer that of Mr. Duffell.

Hon. J. Duffell: Do you approve of Mr. McCallum's words?

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: I do not. Neither can I support the amendment moved by the Colonial Secretary, because that seeks to belittle the offence of which Mr. McCallum is guilty. I submit that after the general expression of disapproval of Mr. McCallum's action that has been given voice to by most members, Mr. Duffell should withdraw his motion. Although Mr. McCallum probably misinterpreted the meaning of Mr. Duffell's remarks, I consider that those remarks are to be regarded as certainly provocative. No doubt Mr. Duffell, when he commented on Mr. McCallum's actions was alluding only to administrative acts. He was not reflecting on the personal honour of Mr. McCallum. But I think there are many of us who find it difficult to differentiate between administrative acts involving dishonour, and the question of personal dishonour. Undoubtedly Mr. Duffell said that if what he had been told was true with reference to certain actions of Mr. McCallum in that gentleman's electorate, then Mr. McCallum could not expect us to give him the wide powers he was seeking to deal with public funds. I have no doubt that Mr. Duffell did not intend to personally reflect on Mr. McCallum's honour, and in view of all the circumstances perhaps Mr. Duffell would have been wiser had he not gone on to make the second portion of his remarks in this Chamber. I submit that the best way for the House to deal with the matter is to vote against the Colonial Secretary's amendment, and then if Mr. Duffell will be guided by what I believe is the general feeling of members, having heard what those

who have spoken have had to say, he will withdraw the motion.

The PRESIDENT: The real point of the debate is whether the Minister for Works was justified in taking the action he did within the precincts of the Legislative Council.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central [54]: I have listened with attention to the remarks made by Dr. Saw. They correspond exactly with my ideas in many respects. I have studied the Parliamentary Privileges Act very closely and I fail to see that Mr. McCallum has offended under the section that has been quoted. As I previously stated, the only remark made by Mr. McCallum to which exception could be taken, was "I will deal with you in more ways than one." Mr. McCallum used those words after he had asked Mr. Duffell to withdraw what he had said. Mr. Duffell refused to withdraw.

Hon. J. Duffell: In explanation I would like to say that the Minister said he would give me the opportunity that afternoon in this Chamber to withdraw and apologise. He did not ask me to withdraw in the corridor; he wanted the withdrawal and the apology in the Chamber.

Hon. E. H. Gray: That is where it should be made.

Hon. J. Duffell: What do you know about it?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: This is the place where the withdrawal should be made. Mr. McCallum asked Mr. Duffell to withdraw and I understand Mr. Duffell refused to do so.

Hon. J. Duffell: And I still refuse to withdraw.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Then Mr. McCallum said, "I will deal with you in more ways than one." From what I can learn, Mr. McCallum's intention was that he would deal with Mr. Duffell by taking the platform against him and proving that what Mr. Duffell had said was not true. Both Mr. McCallum and Mr. Duffell were heated at the time, and perhaps that was why Mr. McCallum made use of the expression that has been quoted. It was not a threat on Mr. McCallum's part; it certainly was not a threat to do any personal injury to Mr. Duffell. The expression was used in a political sense. If there still remains any difference of opinion, I consider that the only course to adopt is for the House

to appoint a select committee to inquire into the matter.

Hon. J. Duffell: I shall willingly agree to that.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: We cannot condemn any member of this House or of another place unheard; we must give an opportunity for a full explanation of the circumstances to be made. The words complained of are perhaps capable of explanation, and the only other course that commends itself to me is for the Minister for Works to be heard at the bar of the House. I cannot support the amendment suggested by Mr. Lovekin; it is infinitely worse than the motion moved by Mr. Duffell, and it is certainly more far-reaching and more drastic.

Hon. A. Lovekin: If it had been a newspaper reporter you could have brought him before the bar of the House, but you cannot bring a member of another place before the bar.

HON. J. DUFFELL (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.8]: I presume that the few remarks I intend to make now will not close the debate, seeing that you, Mr. President, permitted the Colonial Secretary to speak again. I would remind hon. members of the measure that we were discussing at the time I made use of the remarks to which the Minister for Works has taken exception. The Bill provided for the appointment of a board to consist of five members, three of whom are to be appointed by the Government. I proceeded to draw attention to the powers of the proposed board and spoke of the funds they would control, funds that would be paid into a main trust account. These included the Federal grant, moneys appropriated by Parliament for roads and bridges, the whole of the traffic fees, the halfpenny in the pound on unimproved land values, and the 3d. per gallon tax on petrol, kerosene, etc. All these, I stated, would realise a large sum, and I further stated that the Minister claimed he would have no power to declare a main road or developmental road except on the recommendation of this board—a board, three members of which were to be the Government nominees, one of whom was to be chairman with a deliberative as well as a casting vote, and one each to be appointed by the municipalities and road boards. I said then that I intended to get more definite information from the

Minister than I had received at that time to enable me to tell the people outside, the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. A lot of extraneous matter has been introduced into the debate by Dr. Saw who tried to make little of the offence, and who, in fact, declared that there was nothing in it. It is well known to every member here that after the consideration of the Arbitration Bill last session, Mr. McCallum made use of very strong language in regard to this Chamber in many parts of the State which he was visiting.

Hon. E. H. Gray: And was he not entitled to do so?

Hon. J. DUFFELL: He attacked this Chamber on those occasions from without, and he continued the attack from within when he approached me in the corridor. I have no intention of withdrawing the motion; I place myself entirely in the hands of the House, and I shall abide by whatever decision is arrived at. Whatever measures the Government send along to this Chamber, I shall continue to give them my support if I consider they are worthy of it. That will be tantamount to saying that they are for the good of the State. Ministers, however, must not be thin-skinned. They must be prepared to expect ordinary criticism. I venture to say that the criticism levelled against measures submitted to this Chamber by the present Government is nothing as compared with the criticism by that party—when in Opposition—of the measures submitted by Governments then in power. Whatever may be the result of this unfortunate incident, it will not make any difference to me as an individual, so far as doing my duty to the people who have put me in this position is concerned.

HON. J. EWING (South-West) [5.13]: I regret very much that this matter should have come before the House, but from the tenor of the remarks that have been offered, I judge that not only the Leader of the House but every member is endeavouring to maintain the dignity and prestige of the Chamber. In my opinion there are two sides to this incident. Dr. Saw has pointed out that Section 8 of the Parliamentary Privileges Act does not apply. I am not of that opinion; I think it does apply. At the same time I regret that Mr. Duffell should have brought the matter before the House. He must remember that when a Minister of

the Crown is attacked in any way—I do not say that in this instance there was an attack—it appeals to me that that Minister is justified in defending himself.

Hon. J. Duffell: You have criticised Ministers yourself.

Hon. J. EWING: I admit that. It does not appear to me that the hon. member cast any reflection on the Minister for Works, but I can understand the Minister, on reading the statement, feeling aggrieved. If Mr. Duffell were not satisfied with the Ministerial replies on which he based his statement to the House, he should have endeavoured to elucidate the matter further, finding out exactly where the money was expended, and at whose instigation.

Hon. E. H. Gray: That would have been the manly thing to do.

Hon. J. EWING: It is what I would have done. After all, a Minister of the Crown has in his hands the expenditure of vast sums of money. In this instance a sort of reflection, not intentional of course, was cast upon him, and it was implied that because he represented the South Fremantle electorate, he had expended some £12,000 on certain roads, a thing he ought not to have done.

Hon. J. Duffell: I did not say £12,000.

Hon. J. EWING: No, what the hon. member said was 12 miles of road; I dare say it would represent a great deal more than £12,000. Had Mr. Duffell followed up his inquiries, the Colonial Secretary would have asked the Minister for Works exactly what the position was, and so this question would never have come before the House; because the Colonial Secretary would have finally replied to Mr. Duffell, and Mr. Duffell would have known then whether his statement was right or wrong.

The PRESIDENT: I do not see that any good can result from discussing what might have been.

Hon. J. EWING: But I am telling you what actually did happen; I am leading up to the reply given by the Colonial Secretary, in which he said distinctly that the Minister for Works was not responsible for the expenditure of that money.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Then who was?

Hon. J. EWING: Before the present Minister came into office the Mitchell Government had authorised one of the two roads.

Hon. J. Duffell: He said they began the construction of two roads.

Hon. J. EWING: I am taking the Minister's reply, which I know was honest and straightforward. He said that one road had been authorised by the Mitchell Government and that therefore the Minister for Works had been merely carrying it on; while the other road was authorised by the Federal Minister for Works, not by the State Minister.

Hon. J. Duffell: You do not know how many roads were constructed, any more than I do.

Hon. J. EWING: I am taking the Colonial Secretary's reply, and I am sure it was an honest one. That gives the clear position. Had Mr. Duffell prosecuted his inquiries further and got a satisfactory reply, he would have risen in his place and withdrawn. That is what I would have done, and I think Mr. Duffell should have done it. It is a terrible thing for a Minister of the Crown to have any insinuation cast at him. Of course, I am sure Mr. Duffell did not intend anything of the sort. However, we have a further question exercising the minds of members: The difficulty is that the Minister for Works did create a breach of privilege in coming into the precincts of the House and addressing a member as he did. Having heard both sides, I am not going to vote for any of the propositions now before the House. They will have to be much clearer than they are before I do anything of the sort. I am endeavouring to maintain the rights and privileges of this Chamber, but I do not feel justified in reflecting on the Minister, as we should be doing if we carried any of the propositions before us. I had hoped it might be possible for the Minister for Works to express his regret at what had taken place. If he did that, it would satisfy every member of the House. I appeal to the Colonial Secretary not to let this question go to a vote, but to have the debate adjourned in order that he might see the Minister for Works and get him to express his regret at what he said in the heat of the moment. Then I would appeal to Mr. Duffell, in fairness to the Minister for Works, to withdraw the remarks he made on the second reading of the Main Roads Bill. That is the only straightforward and honest way to clear this up. Moreover, it would maintain the good feeling that exists between the two Houses at present. We have any amount of trouble in front of us in opposing Bills brought down from an-

other place, so let us deal with principles rather than with anything else. I would not hesitate to oppose any Bill that I thought was not in the interests of the country, but I say, let us keep away from trouble such as this before us, trouble that should not be allowed to arise between the two Houses.

HON. V. HAMERSLEY (East) [3.22]: I cannot agree with the remarks of Mr. Ewing. This matter contains a great deal of principle. If members are allowed to go from one Chamber to another threatening other members, some of us might feel disposed to go along to the Assembly and challenge the remarks of members down there. If that practice were to grow, the two Houses would inevitably earn a reputation that has been acquired by Houses of Parliament in other States, namely, that of being nothing but a bear garden.

Hon. J. Ewing: This is not a bear garden.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: It could easily become one if members, and particularly Ministers, were to go from one Chamber to another and attempt to browbeat others over remarks made in debate. Mr. Ewing's reference to the expenditure of money in certain localities is entirely beside the question. I was one of those present when Mr. Duffell was called out of the room by the Minister for Works. Mr. Duffell reminded the Minister for Works that he had no right to come along to the lobby of this Chamber and adopt the attitude that he did. I think Mr. Duffell was quite right. I regret that several who have spoken, particularly Dr. Saw, should have gathered the impression that there was an intention to go into mortal combat, or that there was any suggestion of physical force. Never for a moment have I read into Mr. McCallum's remarks that he intended to resort to physical force if Mr. Duffell did not withdraw and apologise that afternoon.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: That was Mr. Duffell's impression.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I do not know what Mr. Duffell's impression was, but it certainly is the impression of certain members here, and is also the impression conveyed to the public. I read into the threat of the Minister for Works that he would deal with Mr. Duffell, the intention that, in the event of Mr. Duffell having to go before him with a deputation, or with a request for

anything at all on behalf of his constituents, his deputation, or his request, would get small consideration from the Minister for Works.

Hon. J. Ewing: It is a terrible thing if that is so.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: That is the only thing we can read into the Minister's threat.

Hon. E. H. Gray: An evil mind!

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: In those circumstances Mr. Duffell did the proper thing in bringing the matter before the Chamber, because he had to put himself right in the eyes of his constituents in the event of his ever having to approach the Minister for Works. I know that that sort of thing has obtained with previous Ministries. As to the immediately previous Ministry, which was represented in this House by Mr. Ewing, members of Parliament have refrained from introducing deputations because of the impression held that they would not be doing any good by appearing before certain Ministers. Every member knows of such occasions.

Hon. J. Ewing: You could not say that against the ex-Minister for Works.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I am not saying it against any particular Minister, but if Mr. Ewing likes to name individual Ministers—

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: I have heard of dragging a red herring across the track, but why take a red rag to stir up a hornet's nest?

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: From time to time there has been a tendency to victimisation, and we have to watch such tendencies very carefully. I do not regret this matter having been brought before the House, for in my view it has served a very good purpose. I was extremely sorry that the amendment moved by the Colonial Secretary did not contain words of regret; had it done so, I should have been inclined to support it. I now feel that the suggestion made by Mr. Lovekin is a good one, and if the Minister would withdraw his amendment we could adopt the suggestion.

Hon. E. H. Gray: That is worse than any of them.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: We cannot let the matter drift by a mere expression of regret that the matter has been brought before the House. Those who take that view are not seized with the full significance of what this might lead to. Perhaps Mr. Love-

kin's proposal would fit the occasion. None of us is altogether satisfied either with the motion or the amendment of the Leader of the House. If we have to fall back on the motion I should like to see substituted for the word "Parliament," the words "this House." If the motion is passed in its present form, we should then have to pass another motion asking for its concurrence in another place.

Hon. E. H. Gray: A funny situation would arise then.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: We would never get the concurrence of another place, and it would be felt that there was a fight between the two Chambers.

The PRESIDENT: The word "Parliament" is an error. It ought to be "this House."

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: It is a matter for this House to deal with and not for another place. I favour the idea of carrying Mr. Lovelock's proposal.

HON. W. H. KITSON (West) [5.33]: It is to be regretted that Mr. Duffell is so persistent in regard to the motion. From the tenor of the remarks of members who have spoken one would imagine that words had been used that should not be used by one party only. The question of justification has some little bearing on the subject. Mr. Duffell prefaced his remarks when making the speech that led up to this motion with these words—

I wish that I could have complete confidence in the Minister for Works' administration of the measure to the satisfaction of the people.

This was in connection with main roads.

Hon. J. Duffell: I hoped the Minister would contradict what I said, so that I might be in a position to contradict also the statement that was made to me. Put in the whole thing and you will be right. I asked it for a purpose.

Hon. W. H. KITSON: That was the hon. member's preface to remarks that were made some little time later.

Hon. J. Duffell: You cannot read from "Hansard" of this session.

Hon. W. H. KITSON: The hon. member made the statement that 12 miles of road had been constructed in the Minister's electorate since the passing of the Main Roads Bill in another place last session. This statement meant that a considerable amount of money, a far greater proportion of that

which was available for main roads, had been expended in that electorate to the exclusion of other electorates that were entitled to their proportion of the money. Mr. Duffell used as an illustration the main Albany road leading from Perth and running through Gosnells, indicating that the Minister could have spent some of the money there. If the hon. member had known his subject he must have been aware that the Minister could not use any of that money on that particular road.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Why?

Hon. W. H. KITSON: The Commonwealth grant was not and is not available for that road. How then could the hon. member have used that as an illustration of where money could have been spent if it had not been spent in the Minister's electorate?

Hon. J. Duffell: There was other money that was being spent by the State.

Hon. W. H. KITSON: The hon. member said he had been informed that no less than 12 miles of road had been constructed in the South Fremantle electorate since the passing of the Bill last session.

Hon. J. Duffell: And I hoped the Minister would contradict it.

Hon. W. H. KITSON: The hon. member was dealing with the Commonwealth grant. While he was speaking there was an interjection informing him of the position of the main roads in connection with the Commonwealth grant. The interjection is not recorded in "Hansard," but the hon. member replied to it. To carry the argument of justification a little further, may I remind the House that in the statement made by the Leader of the House on behalf of the Minister for Works, Mr. McCallum says that, when he asked Mr. Duffell to withdraw and apologise after he had heard the statement of the Minister, Mr. Duffell said it would all depend on whether the statement was true or not. That was adding insult to injury. If that remark had been made to many men it would not have been a question of dealing with Mr. Duffell in other ways, but of dealing with him in a very direct way.

Hon. J. Duffell: It might have been a greater mistake than ever to have adopted that attitude.

Hon. W. H. KITSON: If words carrying the same interpretation that I put upon Mr. Duffell's words had been used in my case—

Hon. J. Duffell: The Minister took no exception to them.

Hon. W. H. KITSON: I beg your pardon!

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. W. H. KITSON: I took exception to the words at the time they were uttered. I asked the hon. member why he was not prepared to make a plain statement instead of making such nasty inferences.

Hon. J. Duffell: I do not remember that.

Hon. W. H. KITSON: The hon. member told me I would have the right to refer to the matter when my turn came. It was plain to me at the time that the statement that was being made by the hon. member was one which should never have been made here or anywhere else, unless there was some foundation for it. The information desired could have been obtained in more ways than one. By the mere expedient of asking a question in the House Mr. Duffell could have obtained the information he wanted. From his remarks since then I am doubtful whether he would have been prepared to accept the statement of the Minister.

Hon. J. Duffell: The information was asked for by another member.

Hon. W. H. KITSON: I am doubtful whether Mr. Duffell would have accepted any statement.

Hon. J. Duffell: That is not fair.

Hon. W. H. KITSON: His attitude and remarks this afternoon show he is not satisfied with the statement already put forward, and is going to make still further efforts to see if the reply given to the House is correct or not. Can any other construction be put on his remarks this afternoon? I agree with the member who said there was a principle at stake. A principle is at stake in the first place when any member comes forward and, on mere hearsay, makes damaging statements concerning a Minister of the Crown. The statements are published in the Press and circulated in every corner of the State. Whether they be correct or not one cannot hope in the reply that is given to reach the same people who saw the original statement.

Hon. J. Duffell: The Press gave the same attention to the one side as to the other.

Hon. W. H. KITSON: A statement is made, and the statement is denied. Many people see the statement, but not the denial. To that extent a serious injustice has been done to the man who has been charged with

the offence. One would imagine that no breach of privilege had been committed by Mr. Duffell, and that the breach had been all on the side of the Minister for Works. If Mr. Duffell had been as fair with Mr. McCallum as, I am of opinion, Mr. McCallum was with him, there would have been no need for the matter to come before the House. If a member chooses to cast doubt upon the veracity of a Minister of the Crown, concerning a return he presents to the House dealing with certain works under discussion, he deserves all he gets. I cannot see that the Minister for Works did any great wrong in coming up here and having an interview with Mr. Duffell. He did the only thing that could be expected of him. I would have done the same thing myself, and would have wanted an explanation of the remarks that had been made. Had I been in the position that the Minister for Works apparently was in, I, too, would have requested Mr. Duffell to withdraw and apologise for what he said. Quite a lot of trouble has been caused over a little thing. The statement that has been made ought never to have been made. While Mr. McCallum may have used words which were perhaps unparliamentary, I claim that he was justified, in the circumstances, in using them, more particularly in view of the fact that the offence was aggravated by the statement of Mr. Duffell that it would all depend on whether the reply submitted by the Minister to the House was correct or not, as to how he acted. The best thing the House can do is to vote for the amendment moved by the Leader of the House, and let the matter rest.

Amendment (to strike out all the words after "That") put and passed.

Amendment (the Colonial Secretary's) put and negatived.

HON. A. LOVEKIN (Metropolitan Province) [5.54]: I move an amendment—

That the following words be inserted in lieu of those struck out:—"This House, having heard the statement of the Hon. J. Duffell and, through the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, the explanation of the Hon. A. McCallum, together with the admission by him in respect to the expression complained of, regrets that a Minister of the Crown should have allowed himself to use words which constitute a direct and grave attack upon the security and freedom of debate and which are calculated to menace the independence of representatives elected to Parliament by the people."

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

Ayes	..	..	..	13
Noes	..	..	..	8
				—
Majority for	..	..		5
				—

AYES.

Hon. J. E. Dodd	Hon. J. M. Macfarlane
Hon. J. Duffell	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. W. T. Glasheen	Hon. H. Seddon
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. H. A. Stephenson
Hon. E. H. Harris	Hon. F. E. S. Willmott
Hon. J. W. Kirwan	Hon. E. Rose
Hon. A. Lovekin	(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. J. R. Brown	Hon. J. W. Hickey
Hon. A. Burvill	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. A. J. H. Saw
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. J. Ewing
	(Teller.)

Amendment thus passed.

BILL—MAIN ROADS.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 10th September.

HON. J. R. BROWN (North-East) [5.51]: The pros and cons of this measure have been largely discussed, especially as to how the Bill will affect municipalities and road boards, and as to the amount of money required. No Bill of any magnitude can be expected to prove a perfect measure from the start. Indeed, no Act affecting the community as a whole has been a success from its initial stage. Victoria led off with a Main Roads Act, and this State has been rather slow in the matter, the reason being that various Governments did not care to take the responsibility of such a measure. We have only £190,000 per annum to start with, but that amount is something to justify the placing of this measure on the statute-book. Some members seem to think we should have three or four million pounds before enacting the Bill. If we wait until we get three or four millions, or even a million sterling, our plight will continue for years to come the same sorry one it is now. As the country develops, we must have main roads. Municipalities and road boards cannot extend their operations as far as is required. If the Government can devise a scheme for lifting that responsibility off the municipalities and road boards, it will be a great relief to the local authorities. I have had telegrams from Kalgoorlie asking

me to vote against the Bill. The Kalgoorlie Road Board, however, have not thought it necessary to pronounce against the measure, because they have found out that the Kalgoorlie road district will not be included in the proclaimed area.

Hon. E. H. Harris: How did they find that out?

Hon. J. R. BROWN: Just in the same way as they find out other things.

Hon. E. H. Harris: The Minister would not give us that assurance.

Hon. J. R. BROWN: The Minister gave an assurance that certain areas would not be included in the scope of the Bill.

Hon. E. H. Harris: But he did not name them.

Hon. J. R. BROWN: The Kalgoorlie district was not intended to be included, and neither was the North-West. Other districts will come within the purview of the Bill. When the measure came before this Chamber, members seemed to suffer from a nightmare that it would do this, that, and the other. First they thought we should have a select committee. Before its presentation in another place the Bill was drafted by able men, and every one of its details was thoroughly thrashed out. It was also carefully considered by the Crown Law Department. Here members discuss the Bill on the spur of the moment. They perceive all the anomalies it contains, and also some anomalies it does not contain. Members seem to have a terrible fear of the Minister who is to control the measure. They are afraid he will prove a dreadful man, one of whom people should steer clear. In fact, members seem to look upon that Minister as a menace to the community. They regard him as a dog to be kept on a short-length chain. Generally, members here seem to have an objection to measures coming from another place. This is called a House of review, but there does not seem to be much reviewing about it: it is all adverse criticism. Members seems to lose sight of the fact that the Bill is intended to assist local governing bodies, and not to do them any harm. Some of the local authorities will lose the wheel tax and so on.

Hon. H. Seddon: That is just the point.

Hon. J. R. BROWN: If they are not required to keep their roads in order, they will not require those taxes, unless it be to raise their three per cents. to nine per cent. If responsibility is to be lifted off the local authorities, the Bill will be of some service.

It is always considered here that a measure coming from another place is loaded. This is a Bill that is not loaded, members here jamb some ammunition into it to fire off in this Chamber. Members here have apparently got an idea into their heads that a Bill coming from another place is bogus and not to be trusted. Instead of chasing the buffalo, they chase the bunyip or the banshee, and are never on the right track. A joint select committee on the Bill was proposed, but was pooh-poohed. Now it is proposed to have a select committee of this Chamber, but can any member nominate the three or five members of that select committee? Have we three or five members sufficiently intelligent to add one jot or tittle to the Bill or cross a "t" or dot an "i" in it? I do not think we have. A select committee will merely mean extra expense. A long report will be submitted, containing the views of, say, a road board secretary out in the back country who has been there for three score years and ten. That is the kind of thing that will be in the report. Would this Chamber accept the report? No. Members generally would have to go over the same ground again. Let us drop the idea of a select committee and pass the second reading, and then in Committee let us see if we cannot put the Bill into apple-pie order. However, members criticise just for the sake of criticism. If they do not oppose every measure coming from another place, they consider that they are not doing their duty by their constituents. That seems to be the ruling opinion here. We ought to try to pass measures without so much adverse criticism. I have very little faith that a select committee will bring in a useful report. I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading.

HON. J. W. KIRWAN (South) [5.59]: The previous speaker has paid a high compliment to the Legislative Council, though, perhaps, not intending to do so. We ought all to be grateful to him for the manner in which he has acknowledged that members of this House always endeavour to do their work. This is not a party Bill, and if members of the Council wished to shirk their job the simple method for them to pursue would be to sit back and allow the Bill to pass thought quite irrespective of the consequences to the country. The Government would then have to accept full respon-

sibility for its defects. However, as Mr. Brown has pointed out, members of this Chamber have a high sense of their responsibilities. To use his exact words, "They feel that it is their duty to criticise each Bill when it comes before them, and to carefully examine it." That is the duty of a second Chamber, namely to review Bills very carefully. Although some Bills that come before us may at first sight be all that they should be, still on careful examination they are found to possess many defects. After a Bill of that description has passed through the criticism of a Chamber like ours, I do not think there remain in it many defects that have not been pointed out. We should be very grateful for the tribute paid to us by the hon. member regarding the conscientious and earnest way in which members of this House endeavour to improve Bills coming before them. The Bill is not a party one. The Colonial Secretary, as Mr. Glasheen pointed out, invited members to examine the measure and see what improvements could be effected in it. The debate that has taken place has certainly indicated that hon. members are desirous to the best of their ability of making the Bill one that will be creditable to Parliament. Mr. Brown made a somewhat remarkable statement, which is to a certain extent an explanation as to why one of the local bodies in the provinces I represent has not protested against the Bill as other local governing bodies have protested against it. Part of the Kalgoorlie Road Board district is in my province and part in the province represented by Mr. Brown. I was rather surprised that I had not received any communication from the Kalgoorlie Road Board on this matter, particularly as some of the members had spoken to me in opposition to some of the provisions in the Bill. The reason for the board's silence is cleared up now inasmuch as, so I understand from Mr. Brown, the Kalgoorlie Road Board has received an assurance that Kalgoorlie will not be included in the proclaimed area.

Hon. J. Ewing: Does the hon. member know that for certain?

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: No Minister is in a position to give any such assurance. The present Minister for Works may give an assurance that while he is Minister for Works he will see that the proclamation is not issued to bring the Kalgoorlie Road Board area within the provisions of the Bill, but the life

of a Minister is but temporary. Ministers, like members of Parliament, are the creatures of a day and it frequently happens that during the life of a Government, portfolios are changed so that the Minister who is at present Minister for Works may hold that portfolio for another month or a year only, and then another Minister may be appointed to that portfolio. Consequently the promise made by the present Minister for Works can only have effect during his tenure of office, and the assurance that the Kalgoorlie Road Board area will be brought within the scope of the Bill can only apply to the period while the present Minister holds office.

Hon. H. Seddon: That is an important point.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I have received, as Mr. Brown said he had himself received, strong protests from various local governing bodies against the Bill. The hon. member himself received a protest from the Kalgoorlie Municipal Council and a request to reject the Bill altogether. I have a letter from the Boulder Municipal Council, asking me to vote against the Bill. Furthermore, Mr. Rose mentioned that at Bunbury a conference of road boards had expressed their opposition to the Bill. Another conference was held at Geraldton, at which there were present delegates from Minginew, Perenjori, Morawa, Upper Chapman, and other centres, at which conference a series of resolutions in opposition to the Bill were agreed to. The Government have stated that they brought the Bill before Parliament in response to requests from road boards and local governing authorities, but the requests made were for a Main Roads Bill. Those local governing authorities have made it perfectly clear now that it is not the Bill before us that they want.

Hon. J. Ewing: Indeed they do not.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: If the Government were so much influenced by the requests of local governing bodies for a Main Roads Bill, they should be equally influenced by the expressions of hostility from so many local bodies regarding this particular Bill. So far as I know the road boards and municipalities are unanimous against the Bill, and that being so—the Minister says he was influenced by the requests of the local bodies—what is the good of going on with it in its present form? I confess that the more I study the

Bill the less I am inclined to support it. Now the Minister apparently has given an assurance that there are particular parts of the State that will not be included within the scope of the Bill. On the other hand, the taxation to be imposed under the Bill will be collected from every part of the State. For instance, the petrol tax will be collected from all over the State, and the whole of that tax will go to the main roads board which will not have any jurisdiction over parts of the areas from which the tax will be collected.

Hon. J. Ewing: Is that correct?

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: It must be right, otherwise how are they going to distribute the petrol tax?

The Colonial Secretary: It is correct.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: The Leader of the House, in that fair manner he always displays in conducting the affairs of this House, informs us that that is correct. It is practically certain that in the early stages of this legislation the operations will be largely confined to the metropolitan area, and the taxation that will be collected from all over the State will have to be spent within the area covered by the Bill.

Hon. J. Ewing: Only in regard to petrol.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: Furthermore, it would be extremely difficult to amend the Bill in such a way that the areas outside the operations of the Bill could receive their due proportions of the tax. It would be almost impossible to estimate what proportion of the petrol tax should go to the outside areas which would not come within the operations of the Bill. I consider that as the State has proceeded for so long without a Main Roads Bill we might very well continue for a further period without one. I would prefer to see the £190,000 that will be controlled entirely by the main roads board, which will consist of three Government officials and two nominated by the local governing authorities within the neighbourhood of Perth and Fremantle, distributed among the local governing bodies of the State rather than to be left in the hands of the main roads board. Those local governing bodies have done good work in the past, and had they been more liberally supported from the funds of the State, the roads throughout would be in a better condition to-day. One of the greatest difficulties, as pointed out by Mr. Burvill, will be found in distinguishing between main roads, feeder roads, and de-

developmental roads. I agree with him that feeder roads and developmental roads especially, are of greater importance than the main roads. The developmental roads affect the progress of industries that are the life-blood of the State. To my mind, if the money were spent throughout the length and breadth of Western Australia, it would be better for our industries than if the money were to remain with the main roads board to be spent on roads only after they were proclaimed main roads. This is a much more serious matter than those who have not lived in the back country can possibly realise. Half the requests received from the agricultural and mining area relate to improvements to roads, so that those concerned in the industries I have mentioned can carry on the work of developing the resources of the country. I believe that the Bill places too much emphasis altogether on main roads. The great bulk of the traffic that would go by main roads goes now by the railways, and this legislative proposal will mean taking away a great part of the money that is used in the construction of developmental roads and feeder roads. Personally, I would not be in the least sorry if the select committee, which I understand will be appointed to examine the Bill and endeavour to put it into a workable and useful form, were to report that it was an impossible task.

Hon. W. T. Glasheen: They may deal with developmental roads under the Bill.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: Not until they are proclaimed roads. Only then can assistance be given under the provisions of the Bill.

Hon. J. Ewing: No, not at all. There is special money for developmental roads.

Hon. H. Stewart: Only certain money shall be used for that work.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: The whole tenor of the Bill is in the direction of setting out that money shall be spent on the main roads of the State, which to my way of thinking, are not really the most important roads. The most important are the developmental roads through the agricultural and mining districts, serving people who are engaged in developing the State's natural resources.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I would not have spoken on the Bill but for the remarks of Mr. Brown, and particularly his explanation as to why the Kalgoorlie Road Board had not protested against the Bill. It is

desirable that I should briefly state the reasons given by the main local body in the province I represent as to why they are opposed to the Bill to the extent of requesting me to vote against it. Their objection is stated thus—

The Bill provides for all motor and vehicle taxes to be collected by the police on behalf of the Government and to be paid into one fund. The bulk of this fund will, in all probability, be expended on roads from which the large majority of contributing municipalities and road boards will derive no benefit. In the case of this municipality, it will probably mean a decrease in revenue of £500, and you will, I am sure, fully realise the seriousness of the position.

It is also desirable to read the resolutions passed at the conference of local authorities held at Geraldton. They are—

That the proposed Main Roads Bill, being a new departure in the construction and control of main arteries of traffic, and largely experimental in its nature, the provisions of such Bill be confined within a strictly limited area to be defined in such Bill, and any proposal to place the power of defining the scope of the Bill in the hands of a nominee board be opposed.

That the proposal that the Commissioner of Police collect all license fees under the Traffic Act, at present being collected by local authorities, will be establishing a dangerous precedent and strikes directly at one of the prerogatives of local authority.

That the fixing of fees payable as licenses under the Traffic Act by the Government for the whole State is not conducive to the interests of outlying districts in the process of development, and such fees should be on the zone system so that lower fees should prevail on the goldfields and outlying pastoral areas which rely on motor transport for development.

I quote those resolutions because they are the decisions of the important local bodies and give the reasons for their hostility to the Bill. Mr. Glasheen referred to the fact that provision is made in the Bill for the proposed main roads board to construct developmental roads. That is so, but the point I wish to make is that the board is essentially a main roads board. The whole Bill is supposed to apply to main roads, and the work of the board in connection with developmental roads would be a mere incidental in proportion to the main part of their duties. My chief objection to the Bill is that it attaches far too much importance to main roads, and does not stress the very great importance of developmental roads and roads which might be described as feeders to the rail-

ways. I object to the Bill because I believe it will mean a serious lessening of local governing powers in the country and gold-fields districts. It is a move in the direction of reverting to centralisation instead of along the lines of decentralisation. The measure would place altogether too much power in the hands of a board having their headquarters in the capital. A board in the capital would naturally be inclined to pay particular attention to the requirements of the locality immediately under their notice, and correspondingly little attention to the remote parts of the State that were beyond their ken. Even if the operations of the Bill were limited to the metropolitan area, or to that and some of the neighbouring areas, the objection arises that we would have taxation in outside districts and no possible corresponding benefits. The petrol tax is objectionable because the users of petrol live in all parts of the State, and yet no one contemplates that the whole of the State will be included within the operation of the Bill.

Hon. J. Nicholson: We might eliminate the metropolitan area from the Bill and that would remove your objection.

Hon. J. Ewing: Then you would get no revenue.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: If what Mr. Nicholson suggests were done the metropolitan area would pay the petrol tax and the outside areas would spend it. Is that what the hon. member means?

Hon. J. Nicholson: There would have to be some adjustment.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: There is a further objection to the petrol tax, namely that it would hit people who are using machinery. Some members have referred to the fact that the tax would be collected on the sale of petrol and that if people imported petrol for their own use, the users of such petrol could not be taxed. I understand that, owing to some arrangement made with petrol importers, it will not be possible to import petrol for one's own use. I heard that stated in an influential quarter, but I heard in another quarter that it was a very simple matter to import petrol directly for the use of those importing it. I shall await with interest the explanation of the Minister, because it is such a serious point that I feel it cannot possibly have been overlooked by the Government. I am informed that petrol has already been imported by

users in this way, and so the tax could be evaded. Mr. Brown said he did not think members of this House would be capable of improving the Bill. Surely members of this House know as much about the main and developmental roads of the State as do those who framed the Bill. I have perfect confidence that a committee could be formed from members of this House capable if any committee is capable, of making this Bill an acceptable measure. I hope the Bill will be referred to a select committee, although I agree with Mr. Glasheen's remarks that it will be extraordinarily difficult to put the Bill into an acceptable shape. I shall be agreeably surprised if, as a result of investigations, a select committee is able to bring forward amendments that will make the Bill a useful measure.

On motion by Hon. H. A. Stephenson, debate adjourned.

BILL—ROMAN CATHOLIC GERALDTON CHURCH PROPERTY.

Returned from the Assembly without amendment.

BILL—CITY OF PERTH.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

House adjourned at 7.42 p.m.
