

THE HON. J. DOLAN (South-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [10.36 p.m.]: I will draw the attention of the Minister for Works to the queries which have been raised by the honourable member and I will ask that Minister to contact him and give him the requisite answers.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 10.37 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 24th May, 1973

The **SPEAKER** (Mr. Norton) took the Chair at 11.00 a.m., and read prayers.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

Membership

MR. J. T. TONKIN (Melville—Premier) [11.04 a.m.]: I move—

That the Member for Maylands (Mr. Harman) and the Member for Fremantle (Mr. Fletcher) be discharged from attending the Public Accounts Committee and that the Member for Mount Hawthorn (Mr. Bertram) and the Member for Mirrabooka (Mr. A. R. Tonkin) be appointed in their place.

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Leader of the Opposition) [11.05 a.m.]: In supporting the motion I would like briefly to say that the Parliament should record its appreciation of the work done by the members who are retiring from the Public Accounts Committee, and particularly the gentleman who has been the chairman of the committee. I would like to congratulate him upon his elevation to the Ministry. I can assure him that his ulcers will increase at the square root of the salary increase he will receive! However, we take the opportunity to express appreciation for the work he and the member for Fremantle have done.

MR. W. A. MANNING (Narrogin) [11.06 a.m.]: As Deputy Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee I would like to say a few words to the two members who are retiring—the member for Fremantle (Mr. Fletcher) who has been on the committee for some time and the member for Maylands (Mr. Harman) who has been the chairman since the retirement of the present Minister for Housing (Mr. Bickerton). We appreciate the work they have done on the committee. May I say that it seems to be part of the job of Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee to step up into Cabinet. We have set a couple of precedents in this regard.

Sir Charles Court: Now you have the member for Karrinyup worried!

MR. W. A. MANNING: On behalf of myself and other members of the committee I wish to express appreciation of the work done by the members who are retiring. It is a pleasure to work on the committee because of the untiring efforts of the members concerned and because of the fact that the committee has never shown the slightest leaning towards party political ideas. That has never entered into our work. We have been one, united committee; that has been the essence of our thinking and our actions from the very beginning.

MR. HARMAN (Maylands) [11.07 a.m.]: I would like to thank the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Narrogin for their kind words and congratulations. I found the committee to be a most stimulating body with which to work, and I think we were able to achieve a great deal for the House.

On behalf of the member for Fremantle, who is also retiring from the committee with me, I would like to say that we enjoyed the fellowship of the other members of the committee. We worked as a team and it is with some regrets that I sever the association I have enjoyed over the past two years.

MR. FLETCHER (Fremantle) [11.08 a.m.]: I did not anticipate expressions of thanks for my service on the Public Accounts Committee. However, I sincerely thank the Opposition for recognising that service. I, too, found my experience on the committee to be most enjoyable and very educational. I wrote to my party expressing my regret at the need to ask it to relieve me of this pleasant duty.

The member for Narrogin has pointed out that two chairmen of the committee have been elevated to the Cabinet. In future the electors will determine from which side of the House others will be elevated to the Ministry. It did not happen to me, by a very narrow margin.

However, my electorate must come first and my responsibilities as member for Fremantle include being a member of the Board of the Social Centre for Elderly People, and a member of the hospital board. I am also on subcommittees of those boards. Unfortunately, their meetings are held on the days which the Public Accounts Committee finds it convenient to meet. I bow out with some reluctance. I am aware of the worth-while nature of the committee. As a result of my association with the Civil Service Association I know that Government departments are also aware of the existence of the committee as a result of our inquiries; and various departments are now on their toes.

As I say, they are conscious of the existence of this committee.

To that extent the Public Accounts Committee is a worth-while body. I wish it well, and I also wish my successor well in his service on the committee on behalf of this Parliament and the State of Western Australia.

Question put and passed.

TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 23rd May.

MR. STEPHENS (Stirling) [11.11 a.m.]: I would like to make a few brief remarks in this debate, and my idea of brevity is rather different from that of other speakers who prefaced their contributions by saying they would be brief and then spoke for some time.

The measure before us is based on the same premises as the measure that was introduced in 1971. At that time I opposed the measure, and I also oppose the one now before us. Like other speakers on this side of the House, I maintain that the road maintenance tax is a rather iniquitous tax, and I would like to see it repealed. However, I cannot see any real advantage in repealing the tax and replacing it with another measure which contains just as many anomalies as the one the Government hopes to get rid of.

The road maintenance tax is assessed according to the miles travelled. The amendments set out in the Bill to amend the Traffic Act contain a scale of fees, but these fees have no relationship whatsoever to the miles travelled. In this respect it can prove to be a great hardship to many people.

I instance the fishermen who are compelled to license their vehicles but who travel very few miles in them. Stock transporters are in the same position. At the moment, the stock position being as it is, many stock operators in the country are laying off men because of the lack of work. They will be further disadvantaged if the amendments in the Bill are agreed to. Likewise, log hauliers are in the same position. All these circumstances have been adequately dealt with by previous speakers in the debate, so I shall not go into them in detail.

When the member for Mt. Lawley was making his contribution to the debate the Premier, by way of interjection, said he was implementing his election promise by the introduction of the measure, because this was a source of revenue which was not a tax. We have previously heard a similar play on words from the Premier in debates on this issue.

My main reason for making a contribution to the debate is to bring to the attention of the House a report purporting

to be a statement made by the Premier which appeared in *The Albany Advertiser* of the 15th February, 1971, under the heading, "Tonkin outlines Labor Policy". This was a report of the speech which the Premier had made in the Albany Town Hall in support of the Labor candidate.

Mr. Brown: He was a very good candidate.

Mr. STEPHENS: I am now discussing the merits of the Act, and not the policy speech of the Premier or the candidate. I have not sufficient time to go into those aspects.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Did you say the merits of the Act? What merits are there in the Act?

Mr. STEPHENS: What appeared in the report I have just mentioned is relevant to the remarks made by the member for Greenough last night to which no answer was given. The Premier would be aware of this newspaper report, because he himself quoted from it in a reply to a question on education. The report is as follows—

Mr. Tonkin said the road maintenance tax was the most iniquitous tax ever imposed on the people.

He denied a statement by Premier Brand that abolition of the tax would automatically mean that expenditure on the State's roads would be cut by about \$20 million in the next three years.

He said a Labor Government would effect savings that would more than offset any loss of revenue from the tax which was, in many cases costing more to collect than actual tax, specially from interstate hauliers.

Sir David Brand: I bet the Premier had his tongue in his cheek when he said that.

Mr. STEPHENS: In his policy speech the Premier made it quite clear that he would abolish the road maintenance tax without introducing any alternative.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: What gave you the basis for saying that from the report you have read? That is purely an assumption.

Mr. STEPHENS: It is stated in the newspaper report that—

He said a Labor Government would effect savings that would more than offset any loss of revenue from the tax which was, in many cases costing more to collect than actual tax, specially from interstate hauliers.

That is quite clear to the normal person.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: It is quite clear, as I shall tell you in a short while!

Mr. STEPHENS: There is no need for the Premier to indulge in playing with words.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: I am not playing with words.

Mr. STEPHENS: He said that he would abolish the road maintenance tax without introducing any replacement. With those remarks I oppose the measure.

MR. BROWN (Merredin-Yilgarn) [11.16 a.m.]: I wish to offer my support to the Bill which seeks to amend the Traffic Act and to abolish road maintenance tax contributions. I believe this is an iniquitous tax; I go further and say it is an immoral one. It has been demonstrated clearly throughout the length and breadth of the State that this tax has created such a severe imposition that it has taught some people to cheat. Many have tried to avoid their obligations under this law. In my view any law which imposes an obligation on people causing them to cheat is an immoral law.

Last evening the member for Greenough said quite rightly that farmers and people in the country do not know very much about the tax. When the road maintenance tax was introduced the same remark would have been applicable at that time. I believe there was no alternative but for the Treasury officials to advise the Government that the only way it could introduce the tax on motor vehicles in 1965 was by imposing the road maintenance tax.

Opposition to this tax in 1965 could not be brought about, because the local authorities were the licensing authorities and the revenue they received was used to enable them to carry out their work. So, if they were to increase the license fees it naturally followed that the imposition of the tax would not have the implied results contemplated by the Government; that is, to use this revenue as it saw fit for the construction of roads, which is an admirable objective of any Government.

With the local authorities being the licensing authorities at that time, they would receive this money and their revenues would be increased; subsequently they would receive more money from the matching grants made available under the Commonwealth Aid Roads Fund. So, in 1965, there was no alternative, because of the fact that the tax was introduced in the Eastern States in 1956. Victoria was the first to introduce it, and it was followed by the other States. In view of the vast distance separating Western Australia from the Eastern States, it did not necessarily follow that this tax should have been applied in Western Australia.

The people in the country were told that the idea of introducing road maintenance tax was to compel interstate hauliers to make a contribution to the maintenance of our roads. That was the reason given to the people at that time. The then Government said that the main purpose was to obtain contributions from interstate road hauliers from the Eastern States who operated in Western Australia, and *vice versa*. However, that has not proved to be the outcome of the road maintenance tax. Its imposition has caused hardship

to the people who are living farthest away from the large centres, particularly country centres. This is an imposition and an immoral tax; I say that the measure before us and the related one on the notice paper deserve our approbation.

Sir David Brand: I wish to make a brief contribution.

The SPEAKER: The member for Greenough cannot do that, because he has already spoken in the debate.

MR. J. T. TONKIN (Melville—Premier) [11.19 a.m.]: I did not think that the anxiety of the member for Greenough about this measure was of such an extent that he wanted to speak twice in the second reading debate. I do not know what the Opposition wants in regard to this question. The action of members opposite during the time they were in Government showed they did not like the tax at all. They were doing their level best to find a way to get rid of it.

Sir David Brand: You have not been able to find an alternative.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: They were doing their best to get rid of it. The Labor Party opposed this tax from its inception.

Sir David Brand: That is right.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: We said at the time it should not have been imposed at all, that it was putting a burden on the people farthest away from the city, and it was only being brought in for the purpose of enabling the Government to qualify for additional assistance. I said at the time there would have to be a limit to this form of finance.

Sir David Brand: There was no State in the Commonwealth in more urgent need of assistance for roads than Western Australia. That was the point.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: That was not the point at all. The point is that we opposed this from its inception.

Sir David Brand: All this is nonsense because we have not gone very far at all.

Mr. O'Connor: We have gone backwards.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: No, it is the same tax.

Sir David Brand: It has been handled wrongly.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Can members opposite explain why a gentleman had been in gaol for 12 months?

Mr. O'Connor: Should he not have been there?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: No.

Mr. O'Connor: You were remiss in letting him out.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: If the Opposition wants to know the way it handled the matter I will give an instance. I will

mention the case of a truckie who got behind with his road maintenance tax. He got rid of his truck because he could not meet the payments, and he took a job in a timber mill in the south-west. What did the Government of the day do? It issued a summons against him and took him away from a job where he was earning wages to maintain his wife and family, and put him in gaol.

Mr. O'Connor: The present Government has done the same thing.

Sir David Brand: But that is different!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Representations were made to the Minister at the time—who is now interjecting—and arrangements were made to let the fellow out of gaol.

Sir David Brand: That is not the first time that has been done.

Sir Charles Court: I can remember the Premier saying, time and time again, that people should obey the law.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: There is an example of precisely the same thing about which the member for Mt. Lawley and the member for Darling Range complain.

Mr. O'Connor: I never fiddled with the operations of the department, and instructed it the way it is instructed now.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: That is absolute nonsense, and I could go further—as I may a little later.

Mr. O'Connor: That will give me an opportunity to come back at the third reading stage.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The member for Mt. Lawley will have as many opportunities as he wants. I have a lot more information about his operations than he knows about.

Mr. O'Connor: If the Premier is happy to disclose that information he should do so. I have nothing to hide as far as I am concerned.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I am about to tell the member for Mt. Lawley about a situation.

Mr. O'Connor: I think that if the Premier has something he should bring it out and not hide it.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: That is my business.

Mr. O'Connor: Well, you have referred to some of my business.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The member for Mt. Lawley never ceases to do that! A question appeared on the notice paper, yesterday, addressed to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport. The question was as follows—

- (1) Does he know if the amount of \$650 monthly (\$200 Western Australia and \$450 South Australia)

is a figure Mr. C. Saleeba will be able to meet to repay road maintenance arrears?

- (2) Does he know if Mr. Saleeba will be charged if he is unable to pay?
- (3) Is it possible to arrange a compromise with the South Australian Minister?
- (4) If so, will the Minister make an approach to South Australia?

That question is an example of the member for Mt. Lawley requesting a Minister in the State Government to make representations to a Minister in the South Australian Government to ease off a little with regard to the road maintenance tax which a particular person owes to the South Australian Government.

Mr. O'Connor: I asked if the \$650 was not too much to pay each month, and if some arrangement could be made for a reasonable amount to be paid.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Under the administration of the previous Government there would have been no arrangement for a payment such as this at all. The man concerned would go to gaol.

Mr. O'Connor: The Premier is completely inaccurate in his statement, because we did make arrangements as he well knows. He is misleading.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: What arrangement did the former Minister make regarding the timber worker? What chance was he given?

Mr. O'Connor: The Premier knows that we made arrangements for him to pay so much a month off his arrears.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: You do not know what you are talking about.

Mr. O'Connor: I do, but the Premier does not know what he is talking about.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The trouble is that I know too much of what I am now talking about.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Sir Charles Court: The Premier should not allude to the member for Mt. Lawley in that manner.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! Will the Premier resume his seat? Members will keep order. Every member is entitled to be heard. I call on the Premier.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I will return to the purpose of the question, which was to ascertain whether the State Government would make representations to the South Australian Government on behalf of a man to protect him from being summonsed if it were found that he could not maintain his payments of \$650 per month. That is the substance of the question.

Mr. O'Connor: You read into it what you want to.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: So I say that does not leave any grounds at all for the member for Mt. Lawley to try to criticise this Government for the sensible way in which it has handled the matter with regard to hundreds of people who, because of the way that this tax falls on them, have found it impossible to meet their commitments.

Thousands of dollars are owed by contractors all over Australia who, for one reason or another, have found it impossible to pay road maintenance tax.

Mr. R. L. Young: One of your own Ministers made it very clear that every cent of road maintenance tax had been collected before a certain truckle drove his truck again. Therefore, would the Premier not agree that the truckle, having paid his tax, was under no further obligation to the State? If that is not so I suggest the Premier get together with the Minister for Housing.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The member for Wembley shows his complete ignorance of this situation. He is completely ignorant as I shall show him.

Sir Charles Court: Did the Premier hear the speech made by the Minister for Housing last night?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Yes, I did.

Mr. Brady: A good speech, too.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I will now proceed to demonstrate the complete ignorance of the member for Wembley on this question.

Mr. R. L. Young: Okay.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: A number of truckles had to take on contracts as subcontractors because they were so keen to get work to enable them to meet their monthly payments on their vehicles. Because of their hire-purchase commitments they had to take the contracts at the price at which they were offered.

Mr. Brady: Hear, hear! That applied to many of them.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The road maintenance tax does not provide sufficient money for all the roads in the State to be kept in first-class order.

Mr. Thompson: Before the Premier moves on—

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Before nothing! Many of the truckles were operating on roads in the north where the cost of repairs to their trucks left them with little or no money on which to live and with which to meet their vehicle and other financial commitments.

Mr. Gayfer: So you are going to make the farmers, who do not even use the roads, pay for this.

Mr. R. L. Young: You have not answered the question I asked.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I have not been given a chance to answer anything yet.

Mr. R. L. Young: Keep going.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I will keep going if I am allowed.

Sir Charles Court: We are just interjecting to help you fill in the time.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The Opposition wants the right to say all it likes and leave me no right of reply.

Sir Charles Court: Never lose your sense of humour in this place.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The situation is precisely as I have stated it—that because of the high cost of repairs and the prices given for the subcontracts it was physically and financially impossible for these people to pay road maintenance tax and live. I have personally inspected some of these vehicles and seen the condition they were in. So they tried to get out of paying road maintenance tax.

Mr. R. L. Young: You used the words "they had to accept the subcontract". They did not have to accept it at all.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. R. L. Young: Last year, at great length, I made that point.

Mr. H. D. Evans: Tell us what the alternatives were.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Members of the Opposition talk about expecting these people to pay in every case, but why is every State not expecting them to pay and not making certain they pay? For the simple reason that some of them cannot pay. The member for Mt. Lawley appreciates that point in this question of his. How did this fellow get so far behind in the payment of road maintenance tax that he now has to pay \$650 a month?

Mr. O'Connor: I gave you time to interject, so I will interject if you will give me time. He got so far behind because he was misled by your indication that road maintenance tax would be abolished, and, like many others, he thought he would not have to pay it.

Mr. Jamieson: Rubbish!

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I thought members on the opposite side were talking about the obligation to obey the law.

Mr. O'Connor: You cast aside the law whenever you wish.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The law was not cast aside at all.

Mr. O'Connor: You have done it in many cases. You have even destroyed documents.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The law was not cast aside at all, and until road maintenance tax is abolished the people operating under it know they have a legal obligation to pay road maintenance tax.

Mr. Gayfer: So you load the "cockles" instead.

Mr. Bryce: The "cockles" are accustomed to loading us.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Some attempt has been made to show that at some time or other I gave an undertaking that in abolishing road maintenance tax I would not put anything in its place. Several members have attempted to establish that, the latest being the member for Stirling. Nothing he quoted from that newspaper cutting enabled him to draw the conclusion he was pleased to draw.

Mr. Hutchinson: Some extraordinary statements were made.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: He did not do it for any reason other than to make false representation.

Mr. Stephens: I did no such thing.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: In the policy speech—and I checked it this morning to be absolutely certain—

Mr. Hutchinson: You cannot comment on the member for Stirling's utterance.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: In the policy speech, after setting out that it was a most inequitable tax, I made this clear statement, without qualification of any kind and without suggesting there would or would not be some other form of revenue raising: "We will abolish this inequitable tax."

Mr. R. L. Young: Without any qualification.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: And that is what I am trying to do.

Sir David Brand: The impression people got was that you were going to abolish the tax.

Mr. Stephens: Are you claiming you were misreported?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Last night the member for Darling Range was pleased to refer to *Hansard* reports on a different Bill from the one I am now dealing with. He knew very well that if he wanted to make a proper comparison the thing to do was to see what I said on the Traffic Act Amendment Bill (No. 3) in 1971—the same type of legislation with which we are now dealing. But he did not choose to do that, for obvious reasons as I will point out. He read some of my references to the other Bill, where, when I was questioned as to whether I was going to put anything in its place, I declined to answer. Had he

referred to my remarks on the Traffic Act Amendment Bill (No. 3), he would have seen I said, without any qualification at all, that if the Parliament did not pass the Traffic Act Amendment Bill (No. 3)—the one with which I was dealing—the road maintenance tax repeal Bill would be proclaimed if passed.

Mr. O'Connor: Could you give us the reference in *Hansard*?

Mr. Jamieson: You did not research it enough.

Mr. O'Connor: I do not deny it. We admitted that had been said by the Premier, as I think the Premier would agree.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: In the days when I was studying accountancy and had to study company law, the law of contracts, and so on, I remember learning that fraud is false representation of fact made with a knowledge of its falseness or made recklessly without belief in its truth. That is precisely what the member for Darling Range did last night.

Sir Charles Court: He did nothing of the sort.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Yes, he did.

Sir Charles Court: He asked you to give him the reference.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: No, he did not.

Sir Charles Court: Yes, he did. He had searched for the reference.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: He dealt with my remarks on the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act Repeal Bill and declined to make any reference at all to the Traffic Act Amendment Bill (No. 3); and I will take a lot of convincing that he had not read my remarks on the Traffic Act Amendment Bill.

Sir Charles Court: He asked you to say where that particular reference to which you were alluding was.

Mr. O'Connor: And he did not deny you said it.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: When I put the question to him as to why he was taking that line, he did not advance the information that he had not had an opportunity to look at my remarks on the Traffic Act Amendment Bill (No. 3). He continued to try to create the impression in the House that I had nowhere stated that if the Traffic Act Amendment Bill (No. 3) was not passed I would proclaim the other Bill.

Mr. O'Connor: He did not.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: That is the situation.

Sir Charles Court: Reference was made to this statement you are said to have made, and my deputy interjected at the time to say he could not find it in *Hansard*. You were invited to—

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: But he still went on to establish the point that I had not made it, despite my denial—

Sir Charles Court: He invited you to tell him where it was.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Rubbish!

Mr. O'Connor: Surely he is entitled to believe a statement made by you which appears in *Hansard*.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: His whole purpose—and he spent a considerable time on it—was to try to establish that I had not said I would proclaim the Act if the other Bill was not passed.

Mr. O'Connor: He was quoting what you said from *Hansard*.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Yes, and he kept on quoting and re quoting it, despite the fact that I asked him straightout, "Are you saying I never stated I would have the Act proclaimed?"

Mr. O'Connor: Had he been here for a long time, he would know he could not believe it because you change your mind twice a day.

Mr. Hutchinson: Where is the record of this?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I will tell members of the Opposition this—

Mr. Graham: Your research is very poor.

Mr. O'Connor: It will be interesting to hear.

Mr. Hutchinson: It will be denying something he said previously, anyway.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I refer members to page 452 of *Hansard*, 1971.

Mr. O'Connor: Is that the second series for that year?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: It is page 452, and there is only one page of that number each year.

Mr. O'Connor: There would be two for 1971.

Mr. Jamieson: That was the second session.

Sir Charles Court: That is all we wanted to know.

Mr. Jamieson: You would have found it had you looked at the right Bill.

Mr. O'Neill: The Premier could not find it either.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: At the bottom of the page the member for Mt. Lawley is reported as saying—

But a lot of people will pay a tax which they have not paid previously.

I was astonished at what the Premier had to say. Nothing amazes me now because he will say anything.

And I interjected and said—

The member for Mt. Lawley ought to talk about that.

Mr. Bickerton: That was a good interjection.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The passage then continues—

Mr. O'CONNOR: The Premier said unequivocally he would abolish the road maintenance tax.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: The road maintenance tax, yes.

Mr. O'CONNOR: In other words, if this legislation does not go through the Premier will still proclaim the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act Repeal Bill.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Of course.

The Minister for Works reacted immediately. He said—

But we would be without country roads.

Anyone who has honestly researched the situation and is prepared to present the facts of the matter to the House most certainly would have referred to my remarks on the Traffic Act Amendment Bill (No. 3). Anyone doing this would have seen proof that I had stated over and over again it was my intention that I would proclaim the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act Repeal Bill even if the Traffic Act Amendment Bill (No. 3) did not pass.

We cannot expect fairness from the Opposition. All we have seen is misrepresentation to score debating points.

Mr. O'Connor: Well, you are very competent at doing that.

Mr. O'Neill: It was dragged out of you like pulling a tooth.

Sir Charles Court: That is about it.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: That is merely an opinion of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and I do not place much store on his opinions.

Mr. O'Neill: You certainly shocked the Minister for Works when you made that statement, as you admitted last night; he nearly collapsed.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The Government is trying again to fulfil the undertaking which it had given unequivocally that it would abolish road maintenance tax. In order to ensure that local authorities are not deprived of funds for roads—and that would be the result if no attempt were made to raise some money—the Government proposes to substitute another method of raising money. If the present proposals are agreed to, I can inform the House without the slightest hesitation and

after considerable research on the subject, that the amount paid by the owners of motor vehicles in this State will be less than that paid by motorists in other States.

Mr. W. G. Young: Why not include all motor vehicles and make up the difference?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I looked at the situation in Queensland because the Premier of that State told me recently that his Treasury received \$8,000,000 from one section of the motoring public. I therefore studied the latest report of the Auditor-General in Queensland and I made a comparison between the position there and here. In round figures I found that in 1970-71 the Queensland Treasury obtained \$25,000,000 from the owners of 755,000 motor vehicles. At the same time in Western Australia, our Treasury received \$14,000,000 from the owners of 475,000 motor vehicles.

I worked out a very simple sum and I arrived at a figure applicable to Queensland if that State imposed the same charges as those imposed here. Instead of \$25,000,000, the Queensland Treasury would receive only \$22,000,000. Therefore, on a direct comparison, \$3,000,000 more is being paid by the owners of vehicles in Queensland than would be paid by the owners of the same number of vehicles in Western Australia. I put this to members—

Mr. R. L. Young: About \$4 per vehicle per annum more.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Is it argued by the Opposition that road maintenance tax should not be abolished? Apparently not. Is it argued then that no attempt should be made to raise funds so that payments to local authorities may be maintained?

Mr. W. G. Young: We agree with that.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Apparently the answer is that an attempt should be made.

Mr. W. G. Young: But the burden should be spread over the owners of all vehicles.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The next question is: How is this money to be raised?

Mr. Graham: Road maintenance tax was not applied to all vehicles.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The Deputy Leader of the Country Party suggested, and backed it up with documentary proof, that one way to accomplish this end was a tax on petrol. This is the very point I put forward at the Premiers' Conference, but I did not get very far, as one member said last night. I looked at this idea because I felt it was a sensible approach if it were practicable. However, those who are in a position to know, or ought to be in a position to know, advised me that we would not be able to implement it. It seems that an attempt in this direction

would place us in the same position as that of Tasmania in regard to the tax on tobacco. However, the Tasmanian Government is in the happy situation that it cannot pay the money back. It was told that the tax imposed was contrary to the Constitution, but it cannot go around refunding money to everyone who purchased cigarettes. Therefore, this money has remained with the Treasury.

Mr. McPharlin: Would not the new Federal Government give sympathetic consideration to your proposal?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I am hoping it will. I have not given up because I intend to get rid of this tax if it is possible. This is one of the worst taxes ever imposed anywhere because of the hardship which results from it. A great many people just do not pay it. It is no exaggeration to say that thousands of undelivered summonses are floating around all over Australia because many truck owners operated under false names.

The summonses cannot catch up with them. Some of these people owe money in every State. For instance, in the case of Saleeba, he owes so much money in South Australia that he has to pay it back at the rate of \$450 a month.

Mr. Jamieson: He probably owes some money in Victoria, too.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Very likely. This tax has brought hardship and sorrow to many households throughout the length and breadth of the Commonwealth. Is this to continue?

Sir Charles Court: Will not the licenses bring equal hardship, particularly as they will have to be paid immediately?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The difference is that the person licensing his vehicle has to pay the money to start off and it will be added to the cost of his going into business and from then on the return he gets from the contracts he enters into will provide the money to repair his vehicle, meet his monthly hire-purchase payments, and cover his cost of living.

Mr. R. L. Young: He has to get the capital before he starts.

The SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Mr. R. L. Young: It is unbelievable!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The virtue of the tax as proposed in this Bill is that it would make people think a second time before they enter business if they have to find the money to buy the vehicle.

Mr. R. L. Young: That is what we told you last year.

Mr. W. G. Young: On that basis they would not be able to go into business.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: That could prove to be a very good thing for them.

Mr. Hutchinson: An amazing display of verbal acrobatics!

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The proposal before the Parliament at present provides for a similar method of raising revenue but on a reduced scale, because when this proposed method was being considered I asked the Minister in charge of the Main Roads Department, who, at the time, had the Commissioner of Main Roads with him, to inquire into an alternative system of licensing and effect a 5 per cent. reduction in the amount to be levied. I am sure the scale of licenses set-out in this Bill has been prepared on the basis of a 5 per cent. reduction of what was proposed before.

If the Parliament refuses to pass this Bill I have already indicated that I am not prepared, in those circumstances, to agree to proclaiming the other Bill, even if it is passed. However, I do not believe the House would pass the other Bill, alone, so if this Bill is defeated I believe both Bills will be defeated. We have the numbers in this place and I hope to pass this Bill, but of course we do not have the numbers in another place. Therefore, if the legislation is defeated that will not be my fault.

I say in conclusion that it will not take away from me the strongest desire I have ever had to do anything; that is, to see the day arrive when this iniquitous tax is repealed and replaced with another that is more humane, reasonable, and practicable. To talk about enforcing payment of the road maintenance tax by putting people into gaol for nonpayment is, in my view, immoral and inhuman, as I have already said.

Question put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes—23

Mr. Bateman	Mr. Hartrey
Mr. Bertram	Mr. Jamieson
Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Jones
Mr. Brady	Mr. Lapham
Mr. Brown	Mr. May
Mr. Bryce	Mr. McIver
Mr. Burke	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Cook	Mr. Taylor
Mr. H. D. Evans	Mr. A. R. Tonkin
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. J. T. Tonkin
Mr. Graham	Mr. Moller
Mr. Harman	

(Teller)

Noes—23

Mr. Blaikie	Mr. Mensaros
Sir David Brand	Mr. O'Connor
Sir Charles Court	Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Coyne	Mr. Ridge
Dr. Dadour	Mr. Runciman
Mr. Gayfer	Mr. Sibson
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Stephens
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Thompson
Mr. A. A. Lewis	Mr. R. L. Young
Mr. E. H. M. Lewis	Mr. W. G. Young
Mr. W. A. Manning	Mr. I. W. Manning
Mr. McPharlin	

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr. T. D. Evans	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Davies	Mr. Rushton

The SPEAKER: The voting being equal, I give my casting vote with the Ayes.

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. Bateman) in the Chair; Mr. J. T. Tonkin (Premier) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1: Short title and citation—

Mr. O'CONNOR: I wish to disagree with this clause because it is the basis of the whole Bill. I know the Premier will not like my speaking to it because I shall endeavour to be more specific in regard to some of the cases he has mentioned.

The CHAIRMAN: You can only speak to the short title and citation.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Yes, Mr. Chairman, that is what I intend to do. I will give my reasons why I do not want this title and in support of my case I will enlarge on some of the references that have been made by the Premier.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: What will you put in its place?

Mr. O'CONNOR: The Premier will find out later.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: We are entitled to know.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I am entitled to put my case in my own way. The Premier has misled members of the Chamber today and he knows it.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: You prove it.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member must speak to the short title.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Very well, Mr. Chairman. The short title, as I see it, is that which relates to the whole of this measure.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! It deals only with the name of the Bill.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Am I not entitled to put forward any reasons why the short title should not be agreed to?

The CHAIRMAN: You are entitled to deal only with the name of the Bill.

Mr. O'CONNOR: In that case I will leave my speech until the third reading.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Bad luck!

Mr. O'CONNOR: It will be bad luck for the Premier when I disclose just how much he has misled the House.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 2 and 3 put and passed.

Clause 4: Section 5 amended—

Mr. GAYFER: Will anyone who has had anything to do with teaching tell me when we are going to arrange our Bills and Acts so that the word "license" is spelt in the correct manner?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The member for Avon thinks he has a point, but if he refers to the dictionary he will find it can be spelt either way.

Mr. O'Neill: We spell it wrongly.

Sir David Brand: You are supposed to spell the word "Labor" with a "u", too!

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 5 to 7 put and passed.

Clause 8: Third Schedule amended—

Mr. McPHARLIN: I desire to know whether the Premier will give consideration to amending the schedule to include all motor vehicles as defined in the Traffic Act.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The Deputy Leader of the Country Party has asked a question which must have been in the minds of a number of members from time to time. Consideration was given to the desirability of raising the necessary money by spreading the burden over all motor vehicle owners. At present the burden is placed on the owners of commercial vehicles because the general public make their contribution—or should do—under the road maintenance tax and it would be wrong to expect them to pay a second contribution if they are running a private vehicle not engaged in commerce. It is my view, and it is supported by the officers of the Main Roads Department and the Minister for Works, that it would be unfair to add another burden to the average motorists who are already being taxed heavily enough.

Mr. McPharlin: Some members on your side agree with the proposition.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: They may do, and I assume some difference of opinion exists on the Opposition side. Complete unanimity cannot be obtained on this point. Everyone benefits by good roads, but many truck owners are using roads over which the average motorist would not ever in his lifetime travel. Therefore it would be unreasonable to expect private motorists, the majority of whom travel only on city roads all the time, to make a contribution towards the upkeep of roads which are being used practically 100 per cent. by commercial vehicles. It is considered that the owners of commercial vehicles are the ones who require the money to be spent on the maintenance of the roads they use.

I am not prepared to impose an additional license fee on the private motorists in order to relieve the owners of commercial vehicles of some of the license fees it is necessary to obtain in order to provide sufficient funds to enable road maintenance to be carried out.

Mr. GAYFER: I think that is a lot of bunkum. The Premier states that it is unreasonable that people who use the roads in the metropolitan area should pay for

the upkeep of the roads damaged by heavy haulage contractors. He is easing them of the burden of responsibility and he is relieving the truck owner from the excess responsibility, as he calls it, of paying for the upkeep of the roads away from the metropolitan area because he states they will be in front provided they are competent, which is the word he used in his second reading speech. On the other hand, he is loading with an excess burden the farmer who will not use the roads.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: No.

Mr. Brown: Rubbish!

Mr. GAYFER: The member for Merredin-Yilgarn said "rubbish".

Mr. Brown: That is right.

Mr. GAYFER: I want that word recorded.

Mr. Brown: You can put it in the newspaper, too. Go on!

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. GAYFER: The license fee of the five to eight-ton trucks owned by farmers will be increased by 28 to 30 per cent. The farmers should be looked after because they use their trucks to go only from the farms to the sidings where they support the railways. Then they bring the superphosphate back to the farms and for most of the time the trucks remain in the sheds.

Mr. Brown: Who supports the railways?

Mr. GAYFER: Most farmers. From statements made on the other side, we know that the farmers' trucks cover only 3,000 to 5,000 miles per year.

Mr. Brown: Only 25 per cent. of the farmers go to the railway sidings for their superphosphate.

Mr. GAYFER: I am talking about the farmers who, in the main, use their trucks to cart superphosphate from the railheads to their farms.

Mr. Brown: Only 25 per cent. of them do that.

Mr. GAYFER: The average farm truck does 3,000 to 5,000 miles a year. So the farmers do not use the roads, yet they are being taxed. How can that argument be balanced out when the Premier said that private vehicles and so on should not pay any increase towards road maintenance? What the Premier is trying to do is unprecedented. He proposes to sympathise with and support those in one section of the community because they are being gaoled, but he is penalising the very people he is supposed to be caring about; that, is, the members of the Farmers' Union who made a submission to him for the abolition of the tax.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I missed the first few minutes of the Premier's reply to the debate, so I do not know whether he answered the query I raised last night. I asked him to clarify the position regarding the three

different figures we were given in connection with the number of vehicles which will be affected by the tax.

In 1971 the figure given of the number of vehicles on which additional license fees would be paid was 65,000. On the 22nd May, this year the member for Mt. Marshall was given the figure of 97,000. On the 23rd May, the very next day, the Premier gave me a figure of 91,000. It is unreasonable to suggest that the number of vehicles affected should have increased to 97,000 today from 65,000 two years ago. The increase is approximately 50 per cent.

If the figures which have been given are accurate, obviously additional vehicles will be included under this measure which were not included under the 1971 measure. I do not believe there are additional vehicles, but the Premier may be able to give us some reasons to substantiate the difference which I think is quite unreasonable and which I cannot work out.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: To answer the member for Mt. Lawley, I have not had an opportunity this morning to obtain a reconciliation of the figures but I shall endeavour to do so at the first opportunity. By casting my eyes quickly over the figures I notice that there was a substantial falling off in the number of vehicles in 1971. From memory, several thousand vehicles fewer than the number in the previous year operated in 1971. I will endeavour to have the figures reconciled.

I ask the member for Avon a question: If the argument he puts forward for placing this impost on the motorists generally is a sound one, why did not the previous Government levy this tax on all motorists instead of limiting it to commercial vehicles?

Clause put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

MR. J. T. TONKIN (Melville—Premier) [12.12 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

MR. O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley) [12.13 p.m.]: I am quite sure the Premier and members generally are surprised that I intend to speak to the third reading.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: The honourable member has had time to cool down.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Because of the comments which have been made I do not believe I should cool down. When I spoke to the second reading, my remarks were in an easy vein in that I did not bring in controversial points and did not mention cases of individuals who were affected by road

maintenance tax. The Premier has done this and has reflected upon me. I believe it is my duty to reply and I intend to do so.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Fair enough.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The Premier brought up the case of a person in Kalgoorlie who was kept in gaol for 12 months because he had not paid road maintenance tax. The Premier failed to say that the man in question had an extremely bad record; in fact, it was probably the worst record in connection with the nonpayment of road maintenance tax which I came across while I was Minister.

While the man was in gaol he was asked whether, if released, he would give an undertaking to try to pay his arrears in road maintenance tax and do the right thing in future. He said that he would not and that if we let him out of gaol he would continue to operate trucks without paying road maintenance tax.

What does a Government do with a man such as that? Yet, the Premier criticised the previous Government for keeping that man in gaol. If a man operates in that way and is not prepared to obey the law he should be kept in gaol—

Mr. Graham: Forever and a day!

Mr. O'CONNOR: —until he has served the sentence imposed on him by the court. When it comes to laws, the Deputy Premier knows how his Government interferes with them.

Mr. Graham: No, I do not know. Tell me.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I can tell the Deputy Premier if he wishes. The Government is allowing people to break the law in Dampier.

The SPEAKER: Order! This has nothing to do with the measure.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I was talking about breaches of the law in connection with road maintenance tax and I am saying that the present Government allows the law governing the Totalisator Agency Board to be broken in Dampier.

How can we believe any statement which the Premier makes? He said that fraud is false representation of fact. He then accused the member for Darling Range of fraud when the Premier himself is the person guilty of fraud, because he has misrepresented facts on so many occasions in the House. It is a pity the Premier does not state the facts instead of casting unwarranted reflections.

Mr. Bertram: If so, he has learnt it from the Liberal Party.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The member for Mt. Hawthorn would not know. On the 22nd May the Premier said in the House that

97,000 vehicles would be affected by the additional license fees. On the very next day, the 23rd May, the Premier gave a figure of 91,000, representing a drop of 6,000. How on earth can there be a drop of 6,000 in one day? Obviously this is incorrect information. Further, the figure given in 1971 was 65,000 and, quite obviously, the figures which have been given are false.

The Premier has said on many occasions that if a member gives figures in the House he is responsible for them. On one occasion when I was Minister and gave information which had been supplied to me by the department the Premier accused me of misrepresentation and said that I was responsible for the figures. If the Premier stands by that statement he obviously must accept the blame in connection with this matter.

Previously the Premier claimed that the measure was not a substitute for road maintenance tax. Last night he claimed it is a substitute and, thus, he completely refuted what he had said previously.

Mr. Hutchinson: Verbal acrobatics.

Mr. O'CONNOR: On Wednesday, the 18th August, 1971 I asked the Premier a question which appears on page 789 of *Hansard*. It reads as follows—

Has he indicated that he intended to implement a charge to replace road maintenance charge prior to 12th August, 1971; if so, will he advise details?

The answer was a beauty! The Premier said—

I clearly recall having done so but am unable to give details as requested. The reason he was unable to give details was that he had not done so.

Yesterday I asked almost exactly the same question of the Premier. My question reads—

(1) Has he indicated he intended to implement a charge to replace road maintenance charge prior to 12th August, 1971?

(2) If so, will he give details?

I asked the question because the Premier changes his mind so often.

Mr. Hutchinson: Was the answer a beauty?

Mr. O'CONNOR: Yes, it certainly was. It reads—

I may, or may not have done so. There is no way in which I can be sure. Possibly I did not.

I ask members to compare the two answers and to appreciate the contradiction, once again.

Sir Charles Court: Had we given an answer like that when in Government we would have been here for a week debating it.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The Premier is the person who rose to his feet today and criticised us. He went on to quote from *Hansard* to make an unfair attack on the member for Darling Range. Last night the member for Darling Range quoted extracts from *Hansard*. The Premier interjected and asked, in effect, "Are you saying that I did not say I would let one Bill go through without the other?" The member for Darling Range said that he was not saying that at all. All the member for Darling Range was doing was quoting from *Hansard* what the Premier said.

I will now refer to page 452 of *Hansard* for the year 1971 and the debate on the Traffic Act Amendment Bill (No. 3). Some of my remarks together with interjections made by the Premier are to be found on that page. I will repeat part of what was said because it is quite relevant to the points brought up by the Premier and proves the fraud which he perpetrates in the House.

I indicated to the Premier that he had said unequivocally that he would abolish the road maintenance tax, at which point the Premier interjected, "The road maintenance tax, yes."

The Premier cannot deny that, because I have proof of it in writing, but now he is endeavouring to replace it with a worse tax. On the 25th November, 1971, I am reported as having said—

In other words, if this legislation does not go through the Premier will still proclaim the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act Repeal Bill.

At this point the Premier interjected and said, "Of course." I then said, "I am pleased to hear that." This is the point the Premier was making when he was refuting what the member for Darling Range had said, and when he called him a fraud. I would not have used the word "fraud" had it not been used unfairly by the Premier. On the following page I am reported to have said—

I am glad to hear the Premier say that if this Bill does not pass through both Houses of this Parliament he will keep his election promise and abolish road maintenance tax.

The Premier interjected and said, "I did not say that. I said road maintenance tax will stay."

Sir Charles Court: Oh!

Mr. O'CONNOR: I am waiting for an interjection from the Premier.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Knowing you as I do, I want to check that you are reading correctly.

Mr. O'CONNOR: If the Premier looks at page 453 of *Hansard* 1971, dated the 25th November, he will see exactly what I

am quoting. Does the Premier think I am using the tactics that he used? I will read this again. I said—

I am glad to hear the Premier say that if this Bill does not pass through both Houses of this Parliament he will keep his election promise and abolish road maintenance tax.

The Premier then interjected and said—

I did not say that. I said road maintenance tax will stay.

At this point I said, "The Premier did nothing of the kind, but what he says does not surprise me." I said that because I have become used to the Premier dodging and shuffling around as he has done on three or four occasions. The Premier interjected and said—

You asked me the question: What will happen to road maintenance tax if this Bill is not passed? I said: It will stay.

Mr. Graham: That is quite logical.

Mr. O'CONNOR: That is so, but if the Premier quotes two views he must be right half the time.

Mr. Hutchinson: It is just verbal acrobatics.

Mr. O'CONNOR: In reply to my having said that if he reads *Hansard* he will see what he said, the Premier interjected as follows—

We need not wait for that because if there is any doubt in your mind I will clear it up now. If this Bill does not pass the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act will not be abolished and that tax will stay.

One would think that is quite clear enough. Do you, Mr. Speaker, think it is quite clear? I am sure you do. Which utterance of the Premier should we believe?

Sir David Brand: The Speaker would not reflect on *Hansard*.

Mr. O'CONNOR: In reply to the Premier's interjection which I have just quoted we find the following—

Sir David Brand: You did not say that.

The Premier again interjected and said, "I am saying it now". Here we have the Premier changing his views all the time. As one progresses through *Hansard* one finds the Premier continually shifting his ground.

In the circumstances I consider the Premier owes the member for Darling Range an apology. From what I have quoted members will appreciate that the Premier has made statements which are most difficult to follow. One statement refutes another. We can be pardoned, therefore, for being a little confused about the Premier's promise to supply free school books, particularly when we find that after the election we are told there is a difference in the definition of a student

and a pupil, and so on. Nevertheless, the public does tend to become confused when it hears so many different views being expressed by the Premier. However, I am sure the public will realise the true position and vote in the right manner from now on.

Sir David Brand: I bet the Commissioner of Main Roads is getting ulcers.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I would add that at a later stage, and in spite of all he said previously, the Premier changed his mind once again.

Mr. O'Neil: He qualified what he said and indicated he would proclaim the Bill if the other measure did not go through.

Mr. O'CONNOR: It is quite possible, of course, that nobody in this Chamber really knows what the Premier meant.

Sir Charles Court: Hear, hear!

Mr. O'CONNOR: In commenting on the number of people who were gaoled for nonpayment of road maintenance tax, I would point out that we took the attitude that where the person concerned was trying to do the right thing, and was prevented from doing so because he had problems at home—such as a sick wife, and so on—he would be allowed out of gaol on compassionate grounds. We did, however, endeavour to obtain some promise from such people that they would meet their commitments if at all possible.

In the case of Mr. Saleeba, I would indicate that if he has a commitment to meet he should honour it, but I do believe that it is too much to expect him to pay \$650 a month. If a man is so far behind in his payments that it is necessary for him to pay \$650 a month, he must finish up in gaol or, alternatively, be freed from his obligations.

I ask the Minister for Police to look at this case and see whether or not Mr. Saleeba is being asked to pay too much. We should try to make some arrangements with the South Australian Government in order that the figure might be brought down to an amount which he can meet. If he is given an opportunity to pay a reasonable amount, it may prevent his getting into further hot water and it may give him a chance to overcome his difficulties.

If, however, he does not pay the amount it will be too bad for him, but I do think we should give him an opportunity to pay an amount which is within his capacity to pay. If in spite of this he still does not meet his commitments, then the law must take its course.

Because of the unfair criticism that has been levelled at the member for Darling Range, I felt it was incumbent upon me to raise the points I have done and make the position clear.

MR. THOMPSON (Darling Range) [12.28 p.m.]: I did not hear the remarks the Premier is alleged to have made, because I happened to be answering a telephone call at that time. I understand, however, that the Premier said directly, or hinted, that I was a fraud.

Mr. H. D. Evans: He did not hint, he said so.

Mr. THOMPSON: I would like to reiterate what I said in the House last night after I quoted part of what the Premier had to say in his reply to the debate on the second reading of the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act Repeal Bill, which was introduced into this House in 1971. Having quoted what the Premier said on that occasion, I went on to say that I hoped the Premier, or someone else opposite, could tell me where he gave the clear undertaking that he would proclaim the Bill whether or not the other one went through. I did not assert that he did or did not say it.

Mr. O'Connor: I believe he did.

Mr. THOMPSON: I said I would highlight the fact that the clear statement the Premier was supposed to have made—if indeed it was ever made—was dragged out of him bit by bit with his arm tucked up behind his ear. At this point the Premier interjected and said that I knew the statement was made, to which I replied that if the Premier did make the statement it must have been made by interjection or in some obscure way, because he did not make a clear statement.

The member for Mt. Lawley has just read extracts from *Hansard* from which we find the Premier makes one statement on one occasion and then contradicts it on another.

I have heard the President of the United States referred to as "Tricky Dicky" and I can only say that as a result of my experience in this debate I have no alternative but to refer to the Premier as "Tricky Tonky", because he has been dodging all over the place on this issue. He has made certain statements when it has suited him to do so and has completely reversed them a little later. I believe we have a right to take the Premier to task on this issue.

Mr. Graham: Is it your intention to discuss the Bill or to indulge in this personal slang-wang?

Mr. O'Connor: He had it thrown at him.

Mr. Graham: This has nothing to do with the Bill.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. THOMPSON: Had I been in the Chamber when the Premier made the statement—if indeed that statement was made—I would have asked him to retract it. I now invite him, when he replies to the debate, to apologise to me because at

no stage did I say that that statement was made. I said if it was made it was dragged out of him bit by bit. Certainly he made no clear statement. He said one thing at one time and completely reversed it the next time.

MR. STEPHENS (Stirling) [12.31 p.m.]: During my short speech on the second reading I quoted from *The Albany Advertiser* and the Premier, when replying to the debate, accused me—and I am open to correction regarding the actual words used; I am relying on my memory—of trying deliberately to misrepresent the quotation. I ask the Premier to correct me if that is not the purport of what he said. By way of interjection I refuted that allegation, and I would like to make a few comments about it now. I believe, rather than my trying to misrepresent the quotation, the Premier has shifted his ground.

I point out that in 1971 during the debate on the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act Repeal Bill I used the quotation referred to, and when replying to the debate the Premier ignored my remarks. I used the quotation again when discussing the Traffic Act Amendment Bill (No. 3). As a prelude to using the quotation, I made reference to the fact that a great deal of comment had been made about taxes and revenue. During the course of my speech I asked the Premier to twist out of the statement I quoted. I said that as far as I was concerned the Premier categorically stated there would be abolition of road maintenance tax without any other taxes whatsoever.

When replying to the debate the Premier ignored the comment I made, and so I challenged him by interjection as follows—

What about the promise you made in the Albany Town Hall, that you were going to make up the deficiency?

The Premier replied as follows—

That will mean that inevitably there will be a substantial reduction in the amount of money made available to local authorities. I say that quite deliberately so there will be no misunderstanding about the position.

It is quite clear that the Premier did not think I was deliberately trying to misrepresent the quotation on that occasion; so why should he suddenly get the idea that is my intention on this occasion? I suggest the Premier has no answer, and in the absence of a satisfactory answer he is trying to discredit me and the quotation I made.

MR. O'NEIL (East Melville—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [12.34 p.m.]: Mr. Speaker, I think you will agree that

you have allowed us a great deal of latitude in discussing the matter contained in these Bills which appear together on the notice paper.

The SPEAKER: They are allied Bills.

Mr. O'NEIL: I thank you for your tolerance, Sir; I think you have been very wise. When the Premier introduced the Bill he indicated unequivocally that we would have either both Bills passed or nothing. The argument devolved around a situation that obtained in 1971 when two similar Bills were before the Parliament, and we on this side of the House were trying to ascertain whether we were going to have both Bills, one Bill, or nothing. After a considerable number of interjections questioning the Premier in this regard he finally made the statement which he quoted to us today. That statement appears on page 452 of the 1971 *Hansard*. Most of the questions quoted by the member for Darling Range were interjections posed by him during the 1971 debates; and last night when the Premier said by way of interjection that he had made a statement that he would proclaim the Bill to repeal road maintenance tax without the other Bill being passed, I indicated that he was more or less forced into the position of doing that. I indicated that I recalled his having said that; but I also stated by way of interjection that I could not find the reference in *Hansard*. We are now indebted to the Premier for pointing out that reference.

This matter has been dealt with extensively by the member for Mt. Lawley. The Premier quoted from a section of the debate on page 452, and the member for Mt. Lawley quoted extensively from, I think, page 453 of *Hansard*. However, I think the member for Mt. Lawley could have gone a little further in order to pre-empt the Premier from saying what I imagine he would have said had he had the opportunity to speak again. A little later on page 453 of *Hansard* for Thursday, the 25th November, 1971, we find the following assertion was made by the Premier—

We need not wait for that because if there is any doubt in your mind I will clear it up now. If this Bill does not pass the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act will not be abolished and that tax will stay.

When the Premier said "this Bill" he was referring to the Traffic Act Amendment Bill (No. 3). A little later, during the course of the speech of the member for Mt. Lawley, the Premier interjected and said—

I take it you are now asking whether we will proclaim the Bill if Parliament passes the Bill for the abolition of road maintenance tax and does not pass this one.

The member for Mt. Lawley replied, "That is correct."; and then the Premier said, "We will."

I think we should pause here to ascertain precisely what the Premier meant. He said—

I take it you are now asking whether we will proclaim the Bill—

That is, the Bill to amend the Traffic Act. To continue—

—if Parliament passes the Bill for the abolition of road maintenance tax and does not pass this one.

So we have a little confusion here because there is an implication that the Premier has now gone back on the statement he made earlier. After those remarks were made the Leader of the Opposition interjected and said—

You will have no road maintenance tax and no roads.

Then the member for Mt. Lawley said—

I will go on to the next point. I am becoming confused.

Let me interpolate here to say that he was no orphan.

Mr. Graham: I think he is very often confused.

Mr. O'NEIL: The member for Mt. Lawley continued—

I think I now understand what the Premier is saying; that is, if the Bill now before us does not go through both Houses and the road maintenance tax Bill does go through—

Then the Premier interjected and said—
And the other one goes through.

So he qualified the matter again. The member for Mt. Lawley continued—

—he will abolish the road tax.

The Premier once again introduced a qualification regarding the abolition or otherwise of road maintenance tax, because he said—

I shall not be able to oppose it. I am saying I will proclaim the Act.

I want members to realise that statement was once again qualified by the Premier, because he said he would proclaim the Bill to repeal road maintenance tax if the Traffic Act Amendment Bill (No. 3) was passed.

So there has been a complete reversal. Although the issue is quite confused if one reads that debate carefully one finds that in 1971 the Premier stated that the only circumstance in which he would proclaim the Bill to repeal road maintenance tax was if both Bills were passed.

I think the issue is now perfectly clear. The Premier has in fact done a massive somersault on more than one occasion in respect of this matter. It is no wonder the House and the member for Mt. Lawley

were confused. Certainly the Premier was confused, judging from what he said at that time.

Mr. Graham: That was in 1971.

SIR DAVID BRAND (Greenough) [12.40 p.m.]: I simply want to take the opportunity to speak to the third reading of the Bill to emphasise something I said last night. I feel obliged to enter into the debate again, because the road maintenance tax which was introduced as a result of the stand I took when I was the Treasurer is still with us, and because of what the then Leader of the Opposition said to the effect that he would undertake to abolish the road maintenance tax—and abolish it, full stop.

At this time I said, perhaps in a soft voice, "What will you do to ensure you have money to replace the present revenue derived from the road maintenance tax?" There was silence, and again silence. It does not matter what the Premier has said at any time, or what he said afterwards; he did not make a statement at any meeting of farmers or at any public meeting that the road maintenance tax, when repealed, would be replaced by some other form of tax.

Mr. Hutchinson: That was prior to the last election.

SIR DAVID BRAND: That was prior to the last election.

Mr. Brown: That is not correct.

SIR DAVID BRAND: The transport operators who heard the Premier speak from time to time took it for granted that what he said about the abolition of the road maintenance tax would be put into effect, and that the tax would be abolished and nothing else would follow. The Premier did not say, "By the way, I recognise that we will be short of money, and we must have some alternative." The Minister for Works would understand this clearly.

What we have been talking about this morning does not really matter; what has transpired shows the utter and complete confusion in which the members of this Parliament are placed. All the debate on what the Premier said about this or that has arisen from complete confusion.

It was what the Premier, who at that time was the Leader of the Opposition, did in undertaking to repeal the road maintenance tax at the last election campaign—without any knowledge of the effect of what he was proposing, and in complete ignorance of the problems which would be faced with the abolition of the road maintenance tax—that has caused the confusion. That is why we face the problems which exist today and why the Commissioner of Main Roads is getting ulcers, because he does not know whether

he will be given \$5,000,000, \$3,000,000, or nothing at all for the year. There was confusion not only in the mind of the Commissioner of Main Roads, but also in the minds of the local authorities.

I would point out that no Premier of any mainland State in Australia, whether he be of Liberal or Labor persuasion, has undertaken to repeal the road maintenance tax. In the other States this tax had been imposed years and years before Western Australia imposed it. One could pose this question: Has the Leader of the Opposition in any other State, during election campaigns in the last few years, given such a foolish undertaking? To my knowledge not one has, because they knew there was no satisfactory alternative.

I am loath to enter into the field of accusations and personalities, but I want to say this to the Premier—

Mr. Brown: But you are going to.

SIR DAVID BRAND: I thought I heard an interjection from a member opposite that I would do that. I would point out to him that I shall not do that. I want to tell the honourable member who interjected that I have no intention of entering into the field of personalities. I think that should be avoided at all costs. I hope that the goodwill which we have been able to maintain over the years will continue.

Mr. Hartrey: Hear, hear!

SIR DAVID BRAND: I want to say this to the Premier, as one leader to another: I pointed out to him that he would be in trouble if he abolished the road maintenance tax. The problems in which he has placed himself and Western Australia have arisen as a result of his foolishness and ignorance in regard to the road maintenance tax. At the last election he was after votes, and he was making an appeal to the farmers.

Mr. Jamieson: How many seats did we win?

SIR DAVID BRAND: I could not say.

Mr. Jamieson: You ought to know.

SIR DAVID BRAND: In any case we would not be sitting here and wasting our time now, had it not been for what the Premier undertook to do. I would like to point out to the Minister for Works that his party will have fewer seats after the next election.

Mr. Graham: You hope!

Dr. Dadour: We will win Balcatta.

Sitting suspended from 12.45 to 2.15 p.m.

SIR DAVID BRAND: I had really made all the comments I desired to make because already enough has been said but to no avail. I was pointing out that it is regrettable that in these debates we seem to create the wrong atmosphere unnecessarily. The criticisms which have been expressed

as a result of these debates might well have been avoided had the Premier not been forced into explaining the reasons for the introduction of various Bills. When he was not able to he was faced with a problem simply because no easy solution is available. A practical alternative must be found to road maintenance tax.

I have already said that other States, no matter what the colour of the Government, have found it very difficult to suggest a satisfactory alternative which would allow the same standard of roads and provide the amount of money available to them at present. I am one of those who believe that the problem will not be solved until such time as all the State Administrations get together with the Commonwealth to tackle it.

It has been suggested that an increased tax on petrol could be imposed. However, this is the source of money available to the Commonwealth to help the States with their road problems and I imagine that if the State Treasurers decide to ask the Commonwealth to help, the tax on petrol will be increased anyway. The Commonwealth reserves the right to increase the tax on petrol to meet the new demands of the States for greater grants to cater for the ever-increasing growth of traffic. Therefore this solution is not a simple one. However, because the present road maintenance tax has been proved in the High Court, to present no constitutional problems, it should remain and it should continue until a satisfactory alternative is found.

The demand for better quality roads in Western Australia will grow. We do not have to look too far to realise the urgent need for new roads and better roads and such improvements will require not thousands of dollars, but millions of dollars. Therefore for no political reason at all should we jeopardise and endanger the security of our present income by suggesting an alternative scheme which will not work or bring in the necessary money. I oppose the measure.

MR. JAMIESON (Belmont—Minister for Works) [2.20 p.m.]: I do not agree with the comments of the last speaker. In the ultimate the only equitable solution is to impose a per-mile tax which can be done effectively only on fuel or, to a lesser degree, on tyres. This has all been attempted so, in an effort to overcome the problem, the Government has decided to go ahead with its policy enunciated at the polls and has made an alternative suggestion.

Eventually the Commonwealth must become interested in this matter. At the moment the Commonwealth considers that the money it gets from the fuel tax is consolidated revenue and that it has nothing to do with the money which it grants to the States. Therefore the Commonwealth will

not lightly relinquish that source of revenue. Indeed, the States would be wary of asking the Commonwealth to increase the tax by so many cents a gallon because, although the Consolidated Revenue Fund would benefit, it is doubtful whether the States would get an increased proportionate amount from it.

I believe that possibly the best solution would be to impose a special 2c-a-gallon tax on diesel fuel instead of on petrol because in that way we would be imposing a tax on those who damage the roads. After all, very few heavy haulage operators, if any, now use petrol. They all use diesel fuel. Nevertheless, we can all suggest what could be done, but what can be done is a different matter. We have to try to do it within certain limits.

The only reason I am speaking is to put the record straight—which seems to be the thing to do—and to record the license fees which apply in each of the Australian States. In very few cases are the license fees which apply in South Australia lower than those in Western Australia, and then they are in certain categories only. However, when one checks the amount of third party insurance, which is compulsory and has to be paid before a vehicle can be placed on the road, one realises that Western Australia is far better off than the other States. I intend to quote the figures relating to the various States in order to give members some idea of the amounts involved.

Mr. O'Neil: These figures will exclude third party insurance?

Mr. JAMIESON: Yes, I will quote the third party insurance figures later. They have to be inclusive because a vehicle cannot be placed on the road without third party insurance. The license fee for a Morris Minor, applicable in each of the States, is as follows: South Australia, \$12.90; Victoria, \$13.20; Queensland, \$14.95; Tasmania, \$16.04; and New South Wales, \$25.25, giving an average for the other States of \$16.47. The fee in Western Australia is \$14.

Referring to a Datsun 1200, the license fees are as follows: South Australia, \$16.40; Victoria, \$15.60; Queensland, \$17.55; Tasmania, \$18.12; and New South Wales \$26.25, giving an average for the other States of \$18.78. The license fee in Western Australia is \$15.

For a Ford Cortina, the license fees are as follows: South Australia, \$19.90; Victoria, \$20.40; Queensland, \$22.10; Tasmania, \$22.28; and New South Wales, \$31.85, giving an average for the other States of \$23.31. The license fee in Western Australia is \$20.

The license fees for a Holden Torana LC 70 are as follows: South Australia, \$19.90; Victoria, \$18.60; Queensland, \$20.80; Tasmania, \$20.72; and New South

Wales, \$31.80, giving an average for the other States of \$22.36. The license fee in Western Australia is \$19.

Mr. Hutchinson: We do not really need all this information.

Mr. O'Neill: Can the Minister provide some figures relating to trucks?

Mr. Hutchinson: If that is not out of order it is tangential.

Mr. JAMIESON: If the member for Cottesloe uses that word very often he will not help the Hansard reporter.

Mr. O'Neill: The Hansard reporter knows what it means.

Sir Charles Court: The figures you are quoting apply to all vehicles?

Mr. JAMIESON: The Leader of the Opposition comes in very quickly, as do other members from that side of the House. We are dealing with all aspects. Members opposite are talking about imposing taxes on all types of vehicles.

Sir Charles Court: I am not objecting; all I want to know are the fees that will relate to vehicles in the schedule, and whether the Minister will relate his figures to those vehicles.

Mr. JAMIESON: I will. I was questioned by a member opposite as to whether or not my statement was right.

Mr. O'Connor: Has the Minister said that operators will pay more in Western Australia than in the Eastern States?

Mr. JAMIESON: It will be cheaper to operate vehicles of all categories in Western Australia than in the other States. The details are set out quite clearly in the statement which I have, and members opposite can examine it.

Mr. O'Connor: Can the Minister quote some figures for the various sizes of trucks?

Mr. JAMIESON: In the case of light trucks, the rates in Western Australia would have to be increased by approximately 25 per cent. to bring them up to the average level of the other States because there are so many variations. In the case of medium trucks, the Western Australian rates would have to be increased by approximately 20 per cent. to bring them up to the average level of other States' license fees. It should be noted that in Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland medium trucks also pay road maintenance tax in addition to license fees.

Regarding heavy trucks, Western Australian rates would have to be almost doubled to bring them up to the average level of other States' license fees.

Mr. O'Connor: Is the Minister talking about the license fees for 40 tonners?

Mr. JAMIESON: The license fees of the heavy trucks would have to be doubled to bring them into line with the other States.

The member for Avon did not particularly like the comparison given to him last night. I might say that the inclusion of the 20,000 miles per annum for the purpose of calculating road maintenance charges, shown in the table, relates to the scale prepared in 1971, and it would now be less 5 per cent.

Looking at a Dodge truck type utility, with a tare weight of 1 ton 14 cwt. and an aggregate weight of 2 tons 19 cwt. the average license in South Australia, Victoria, and Tasmania is \$61.08. In Western Australia the proposed fee will be down to \$46. That difference is shown right through the scale of charges.

For a Bedford table-top truck, with a tare weight of 2 tons 12 cwt. and an aggregate weight of 4 tons 19 cwt. the average license fee in the other States is \$94.93, whereas in Western Australia it will be \$89. The Western Australian figures, which I have quoted, will now be reduced by 5 per cent. as a result of the latest proposition.

I think I have said enough to indicate that motorists in this State will license their vehicles at a cheaper rate than that which is charged throughout the rest of Australia. This is something we would like to maintain. Those who are considered to be doing the most damage to our roads should be expected to pay higher maintenance costs, whether through license fees or through road maintenance tax. We chose that it should be through license fees.

It is true that some people could be hurt a little, but others will benefit. However, one cannot win them all. I feel we are quite justified in going ahead with these proposed rates.

Debate adjourned until a later stage of the sitting, on motion by Mr. Bateman.

(Continued on page 2261).

RAILWAY (COOGEE-KWINANA RAILWAY) DISCONTINUANCE BILL

Second Reading

MR. MAY (Clontarf—Minister for Mines) [2.30 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to obtain the approval of Parliament to the closure of a section of the Coogee-Kwinana railway so that an area of land near Woodman Point can be made available for a construction site on which to build a semi-submersible oil-drilling rig.

The company concerned is Transfield (W.A.) Pty. Ltd. and the Department of Development and Decentralisation has successfully negotiated with the company to set up the construction site in Western Australia. On the 19th April, 1972, Transfield tendered for the fabrication of a semi-submersible oil-drilling rig, the *Ocean Endeavour*.

The project, which is worth some \$20,000,000, involves the fabrication of an offshore exploration drilling platform, for launching in October, 1974, with the possibility of a further rig beyond that date. The rig will be constructed on a concrete platform adjacent to a launching hole 30 feet deep and when fully fabricated will be surrounded by a temporary wall 30 feet high. When finished, the area within the wall will be filled with water to float the platform—which has a draft of 27 feet—from the construction pad to over the launching hole. The water will then be pumped out, leaving the rig afloat in the launching hole with the water at sea level. A cut to the sea will then be dredged and the rig towed out for delivery.

In June, 1972, Transfield envisaged the use of land near the B.H.P. jetty in Cockburn Sound but, in September, advised that land near Woodman Point would be more suitable, due to the possibility of several rigs being involved. Cabinet approval of the Woodman Point site was obtained on the 11th September, 1972. It was envisaged by Transfield that 9.6 hectares would be required and this was available, bounded by the main sewer line, the railroad, and the beach.

On the 28th November, Transfield proposed a four-stage development requiring more land than previously—13.3 hectares for stage 1, and up to 35.9 hectares in total for stages 1 to 3.

In resolving the leasing of the additional land from the Commonwealth, it became apparent that the Metropolitan Water Board sewer outfall and a Cockburn Cement line would encroach on the site. To move the sewer line, a sum of approximately \$270,000 would be involved. The site was then replanned to enable its use by lowering the sewer line several feet and orientating the activity across the line with construction on one side and the launching pond to the south to produce access to the sea. In order to obtain sufficient width, it then became necessary to move the railway line.

An important factor in the negotiations with Transfield was the need to ensure actively that the project would remain in the State, as the indications are that employment will be provided for up to 600 people. When difficulties were being encountered with regard to making available a suitable area of land for the construction site, the company felt inclined to construct the rig in another State. It is essential to Transfield's construction programme that this section of line be removed by the end of July this year to enable the company to proceed with the preparation of the construction site.

Closure of the section of railway described in the schedule to this Bill is in accordance with long-term railway planning. Consideration had previously been given to this with regard to general de-

velopment in the area, but action had not been taken as there was no immediate requirement for any development.

Alternative narrow gauge rail connection between Fremantle and Kwinana will be maintained by providing a third rail on the existing standard gauge track between Cockburn and Kwinana, connecting it to dual gauge. Removal of this section of line will free the land south of Transfield's construction site for any future development which might arise. The land involved is owned by the Industrial Lands Development Authority.

Another point worth mentioning is that the area on which the company develops the construction site for the oil rig reverts to the State for recreational purposes in 1976. Some consideration could then perhaps be given to converting the launching hole left by Transfield for use as a marina.

Transfield's construction programme requires that the line be removed by the end of July this year to enable the company to proceed with the preparation of the construction site. The closure of this section of railway and the addition of a third rail to the existing standard gauge line between Cockburn and Kwinana would be undertaken ahead of future railway planning, as there is otherwise no immediate requirement for the railway work. This current proposal is to meet the land requirements for the oil-drilling rig construction site.

The estimated cost of the work involved is \$244,000 and the source from which this will be funded has not yet been determined; but to meet the urgency of the project, the Commissioner of Railways has agreed to meet the cost of the work from railway finances until a final determination is made.

Closure of the 4 miles 25 chains of line will not be detrimental to any existing establishments. At one end of the line at Coogee, a spur line will remain to service the explosives area at Woodman Point. Also, at the Kwinana end a spur line will remain for the benefit of Alcoa.

As required under section 21 of the State Transport Co-ordination Act, the Director-General of Transport has examined this line closure and provision of alternative narrow gauge rail connection between Fremantle and Kwinana by providing a third rail on the existing standard gauge line between Cockburn and Kwinana, and has recommended that the proposal be agreed to.

I table a copy of the report of the Director-General of Transport, together with a copy of plan No. 65797 of the Civil Engineering Branch of the W.A.G.R., which shows, delineated in red, the section of line to be closed.

I commend the Bill to the House.

The documents were tabled. (See paper No. 182).

Debate adjourned until a later stage of the sitting, on motion by Mr. Rushton.

(Continued on page 2239).

SEED MARKETING ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 10th May.

MR. NALDER (Katanning) [2.38 p.m.] : This amending Bill is not in any way controversial. It is quite a simple piece of legislation which allows the Parliament to extend the operations of the Act for a further period.

I do not think it is necessary for me to go over the history because it is recent legislation which has now come up for review. I think the experience gained as a result of the marketing of rapeseed and linseed is sufficient to indicate that the growers want a continuation of the legislation. When the Act first came into being some concern was felt about the time factor. I think I can say, without anyone becoming concerned about it, that at that time there was talk of bringing all small seeds under the Act.

Some sections of the farming community—especially those who were involved in clover seed growing—were a little fearful that the Act might affect the whole of the clover seed marketing operations. At that time it was agreed that the life of the Act—which originally covered only linseed and was subsequently extended to include rapeseed—should be limited to a period of three years. The legislation was passed by both Houses of Parliament on that basis.

It has now run its term and, as the Minister said, it is due for renewal some time in August of this year. I see no reason to delay the passage of the Bill. It will allow the Act to operate for a further three years. Probably this will be of assistance in that it will allow the organisation that has been established to market seeds overseas and to fulfil the local demand to continue its operations. I would not be surprised if, possibly even within the next three years, it is felt necessary to make the Act a permanent Statute, thus obviating the necessity to bring a Bill to Parliament every three years.

However, that is a matter for the future. I think we can proceed with this amendment with confidence in the knowledge that those involved in the industry are satisfied with it. I predict that possibly the industry will increase. All sections of industry—and especially the primary industries—are being encouraged to diversify as much as possible; so I think many farmers will continue to take an interest

in the seed industry. I support the second reading and hope the Bill receives a speedy passage through Parliament.

MR. BLAIKIE (Vasse) [2.43 p.m.] : I desire to make a few comments on the Bill. Like the Leader of the Country Party, I support it. Legislation to provide for the establishment of a board to control the marketing of linseed was introduced in 1969, and the Act was proclaimed in 1970. The life of the Act was limited to three years. Further amendments were made in 1971, and the Act, which was known as the Marketing of Linseed Act, was virtually rewritten; and today it is known as the Seed Marketing Act. The 1971 amendments enabled all seeds to be declared seeds for the purposes of the Act.

At that time we on this side of the House said that before any seed is declared to be a seed for the purposes of the Act a referendum should be conducted amongst the growers of that seed. I still believe that is a most important principle. I hope that before any seed is declared at a later stage, it will be subject to a referendum. However, this is a simple Bill to provide a further extension of the life of the Act. I support the measure.

MR. H. D. EVANS (Warren—Minister for Agriculture) [2.45 p.m.] : As the two members opposite have indicated, this is a simple measure, and I thank them for their support. I feel it is recognised by all that the measure has operated satisfactorily from the point of view of those in the industry and those who control the industry and handle the marketing operations. Those people are convinced it is desirable the Act should operate for a further three years.

The Leader of the Country Party indicated that, as a result of increased interest in the growing of seed, changes could be made in future. These changes are as yet only foreshadowed and are still in the embryonic stage. They are being discussed by organisations outside of the department and Parliament. However, I have no doubt that ultimately changes will be made, and we will deal with them as they arise.

The point made by the member for Vasse that a referendum should be conducted if it is proposed to include other seeds under the Act is quite valid. That was the intention when the Act was introduced initially. I have no doubt this principle will be followed, and before any seed is declared or effect is given to any major change the matter will be referred to the growers. I thank members for their support and commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. H. D. Evans (Minister for Agriculture), and transmitted to the Council.

LAND TAX ASSESSMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

MARINE NAVIGATIONAL AIDS BILL*Second Reading*

Debate resumed from the 8th May.

MR. RIDGE (Kimberley) [2.49 p.m.]: Like the previous measure, this Bill is a simple one. In fact, apart from the short title and the interpretation clause, it contains only three operative provisions. However, the Opposition appreciates the importance of those three clauses to the Harbour and Light Department and various port authorities throughout Western Australia. Accordingly we have no objection to the provisions outlined by the Minister in his second reading speech.

Broadly speaking, the Bill authorises the Harbour and Light Department and the port authorities throughout Western Australia to establish, remove, and maintain various types of navigational aids, such as light beacons and similar devices, which are within the navigable waters of Western Australia.

The **SPEAKER**: I must ask members to be more quiet, because the reporter is having difficulty in hearing the member for Kimberley.

Mr. RIDGE: So am I having difficulty. To protect the Harbour and Light Department and the port authorities, provision is made for the recognition of any navigational aids, such as beacons, that might have been established or positioned before this legislation came into operation. We accept this as being a desirable move.

The Bill also seeks to absolve the Harbour and Light Department, the Minister for Works, and the port authorities and their employees from blame for any accident which may be caused as a result of these navigational aids being incorrectly positioned or through their malfunctioning.

The Bill makes it an offence for anyone to interfere with or to damage these navigational aids. One might wonder how the Harbour and Light Department and the port authorities have been able to operate so long without appreciating that they were not covered by the safeguards that are set out in the Bill.

Fortunately the Western Australian coast has been comparatively free of shipping disasters in recent years. But even as recently as last week we saw evidence that the State cannot afford to be apathetic

in respect of providing and positioning navigational aids. I am not suggesting that the grounding of the *Triadic* at Albany could in any way be attributed to the employees of that port authority, or to poor navigational aids in the port area. The point I make is that there is a need to maintain very high standards of safety.

I have not examined the various pieces of legislation governing the port authorities in this State, but I did notice in the Act governing Port Hedland some provisions to which certain clauses in the Bill relate. One concerns the positioning of navigational aids. This Act gives the Port Hedland Port Authority power to maintain these devices. Whilst the Port Hedland Port Authority Act is of recent vintage, it seems surprising that the same powers contained therein were not conferred on other ports when that piece of legislation was passed in 1970. In any event, the Opposition recognises the importance of the provisions in the Bill before us applying to all ports. Accordingly we have no objection to it.

Clause 4 of the Bill contains probably the most significant provision. This absolves the officers of the appropriate department and the port authorities from any responsibility in the event of a ship foundering as a result of faulty navigational aids, or of navigational aids being incorrectly positioned. We know that the Commonwealth Government is so protected against any claims in similar circumstances. That is a reasonable provision.

I hope that no claim will be contemplated by any shipowner against the State Government or any port authority as a result of a mishap arising through the malfunctioning of some navigational aid or light. The cost of such a mishap would be so great to the State Government, the shipowners, and the iron ore exporting companies that we believe any system of maintaining these navigational aids should be designed to ensure that failures do not occur. The same applies to the positioning of navigational aids.

One hopes that such a mishap will not occur in the ports, particularly those in the north where iron ore is exported, because these vessels are of huge tonnages and their cost is astronomical. Should a ship founder at the approaches to a northern port it would block the port and prevent it from being used for a long time; furthermore the loss to the State in the way of iron ore royalties would be very great, as would be the loss to the shipowner. I hope that a mishap does not occur as a result of the positioning of navigational aids.

I understand that the port at Port Hedland and the approaches to it are protected by a very sophisticated system of electronic navigational aids, and this system is capable of fixing the position of a ship with an accuracy of about 80 feet

up to 50 miles distance. If these navigational aids are as good and as accurate as that—pinpointing a ship's position to within 80 feet at a distance of 50 miles—then nobody can claim that they are incorrectly positioned.

Clause 5 makes it an offence for any person to interfere with or damage these navigational aids. We all hope that nothing like this will take place, but I should point out what happens along our roads. We have seen some people shooting holes at the water tanks that are provided on the roadside for the use of the public. With the increase in boat ownership and the greater use of boats, it is possible that in the future we will see some people shooting at these navigational aids.

In view of the serious consequences of a shipping disaster caused by the destruction of a navigational aid by some irresponsible person, my comment on the clause is that the penalty of \$200 is ridiculously low. Obviously the department and the Minister think this penalty is adequate. Perhaps it is, and I am not aware of all the circumstances; but in my view there is need to provide a greater penalty. It is as simple as that.

The Opposition appreciates the necessity to have this legislation on the Statute book, and therefore we have no objection to the Bill.

MR. JAMIESON (Belmont—Minister for Works) [2.58 p.m.]: I thank the member for Kimberley for the comments he has made. It seems as though the Bill has been brought before us as a result of the concern expressed by the port authorities, particularly that at Port Hedland. They are worrying about what would happen if they were to be involved in legal suits arising from mishaps to vessels caused by damage to these sophisticated navigational aids.

As the honourable member pointed out, in these days more people are travelling about and using boats. It has come to the notice of the department that some people have been making attempts to climb these devices. In doing that they may cause some damage. As a result of such action they might involve the State and the port authority in heavy costs, because the ships which use our northern ports are the huge bulk carriers, the cost of which is extremely high.

Regarding the comment of the honourable member on the penalty provision, I shall refer it to the department for consideration. A penalty not having previously been provided, the department considered the \$200 was a good starting-off point. No doubt if problems arise the penalty could be increased. The important thing is to enable the port authority to display on signs that a penalty of \$200 will be imposed, to discourage those who might desire to damage these devices.

So I suggest that at this stage we leave the situation as it is and see whether any problems arise. As the honourable member pointed out we are lucky we have not experienced any tragedies. All sorts of problems have occurred up and down the coast but mostly they have been as a result of errors by a skipper or the person in charge at the time. They have certainly not been as the result of the malfunction of a light-house or guiding device under or operated by the State. However, this does not say it will not occur and as a consequence we are surely entitled to the protection the Commonwealth requires for its lighthouse operations.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

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

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MARINE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 8th May.

MR. BLAIKIE (Vasse) [3.03 p.m.]: This is a relatively small Bill and my comments likewise will be brief. It contains only five clauses and I will deal with clauses 3 and 4 first.

Clause 3 is designed to provide an interpretation of "air cushion vehicle", or hovercraft as we call it. I am not aware of any vehicles of this type operating in the State at present, but we know of the progress which has been made over the past 20 years in respect of these vehicles in other countries.

The Bill also proposes to include an air-cushion vehicle in the interpretation of "vessel". We have no objection to these amendments. Another provision is designed to prescribe the manner of operating, and regulating and controlling the use of, these vehicles, and for their inspection, testing, survey, and registration.

Clause 5 is quite important, as it seeks to make it obligatory for persons owning hire vessels or passenger-carrying vessels on inland waters or in any harbour, to insure against liability in respect of death or bodily injury arising from any mishap which may occur to the vessel. I believe this is a very sound move.

The persons concerned must enter into a contract and maintain in force a policy of insurance in the approved form for that purpose. I would like the Minister to indicate the approved form.

Clause 2 stipulates that any provision in the Bill may be proclaimed at any time in the future, and to that clause we have no objection.

I support the Bill.

MR. JAMIESON (Belmont—Minister for Works) [3.07 p.m.]: Unaccustomed as I am to getting Bills through the House so quickly, I thank the honourable member for his comments. I agree with him that this Bill is one that must be passed.

Last year Parliament approved of legislation to alter the definition of vehicles which travel on the road, in order to cover air-cushion vehicles, and it is obvious that, as most of such vehicles travel on shallow water, it is desirable to have the definition included in the Western Australian Marine Act. We all seem to agree on that point.

The honourable member stated that he had no knowledge of any tragedy which might have required the payment of insurance. I draw his attention, and that of other members, to the fact that only a few weeks ago on a Rottne Island ferry a small lad had his leg jammed between the wharf and the vessel while he was waiting for the boat to sail.

I understand that of their own volition passenger-carrying vessel operators have taken out public risk insurance, and that is the type of policy they will be obliged to carry under the Bill. The premium will vary according to the number of passengers involved. We want passengers to have the opportunity to obtain insurance money if something goes wrong with the vessel.

Until a few years ago I do not think any insurance companies would have provided insurance cover for the Rottne Island ferries because no-one was ever certain that the ferries would return in one piece. However, those days have now passed and we all agree that it is sensible to provide that it should be obligatory for all vessels to have insurance cover the same as every motor vehicle owner is obliged to have cover for third party insurance. In this way anyone injured on a vessel will be able to have the injuries attended to or, in the case of death, some compensation will be forthcoming if the person killed was the breadwinner or was entitled to receive compensation.

That is all I need say on the Bill, which is a very small one deserving the support of the House. I therefore commend it to members.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Jamieson (Minister for Works), and passed.

DAIRY INDUSTRY BILL

In Committee

Order of the day read for the resumption of the debate from the 9th May.

Points of Order

Sir CHARLES COURT: I do not know which Minister is in charge of the House. Our understanding was that this measure would not be further debated during this part of the session and, in any case, the Minister for Agriculture is not in the Chamber. In the absence of the Premier we cannot go back to the two Bills with which he is concerned.

With respect, I suggest it would not be a bad idea to defer the sitting until the Premier returns.

Mr. JAMIESON: In that case, I propose to move—

That item No. 7 be postponed until a later stage of the sitting.

Sir CHARLES COURT: There was an understanding that this measure would not be proceeded with during this part of the session.

Mr. JAMIESON: It appears we have run into an impasse. I move—

That the sitting be suspended until the ringing of the bells.

Motion put and passed.

Sitting suspended from 3.15 to 3.27 p.m.

RAILWAY (COOGEE-KWINANA RAILWAY) DISCONTINUANCE BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR. RUSHTON (Dale) [3.27 p.m.]: The chaos which prevails in the House at the present time is similar to the chaos presented to us in this legislation.

Mr. Bryce: Here we go again.

Mr. RUSHTON: We have been given about 20 minutes to study the Bill and we are now told to proceed with the debate.

The Opposition does not object to the sitting of the industry. However, I believe it is wise to look at some aspects of the legislation.

It is interesting to look at the report of the Premier's own committee on this issue. The report of the Director-General of Transport refers to a number of points which the Minister did not clarify in his

second reading speech. I suppose the Minister mentioned that up to 600 people will be employed in this industry for the sake of publicity. This is inconsistent with the statement in the director-general's report that 450 will be employed.

The reason given for the discontinuance of this railway is that the nature of the limestone and the relevant method of construction requires a larger area. This is understandable. It was also mentioned that replacement provision can be made for the 3 ft. 6 in. gauge railway by placing another line on the broad-gauge line. The Government has something to answer because all the facts were not referred to in the Minister's second reading speech. I understand the present line carries a great deal of freight, particularly superphosphate. I do not know this of my own knowledge as I have not had time to conduct the necessary research, but it has been indicated that the freight is rather extensive.

The timing of the addition of the broad gauge to allow this freight traffic to continue will be of prime importance. The project will need to be co-ordinated so that as one line comes up the other goes down. The Minister has indicated this will be so. Therefore, I would like an explanation, when he replies to the debate, as to how this will be financed, who will be responsible for the finance, and when the construction will take place.

The director-general's report and his recommendations were very briefly referred to in the Minister's second reading speech. It is interesting to note the three recommendations which were not covered in nearly enough detail by the Minister. They are as follows—

- (1) That the existing Coogee-Kwinana 3 ft. 6 in. railway be closed between 16 mile 70 chain and 21 mile 15 chain, subject to
- (2) the existing 4 ft. 8½ in. gauge railway between Cockburn and Kwinana being converted to dual gauge by the provision of a third, and associated works, and
- (3) the capital expenditure required for this work being made available to the W.A.G.R. free of interest charges.

It has been mentioned that the financing of the programme has not yet been sorted out, and that the Railways Department will accept the burden on a temporary basis. In my opinion the situation is somewhat chaotic, and it should have been sorted out in time to present the House with a clear indication of the details of the project. If the Government cannot accomplish a small thing like this, how can it efficiently direct larger projects? This legislation certainly reflects no credit on the Government.

I will briefly run through some of the points that have been made. I mentioned that there is a difference between the comments of the director-general and those of the Minister. An indication was also given that Transfield (W.A.) Pty. Ltd. was inclined to transfer its operations to another State if its needs in this State were not met.

The land that is available south of the area that is to be used by Transfield could be used for other purposes, and I will touch on this aspect briefly in a moment. There is also the fact that the land to be leased by Transfield will be returned to the State in 1976. On looking at the large map which has been compiled by the Town Planning Department, and which I have in front of me, all sorts of developments are contemplated in the Woodman Point area, and the construction of the oil rigs by Transfield would be carried out on the area which eventually will become a public reserve.

On a quick perusal of the map it will be noticed that allocations have been made for picnic areas, and for sites for hellports, hotels, and other types of development in the future. Therefore, it is important to know what will take place in regard to the area that is to be leased by Transfield, and the adjacent land. It would certainly need to be a clean type of industry, especially when we consider what the Minister for Development and Decentralisation seeks to achieve. He commented on the effect the pressure of unemployment had on the Government and he made the grand announcement that 15,000 people would be living adjacent to this project. This explodes the myth, and exposes the looseness, of many of the statements that are made by Ministers. It exposes the Deputy Premier as being one who has a tendency to make statements without any foundation.

This industry is to be sited on an area south of Fremantle to which no-one is objecting at present because we do not have all the information. However, a short time ago the people of this State were being told that this was a desirable area on which to place 15,000 people because it would be free of pollution. It was also stated that this would be an excellent project for the purpose of relieving the pressure of unemployment on the State. However, we are fully aware of the true story at this point of time. Following an investigation it was found that this area was pollution prone and unsuitable for the settlement of people.

I commenced my speech by saying that this illustrates the chaos that is to be found in the House. It illustrates the backing and filling that goes on and the lack of clear direction in regard to administrative practices which are not conducive to instilling confidence among the

people. This is clearly illustrated by the antics that have been adopted in the House this afternoon.

I now wish to touch briefly on the report that was issued by a committee that was formed by the former Premier. It was set up during the time Sir David Brand was in office, and it made a rationalisation of waterfront facilities at Cockburn Sound in 1972. Following a brief reference to the report of that committee I can say that the area near the one we are now considering had been reserved for another suggested project. For example, I understand that this area was to be used as a site for a future dock. This report is completely relevant to the land that is now under consideration. It deals with the very railway we are now discussing, and the report is well worthy of consideration and study before we proceed with the legislation before us. Some of the comments made by the committee on the 3 ft. 6 in. railway between Coogee and Naval Base are as follows—

Because of the expense associated with the expansion seawards of the 50 acre ship building site at Clarence, the Working Party was of the opinion that everything possible should be done to ensure that the best use is made of the limited amount of land available. In this respect it was noted that the existing 3' 6" Coogee to Naval Base Coastal Railway running longitudinally through the centre of the site is a major deterrent to coherent development.

So here we see agreement in regard to what we are doing at present. The report continues—

Because of the nature of their operations, ship yards require fairly long and narrow areas of land at right angles to the waterfront of sufficient size to accommodate both the length of a vessel and working space at both ends necessary for circulation and handling of materials. Because of this, the presence of the waterfront railway at Clarence, set back only a little more than 100 feet from the waterfront, actively precludes the construction of anything except the most minor vessels. Accordingly if the proper potential of this area is to be achieved, the railway line must be either deviated to the east, or closed altogether.

That committee was talking of something altogether different in regard to the use of this land. Continuing—

In so far as the present function of the railway is concerned, it is used for haulage to and from the Kwinana area, and for the haulage of cement to country centres. As these uses do not require proximity to the coast in the Clarence area, the foregoing

interests would not be affected if an alternative route between Fremantle and Kwinana could be developed.

As we know another rail is to be constructed along the broad gauge railway route to make the line a dual railway as is mentioned in the following remarks—

It was noted by the Working Party that although Western Aluminium had accepted the obligation, by virtue of the agreement with the government, to meet the cost of deviating this railway by provision of a third rail on the existing Standard Gauge route it had advised its inability to provide the funds concerned at the present time.

Here we can see the intention behind this move; no doubt it was connected with the Alcoa refinery which was to join the State in bringing the project to fruition. The Minister pointed out what was happening in regard to the financing of this project, but the submission made by him was indefinite and incomplete.

To continue—

The possibility must therefore be considered of the State providing the estimated cost of \$480,000 subject to repayment at some time in the future by Western Aluminium if it is considered desirable to provide uninterrupted working space for the developing ship construction industry at Clarence.

So it will be seen that what we are talking about is very much related to (1) recreation and (2) the shipbuilding industry.

Since the time of the previous committee report I understand the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority has lent its support, although I have not been able to get confirmation of this. It recommended the residential use of adjacent land in the area north of Alcoa. It appears to me that the planning and the approach to this area have been piecemeal and it is high time we carried out a serious study of its future potential. A great deal is known about the area in question but what we need is a clear decision as to the future.

When one considers the proposed residential areas and port that are to be developed, at Salvado and elsewhere, it would seem that money is really no problem. I suggest that a container port could have been established on this site instead of in the immediate vicinity of Rockingham and Safety Bay. We were told, however, that the cost factor precluded this from being done. To continue with the report—

Irrespective of the outcome of negotiations with the Western Aluminium Company there is a need for closure of the coast railway in the interests of the emerging ship building industry and the best use of the other

valuable foreshore land severed by this line. However, there is as yet no official policy on the necessity or otherwise for closing the coast railway and the Working Party saw a need for a statement in principle which would enable the Department of Industrial Development and the Railway Department to enter into a meaningful dialogue perhaps also taking into consideration the future of the railway in question for rapid passenger service between Fremantle, Kwinana and Rockingham.

That is a most important recommendation. As the Minister knows, the Rockingham and Kwinana Shires are fast growing residential areas. I daresay this area also constitutes our prime industrial site. It has a tremendous future despite all the side issues that have been introduced from time to time, and it is most important that the Government restore confidence in the locality because with the talk of the Kwinana industrial complex reaching saturation point and a remark being made to the effect that this or that cannot happen, damage has been done. Because of the tremendous funds which have been invested by the Government and privately in the area, it is no wonder there is disquiet. However I can see a brilliant future for the area to which I have referred.

Sir David Brand: Hear, hear!

Mr. RUSHTON: The commitment in this direction is so far forward now that there must be no thought of moving to some other area for the purposes designed. Great thought was given earlier to the proposed developmental concept and I pay tribute to those who have given the matter so much serious thought.

We now come to the recommendations that have been made in connection with the Rockingham-Kwinana district. It is well to know that the recommendations in question were being made by the Premier's committee only a short time before the Government came down with this Bill. I would like to read recommendation No. 18 which states—

The Kwinana Committee concur in principle that subject to the provision of substitute facilities to the satisfaction of the W.A.G.R., the 3 ft. 6 in. railway between Naval Base and the northern boundary of the Clarence Ship Yard Area be closed or diverted.

Although closure of the Coast Railway between Clarence and Naval Base is clearly advantageous in terms of present overall commitments, the Working Party nevertheless feel impelled to point out that at some time in the future there could be a demand for a railway passenger service between the residential areas around Fre-

mantle and the employment opportunities at Kwinana. This could be especially significant in the Clarence Area where present plans are for the whole of the industrial area between Russell Road and Naval Base to be rezoned for residential purposes accommodating upwards of 15,000 people, predicated a potential workforce of 6,000, the bulk of whom would find employment at Kwinana or Rockingham.

Mr. Taylor: What is the date of that report?

Mr. RUSHTON: It is dated 1972, I think the recommendations have been approved since by the Government.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.05 p.m.

Mr. RUSHTON: I thought that perhaps there might be another divergence and we would go onto questions.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: We are not able to do that yet.

Mr. RUSHTON: It seems that anything can happen here! Prior to the afternoon tea suspension I mentioned the importance of this railway link to the future rapid transit service between the metropolitan area and Rockingham. It could well be that the pattern of transport will change, and the rail connection will go across the Narrows Bridge or across the Canning River.

I would like to quote to the House recommendation No. 19 from the report of the Premier's committee for the development of Cockburn Sound and Kwinana, as follows—

The Working Party in association with a technical sub-committee consider the possible future need of rapid transit passenger facilities between Fremantle, Kwinana and Rockingham, and if necessary to recommend a route thereto.

As I mentioned earlier, the committee saw a future in the small boat-building industry, in this area, and the need for a rail link in the future. Recommendation No. 17 of the report reads as follows—

The implications be recognised of the future need to consolidate the existing 50 acre ship building site at Clarence, in so far as contiguous zoning, road and rail access, and the provision of services should be sufficiently flexible to meet expanded ship-building demands.

I point out to the Minister that there is a need for road and rail access to this area. Woodman Point is a potential recreation area and we should give detailed consideration to the planning and the siting of industries in the strip between Alcoa and Woodman Point. We need to consider the future road alignment, and also rail access.

It seems that finance has yet to be found. I would like the Minister to give us an undertaking concerning the area, but not during the sitting resuming in August. The Premier's committee could further study the position and submit another report. I think the M.R.P.A. should also update its thinking regarding the area, and the Environmental Protection Authority should bring forward its report.

In this somewhat disjointed and hurried presentation I have pointed out that the Opposition does not oppose the legislation. We would appreciate some information on the points raised.

MR. TAYLOR (Cockburn—Minister for Labour) [4.10 p.m.]: Thanks are due to the member for Dale for his contribution, and perhaps an apology for the short time which has been available to him to look at this matter and prepare his speech. This Bill was debated in another place, and has been on our file for some time. However, it has been only a short time since the second reading speech.

I assure the House, and the member concerned, that all the worries expressed, with the exception of those relating to finance, are adequately covered. I think the member for Dale might have been under a misapprehension when he suggested that this action might affect the coastline, inhibiting its future use for recreation. Parts of the coastline are rocky. However, the railway line which is to be closed is some 4½ miles in length and is from one to two miles from possible future urban development. The area on which Transfield will commence operations is in the proximity of the hoped-for future recreation area referred to. In fact, it is also adjacent to a sewerage plant, and an industrial explosives magazine. There is no chance at all of there being any conflict between possible urban development further south and this new industry in this area.

The second point is that this matter came very quickly before the Government because of an approach made by Transfield during April. Hence, it has become a matter of some urgency to pass the legislation. The Transfield operation will be carried out in this particular area because of the deep water in the vicinity. It might be considered that this establishment should have been in the Point Peron area where deep water is also available, but that area is not yet ready for such development. The Government had little alternative if it was to assist Transfield, and as a result of investigation it was found that the area in question was the only flat land available near deep water and where skilled labour could be found to perform the work.

The work itself will be of a nonpollutant nature. The whole rig will be a welded and prefabricated structure. I am unable to

answer the query regarding the source of the additional charge to change the railway. It could be related to the future of Western Aluminium and its project at Pinjarra.

The Government felt that this oil rig construction industry was so important it had to get the all-clear as quickly as possible. Groundwork has already commenced and there is a chance to have repeat orders brought to the area. The contract will limit the use of the area for a period of six years, after which it will revert to the Government probably for recreation purposes.

I again thank the member for Dale for his contribution and I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

(Continued on page 2260).

QUESTIONS (46): ON NOTICE

1. FERTILISERS

Sales to Eastern States

Mr. W. A. MANNING, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Has any fertiliser manufactured in Western Australia been shipped or railed to the Eastern States during the past three years?
- (2) If so, in what quantities and to what destination?
- (3) Is sulphuric acid manufactured at Kwinana being transported by road to other fertiliser works in this State?
- (4) If so, in what quantities?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) and (2) The four fertiliser manufacturing companies in this State have not shipped or railed any fertilizer to the Eastern States during the past 3 years.
- (3) and (4) This information is not available to my department.

2. FERTILISERS

Rail Cartage

Mr. W. A. MANNING, to the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

- (1) What tonnage of fertiliser was railed from Geraldton, Bassen-dean, Kwinana, Picton and Esperance, from 30th June, 1972 to date?
- (2) What was the tonnage of fertiliser railed to each destination in each case from 30th June, 1972 to date?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

	Tons
(1) Geraldton	28,564
Bassendean	13,053
Kwinana	307,261
Picton	74,394
Esperance	131

These figures are from 1st July, 1972 to 30th April, 1973, inclusive.

- (2) The information respecting individual destinations is not extracted until the annual figures are obtained, i.e., towards the end of August each year.

When these details are extracted, the Member will be advised.

3. RAILWAYS

Employees: Mt. Barker

Mr. STEPHENS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

- (1) At 30th June, 1972, how many W.A.G.R. personnel were permanently employed at Mt. Barker?
- (2) How many are employed at the present time?
- (3) Is it planned to make any reductions now or in the near future?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

- (1) 14.
- (2) 13.
- (3) The staff requirements for Mount Barker are at present being evaluated but no decision has been made at this stage.

4. DRY DOCK

Cockburn Sound Site

Sir CHARLES COURT, to the Premier:

- (1) Which area in Cockburn Sound has been set aside for a major dry-dock, ship survey and ship repair area capable of handling large tonnage vessels such as bulk carriers as well as smaller commercial and naval vessels?
- (2) (a) If an area has not been set aside, what studies are being made and by whom;
- (b) when will those studies be complete?
- (3) (a) Are there any current negotiations for the establishment of a large scale dock as in (1);
- (b) how far advanced are these negotiations and in respect of which site are the negotiations being conducted?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) There have been discussions between State and Australian Government representatives in regard

to joint planning of dock and ship repair facilities in Cockburn Sound adjacent to the south-east tip of Garden Island.

- (2) (a) The Australian Government has been requested to participate in the commissioning of a study to establish plans for development of appropriate facilities.

(b) Answered by (a).

- (3) (a) No.

(b) Answered by (a).

5.

TOWN PLANNING

Kelmscott Scheme 4: Recreation Facilities

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Treasurer:

- (1) Has he received representations for financial help towards providing some recreational area within the M.R.P.A. Kelmscott Scheme No. 4 now developed for State Housing or for the adjacent area of Westfield Park?
- (2) Will he advise me of the help offered?
- (3) If the request has been declined, will he please give me the reason for this decision, considering it has been a usual condition for developers to improve low lying public open space to a usable state?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) I have no recollection of receiving such a request.
- (2) and (3) Answered by (1).

6.

TOWN PLANNING

Kelmscott Scheme 4: Public Open Space

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Town Planning:

- (1) What percentage of the public open space provided within the section of M.R.P.A. (Kelmscott) Scheme No. 4 bounded by Westfield, First and Second Roads, and Third Avenue is along drains and on low lying land?
- (2) Having regard for their size, which sports could be practised on these reserves?
- (3) Is it intended to bring the reserves or some of them to a condition for public use?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

- (1) Approximately 54%.
- (2) The public open space with access from Munden Place could accommodate either one hockey or one association football (soccer) playing area. Several tennis courts would be an alternative.

The public open space in Regina Road could accommodate a maximum of four tennis courts. Part of the public open space fronting Grasmere Way could accommodate tennis courts.

- (3) This is a matter for consideration by the local authority.

7. ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

Street Lighting Charges

Mr. W. A. MANNING, to the Minister for Electricity:

- (1) Is it a fact that charges to local governing bodies for street lighting have been increased?
- (2) If so, what is the reason for loading more costs on to the rate-payers?
- (3) What increases in charges for such lighting have been made in the last 25 years?
- (4) Stated as a percentage, what will be the total increase?
- (5) Would increased costs be the reason for the higher charges?
- (6) If so, what are the factors causing the increase in costs?
- (7) What is the estimated amount of extra revenue?
- (8) For what purpose will any increase in profits be used?

Mr. Graham (for Mr. MAY) replied:

- (1) Certain street light tariffs will increase in July 1973 while others will decrease.
- (2) Street lighting tariffs are payable by local authorities which may or may not decide to pass on the effects to ratepayers.
- (3) One in July 1972 only.
- (4) July 1972—12½%
July 1973—5½%.
- (5) Yes.
- (6) Principally, increased labour costs.
- (7) July 1972—\$95,000 per annum approximately.
July 1973—\$57,000 per annum approximately.
- (8) The increase applied in July 1973 will not result in a net profit on street lighting.

8. ROADS

Stirling Street Crossing, Bunbury

Mr. SIBSON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

Has the Minister considered the suggestion made by the previous Member for Bunbury during his speech on Estimates 1972 regarding the Stirling Street crossing, Bunbury?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

The suggestion made by the previous Member for Bunbury was given consideration but was not favoured because of the danger to elderly people using the crossing.

9. BUNBURY TECHNICAL SCHOOL

Extensions

Mr. SIBSON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Have tenders been called for the extensions to Bunbury Technical School?
 - (2) If so, when do they close?
 - (3) If not, when will they be called?
- Mr. H. D. Evans (for Mr. T. D. EVANS) replied:
- (1) No.
 - (2) Answered by (1).
 - (3) It is anticipated that tenders will be called towards the end of July.

10. DECENTRALISATION

Rail Freight Concessions

Mr. SIBSON, to the Minister for Development and Decentralisation:

- (1) How many country businesses and industries are still in receipt of the previous Government's 10% rail freight concessions?
- (2) Of those whose five year concession has expired—
 - (a) how many have re-applied;
 - (b) how many have received assistance from the new concessions?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

- (1) Forty-four.
- (2) (a) Sixteen.
(b) Four firms have received assistance and four applications are still under consideration.

11. PORTS

Bunbury Harbour Development

Mr. SIBSON, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) Is the progress of Bunbury harbour development running to schedule?
- (2) When is the present stage expected to be completed?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) Dredging progress is in accord with the current schedule.
- (2) February 1975.

12. RAILWAYS

Picton Junction Marshalling Yard

Mr. SIBSON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

What is the progress on design development and land acquisition for marshalling yards at or in the vicinity of Picton Junction?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

The outline design has been completed.

A Bill for construction of a new section of railway will be presented to Parliament during the next sitting of this session. Land acquisition will proceed on acceptance by Parliament of this legislation.

- (2) Yes, this matter will be submitted to the Railway Crossing Protection Committee, which body determines priority and the level of protection at all railway crossings.

15.

DEVELOPMENT

*Wanneroo-Gingin Industrial Area:
Correspondence from Local
Authorities*

Sir CHARLES COURT, to the Deputy Premier:

- (1) (a) Is he correctly reported in the *Sunday Times*, 20th May, 1973 under the heading "Graham Hits at Councils" as having returned a letter to a local authority;
- (b) If so, which is the local authority involved and why did he consider the letter offensive?
- (2) (a) Will he table the letters from other shires, persons, organisations, etc., to which he is also reported to have referred and which letters were complaining about the Government's plan to develop 80,000 acres north of Perth as a sub-metropolitan region;
- (b) If not, what was the nature of the complaints?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

- (1) (a) Yes.
- (b) Kojonup Shire Council.
- (2) (a) and (b) No, but I will read the relevant portions of letters.
- The first is a complete paragraph in a letter dated the 6th February, 1973, from the Shire of Cranbrook, which reads—

The title of your Department suggests to Council that it should be playing a more aggressive role in positive action towards regional development in non-metropolitan areas, and unless this occurs, the object of its existence should be examined. Already there is much evidence to support the opinion that decentralisation is merely an election byword—often spoken but seldom practised.

I then received a letter dated the 1st March, 1973, from the Shire of Kojonup, and this is the letter to which I take exception. It reads—

Perth coastal strip development. You have been recently written to by the Cranbrook Shire Council on the above subject and the contents of that Council's letter was discussed at our

13.

POLICE

Window Smashing Incidents

Mr. McPHARLIN, to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:

- (1) How many cases of bricks or rocks being thrown through windows of homes during industrial disputes have been reported to the police during the last three years?
- (2) Can these cases be directly attributable to militant members of trade unions?
- (3) Have the reported cases been thoroughly investigated and proved?
- (4) How many convictions have been recorded?
- (5) What were the penalties imposed?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) Statistics of simple offences such as wilful damage are not maintained.
- (2) There has been no evidence to suggest this was the case.
- (3) All cases have been thoroughly investigated but not proved.
- (4) Nil.
- (5) Answered by (4).

14.

RAILWAYS

Forrest Road Crossing, Armadale

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

- (1) Is it possible to improve the dangerous situation at Forrest Road railway crossing, Armadale, when at sundown the flashing lights are very difficult to observe?
- (2) As there are six roads converging on this crossing, directly or adjacent, will he have this safety factor examined and upgraded?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

- (1) This double crossing is listed for upgrading which will improve visibility for motorists approaching from an easterly direction.

It is hoped the work can be completed within the next two months. The problem is common to all crossings with an east-west aspect requiring added caution from motorists when the sun is low.

Meeting on the 26th February, 1973 when it was resolved that we support that Shire's views.

In the opinion of the Council the last paragraph of the letter and more specifically the last sentence "hit the nail on the head". Perhaps there are many good reasons why the proposed development should take place in the area chosen, however it is time your Department stopped trying to kid the electors because evidence of what has been achieved in the past towards decentralisation is hard to find.

I replied to that letter on the 7th March, 1973, addressing the letter to the shire president. My reply is in these terms—

I regard as completely unwarranted and most offensive the letter dated 1st March, addressed to me by your Shire Clerk, for which reason I am returning the communication.

One would expect something better from a public official than to use words in the following terms "it is time your Department stopped trying to kid the electors because evidence of what has been achieved in the past towards decentralisation is hard to find".

Suffice to say that far more has been done and is being done at the present time in the matter of decentralisation than ever before in the history of the State, as can easily be ascertained and demonstrated.

I would be surprised and disappointed if the Council supported the utterances of your Shire Clerk.

The last letter from which I will quote is from the Kojonup Shire Clerk—not the shire president—and is dated the 18th April, 1973. It reads—

Perth coastal strip development. The above subject and the contents of the correspondence referred to above were discussed at a recent Council Meeting.

Council agreed that my letter was not most offensive nor completely unwarranted but did agree that the contents could be toned down and accordingly I withdraw the words "Stop trying to kid the electors" and ask that you provide us, for the record, what, in your opinion, has been done towards decentralisation.

I might add Council was not very pleased when they learnt that the basic details of your views had been, "by the grapevine", made known to a neighbouring Shire before we heard about them.

The last paragraph of that letter is completely incomprehensible to me. I minuted that letter in the following words—

I refuse to correspond with a Council of the nature of this one.

16. MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Tour to North-West: Costs

Mr. RIDGE, to the Premier:

In view of the fact that many local authorities in the north are experiencing financial difficulty, will the Government undertake to meet entertainment and other costs incurred by shire councils in connection with the proposed Parliamentary tours of northern areas?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

Such assistance will be considered, where necessary.

17. EDUCATION

Free Milk Scheme

Mr. RIDGE, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is he aware of any proposals to discontinue the distribution of free milk to school children?
- (2) If so, does he propose registering opposition to the suggestion?

Mr. H. D. EVANS (for Mr. T. D. EVANS) replied:

- (1) No. The Education Department has not been advised of any proposals to discontinue the supply of free milk to school children.
- (2) Not applicable.

18. BROOME HIGH SCHOOL

Completion

Mr. RIDGE, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) In relation to my question 49 of 4th April, 1973, will he advise if it is still anticipated that the extensions to the Broome Junior High School will be ready for occupation at the commencement of second term?
- (2) (a) If not, why not;
(b) what is the current anticipated completion date?
- (3) Under the terms of the contract when was the building due for completion?

- (4) If any, what penalties are being applied?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) (a) In addition to the work previously indicated as having to be re-done, late letting of the air-conditioning contract, and a slow rate of progress on the part of the contractor.
- (b) It is anticipated that a practical completion inspection will be carried out in the week commencing 4th June, 1973.
- (3) 31st January, 1973.
- (4) The question of imposition of a penalty will not be decided until the contract is complete and all facts known.

19. EDUCATION

Boarding Allowances: Broome and Wyndham Children

Mr. RIDGE, to the Minister for Education:

Considering that additions to the Broome and Wyndham junior high schools are taking so long to complete, and in view of the fact that the extensions were intended to provide facilities which are normally associated with a high school education, would he be prepared to recommend to his Commonwealth counterpart that living-away-from-home allowances be paid to the parents of children from the towns referred to, who, because of dissatisfaction with local facilities have sent their children to high schools in other areas?

Mr. H. D. Evans (for Mr. T. D. EVANS) replied:

If allowances have been approved and paid by the State Government, the Commonwealth would continue to pay these allowances because, in general, the precedents established by the Education Department have been accepted by the Commonwealth.

20. POVERTY

Research

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Treasurer:

- (1) Has the Government granted financial assistance in any way to a research conducted regarding poverty?
- (2) If so, what was the financial assistance and to whom was it granted?
- (3) Has such research been conducted and a report arrived at?
- (4) If so, could he table the report?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) to (4) Answered by (1).

21. PUBLIC SERVICE

Non-discrimination in Employment

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Premier:

- (1) Is it a fact, as was supplied in the report on 7th May, 1973, in *The West Australian*, that the State Government agreed to comply with the requirements of an International Labour Organisation convention on the subject of no discrimination in employment, so that the Federal Government can ratify the convention's decision on this subject?
- (2) If so, would the convention's decision apply to non-discrimination in permanent employment in Public Service?
- (3) If (2) is "Yes" will a Bill be introduced to amend section 21 of the Public Service Act?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) and (3) The matter is under consideration.

22. TRAFFIC

Synchronised Lights

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:

- (1) Are there any synchronised traffic lights in the metropolitan area?
- (2) If not, would he consider to ask for an investigation within his department whether synchronising traffic lights on main roads, as it is done in many overseas cities, would not speed up the flow of traffic especially in peak hours?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Departmental investigations indicate that synchronising of traffic lights on our main roads would not speed up the flow of traffic. Synchronising is generally only advantageous with closely spaced traffic lights where, as a result, traffic can move in platoons. It generally results in additional delays to cross traffic.

23. TOWN PLANNING

Murray and Serpentine River Deltas: Projects

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Minister for Town Planning:

- (1) Have there been any plans in the area near the Murray and Serpentine River deltas, similar to the Yundurup canals development, submitted for consideration and/or approval?

- (2) If so, can he describe these plans and the area affected? 24.
- (3) If (1) is "Yes" what was the decision on such plans?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The plans showed a subdivision into 374 residential lots, a medium density residential site and a commercial site. The subdivision surrounded a canal with access to the Serpentine River. The area involved comprises lots 35, 172, 177 and 178 of Cockburn Sound location 16. It is near Barragup bridge.
- (3) Consideration of the plans was deferred pending receipt of further information on the effects of such development on the flood control of the Serpentine River.

CHILD WELFARE

McCall Centre: Employees

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Community Welfare:

Could he list the total number of employees, without mentioning names, at the McCall Centre from its beginning of operation until now showing—

- (a) the date of engagement;
- (b) the classification of employment;
- (c) the qualification of the employee;
- (d) whether public servant or Ministerial appointee;
- (e) the time of termination of employment;
- (f) the reason for termination?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

Classification (b)	Date of Engagement (a)	Qualification (c)	P.S. or Ministerial (d)	Date Terminated (e)	Reason for Termination (f)
Superintendent	1/5/70	B.A., M.Psych.	Seconded Ministerial		
Assistant Superintendent	1/4/71	B.Sc., M.Psych.	Seconded Ministerial		
Group Co-ordinator	26/4/72	Dip. Welfare Psychology	Ministerial		
Group Worker	3/5/71	Junior Cert.	Ministerial		
Group Worker	3/5/71	Junior Cert.	Ministerial		
Group Worker	3/5/71	Junior Cert.	Ministerial		
Group Worker	3/5/71	Junior Cert.	Ministerial		
Group Worker	3/5/71	Junior Cert.	Ministerial		
Group Worker	3/5/71	Junior Cert.	Ministerial		
Group Worker	3/5/71	Junior Cert.	Ministerial		
Group Worker	3/5/71	Junior Cert.	Ministerial		
Group Worker	3/5/71	Junior Cert.	Ministerial		
Group Worker	3/5/71	Junior Cert.	Ministerial		
Group Worker	3/5/71	Junior Cert.	Ministerial		
Group Worker	3/5/71	Junior Cert.	Ministerial	11/6/72	Resign
Group Worker	29/5/72	Junior Cert.	Ministerial		
Group Worker	2/4/73	Junior Cert.	Ministerial		
Social Worker	4/4/72	Dip.Admin.B.A., Dip.Social Scien.	Ministerial		
Occupational Therapists	2/8/71	Dip.Occupational Therapy	Ministerial		
Clerk Typist	1/7/71	Junior Cert.	Ministerial		
Teacher	3/5/71	Teachers Cert.	Ministerial	28/4/72	Resign
Teacher	4/4/72	Interim Element. Teachers Cert.	Ministerial	19/1/73	Request for transfer
Teacher	15/5/72	Primary Teachers Cert. Special Cert. in education of maladjusted children	Ministerial	15/3/73	Resign
Teacher	5/2/73	B.A.Dip.Ed.	Ministerial		
Teacher	16/3/73	Teachers Cert.	Ministerial	11/5/73	Resign
Teacher	24/5/73	Teachers Cert.	Ministerial		
Cook	26/7/71	Nil	Ministerial	28/1/72	Resign
Cook	31/1/72	Nil	Ministerial	25/2/72	Dismissed
Cook	6/3/72	Nil	Ministerial		
Domestic	26/7/72	Nil	Ministerial	22/10/71	Resign
Domestic	25/10/71	Nil	Ministerial	26/10/72	Resign
Domestic	27/10/72	Nil	Ministerial	3/11/72	Resign
Domestic	30/8/72	Nil	Ministerial		

25. CHILD WELFARE

Latch-key Children: Mosman Park

Mr. HUTCHINSON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Community Welfare:

- (1) Is he aware that, although the Community Welfare Department is prepared to make \$500 available to the Mosman Park Council to help the council start its pilot scheme to provide after school care for latch-key children away from school, no real commencement can be made because council has been unable to find a suitably trained person to organise and supervise the scheme?
- (2) Is he also aware that the council could have employed an unsuitable person by offering what would only be payment more or less of the honorarium kind but resolved not to proceed on this basis because Councilors did not want to jeopardise the success of the scheme and have it collapse at an early date?
- (3) Is he aware that the department and the Government will both have to be prepared to take a much more vital interest in this community problem and that a successful experiment conducted in Mosman Park may well pilot the way to a new deal for latch-key children with consequent beneficial effects in so far as the incidence of vandalism and child delinquency generally?
- (4) Will he therefore, in order to give the Mosman Park pilot scheme a real chance of success, favourably consider seconding a trained Government social worker or perhaps more profitably arrange for a roster of senior social worker students at W.A.I.T. to launch the scheme?
- (5) Would it not be of practical advantage to senior students as well as the children involved if the idea suggested above were adopted?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) and (2) No.
- (3) The Minister for Community Welfare is very interested in the proposals of the Mosman Park Council in relation to this problem. These proposals have his undivided support and if it is demonstrated that their efforts are successful in the way suggested, he proposes to involve his department in an extension of the programme.
- (4) There are no trained social workers available at the present time to be seconded to this work

as they are heavily committed elsewhere. However, the Minister is prepared to instruct his department to seek funds during the next financial year for the appointment of social workers for these and other special purposes. He considers that the suggestion of using senior social work students in this capacity is interesting.

In the meantime, if the council consider they have available an unqualified, but otherwise suitable person, then senior departmental officers would be pleased to confer with council representatives to devise a scheme that will provide some departmental professional assistance and advice to any person engaged by the council.

This would be in furtherance of a recognition that this is a field where experimentation and local variations must be considered.

(5) Yes.

26.

WHEAT

Quotas, and Sales to China

Mr. W. G. YOUNG, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Has he seen the statement by Dr. Jim Cairns, Minister for Overseas Trade, that there is no limit to the future of wheat sales to China and that the only limit would be our ability to produce wheat?
- (2) If this is the position, would he make representations to the Rural Reconstruction Authority to have the assessment of applications made on a production figure of at least 100% of quotas?
- (3) In the short term would these assessments be made on a maximum production figure for the applicant concerned?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) and (3) Rural Reconstruction Authority currently uses 100% of base quota when assessing wheat income for the next two years. This could be raised if individual circumstances indicate the possibility of a larger area of wheat.

27.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Driveways to Residences

Mr. JONES, to the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Who is responsible for the construction and/or maintenance of driveway entrances to residential properties?

- (2) Where a person sustained a serious accident as a result of the condition of the area involved has it been established who would be responsible for damages at common law—the owner of the property or the local authority?

Mr. TAYLOR replied:

- (1) Section 360 of the Local Government Act is as follows—

360 (1) A Council may, having regard to the provisions of section three hundred and fifty-nine, from time to time, by notice in writing—

- (a) served on the owner or occupier of land abutting a street or way in the district of the municipality, require him to construct, subject to those provisions, or repair a crossing from the common boundary of the land and a street or way to the paved position of the carriage way of the street or way, and unless within twenty-one days after the service of the notice upon him he shows cause to the satisfaction of the council why he should not be so required to construct or repair the crossing or unless within that time he constructs or repairs the crossing to the satisfaction of the council, the council may construct or repair the crossing, and charge the owner or occupier with one-half of the expense of doing so; or

- (b) served on the owners or occupiers who have the right to use or who commonly do use, and whose land abuts, a way or private way, require them to construct, subject to those provisions, or repair a crossing from the way or private way to the paved portion of the carriage way of an adjoining street or way, and unless those owners or

occupiers, within twenty-one days after the service of the notice show cause to the satisfaction of the council why they should not be so required to construct or repair the crossing, or unless within that time they construct or repair the crossing to the satisfaction of the council, the council may construct or repair the crossing, and charge one-half of the expenses of doing so against the owners or occupiers in such proportions as the council determines.

- (2) If after the expiration of fourteen days from the delivery to an owner or occupier of an account of money which has become payable by him under this section, the money, or part of it remains unpaid, the council may recover the amount unpaid from him in a court of competent jurisdiction.

- (2) This is a question of law. The circumstances of each particular case would have to be taken into account.

28.

TOWN PLANNING

Wanneroo-Gingin Industrial Area: Price Blanket

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Town Planning:

As he has given the necessity for the 1st January, 1973 price blanket on the 80,000 acres within the shires of Wanneroo and Gingin was because of American interests speculating in this land, will he identify the interests with supporting documentation?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

Inquiries have been made of Town Planning Department officers by American interests relating to the possible acquisition of large-scale land holdings in this area for speculative purposes. The department is also aware, through correspondence, of other overseas interests in the area. As the inquiries and the correspondence were confidential I am not prepared to disclose the sources.

29. TOWN PLANNING

*Wanneroo-Gingin Industrial Area:
Subdivisions*

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Town Planning:

- (1) Will he indicate the subdivisions which have been approved since 1st January, 1973 within the 80,000 acre area within the Wanneroo and Gingin shires over which a price blanket has been placed—
 - (a) initiated before 31st December, 1972;
 - (b) initiated since 1st January, 1973,
 with dates of approval, in each case?
- (2) Will he give the following details of each approved subdivision—
 - (a) site identification;
 - (b) area;
 - (c) number of blocks;
 - (d) conditions?
- (3) Have the shires been consulted and have they approved the subdivision?
- (4) If (3) is in the negative, why have the shires' approval not been obtained?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

It has not been possible to compile the information requested, and rather than postpone the question I will make the information available to the member as soon as it is completed.

30. TOWN PLANNING

Salvado: Effect on Corridor Plan

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Town Planning:

- (1) Did the Perth metropolitan corridor plan indicate a growth pattern for population from 750,000 to 1.2 million?
- (2) Does the new Salvado city planning—
 - (a) invalidate the corridor programme;
 - (b) complement the corridor programme of Perth growth programming of infrastructure services?
- (3) If 2 (b) is "Yes" why was this planning not included in the corridor plan presentation?
- (4) Is the new Salvado city—
 - (a) a solution to Perth's growth pattern, and, if so, what is the new population projection and how is it inter-related with Corridor growth;

(b) to satisfy economic industrial needs for a specific industry or industries;

- (c) to provide resettlement for Perth's existing problem areas similarly to the United Kingdom "new towns" and, if so, will he indicate these problem areas which have not been indicated in the corridor plan?
- (5) Does Salvado city planning reinforce centralised growth in the metropolitan area, and, if not, will he explain the reasons for his contention?
- (6) As overall State needs clearly indicate the necessity of Commonwealth expenditure at appropriate regional growth centres why is the highest priority being given to further centralisation on the Perth metropolitan area?
- (7) As the new cities commission needs a catalyst to enable growth to occur, what is to be the catalyst for Salvado city?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

- (1) No. The estimated population projection in the corridor plan was from 559,000 in 1966 to 1,436,000 in 1989.
- (2) There is no city proposed at Salvado. The information to all questions which follow are related to the development area named Salvado.
 - (a) No.
 - (b) Yes.
- (3) The general concept of development in the north-west corridor was included in the corridor plan report. The present proposals are a further refinement and application of the overall corridor plan strategy.
- (4) (a) The present proposals are a component of, rather than a solution to, Perth's growth pattern. The population projection for the Salvado development area contained within the north-west corridor is estimated at 320,000 by 2000AD. The proposal forms an integral part of the corridor growth pattern but will result in redistribution of regional population within the corridor plan.
 - (b) In general terms yes. The establishment of industrial facilities in the Moore River area expands the amount of industrial land with sea-board facilities.

(c) No. It is not possible to draw a parallel between the position existing in United Kingdom and Western Australia with regard to resettlement of problem (slum) areas.

(5) No. The proposal will complement existing urban development.

(6) There has been a priority in the order of carrying out studies because of the related complexity of the problems associated with the Perth area. Other studies have been commissioned by the Commonwealth Government on the growth of other regional centres within the State. There has been no decision as to the priorities of development at this stage.

(7) Industrial projects which will be mainly related to the mineral resource base of the State.

31. YUNDURUP CANALS DEVELOPMENT

Government Policy Changes

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Premier:

Considering his reply to my question 10 as far back as 19th October, 1972, in which he said in connection with changed conditions re the Yundurup canal development, that "inquiries will be put in hand immediately and the Member will be advised as soon as possible.", would he please oblige with this advice?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

Inadvertently, some delays have occurred in obtaining answers to the Member's inquiry. However, the matter is again in hand, and the information sought will be made available at an early date.

32. EDUCATION

Boarding Allowances: W.A.I.T. and Commercial Colleges

Mr. E. H. M. LEWIS, to the Minister for Education:

(1) Are boarding allowances available for students attending commercial studies at the Western Australian Institute of Technology; if not, why not?

(2) Are these allowances also available for students receiving instruction at commercial colleges; if not, why not?

(3) What are the allowances in both cases?

Mr. H. D. Evans (for Mr. T. D. EVANS) replied:

(1) The Western Australian Institute of Technology offers courses in business studies at the tertiary (under-graduate and graduate) level only.

Commercial studies in the generally accepted meaning of the term are not taught at the institute.

Means tested living allowances are available to institute students under the Commonwealth's advanced education scholarship scheme.

(2) No. Boarding allowances are only payable to students attending schools listed by the Education Department as being "efficient" within the provisions of the Education Act or, in other words, offering the range of subjects necessary for a total primary and secondary education as opposed to specialised vocational education.

(3) Allowances available to institute students under the Commonwealth's advanced education scholarship scheme vary according to need determined by a means test. Other information not available.

33. TEACHERS

Training: Commonwealth Takeover

Mr. E. H. M. LEWIS, to the Premier:

(1) Are the reports in *The West Australian* of 22nd and 23rd May concerning Commonwealth proposals for teacher education substantially correct?

(2) If so, can he reconcile the reported Commonwealth proposal to contribute \$188 million to the States' \$22 million, a total of \$210 million, with the Cohen report recommendation, on which the Commonwealth proposals are said to be based, that the Commonwealth should contribute \$83.9 million to the State's \$122.7 million in a total of \$206.6 million?

(3) Is it a fact that under the existing formula the Commonwealth would contribute \$72.5 million in a total of \$206.6 million?

(4) Does the Press report that the Commonwealth will take full responsibility for tertiary education from January 1974 mean that the States will no longer be called upon to meet any of the cost?

- (5) If (4) is "Yes", how much will be saved to this State in 1973-74 and in 1974-75?
- (6) What impact will the reported offer of the Commonwealth of \$5,000 to \$7,500 for approved residential halls have on such needs in this State?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) to (3) The Cohen report recommends that teacher education should be financed on the same basis as other tertiary education institutions from 1st July, 1973, but the current Commonwealth proposal is to share the cost of teacher education with the States from 1st July, 1973 to 31st December, 1973, and, thereafter, for the Commonwealth to take over full financial responsibility. If the Cohen report recommendations are implemented, the States would be required to contribute \$122.7 million and the Commonwealth \$83.9 million towards a total cost of \$206.6 million over two and a half years. Under the latest Commonwealth proposal, States will be required to provide \$21.9 million and the Commonwealth \$184.7 million of the total cost of \$206.6 million.
- (4) Yes.
- (5) 1973-74—\$2,945,600; 1974-75—\$6,224,200, but the Commonwealth proposes to make corresponding reductions in general purpose funds provided to the State.
- (6) Such assistance will help to meet the operating costs of residential accommodation.

34. POLICE

Missing Girls

Dr. DADOUR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:

- (1) Is the disappearance of girls (between 13 to 18 years) being fully investigated by the police?
- (2) Has any of these girls who have been located either—
- (a) been found in a foreign country; or
 - (b) been to a foreign country during her absence?
- (3) Are there any circumstances that may lead to suspicion of white slavery?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) and (3) No.

35. BILLS AND MOTIONS

Inclusion of File Number on Records

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Speaker:

In connection with printing, would he consider—

- (a) to have the file number printed with Bills whether debated or mentioned in messages on Votes and Proceedings the same way as is done on the Notices and Orders of the Day;
- (b) to have the same file number printed in *Hansard* with the Bill designation at the beginning or continuation of a debate;
- (c) to have a short indication of the question of the debate (Bill or motion, etc.) printed on the top edge of each page of *Hansard*, as is done with Commonwealth *Hansard*?

The SPEAKER replied:

- (a) I have considered this request and find that this will cause no problems. Action to implement this will be taken when Parliament again meets, but will not include Messages from His Excellency the Governor assenting to Bills.
- (b) and (c) This is a matter for the Joint Printing Committee and will be raised when the committee next meets.

36. BUDGET

Provision for Land Tax Amendments

Mr. HUTCHINSON, to the Treasurer:

Will he include in his Budget to be produced in the next session of Parliament provision for amendments to the Land Tax Assessment Act to cater for extension of benefits to homeowners in general terms of my proposed amendment to that Act as discussed in debate on the Land Tax Assessment Act Amendment Bill on Tuesday, 22nd May?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

The matter raised in general terms during the debate on 22nd May is already under consideration in the review of land tax legislation which is currently being undertaken by the Treasury and State Taxation Departments. The Member may rest assured the points he has made are not being overlooked.

37. LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Unemployment Relief and Road Maintenance Tax: Funds

Mr. McPHARLIN, to the Treasurer:

- (1) What moneys were made available to each local authority in Western Australia from the Western Australian Local Authorities Special Assistance Fund during the year 1971-72?
- (2) What moneys were made available to each local authority in Western Australia to relieve unemployment in their areas during the year 1971-72 from—
 - (a) Commonwealth Government; and
 - (b) State Government sources?
- (3) What amount was paid to local governing bodies from moneys collected as road maintenance tax during the year 1971-72?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) \$498,807 as shown on the statement which, with permission, I hereby table.
- (2) (a) \$781,706 as shown on the statement which, with permission, I hereby table.
(b) Nil.
- (3) \$964,050 were allocated.

The statements were tabled (See paper No. 187).

38. SHEEP

Throughput at Abattoirs, and Exports

Mr. COOK, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What has been the total sheep kill in Western Australian abattoirs in each of the last three years?
- (2) What has been the total number of sheep exported live in each of the last three years?
- (3) What has been the total sheep kill in Western Australian abattoirs in each of the last 12 months?
- (4) What has been the total number of sheep exported live in each of the last 12 months?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- | | 1970 | 1971 | 1972 |
|-----|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| (1) | 4,050,853 | 5,342,579 | 5,823,334 |
| (2) | 393,642 | 477,075 | 686,030 |
| (3) | 1972— | | |

January—473,684,
February—463,048,
March—513,850,
April—474,322,
May—518,332,
June—399,705,
July—361,163,

August—425,318,
September—444,505,
October—601,238,
November—607,196,
December—540,973.

(4) 1972—

January—46,075,
February—84,599,
March—54,937,
April—60,976,
May—63,477,
June—66,541,
July—23,308,
August—17,484,
September—69,369,
October—38,197,
November—90,901,
December—73,099.

39.

WOOL

Premier Exports Pty. Ltd.: Investigation

Mr. NALDER, to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:

- (1) Have the investigations which were initiated last year into the firm of wool buyers, Premier Exports Pty. Ltd., been concluded?
- (2) Will the Minister indicate what was the outcome of the inquiry?
- (3) Has any action been taken as to the results of the final inquiry?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Investigations indicated possible breaches of the law. This was communicated to interested parties in Australia and overseas who advised that they did not wish investigations to continue as civil action was intended.
- (3) Answered by (2).

40.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Commonwealth Financial Assistance

Mr. NALDER, to the Premier:

- (1) Are regional committees being established in Western Australia at the instigation of the State Government to assess the claims of local governing bodies to moneys it is anticipated will be made available from the Commonwealth Government?
- (2) Is it proposed that moneys to assist local government with its finances in Western Australia are to be payable direct to local governing bodies?
- (3) Has the Government received an assurance from the Commonwealth Government that financial assistance is to be given to local authorities in Western Australia?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) It is understood that regional groupings of local authorities are to be established for the purpose of assessing financial assistance grants payable under the proposed new Grants Commission procedures and that State Governments will be consulted in devising appropriate regional groupings.
- (2) No. Such assistance as is granted will be in the form of grants paid to the States in the first instance for subsequent disbursement to local authorities.
- (3) Local authorities in Western Australia will have the same opportunities to claim financial assistance as authorities in other States.

41. SEWERAGE

Bunbury: Unemployment Relief

Mr. SIBSON, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) Further to my question 1 on 23rd May, would he please indicate the date on which he made representation to the Commonwealth for the funds necessary to ensure that no retrenchments will be made in relation to sewerage workers at Bunbury?
- (2) In view of his answer that the Commonwealth is reviewing the question of further assistance and considering that the employees in question are gravely concerned over their future, will he press the appropriate authorities and consider the matter on an urgent basis, and also will he undertake to advise me of the result of his representations?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) This matter was raised at the Premiers' conference on 17th May, 1973.
- (2) Efforts will be made to expedite a decision by the Commonwealth and the Member will be advised of the result as soon as is practicable.

42. ROAD MAINTENANCE TAX

Country Shires Circular

Mr. BRYCE, to the Minister for Works:

Further to the document circulated to country shires by the Main Roads Department dated 2nd November, 1972 concerning road maintenance tax which *inter alia* on page 4 states:

"When a comparison is made between the foregoing expenditure statement and the revenue statement shown earlier in this submission it might well be asked how the Main Roads Department managed to spend more funds than they actually received. The principal reason is that the Department has been spending State funds which were held in reserve . . ."

will he indicate the level of such reserves held to the credit of the Main Roads Department on 30th June for each of the years 1966 to 1972?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

The balance of State funds, excluding plant reserve funds, held to the credit of the Main Roads Department on 30th June was as follows—

	\$
1966	7,341,016
1967	7,114,388
1968	4,582,789
1969	5,170,313
1970	4,408,839
1971	5,114,342
1972	5,600,032

Of these balances \$3 million was committed for expenditure on the Mitchell Freeway and will be expended in the current financial year. The remainder of the funds was committed for expenditure on railway crossing protection, work on behalf of other authorities and items in the departmental programme of works.

43. KALAMUNDA HIGH SCHOOL

P. & C. Submission

Mr. THOMPSON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has he received a letter from the Honorary Secretary of the Kalamunda Senior High School parents and citizens' association requesting a reply to matters raised on a recent deputation and when he visited the school?
- (2) If "Yes" to (1), will he ensure that a reply is given before he hands the Education portfolio over to another Minister?
- (3) If "No" to (1), will he nonetheless reply to the association's submissions?

Mr. H. D. Evans (for Mr. T. D. EVANS) replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The letter was received at the Minister's office subsequent to the departure of the Hon. T. D. Evans.

for overseas. It is not possible for Mr. Evans to reply before a change of portfolios is effected.

- (3) The submission will receive every consideration.

44. **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Dumping of Waste

Mr. THOMPSON, to the Minister for Environmental Protection:

- (1) Is he aware of any material being dumped by industries into the ocean off the Western Australian coast?
- (2) If material is being so dumped will he state—
 - (a) what it is;
 - (b) who is responsible;
 - (c) for how long the practice has been made?
- (3) What steps are being taken to reduce such disposal?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) It is not considered appropriate to respond on the details requested because all such dumping is under Commonwealth control in areas outside the continental shelf at depths of greater than 500 fathoms. The Member will be aware that the State Attorney-General is presently in London to discuss details of control of sea waters off the W.A. coast.
- (3) Discussions are taking place between the State and the Commonwealth and internationally, as to the appropriate control of dumping at sea.
I will discuss this matter at an appropriate time with the State and Federal Ministers responsible for environmental management within the framework of the Australian Environment Council.

45. **BUSSELTON JETTY MAINTENANCE**

Employees

Mr. BLAIKIE, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) What arrangements have been made to continue employment of men, formerly employed at Busselton on jetty maintenance?
- (2) Would he list projects and locations where these personnel have been employed since the jetty maintenance ceased?
- (3) Is it the intention to continue their employment on Government projects in the Busselton district, as verbally assured by the Minister?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) Answered by (2) and (3).
- (2) These men have been employed continuously on drainage maintenance works in the Busselton district.
- (3) It is intended to continue their employment on Government projects in the Bunbury-Busselton areas.

46. **RAILWAY**

Perth-Armadale Line: Fencing

Mr. BATEMAN, to the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

- (1) Is it the intention of the Railways Department to erect cyclone mesh fencing along both sides of the railway line between Perth and Armadale?
- (2) If not, what sections are intended to be fenced and for what purpose?
- (3) Can he advise the cost of fencing to date and what is the estimated total cost?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

- (1) The practice has been to fence sections of the suburban railway reserve where this has been dictated by such factors as public safety and protection of railway property. Ultimately, as population density increases, further fencing between Perth and Armadale will be required.
- (2) Contracts for two sections of fencing (one at Armadale Station, the other between Victoria Park Station and Gibbs Street, Cannington) are almost complete.
- (3) Fencing of various sections of the suburban railway reserve has been effected over many years and the total costs of fencing construction to date would not be available. The present day cost of six foot railless security fencing with three rows of barbed wire is just over \$1 per foot, or approximately \$5,500 per mile.

QUESTIONS (10): WITHOUT NOTICE

1. **UNEMPLOYMENT**

Commonwealth Assistance

Sir CHARLES COURT, to the Premier:

- (1) Has he seen the report in today's issue of *The West Australian* under the heading "Job Plan for W.A. Proposed"?
- (2) Have the representations "from several Government members from W.A." been made—
 - (a) with his knowledge; and
 - (b) with his approval?

- (3) (a) Is there still an "unemployment problem in the Perth Metropolitan area"?
- (b) If so, what is the extent and nature of it?
- (4) What unemployment relief assistance is the Western Australian Government expecting?
- (5) Has he, or his Government, made a request to the Commonwealth and, if so, in what form, and for what amounts?
- (6) To what extent have current unemployment figures for Western Australia been kept down because of Commonwealth and State unemployment relief expenditure—
 - (a) in the metropolitan area; and
 - (b) in the rural areas?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Representations from Federal members do not require approval by State Governments.
- (3) A special grant from the Commonwealth for sewerage works in the metropolitan area to help relieve unemployment will be largely expended by the 30th June and, if such assistance is not continued beyond that date, there would be some displacement of labour.
- (4) The amount of any such assistance has yet to be determined.
- (5) This matter was raised at the recent Premier's Conference and the Prime Minister indicated that the Commonwealth was considering the future of the existing scheme for the relief of unemployment.
- (6) Persons employed on unemployment relief works at the 30th April, 1973, were—
 - (a) metropolitan area—226; and
 - (b) rural areas—1,219.

2. KALAMUNDA HIGH SCHOOL

Path

Mr. THOMPSON, to the Premier:

- (1) Will he take note that on the 15th May I wrote to the Minister for Education advising him that the following motion had been passed by the Kalamunda Senior High School Branch of the State School Teachers' Union, at a meeting on 9th May—

Unless work is completed on the pathway between the Pre-Vocational Centre and each of the demountable classrooms by the beginning of next term, as a token protest teachers will be asked not to conduct

classes in the demountables but instead conduct them in the main quadrangle. The remainder of the staff would be invited to join the protest by refusing to teach classes and instead only supervise?

- (2) Will he also be advised that with only one week day left before school starts again, no sign of a start on the path is present, even though the Minister advised me verbally that the path would be provided for commencement of the second term?
- (3) In view of the seriousness of the action proposed by the teachers at the school, will he take the necessary steps to ensure that the path which the Minister promised weeks ago, is laid before Monday next?

I refrained from raising this matter in the House—

The SPEAKER: The honourable member cannot make an explanation; he can only ask the question.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) The question asked by the honourable member will be brought to the notice of the Acting Minister for Education.

3.

WHEAT

Stock Feed and Freight Charges

Mr. W. G. YOUNG, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What price do farmers in the Ravensthorpe Shire have to pay for wheat for stock feed in the following cases—
 - (a) farmers who had no 1972-73 delivery history;
 - (b) farmers who delivered wheat in 1972-73?
- (2) If farmers who delivered wheat in the 1972-73 season have to repay the first advance of \$1.10, what happens to the freight charges which have already been deducted by the Australian Wheat Board?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) (a) \$56.98 per tonne for deliveries of 50 tonnes or more per calendar month or \$57.90 per tonne for amounts less than 50 tonnes.
- (b) Answered by (2).
- (2) The price for redelivered wheat in the 1972-73 season is a refund of the first advance payment of \$40.40 per tonne, plus \$4.23 per

tonne to cover handling, storage, and interest charges, less freight to the terminal port.

4. EDUCATION

Boarding Allowances: Broome and Wyndham Children

Mr. RIDGE, to the Minister for Education:

I am seeking further information in relation to question 19 in which I asked whether the Minister would be prepared to make representations to the Federal Minister for Education, because of certain circumstances which currently apply at Broome and Wyndham. The Minister seems to have overlooked the importance of the question, because in his reply he related only to people who had obtained the approval of the State Education Department for their children to attend high schools away from their particular towns. Is the Minister prepared to make representations to the Federal Minister for Education on behalf of people who do not have the approval of the State Education Department? I should point out that certain people in these circumstances have had their applications rejected by the Commonwealth Department of Education.

Mr. H. D. Evans (for Mr. T. D. EVANS) replied:

I shall certainly be happy to follow up the point raised by the honourable member. If it appears necessary to make representations by all means I will do so.

5. SUPERPHOSPHATE

Rail Cartage

Mr. McPHARLIN, to the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

What percentage of superphosphate was carried by rail in 1970-71 and 71-72 from works in—

- (a) Metropolitan area,
- (b) Esperance,
- (c) Albany,
- (d) Bunbury, and
- (e) Geraldton?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

This information sought by the honourable member is not immediately available. It will be calculated and the information supplied as soon as possible.

6. PUBLIC SERVICE

Annual Leave Entitlement

Sir CHARLES COURT, to the Premier:

I ask this question to make sure that we have a record to clarify

beyond doubt the situation that exists under a Bill that passed through this House. With reference to the permanent public servants who took leave during the period from the 1st January, 1972, to the 31st December, 1972—

(a) what period of annual leave did they then receive;

(b) if this was on a basis less than now provided by the Public Service Act Amendment Bill (No. 2), will he or she have additional leave added to the four weeks' entitlement when taking leave in 1973 after the passage of the Public Service Act Amendment Bill (No. 2)?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (a) Three weeks.
- (b) Yes.

7. PUBLIC SERVICE

Annual Leave Entitlement

Mr. BATEMAN, to the Premier:

Is a State Government employee, who was employed before the 1st January, 1972, entitled to four weeks when going on annual leave in 1973?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

Yes.

8. ALCOHOL AND DRUG DEPENDANTS: TREATMENT

Report of Honorary Royal Commission

Mr. W. A. MANNING, to the Premier:

- (1) Does the Premier anticipate there will be considerable public demand for the report of the Honorary Royal Commission on the treatment of alcohol and drug dependants?
- (2) Will he ensure that sufficient copies are printed to meet this demand?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) and (2) I anticipate there will be considerable public demand for this report, and I have already authorised the printing of additional copies.

9. PRICES CONTROL

Items: Comparison with South Australia

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Prices Control:

- (1) When does the Minister intend to let me have the information which I asked for some weeks ago comparing prices control of items in South Australia with similar items in Western Australia?

- (2) As weeks have passed since I asked for this information, and as the price control legislation is not being proceeded with, does this mean the Government considers price control as an isolated measure is no longer necessary or urgent?

Mr. TAYLOR replied:

- (1) The information has been received from South Australia on some retail costs in that State. I indicated that in answer to a question asked some days ago. There has been some difficulty in equating Western Australian prices with these South Australian prices, because of certain brand names and other factors. I shall forward the information to the honourable member as soon as the department can equate the figures.

- (2) The Government will proceed with its price control legislation, and it certainly believes in this principle.

10. STEEL *Shortage*

Sir CHARLES COURT, to the Minister for Development and Decentralisation:

It might be more appropriate for me when the Minister hears the question to ask it of the Premier.

- (1) Has he had representations made to him about the steel shortage in Western Australia; and if so can he indicate the degree of shortage?
- (2) Is it a shortage in specialised steels, is it a general shortage, is the shortage due to industrial troubles, or just a shortage due to an unexpected upsurge in demand?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

- (1) and (2) Owing to circumstances which involved the House sitting into the early hours of the morning this week and to my other commitments, I have not had a great deal of contact with my department, but I am aware of the current shortage of steel in this State, and the fact that the situation has been worsening. Very largely the shortage is on account of a greatly increased demand for steel for all sorts of purposes. An element of this is the demand from farmers, owing to their changed and improved circumstances.

I would hazard a guess that the Department of Development and Decentralisation would have had representations made to it, that the

matter has been examined carefully, and that representations have been made in the appropriate quarters in other parts of Australia and other parts of the world.

TELEVISION PROGRAMMES

Use of Vulgar Words: Grievance Debate

MR. GRAHAM (Balcatta—Deputy Premier) [5.00 p.m.]: On the 9th May the member for Avon spoke on a grievance. Subsequently the Leader of the Opposition asked me if I would contact the Australian Broadcasting Commission in respect of the use of certain words about which the member for Avon had complained.

I wrote to the Australian Broadcasting Commission and, for the information of the House, I desire to read the following short reply dated the 22nd May and addressed to me—

Thank you for your letter of May 18, addressed to Mr. Chisholm who is on leave.

The Anzac Day edition of "This Day Tonight" was produced in Melbourne for showing in all states. The extract from David Williamson's play—"Jugglers Three" was included in an attempt to illustrate that many young people in Australia are now seeing their country in a different way from former generations.

The ABC does not condone the kind of language in the play but accepts it as part of today's society. There were few protests in W.A., but from the complaints we received elsewhere, it would seem that it was an error of judgment to include this type of material at a time when a peak audience was watching "This Day Tonight".

Yours sincerely,

A. POVAH,
Acting Manager for W.A.

Mr. Gayfer: Thank you.

MARGARINE ACT AMENDMENT BILL *Returned*

Bill returned from the Council with an amendment.

RAILWAY (COOGEE-KWINANA RAILWAY) DISCONTINUANCE BILL *In Committee*

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. Bateman) in the Chair; Mr. Taylor (Minister for Labour) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3 put and passed.

Clause 4: Discontinuance of railway and incidental matters—

Mr. RUSHTON: The road and the railway are parallel and I would like the Minister to give an indication of the situation concerning the road.

Mr. TAYLOR: I am unable to give an accurate assessment, but from memory I would say the railway line is between the road and the coast and when the railway line is closed the area of land will be very close to the road. Transfield has cleared the land up to the road, but I have no knowledge of whether the road will be deviated. I undertake to obtain the information for the honourable member.

Clause put and passed.

Schedule put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Taylor (Minister for Labour), and passed.

TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Third Reading

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR. BLAIKIE (Vasse) [5.07 p.m.]: The third reading gives members an opportunity to emphasise to the Government all the facts presented during previous debates on the Bill.

As has already been indicated, the proposal in the Bill will be an indictment against country people. I now wish to reiterate the effect the proposal will have on the timber industry. It will create problems in the industry. As the member for Warren, who is the Minister for Agriculture, is aware, as is also the member for Collie—

Mr. Jones: You talked about my industry the other night without any success.

Mr. BLAIKIE: I ask the member for Collie to fully represent the people.

Mr. Jones: I am quite capable of doing that without any help from you.

Mr. BLAIKIE: The member for Collie and I have a kindred interest in this proposal and he should represent all the people in his electorate.

Those in the timber industry will suffer hardship and an injustice if this Bill is passed.

Mr. Jones: What about Hawker Siddle? You gave the forests away.

Mr. BLAIKIE: May I continue? The companies involved in the timber industry establish their own roads through forest areas and they are obliged to maintain them. The vehicles they use on those roads are subject to a license fee, but they are not subject to road maintenance tax while they travel on the company roads. However, under the proposal in the Bill those

operators will be obliged to bear the full brunt of the tax as they will be paying the increased license fee whereas now they do not pay road maintenance tax. At the moment the vehicles under discussion may travel only about 400 or 500 miles a year on Government roads and yet they will be subject to \$1,500 or \$1,600 a year in lieu of road maintenance tax which is now not paid.

Mr. Jones: Where does this occur?

Mr. BLAIKIE: The member for Collie must be fully aware of the fact that the vehicles travel mostly on country roads.

Mr. Jones: You said that the vehicles travel about 500 miles on Government roads. What Government roads?

Mr. BLAIKIE: They would travel across public roads when going from one timber concession to another. While the vehicles are travelling on company roads they are not subject to road maintenance tax. I hope I do not have to explain the position to the member for Collie as well as to the Premier because I am having enough difficulty convincing the Premier of the problems which will be encountered under the legislation.

If we recall the problems facing the timber industry in the past, we will know what such an imposition will do to the industry in the future. Therefore I sincerely hope that before the vote is taken on the third reading members opposite will give further consideration to the matter because this is a very unjust imposition.

Another aspect to be considered is the effect on the trucks which carry livestock in my area and throughout the rest of the south-west. These trucks are usually in the vicinity of eight tons and up to date they have not been subjected to road maintenance tax. The carriage of livestock has been exempt and yet the Bill proposes that any provision for exemption granted in the past will become null and void.

I could refer to semi-trailers. In the past these vehicles have not been subjected to road maintenance tax because of a concession. I would like to know how the member for Roe and the member for Stirling view the measure now because in their areas a lot of stock is transported and such an imposition will be totally unpalatable.

I could go on and on. I have taken the opportunity once again to indicate to the House that I do not consider the Government has read the signs correctly. I trust it will take heed of the debate and the submissions of members on this side of the House. I realise that no tax is palatable and that we would all like taxes in all shapes and forms to be abolished. But if we adopted that attitude we would be totally irresponsible, just as the Government has been irresponsible. Firstly it gave an undertaking to repeal the road

maintenance tax without any qualification whatever, and, secondly, it has now provided a substitute which will affect more people than the road maintenance tax affected initially.

These are the circumstances which face the people involved, and they are circumstances of which the Government has not taken full heed.

The reasons for road maintenance tax coming into existence are clearly understood. The State was dependent on road grants. People who oppose the issue have said from time to time, "Let us have a tax on fuel." What a tremendous idea this would be if it could work. Why do we not have a tax on fuel? The point of the matter is that it simply will not work. This was relayed to the House, I believe, by the member for Mt. Lawley who was the Minister for Transport in the previous Government. He said that it would not work because of taxing difficulties under the Commonwealth Constitution and I believe the Premier himself fully acknowledges that a tax on fuel at this stage would not work.

Of course, if there were a tax on fuel it would create some benefits. For example, we would not need inspectors to police the situation on the roads as we are obliged to at the moment. Probably we could cut down on some of the staff. What grants would we receive in return from the Commonwealth? Herein lies the inherent danger.

The suggestion has also been mooted that there should be a tax on tyres. I have been asked about this by carriers in my own area who believe that road maintenance tax is unpalatable. However, they also said that they do not like the alternative proposed and will not accept it. As I have said, a tax on tyres has been suggested but, once again, it has been found that this simply would not work.

I appreciate the Premier's concern in trying to give effect to the promise he has made. I realise that, under the circumstances, he is obliged to attempt to give effect to his promise but I believe that his Government has a total responsibility to the people of Western Australia. When such an undertaking is given, a responsible alternative method should be put forward. I do not believe that the proposal in the measure under discussion is responsible. I believe it is totally unpalatable and, consequently, I do not support the third reading of the Bill.

MR. J. T. TONKIN (Melville—Premier) [5.17 p.m.]: We have heard a great deal of debate, which is somewhat unusual on the third reading of the measure. It does occur from time to time but I did not expect it on this Bill because practically all that could be said was said during the second reading. Some of what has been said was

quite fair but quite a deal of it was unfair. In politics of course we must accept the fair with the unfair, the good with the bad, and not complain about it.

In order to put the record straight I wish to reply to some of the comments which have been made. The member for Mt. Lawley dealt with the case of Mr. Saleeba and endeavoured to show that Saleeba was in the difficult financial position in which he finds himself because he understood that road maintenance tax was to be abolished and, therefore, he anticipated this repeal and did not pay the tax.

Mr. O'Connor: He advised me of that.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: He advised the member for Mt. Lawley? The honourable member did not say that when he was speaking but gave it as a reason.

Mr. O'Connor: I am telling you now.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I will show how ridiculous this is. Saleeba owes the South Australian Government \$10,204. He cannot claim that he ran up that debt because he expected the tax to be repealed in South Australia because there has never been any suggestion by the Premier of that State that he would repeal the tax.

Mr. O'Connor: I do not think that I said he did.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: What the member for Mt. Lawley said in the House today was that Saleeba is in the difficult financial position in which he finds himself—

Mr. O'Connor: Correct.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: —because he relied upon my statement that we would abolish road maintenance tax.

Mr. O'Connor: That is right.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: What would that have to do with what he owes the South Australian Government?—absolutely nothing. Let us see what he owes Western Australia.

Sir David Brand: What does he owe?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Mark you, Mr. Speaker, what makes this worse is that he owed \$10,204 before my Government took over.

Mr. O'Connor: All of it?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: All of it; every dollar!

Mr. W. A. Manning: How long had he owed it?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: We took over in March, 1971.

Mr. W. A. Manning: How long before that?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I will leave it to the honourable member to work out. If he was able to strap up a deficiency of \$10,000-odd he must have been operating for quite a long time; otherwise, this road license I am proposing would be a mere bagatelle.

I now come to this State to see whether there is any credence in what the member for Mt. Lawley said about this. The amount I will quote is the amount which Saleeba owed before we took office. The amount is \$1,365.

Mr. O'Connor: How long had that been owing?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: During the time the member for Mt. Lawley was a Minister in the previous Government.

Mr. O'Connor: If it was for a period of two months, it is not really relevant.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: That amount was owing at the time we took office.

Mr. O'Connor: What period of operation did it cover?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Therefore, it was idle for Saleeba to tell the member for Mt. Lawley that he owed \$1,365 because he believed that my Government would abolish road maintenance tax.

Mr. O'Connor: Of course not, because the Premier made that statement prior to the election. If the amount was owed over a short period that is relevant.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Mr. Saleeba owed \$1,365 when we took office.

Mr. O'Connor: Is that more than three months' road maintenance tax?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Is it?

Mr. O'Connor: I am asking a question; I do not know.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I will answer the question. The member for Mt. Lawley has been complaining about the level of license fees which my Government will place on vehicle owners.

Mr. O'Connor: Will you answer the question?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I am answering it. The member for Mt. Lawley has been complaining about the level of license fees which my Government will place on truck owners.

Mr. O'Connor: Not entirely.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Does the member for Mt. Lawley know of any truck owner, similar to Saleeba, who would have to pay a license fee—in addition to the license fee he already has to pay—of \$1,365?

Mr. O'Connor: Of course there are various aspects. Will you answer the question?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I ask the member for Mt. Lawley to put his question.

Mr. O'Connor: I asked whether the amount of \$1,300-odd applied to a period longer than three months. What period did that amount apply to?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The honourable member knows I cannot answer a question like that off the cuff.

Mr. O'Connor: The Premier is talking about something he knows nothing about.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: No, I am not.

Mr. O'Connor: It is quite likely that a person with a number of trucks could run up this amount in a short time.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I am dealing with the member for Mt. Lawley's statement that Saleeba found himself in the serious financial position he is in because of my statement that we would abolish road maintenance tax. The position now is that Mr. Saleeba has to pay \$650 a month.

Mr. O'Connor: Many drivers are in this position because of that promise.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The member for Mt. Lawley was dealing with Saleeba and said that he found himself in this financial position because he believed that road maintenance tax would be abolished. Saleeba was in this position before the election.

Mr. O'Connor: Statewise, not necessarily.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Necessarily.

Mr. O'Connor: No.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Absolutely necessarily.

Mr. O'Connor: It depends on what period that amount applied to.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: It does not depend on anything of the sort.

Sir Charles Court: With some operators that would be a month's activities.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I asked the Transport Commission what Saleeba owed before March, 1971.

Mr. O'Connor: That could have been February's dealings.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The member for Mt. Lawley was a Minister in the Government which was in office in that February.

Mr. O'Connor: Of course, February's dealings would not have been due until after March. They are not payable in advance. This is relevant.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: It is not relevant.

Sir Charles Court: The period is relevant.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Is it? The reasoning of the Leader of the Opposition is screwy.

Sir Charles Court: Do not become offensive. We have had enough trouble today due to misquoting.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I am entitled to reply to what was said and to correct the misrepresentation that was made.

Sir Charles Court: I do not deny that.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: That is what I intend to do.

Mr. O'Connor: What period does that amount of debt apply to?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Let us take it step by step. It has been established that the member for Mt. Lawley said that Saleeba is in the financial position in which he finds himself due to his reliance upon the fact that he expected road maintenance tax to be abolished. Every member knows that is the position.

Sir Charles Court: Quite a few operators said that was so.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Saleeba was in that financial position before we became the Government.

Mr. Brady: Six months before.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Saleeba was in that position before he knew the result of the elections. In all, he owed \$11,569.42.

Mr. O'Connor: \$1,300-odd in this State.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Yes, but it does not make any difference. He was in that financial position before the elections.

Mr. Rushton: The Premier had made promises.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: How on earth can Saleeba say that his serious financial position is due to the fact that he expected my Government to abolish road maintenance tax?

Mr. O'Connor: He should be up here shortly and he can tell you.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Let us go a little further. In addition to this, he owes \$768 in fines and costs imposed by the court for his failure to submit returns since March, 1971. This is the only amount he could possibly claim could be due to the fact that he expected road maintenance tax to be abolished. This is the only amount—\$768 out of a total of \$11,000-odd.

Nevertheless, the member for Mt. Lawley stood up and said that Saleeba's financial position was due to the fact that he was relying upon my Government to abolish road maintenance tax.

The other point we must clearly establish is whether or not I said, when similar measures were previously before the House, that I would proclaim the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act Repeal Bill if the Traffic Act Amendment Bill (No. 3) was not passed. I agree there was a great deal of confusion in what was read out in the House this afternoon.

Sir Charles Court: I'll say!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: This is understandable when questions are being bandied across the Chamber from time to time. The Leader of the Opposition said, "Yes". He was in no shadow of doubt and knew what I had said.

Sir Charles Court: I have read it on pages 452 and 453.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Page 453 of the 1971 *Hansard* is the page. I now quote what I said, as follows—

I take it you are now asking whether we will proclaim the Bill if Parliament passes the Bill for the abolition of road maintenance tax and does not pass this one.

Mr. O'Connor: Which side of page 453? Is it half-way down on the right-hand side?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: My remarks are to be found in the right-hand column of page 453. At that point the member for Mt. Lawley came in, backed up his leader and said—

That is correct.

Consequently, I had posed the question correctly. My answer to that question, as shown on page 453, is—

We will.

I will read further to show that there was no misunderstanding on the part of the Leader of the Opposition. He is the only one who counts so far as the Liberal Party is concerned. If he understands the position other members of his party are supposed to understand it, too.

Mr. O'Connor: How many times did you contradict yourself on that page?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Never mind about that. I am talking about whether or not the situation was understood.

Mr. O'Connor: You brought this on yourself by accusing one of our members of fraud.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I will deal with that, too.

Mr. O'Connor: I am glad. You brought this on your own shoulders.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: We will see whether the Leader of the Opposition was in any doubt about my remarks. On page 453 he said—

You will have no road maintenance tax and no roads.

Does that leave any doubt?

Mr. O'Connor: Well, then—

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Does that leave any doubt in the mind? The honourable member should not interject, "Well, then—".

Mr. O'Connor: What you said was, "Does that leave any doubt?" This reveals you are the best acrobat in Parliament—three somersaults in one page!

Sir Charles Court: He landed on his feet.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: That establishes the point without any doubt whatever.

Mr. O'Connor: If you read the next page in *Hansard*, you will see one of your somersaults.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The honourable member knows very well, and so do all his colleagues, that had the road maintenance legislation been passed but not the

traffic legislation, we would have still proclaimed the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act Repeal Bill.

Sir Charles Court: You have changed it twice.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I say this—I admit it includes some speculation, but I think it will be close to the mark—had the Legislative Council passed the Bill to abolish road maintenance tax and rejected the other one, I would not have been allowed to get away with not proclaiming it.

Mr. O'Connor: That is an assumption.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: It is a fair assumption, too.

Sir Charles Court: You will not permit assumptions.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: There would have been no doubt then about what I said.

Sir Charles Court: To complete the record, how about referring to your additional comments when you somersaulted again?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Rushton: You only deal with hypothetical cases.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: A few members over there somersault occasionally, and this is especially so in the Federal House.

Sir Charles Court: We are just dealing with this Chamber at the moment.

Mr. Rushton: Do not speak about your Prime Minister like that!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: We will proceed to the question as to whether the member for Darling Range represented a situation in accordance with his belief or whether he did not. I said he made false representation, whilst he was aware of its falseness. Now let us see the position, and I quote from a duplicate of his speech. He said—

I hope the Premier, or someone else opposite, can tell me where he gave this clear undertaking that he would proclaim the Bill whether or not the other went through. As I have indicated, no clear indication at all was given by the Premier during his reply to the debate . . .

Mr. O'Connor: That is fair.

Mr. Rushton: I have tried to find it.

Mr. O'Connor: No clear indication, because straight after you gave it, you refuted it.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The honourable member said that I gave no clear indication during the debate.

Mr. O'Connor: You gave a clear indication—both ways.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Why did the Leader of the Opposition interject and say, "We will have no road maintenance tax and no roads"?

Sir Charles Court: You changed your mind after that.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I interjected on the honourable member and I said—

Is the honourable member saying that when these Bills were being debated previously, I never at any time said that?

Mr. Thompson: Keep going.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I will. The honourable member answered—

I have quoted what the Premier said. Whereas he should have said, "I have quoted some of what the Premier said."

Mr. Thompson: I qualified my comments.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I then interjected and said—

So you are misrepresenting the position.

To this the honourable member replied—

I am not at all, I have quoted the Premier chapter and verse.

He quoted some chapters and some verses, that is all.

Mr. Thompson: I quoted your concluding remarks in reply to the debate.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Trying to pin the member for Darling Range down—

Mr. Bertram: Impossible!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: —I put it to him this way—

I am putting this to you, and do not dodge it. Is your attitude that I never, at any time whilst those Bills were before the House, said that I would proclaim the Bill for the repeal of road maintenance tax even though the other one was not passed?

That is a fair enough way to put it. There is no equivocation about it. It called for a straightforward answer, but what did I get? The member for Darling Range said—

The fact I will highlight is that the clear statement which the Premier was supposed to have made—if indeed it was ever made—was dragged out of him bit by bit with his arm tucked up behind his ear.

Mr. Rushton: Why are you so upset with the member for Darling Range?

Mr. A. A. Lewis: Because he had him on a spot.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I said—

What difference does that make?

The member for Darling Range said—

All the difference in the world.

Then the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said—

The Premier said it by way of interjection, but I could not find it in *Hansard*.

I replied that the statement was made, and this of course is perfectly true. The member for Darling Range then said—

It was not made in response to clear questions which were asked.

That is untrue.

Mr. O'Connor: Was it refuted straight-away?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: That is untrue; it is false representation.

Mr. O'Connor: Did you say road maintenance tax would remain if the other legislation did not go through?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I said that we would proclaim the Act to repeal road maintenance tax even if the other Bill was not passed.

Mr. O'Connor: You also said the opposite.

Sir Charles Court: You reversed that.

Mr. O'Connor: Do you deny you said the opposite?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I am saying that after all this backward and forward argument, and all these questions and answers, the Leader of the Opposition was fully aware of my intentions.

Mr. O'Connor: Well, you weren't.

Sir Charles Court: But you changed that again. If you will continue with the quotation from *Hansard* which you have read to us today, you will discover this. It is in the next few lines.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: What does the Leader of the Opposition think I really said?

Sir Charles Court: At that point?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Never mind about that point or any other point—I want to know what was his understanding.

Sir Charles Court: The House was completely confused. At that point I thought we had you lassoed and tied, and then you did a Houdini act and got out of it. If you read on—

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I do not want to read on. I asked the simple question: Did the Leader of the Opposition believe, after all the crossfire, that I had given an assurance we would proclaim the road maintenance legislation whether or not the traffic legislation was passed?

Mr. O'Connor: If you read *Hansard* you should be able to find that.

Sir Charles Court: At that point, but then you did a Houdini act.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: It is impossible to establish a point when one cannot get straightforward answers to questions one asks.

Sir Charles Court: At that point we thought we had you lassoed and tied, but then you did the Houdini trick. If you read on you will find you reversed your statement.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I am telling the Leader of the Opposition this, and he can deny it if he likes.

Sir Charles Court: I have the book in front of me here.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The Leader of the Opposition knows very well what I had in mind and what I did not.

Mr. O'Connor: You are the one on the hook.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: So did the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, who was very fair in his comments this evening.

Mr. O'Connor: Why not be honest?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The member for Mt. Lawley ought to talk about honesty!

Mr. O'Connor: You quote where I am not honest.

Sir Charles Court: At that point we thought we understood you, but when you finished the debate that night, you left it on the basis that you would not proclaim the legislation.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I am quite sure we all believe that the Leader of the Opposition would not be content to leave a matter he did not understand! He should not try to put that one over.

Sir Charles Court: *Hansard* records it.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The Leader of the Opposition should not start to quote that to me.

Sir Charles Court: I can see we will have to request autographed copies of pages 452 and 453. They are becoming famous.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: It is perfectly clear from the statements I have read from the speech of the member for Darling Range, and from what I said by way of interjection at the time, that he was hell bent to try to establish the point that I had never, at any time, informed the House of my intention to proclaim the Bill to abolish road maintenance tax.

Mr. O'Connor: What are you going to do this time?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: That is what I was trying to do. He knew at the time I had made such a comment.

Mr. O'Connor: Last time, but what about this time?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: Therefore, he made an attempt to mislead by false representation, and knowing it was false.

Sir Charles Court: That is an unfair accusation against the honourable member.

Mr. Thompson: Unbecoming for the Premier.

Sir Charles Court: I heard what the member for Darling Range said. I thought he laid it on the line in regard to the basis for his information and his opinion.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The Leader of the Opposition heard what I said.

Sir Charles Court: I did. I heard both of you.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The Leader of the Opposition will hear again what I said.

Sir Charles Court: All right.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I quote from the duplicate of my own speech. I said—

When I put the question to him as to why he was taking that line, he did not advance the information that he had not had an opportunity to look at my remarks on the Traffic Act Amendment Bill (No. 3). He continued to try to create the impression in the House that I had nowhere stated that if the Traffic Act Amendment Bill (No. 3) was not passed I would proclaim the other Bill.

Now, I suggest that is perfectly true. The member for Mt. Lawley says I did not say that. I said, "That is the situation." The Leader of the Opposition said—

Reference was made to that statement you are said to have made and my deputy interjected at the time to say he could not find it in *Hansard*. You were invited to—

The interjection was cut off at that point. I said—

But he still went on to establish the point that I had not made it despite my denial—

That is true. The Leader of the Opposition said—

He invited you to tell him where it was. I said "Rubbish".

Sir Charles Court: He did.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: The member for Mt. Lawley then said—

Surely he is entitled to believe a statement made by you which appears in *Hansard*?

I said—

His whole purpose—and he spent a considerable time on it—was to try to establish that I had not said that I would proclaim the Act if the other Bill was not passed.

The member for Mt. Lawley said—

He was quoting what you said from *Hansard*.

Of course, what the member for Mt. Lawley should have said was, "He is quoting some of what you said from *Hansard*."

Then I said—

Yes, and he kept on quoting and re-quoting it, despite the fact that I asked him straightout, "Are you saying I never stated I would have the Act proclaimed?"

I believe I have justified my comments about the member for Darling Range. Under the circumstances I have no intention whatever of retracting my remarks.

Mr. Thompson: I would have fainted if you had.

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: I commend the Bill to the House.

Sir Charles Court: We should say, "God Save the Queen" and "Hallelujah".

Question put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes—22

Mr. Bateman	Mr. Harman
Mr. Bertram	Mr. Hartrey
Mr. Brady	Mr. Jones
Mr. Brown	Mr. Lapham
Mr. Bryce	Mr. May
Mr. Burke	Mr. McIver
Mr. Cook	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Davies	Mr. Taylor
Mr. H. D. Evans	Mr. A. R. Tonkin
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. J. T. Tonkin
Mr. Graham	Mr. Moller

(Teller)

Noes—22

Mr. Blaikie	Mr. McPharlin
Sir David Brand	Mr. Mensaros
Sir Charles Court	Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Coyne	Mr. Ridge
Dr. Dadour	Mr. Runciman
Mr. Gayfer	Mr. Rushton
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Sibson
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Stephens
Mr. A. A. Lewis	Mr. Thompson
Mr. E. H. M. Lewis	Mr. W. G. Young
Mr. W. A. Manning	Mr. I. W. Manning

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr. T. D. Evans	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Bickerton	Mr. R. L. Young
Mr. Jamieson	Mr. Naider

The SPEAKER: The voting being equal, I give my casting vote with the Ayes.

Question thus passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

PUBLIC SERVICE ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Returned

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

ROAD MAINTENANCE (CONTRIBUTION) ACT REPEAL BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 15th May.

The SPEAKER: Before I call on the member for Mt. Lawley I wish to remind members that when that honourable member rose to speak to the Traffic Act Amendment Bill (No. 2) he asked permission to address himself to the provisions of both that Bill and the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act Repeal Bill in view of the fact that they were closely related, and at the time I nodded my assent. Therefore, before the member for Mt. Lawley proceeds with his speech on the second reading of this Bill I trust that members will accept that explanation.

MR. O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley) [5.50 p.m.]: When I spoke on the Traffic Act Amendment Bill, as the Speaker has said, I asked for permission to be able to discuss the contents of both Bills at the one time, because they are closely related. I could see no purpose in carrying on a similar debate on the second Bill and spending hours and hours on unnecessary discussion.

Actually, I think the debate could have concluded long ago and much earlier this evening, had not an unsavoury element been introduced into the debate.

We oppose this Bill for the reasons I expressed previously and I do not intend to spend more than five minutes in making this speech. In replying to the third reading of the Traffic Act Amendment Bill (No. 2) the Premier took a great deal of time to explain that he made certain statements. I think he would have been fair had he said he had made a statement to the contrary at a later stage, because there is no doubt that, after making the comment he did he went on to say, "I did not say that on the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act Repeal Bill."

The **SPEAKER**: I hope the honourable member will keep to the Bill.

Mr. O'CONNOR: My comments certainly relate to the Bill and have reference to the comments made by the Premier on the 1971 Bill, especially as they are so closely related. The opinion held by many members and those people who listened to this debate was that the Premier gave an undertaking that the road maintenance tax would remain. At this time he was speaking on the Traffic Act Amendment Bill (No. 3) in 1971, and if the Premier is looking for the relevant page in *Hansard* I can tell him that those remarks appear on page 453 of volume 192. I am merely trying to be helpful. His actual words were—

We need not wait for that because if there is any doubt in your mind I will clear it up now. If this Bill—

Here he was referring to the Traffic Act Amendment Bill (No. 3), which proposed to introduce a new tax. Continuing—

—does not pass the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act will not be abolished and that tax will stay.

We have been unable to get the Premier to admit to making that statement. Instead, he spent all his time pointing out that he had made statements to the contrary. I agree that he did, but he went on to make other statements. Members should not be misled and should be acquainted with all the facts.

In conclusion, because of the reasons that have been given previously I would point out that the members on this side of the House intend to oppose this measure.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

MR. J. T. TONKIN (Melville—Premier)
[5.56 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

Question put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes—25

Mr. Bateman	Mr. Jones
Mr. Bertram	Mr. Lapham
Mr. Brady	Mr. E. H. M. Lewis
Mr. Brown	Mr. W. A. Manning
Mr. Bryce	Mr. May
Mr. Burke	Mr. McIver
Mr. Cook	Mr. McPharlin
Mr. Davies	Mr. Sewell
Mr. H. D. Evans	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. J. T. Tonkin
Mr. Graham	Mr. W. G. Young
Mr. Hartman	Mr. Moller
Mr. Hartrey	

(Teller)

Noes—18

Mr. Blaikie	Mr. Mensaros
Mr. David Brand	Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Charles Court	Mr. Ridge
Mr. Coyne	Mr. Runciman
Dr. Dadour	Mr. Rushton
Mr. Gayfer	Mr. Sibson
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Stephens
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Thompson
Mr. A. A. Lewis	Mr. I. W. Manning

(Teller)

Question thus passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

MARGARINE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Council's Amendment

Amendment made by the Council now considered.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. Bateman) in the Chair; Mr. H. D. Evans (Minister for Agriculture) in charge of the Bill.

The amendment made by the Council was as follows—

Clause 22, page 12, line 7—Delete the passage commencing with the word "No" in line 7 and ending with the word "containing" in line 11, and substitute the following passage—

"No person shall in any way in the packaging, labelling or advertisement for sale, or for any purpose connected therewith, of any margarine indicate or suggest, or use any matter which indicates or suggests, or which contains".

Mr. H. D. EVANS: Members may recall, that during the second reading debate the member for Avon foreshadowed an amendment which was subsequently put forward in the Committee stage. At the time we indicated there was no objection to the amendment as this would simply assist in serving the purpose of ensuring protection for the consuming public. The second amendment suggested was considered to be redundant and it was pointed out to the member for Vasse that whilst

we were prepared to go along with the first amendment we could not agree to the second one, and he was co-operative enough to allow the Bill to pass to another place after the third reading without any amendment being made. This amendment from the Council which we now have before us is the one we examined and discussed previously and it is now acceptable to those on this side of the Chamber: I move—

That the amendment made by the Council be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Report

Resolution reported, the report adopted, and a message according returned to the Council.

ORDER OF THE DAY

Consideration

MR. J. T. TONKIN (Melville—Premier) [6.00 p.m.]: I move—

That Order of the Day No. 16 be now taken.

Question put and passed.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. O'Neill: The Premier has referred to the wrong Order of the Day. He has referred to the Electoral Districts Act Amendment Bill.

ORDER OF THE HOUSE

Withdrawal

MR. J. T. TONKIN (Melville—Premier) [6.01 p.m.]: I am sorry. As members are aware I had occasion to refer to yesterday's notice paper and this is the reason for my mistake. I seek leave to have the previous Order of the House withdrawn.

Previous Order of the House, by leave, withdrawn.

ORDER OF THE DAY

Consideration

MR. J. T. TONKIN (Melville—Premier) [6.03 p.m.]: I move—

That Order of the Day No. 13 be now taken.

Question put and passed.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 10th May.

MR. O'NEIL (East Melville—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [6.04 p.m.]: It is obvious from what has occurred today that chaos reigns supreme. It has done so for a considerable time, and the sooner

the House adjourns and members are permitted to go their ways to follow their various pursuits, the better.

Mr. Hartrey: Hear, hear!

Mr. O'NEIL: At least on that issue I have some support from the Government side.

Mr. Hartrey: You certainly have.

Mr. O'NEIL: Those on this side of the House had hoped by this stage the administration of the business of the House—I am referring to the handling of Bills—would have been a little better. Last session concluded in chaos and here we are just approaching the conclusion of this part of the session for a limited break. We are not concluding the business of the House. What legislation is not discussed now will remain on the notice paper and will be adequately dealt with at a later stage. Yet, I and my colleagues do not know from one moment to the next what is going on.

I was away for a period this afternoon with the Minister for Mines as I represented the Leader of the Opposition at a function. It was not until I took my seat in this Chamber 20 to 25 minutes ago that I was advised that once again all the then existing plans had been scrapped and new plans were afoot. I am particularly concerned about the resumption of the debate on the Bill before us.

From the questions I have asked in the House, members will realise that, apart from the subject matter of the Bill, the manner in which the legislation has been placed before the House is of considerable concern to Parliament, and certainly it is of concern to the Opposition.

A similar Bill was introduced in the last session of Parliament but other than the Minister's introductory speech, no debate ensued. Parliament was then prorogued, for reasons we know, and when the House resumed the notices of motion indicated that the Bill was one of those to be reinstated. However, that was not to be. We were then told that the Bill was not in its proper form and therefore it would not be reinstated for consideration. We then waited to see precisely what the Government proposed in relation to the Workers' Compensation Act. To our amazement a Minister representing the Minister for Labour introduced a Bill practically the same as the one which had been allowed to lapse. We were even more amazed when we listened to the stand-in Minister's speech.

I will not refer to all of it, but only a few parts because they concern us more than a little. The parts to which I wish to refer relate to the treatment of the Bill by a stand-in Minister—the Minister for Housing. He indicated that the provisions of the Bill did not comply with the Government's intention, but that we were not to mind because when the Bill was in Committee it would be appropriately amended.

I asked certain questions to ascertain what was going on. A Bill was presented to Parliament, but Parliament was told in essence—I will not be specific—"Do not take any notice of what is in the Bill because it will be amended anyway". So, on that score alone, neither the Opposition nor the sector of the public interested in the Bill really knew at that time what the Government proposed.

I wondered why such an unprecedented step had been taken, and it did not take me long to find out. Firstly I suspected the action was part of a pressure campaign by a particular section of the T.L.C. to have certain Bills relating to industrial matters before the House at the same time. In fact, one of the publications issued in support of the campaign contained comments on matters which were supposed to be in the Bill. There was even a comment by a doctor, whose name I cannot recall at the moment but which I have quoted previously, that having looked at the provisions he thought they were good. No-one else had seen the provisions, and certainly not Parliament.

Mr. Taylor: You are aware that the Employers Federation and the T.L.C. had been notified of what was likely to be in it.

Mr. O'NEIL: I am glad the Minister referred to what was "likely" to be in it, because we did not, in fact, know the Minister's proposals. It was only as a result of my consultation with him and at my request that he made a statement indicating the proposals.

Amendments were placed on the notice paper shortly after the Bill was introduced and I was asked whether it was unusual for a Government to amend its own Bills. I indicated that of course it was not, but that it was most unusual for a Minister to introduce a Bill and then tell members not to take any notice of certain clauses because they were to be amended. Having heard the Minister's explanation we now have before us a Bill the contents of which we have some little knowledge.

A moment ago when I was diverted from my theme, I was about to say that the Bill before us is ill-prepared, if not unprepared, and was introduced by a stand-in Minister who made apologies about amendments which would be made. I said that this action had taken place because of pressure from the T.L.C. I have made that statement before, but it is not without significance that in the *Daily News* of Friday, the 11th May, there appeared an article under the heading, "M.P. Survives Union Threat" and it relates to the very Bill we have before us. I will read portions of the article as follows—

The Attorney-General, Mr. T. D. Evans, has survived a union threat to unseat him from his Kalgoorlie electorate.

The union concerned is the Australian Workers' Union. Incidentally while we were debating an issue relating to the employment of Africans in mines the Minister for Works interjected to say that the previous attitude might have been because of A.W.U. pressure. This article confirms the type of pressure the A.W.U. apparently exerts, and I regard that union as a moderate and excellent union.

Mr. Hartrey: I agree with you.

Mr. O'NEIL: The article indicates the type of pressure that the union can apply. A little further on the article reads—

The powerful Australian Workers Union warned him that it would contest his seat if his government did not get on with the job of workers compensation reform . . .

The State Government got on with the job.

And what a mess it is making of it. Further down the article states—

The A.W.U. secretary-organiser in Boulder, Mr. Alf Barwick, confirmed the use of his union's political muscle.

We have two reasons for the Bill being before us in its messy state, and I will explain further about the mess the legislation is in. One of the reasons the Bill is before us is as a result of the T.L.C. campaign in respect of its industrial legislation—not the Government's industrial legislation—and the other is the pressure placed upon No. 3 in the Labor Cabinet—the Attorney-General who is the member for Kalgoorlie—by the Mining Division of the A.W.U. No-one has denied that the Attorney-General has been subjected to pressure. The article further continues—

Mr. Barwick did not deny that the A.W.U. had gone so far as to consider sponsoring their own candidate at the next state election.

"We got him (Mr. Evans) up here and discussed our problems and when he understood them he went away and did something."

I will say he did. He went away and did something all right, and that is why the Bill in its truly messy form is before Parliament at the moment.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. O'NEIL: Prior to the tea suspension I had been relating a sad and sorry story with regard to how this legislation came before the House in its present form. If members have read some of the questions I have asked—one as late as today—they will have realised that I have requested the Minister to give serious thought to taking a course of action which would greatly facilitate consideration of this most important piece of legislation.

I pointed out to the Minister, quite clearly, that currently there is no printed up-to-date copy of the Workers' Compensation Act. I am indebted to the staff of

Parliament that, in fact, I have a photostat copy of the Act. It is in rough form and I had to do the guillotining myself.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Why did not the Deputy Leader of the Opposition arrange for some copies to be printed while he was in Government for 12 years?

Mr. O'NEIL: The Act was printed up to 1970. No printed copies of the Act were available when the Minister introduced the Bill in 1971. It is a fact that currently there is available a printer's proof, and once again I am indebted to the Minister for supplying me with a copy of the printer's proof. However, it is dated 1972.

As I understand the situation, the Act was to be reprinted in appropriate form in 1972, but the reprinting was held over pending the possible passage of the 1972 Bill which did not eventuate. I have already told the story relating to that Bill which was included amongst those of which notice was given of intention to reinstate, but this did not eventuate.

The Bill now before us does not do what the Government intends. In fact, amendments appeared on the notice paper before the Bill was debated. Having regard for the fact that there is no printed copy of the Act available; having regard for the fact that there is a printer's proof which can go to the Press immediately; and having regard for the fact that we already have a Bill which has not been debated and which it is proposed to amend, would the Minister withdraw this measure and reintroduce it during the spring sitting of the Parliament?

At that stage the Minister could give a full statement of what he proposed to do. He will not need to make any changes and we, the Opposition, would be able to understand the measure more fully. In answer to a question—I think it was today—the Minister said there are certain problems. He said he would relate the line numbers in the Bill to the line numbers in the unprinted Act in order to help us. That is as far as he was prepared to go at this stage, but he said he would give consideration to the other points I raised.

We propose to handle the Bill only to a certain stage in this place, so surely it would not be unreasonable, without any change in the philosophy of the Government and without any delay caused to the Minister or the Government, to do as I have requested. I ask the Minister to reintroduce the Bill and include in it the amendments which appear on the notice paper. The Act could be reprinted and the provisions contained in the Bill would relate to the Act. We would then be able to see precisely what the Government has in mind.

I have done considerable work and blended the amendments into the Act. I have a rough idea of what is intended but I feel certain that other members,

who might have taken similar action, would have found themselves in great difficulty because until we get into Committee we will be discussing the Bill as printed. Then, when we do get into Committee, there will be a change. We could argue a point of issue in the Bill as presented, not knowing what was to happen during the Committee stage.

The provisions in the Bill, as presented, are more acceptable than the proposed amendments. The principles are different and, under Standing Orders, at the second reading stage I cannot talk on other than what is contained in the Bill. I also understand the T.L.C. desires the Opposition to express an opinion on this particular piece of legislation as part of a quartet of industrial Bills. I am a little disinclined to express an opinion, but, I believe it is important that I do so.

I want to emphasise that experience has proven we are not opposed to improving the conditions in respect of which workers' compensation is available. I am more and more annoyed when I read statements to the effect that this Act is in the same form as it was when Adam was in short pants. Those statements are misleading. I have made statements previously—as the member for Boulder-Dundas will be aware—that during the six years I was Minister for Labour this Act was amended eight times.

Mr. Taylor: I do not think that appears in my second reading speech.

Mr. O'NEIL: Well, it did in the previous speech.

Mr. Hartrey: And all except one of those amendments were advantageous!

Mr. O'NEIL: That is right. Some of the amendments did not go as far as the trade unions wanted, but I must say that the amendments passed were substantial as far as workers' compensation was concerned. They were probably the most important amendments made in the last 15 to 20 years, and I cannot go back much further than that.

Mr. Hartrey: Some amendments were made during the time of Sir Ross McLarty.

Mr. O'NEIL: I was not here at that time. I was not in Parliament when Sir Ross McLarty was Premier. The fact remains I take exception to any accusation that we, on this side of the House, take an unfair view with respect to compensation available to workers.

Mr. Jones: But you did not go to the extent of matching the standards which exist in the Eastern States.

Mr. O'NEIL: As a matter of fact, we went further. Let me say that the amendments introduced in respect of workers' compensation came about as a result of a committee set up specifically to review not

only the quantum of compensation available under the Act, but also the associated problems in general.

Mr. Hartrey: Dead right.

Mr. O'NEIL: The terms and conditions which I laid down, as members will be aware, were fair and clear. The committee was established and consisted of representatives of private insurers, the State Government Insurance Office, the Workers' Compensation Board, the employers, and the trade union movement. The committee was chaired by the present Chairman of the Workers' Compensation Board.

It took a long time for the committee to bring down its recommended amendments. I can recall that it had been announced, in the Governor's Speech, that amendments would be introduced, but they were not available when we wanted them. This always seems to happen; somebody is away on leave at the wrong time. However, at the earliest opportunity the amendments, as recommended by that quadripartite committee were presented to this Parliament untouched by the Government, and untouched by me as the Minister for Labour.

Mr. Jones: And not touched by the T.L.C.

Mr. O'NEIL: I do not agree with the member for Collie. There was mediation. Certain matters were submitted by one section and other matters were put forward by the other section, and what was presented to Parliament was a compromise acceptable to all, and a compromise with which I did not interfere. I am sorry, I have just remembered that I did interfere to some extent when I introduced the matter of mesothelioma, which is a cancerous growth caused by pneumoconiosis. The disease was so rare that it did not matter, but that was the correction I made.

Mr. May: Even the members of the committee did not know anything about it.

Mr. O'NEIL: I did not know the meaning of the word when I first saw it but, as I have explained, it was a serious condition and a very rare one but, in fact, it could not be covered under the provisions of the Act. However, every other recommendation contained in my Bill was the result of the work of that special committee.

A change of Government has occurred and in the Premier's policy speech he made the statement that there would be a comprehensive review of the Workers' Compensation Act—a complete revamping. A new Act was to be prepared. I was thrilled to bits to hear that statement because I still believe the Workers' Compensation Act ought to be split so as to cover industrial accidents, as such, and with a separate area to cover work-caused diseases because they are a great problem.

A person can suffer from a work-caused disease and not be placed in the position of not being able to earn a full income. Compensation, as such, is designed to compensate for loss of earning capacity. Some disabilities can be compartmentalised into one section, but many disabilities suffered by workers, as a result of their work, do not for the time being reduce their income-earning capacity. Industrial deafness is one disability which is a great problem. So I feel there should be a separation. I understand in New South Wales there is some form of separation by way of a special provision covering disability which may not reduce the income earning capacity and which is separate from compensation *per se*.

Mr. Hartrey: Only for Broken Hill miners.

Mr. O'NEIL: That may well be so, but I think members will realise there is a distinction. A man can suffer some disability in respect of which he should be compensated because it is work-caused but which does not for the time being, or even during his working life in many cases, impair his capacity to earn a living. I believe that should be covered completely separately from workers' compensation because there are clear instances of injuries occasioning the loss of a limb, or something like that, which cause absence from work, hospitalisation, and measurable hospital and medical costs, and which are clearly and coldly compensable to a measurable quantum. To my way of thinking, they should be covered by compensation *per se*.

On the other side we have these disabilities which occur as a result of working conditions. I understand that in arsenic plants one loses one's hair; as a boiler-maker one is likely to become deaf, which is a social disability. In some compensation schemes no compensation would be paid until the worker left work and retired. He is not precluded from earning an income as a boilermaker because he is partially deaf, although he may be a danger to his fellow men.

It seems to me there should be a distinction between the types of disability which are work-caused. I would dearly have loved to make a thorough study of this matter, but I think the Minister for Labour for many days to come will understand that there are many things we would like to do which the pressure of other jobs prevents us from doing.

Having cleared that out of the way, I want to make the point that this Bill contains two principles with which we do not disagree. There are a lot of "funnies" around the edges which relate to specific areas of disability, but there is one principle and perhaps one fact with which we do not disagree.

We do not disagree with the fact that the payments under the Workers' Compensation Act as it now stands should be

upgraded because a period of three years has elapsed since that was last done. Therefore, there is no problem in regard to accepting the fact that there is a need to upgrade the quantum of payments available for certain things—even loss of parts and loss of time.

In my view, it would also be very advisable—and this is the principle with which we agree—to provide for automatic escalation in the Workers' Compensation Act so that it does not have to come back to Parliament from time to time for variation of the amount in a lump sum to be paid for the loss of a limb or a finger, and so on.

In those two areas alone there is some accord between the Government and the Opposition in respect of this legislation.

I have mentioned there are other matters. There is the matter of the qualifications of a *de facto* wife if she has a baby and has lived with her *de facto* husband for three years. It was we who introduced the concept of recognising a *de facto* wife if it could be proved that the *de facto* relationship was permanent. I am not being facetious when I say I am classing this as one of the "funnies" which surround the basic principle. So in that area we have some reason for agreement.

The argument of course—and I think this obtains in respect of the general opinion of people—is quantum and not so much the legal intricacies of who gets what and why. These things are important, but what the worker and the ordinary people think is, "How much a week will I be paid if through an injury at work I am disabled?" That is the bread-and-butter issue of workers' compensation.

I have already conceded we would be foolish to say there was no need to update the Act. We all know costs, wages, average weekly earnings, and the like have risen. I have also mentioned we would like to see some way of tying the specified figures for weekly payments and schedule 2 payments to a datum which varies in some way. The datum to which many of the payments are currently tied is the State basic wage, which is adjusted annually. It is a wage which should, if it does not, reflect movements in the cost of living in that period. So there is in fact some form of automatic escalation. However, in the present Act the scheduled injuries are quoted as straightout figures.

Mr. Hartrey: It was supposed to end there.

Mr. O'NEIL: Let us look firstly at what the Minister proposed to do in his first Bill. I think I am permitted to mention that, because the Minister referred to it. At the time the payment for death, which was basically the maximum, was set out in the Act as \$11,000, which was then above the average of all the States.

Mr. Jones: Above some and lower than some.

Mr. O'NEIL: It was higher than the average. The amount of \$11,000 was the maximum lump sum. Do not forget in the amendments I introduced in 1970 provision was made for that sum, in respect of weekly payments, to be exceeded at the discretion of the board, so it was not a fixed lump sum for a very badly disabled worker. When he had exhausted his weekly payments and so on—the \$11,000—the board could allow that to carry on, so there was not a tied limit; but in respect of the death of an injured worker there was a limit. There was provision for the Workers' Compensation Board to regard \$11,000 as not being the maximum in certain circumstances.

We set that figure at \$11,000, and the Act was assented to on the 23rd September, 1970. That sum varies with basic wage movements. In fact, it varies by \$295 for every \$1 a week increase in the basic wage, so it is tied to the basic wage. In round terms, it increases by four times the annual increase in the basic wage. That is fairly evident. To be precise, it is about 5.7 times the annual increase. For every \$1 a week increase in the basic wage, the lump sum or maximum payment increases by \$295. Although we set the limit at \$11,000 in 1970, the figure today is \$12,208, so it has risen by \$1,208 automatically because of basic wage adjustments. I do not want to be tied very closely to those figures.

Mr. Taylor: They are spot on with those I have.

Mr. O'NEIL: When we proposed raising the figure to \$11,000 from the then existing figure of \$10,000 in the Act, I said, on page 389 of the 1970 *Hansard*—

Consideration has also been given to amounts payable in respect of death. The sum at present payable in this State—excluding amounts added for children—is \$10,881. Amounts payable in other State are as follows: New South Wales \$10,000; Victoria \$9,000; Queensland \$8,640; South Australia \$12,000; Tasmania \$12,098, and the Australian Capital Territory \$12,000. The average of these amounts is \$10,623, a figure somewhat lower than that applying in this State. It is proposed, however, to increase this sum to \$11,000. It has to be realised, of course, that this figure is subject to basic wage fluctuation. For example, the existing figure of \$10,881 would increase by \$295 for each \$1 per week increase in the basic wage.

I do not know whether the Speaker will allow me to talk on what the Minister proposes to do about the Bill because, in talking on the Bill as it is we are talking about a new base figure of \$15,000. I do not know that I should refer to what the Minister proposes to do to the Bill in Committee. But let us look at the figure of \$15,000.

In the Bill as introduced, the Minister carried out a very abortive exercise in assessing the payments under the schedules to the Act. Let us have a look at what he said in respect of the second schedule. It contains a table which itemises the injuries in the first column. The second column lists the nature of the injuries, and the third column shows the lump sums payable. The first item is total loss of sight of both eyes, and the third column states the sum payable as being 100 per cent.

Previously, the figure in the third column was shown as so many dollars. The heading to that column is, "Ratio which the sum payable herein bears to \$15,000 per centum". What was the point of going to all the trouble of putting a heading like that on it when the figure underneath could not vary? In other words, why not put "\$15,000"? That is 100 per cent. of \$15,000. This is one instance I use to show the Bill has been badly prepared.

The Minister proposes to change that, and I will run the risk of annoying you, Mr. Speaker, and being called to order by going beyond what the Minister said in his second reading speech and in his statement, and saying what will happen if and when the Bill reaches the Committee stage and if and when the Minister moves the amendments now on the notice paper.

That amount of \$15,000 will no longer appear in the Bill, and will not appear in the amended Workers' Compensation Act; in lieu there will be the words "prescribed amount". That would be fair enough in respect of the scheduled payments, because we would have a prescribed amount and then we would say a certain injury is worth 100 per cent. of that amount, and other injuries might be worth 5 or 20 per cent. of it. That would be all right because the prescribed amount would vary; but the percentage indicates the ratio between the compensation for a specific injury and the prescribed amount, and to put \$15,000 at the head of the column and then place a percentage beneath it is a waste of time.

The prescribed amount concerns us to a certain degree. I admit that the Minister said he was aiming for the best compensation in Australia. However, I would say he aimed mighty high.

Mr. Bertram: That is the best thing to do, isn't it?

Mr. O'NEIL: I think we in Parliament should adopt a much more responsible attitude than that adopted by a quartermaster, or the headmaster of a school. I know that in the Army if one wanted 20 message forms one would ask for 100 and receive 10; and I know that if a headmaster wanted a certain number of boxes of chalk he would ask for three times that number and probably receive none!

However, reasonably and sincerely, I say this is not the way to legislate. I think that a proposition must have merit and must be

warranted. It may well be that the Minister unwittingly said, "Instead of tying the payment to a datum called the State basic wage, which does not vary enough, let us tie it to a different form of datum described by the Commonwealth Statistician as the national average weekly earnings." I will not go into details in this respect, but let me say that the Minister's amendments propose to delete the State basic wage as the datum and to insert another datum. However, the other datum produces some extremely distorted effects.

I will explain that. Last year it was considered that the maximum payment should be \$15,000 instead of the current figure of \$12,308. Therefore, the Minister and his advisers have assessed that between that time and this the costs have increased by \$3,000. Probably he went a little over the figure, as I did when I made it \$11,000; but that seemed to be fair and reasonable to the Minister at that time and it was reasonable in respect of the Bill which he introduced at that time.

Mr. Taylor: The previous member for Bunbury moved an amendment to reduce it.

Mr. O'NEIL: Well, that was a year ago.

Mr. Taylor: About six months ago.

Mr. O'NEIL: When that amending Bill was before the House the figure set by the Minister was not regarded by the member for Bunbury as being reasonable. On the other hand, at that time, the Minister said \$15,000 was a reasonable figure, and he said it again six months later. So if the member for Bunbury erred in one direction, the Minister erred in the other direction. In other words, when the Bill before us was introduced the figure was \$15,000. Now the Minister proposes to delete all references to specific figures. We do not disagree with the principle of endeavouring to make automatic adjustments to compensation so that we do not have Bills presented to Parliament and are not forced to stand here talking about the matter on a Thursday night when we should be home. However, the Minister has gone too far.

The Commonwealth Statistician's figures in respect of the average weekly earnings in the books he used to produce—and I suppose he still does—carry a very important footnote; and that is that one cannot use the average weekly earnings per State to compare conditions per State. I have used this argument on many occasions when I was on the other side of the House, and it has been used against me on certain occasions. What I am saying is that the figures given by the Statistician in respect of the average weekly earnings per State cannot be used to compare precisely the average weekly earnings in one State against another.

It is a complicated exercise, but I think members will understand this is brought about by the fact that the centres of the major businesses are found in Melbourne and Sydney, and therefore the bulk of the highly-paid senior executives are found in those States and not in this State. Therefore it is difficult to justify the use of the figures supplied by the Statistician as a datum point. So it may well be that the Minister should have adhered not to the basic wage in this State but to a factor of that wage. For example, if under the present system the figure was set at \$12,000 and the Minister wished to lift it to \$15,000, we would arrive at a fraction of fifteen-twelfths, or five-fourths, of the basic wage. The Minister should have said the datum point in future shall be five-fourths of the basic wage. In other words, he should have lifted the datum point and then all the other figures would move accordingly. If the basic wage is not the correct datum point, then the Minister should strike a new datum point, but one which is related to the State basic wage and takes into consideration the consumer price index and other such matters. That would have been fairer.

In selecting a new datum point the Minister lifted the figure which was considered to be fair last year—and, theoretically, this year—from \$15,000 to well in excess of \$26,000. That is not a reasonable proposition.

Mr. Taylor: As I pointed out, firstly, we followed the move currently before the Federal Parliament—it has been accepted already by the lower House—and, secondly, with regard to average weekly wages I understand Western Australia has the second highest average weekly wage, not because we have highly-paid executives here, but because of the fairly highly-paid workers in the north.

Mr. O'NEIL: We are transgressing the rules of debate here by talking about proposed amendments to the Bill which will be moved when the measure reaches the Committee stage. However, to return to my point it is not the average weekly wage which is referred to, but the average weekly earnings.

Mr. Taylor: That is true.

Mr. O'NEIL: I will read from the document I have relating to the first schedule in order to be more exact. The proposed amending Bill sought initially to increase the amount in question to \$15,000, and by an amendment to a new standard to be known as the "prescribed amount"—being the "amount ascertained by multiplying by two hundred and sixty the amount specified in the last estimate, published by the Commonwealth Statistician, before the date of injury or the date of death, as the case requires of the seasonally adjusted average weekly earnings per employed male unit

throughout Australia in respect of the last period of three months that ended before that date in relation to which he published such an estimate". Of course, the prescribed amount is not mentioned in the Bill; it is in one of those amendments proposed by the Minister.

In the words of a layman, that means it will be adjusted quarterly in accordance with the Commonwealth Statistician's figures for the average weekly earnings of the average Australian male. So once again we have a datum which is unacceptable to us because as the Statistician's figure for the December quarter was over \$100 the prescribed amount would currently be over \$26,000. I think that is aiming at the stars and it is not a fair proposition. We on this side of the House are prepared to be fair, but we are certainly not prepared to be unreasonable. I do not think the Minister has put a reasonable proposition before us.

Mr. Taylor: Would you suggest that the proposal in the Bill is reasonable?

Mr. O'NEIL: I could go on to give some of the calculations I have been able to make.

Mr. Taylor: You are referring to the quantum?

Mr. O'NEIL: Perhaps I had better not do that. I am on my feet only because certain people want to know what I think about the Bill; but I do not think I will tell them. I will tell them what I think about the principle. I am in a difficult position because, strictly speaking, I do not know what I am talking about—I do not mean that in the way members opposite have taken it; I said it facetiously because I am referring to proposed amendments. We should be debating the second reading of the Bill before us, and not what is proposed in the amendments foreshadowed by the Minister.

We have an idea how the Bill will finish up from looking at the proposed amendments standing on the notice paper, but they do not necessarily have to be moved anyway. We had a statement from the Minister who introduced the Bill that the Minister for Labour would develop these points a little later and would tell us more about the Bill because it is proposed to amend it.

Perhaps in order to clarify the matter it might be as well to quote from the speech of the Minister for Housing when introducing the Bill. He said—

When introducing last year's Bill, the Minister for Labour announced that it was the intention of the Government to conduct an inquiry into all aspects of workers' compensation.

I want to make the point that, of course, that inquiry was never conducted for the reason that the Government is awaiting a decision regarding what will happen in the Commonwealth sphere.

Mr. Bertram: Are you not in support of the Commonwealth decision?

Mr. O'NEIL: I want to make a point about it. The Commonwealth scheme is not an employers' indemnity insurance scheme; it is a self-contained, self-supporting scheme which is offered to workers as part of their conditions of employment with the Commonwealth. It is not an insurance scheme; it applies only to Commonwealth employees, and nobody pays for it other than the taxpayer in the long term. So to relate the Commonwealth employees' compensation scheme with the Western Australian Workers' Compensation Act is no more valid than to relate the superannuation scheme for members of Parliament to a superannuation scheme in the private sector. I do not care what the Commonwealth does in respect of its own employees.

We had an example here of the Premier introducing a Bill to give four weeks' annual leave to civil servants, and at the same time he said that if the private sector wanted four weeks' leave it would have to go to the arbitration court. That gave a great deal of heart to our argument. There is a difference, and the Premier admitted it. So we cannot in any way relate the Commonwealth employees' insurance scheme to the compensation Act in this State. They operate in two different fields for two different sorts of people.

Mr. Lapham: They are both Australians, but one is valued at, say, \$26,000 and the other is valued at, say, \$10,000.

Mr. O'NEIL: That is fair enough; if the honourable member wants everybody to be level that is all right with me. However, his own Premier introduced a Bill to give civil servants four weeks' annual leave and said that if those who work in the private sector wish to have four weeks' annual leave they can go to the arbitration court. We on this side were greatly heartened to hear that he holds the same view as we do in respect of that.

Mr. Bertram: You make the point that they are not comparable; accepting that for a moment, do you accept the proposed Commonwealth legislation?

Mr. O'NEIL: I have been given copies of speeches and so on, and to the best of my knowledge that Bill has not yet been passed; but it is not a proposition that can be related to this one.

Mr. Jones: What is your attitude towards a national scheme?

Mr. O'NEIL: I would love to tell the honourable member, but I hope that when I continue with what I have to say someone will remind me where I was up to. I was referring to the problem of considering the proposals of the Minister in Committee, as distinct from what was said when he introduced the Bill.

I would now like to refer to a few comments made by the Minister for Housing who moved the second reading of the Bill. He said something to the effect that in the circumstances it was apparent the Bill no longer satisfied the Government's desire to equate the benefits of the Western Australian Act to the best in Australia. He said further that during the progress of the Bill through the House it was proposed to amend it to achieve the Government's objective in this respect.

We did not get any explanation of the proposals, because the Minister said that in the absence of the Minister for Labour it was not his intention to elaborate further on the matter. We were left completely in the air. The Minister then dealt with the clauses in the Bill. In respect of clause 10 of the Bill, and this is an important provision because in relates to quantum, the Minister said—

Clause 10: First Schedule—As previously mentioned, the Bill, in its present form, does not satisfactorily convey the Government's intention. This clause will accordingly require amendment in due course.

The same thing applied in respect of clause 11, and so on.

At the stage when the Bill was introduced we did not know what were the Government's proposals, at least in respect of quantum. The Minister did make a statement to the House sometime later, and that was after a weekend during which I had wasted many hours in trying to find out what the Minister would do. Certain amendments were placed on the notice paper, and I was supplied with a copy. By way of a ministerial statement he overcame the problem by letting us know what he wanted to do.

We recognise that the Act requires updating. We would not disapprove of the principle of the provisions being made automatic; and we would even agree that the datum currently being used for the basic wage might be a different one; but we would not go so far as to use the new datum which, in fact, almost doubles all the figures in quantum within the Act from the current basis of \$15,000 which the Minister thought was fair and equitable compared with the other States, to a figure of \$26,000.

Some of the reasons for the delay in the consideration of the Bill were brought about by the anxiety of the Government to see what would happen in the Commonwealth sphere, especially in relation to the Commonwealth employees' compensation. I indicated that in my view it was not something which could be compared with workers' compensation in this State. That scheme is entirely self-supporting, with no insurance fund, and the like. So one does need to have regard for the cost of this proposal.

Another reason, and probably a valid one, for not setting up a committee of inquiry is that according to the Minister, the committee of inquiry would not meet because all he proposed to do was to make interim adjustments to the Act to restore parity, as the Commonwealth Government intended to introduce a scheme of national compensation.

When I first read about this I had some research done for me. I requested the library reference officer to tell me in terms as simple as possible what it would cost the average income earner in Australia to establish a national compensation scheme or fund.

On the face of it, this is a very attractive proposition. It is to be a national scheme designed to ensure that irrespective of the reason a person is absent from work and his income earning capacity is reduced, he will receive not less than a certain percentage of the average weekly earnings—whether the absence be caused by an injury at work in which case the person would receive workers' compensation; whether it be through a motor vehicle accident in which case he would be entitled to third party compensation; or whether it be any other form of injury or sickness which deprives him of earning an income.

Under this national scheme he would, in fact, be guaranteed a certain figure. I am not sure about this, but I understand the figure under consideration is 80 per cent. of the average weekly earnings.

Mr. Taylor: I am not sure of the percentage.

Mr. O'NEIL: It is a percentage. It suddenly struck me that these schemes are very attractive initially, but as the Leader of the Opposition said the other day all these schemes to grant extra leave and other benefits are attractive, as long as we remember somebody has to pay for them.

I raised this issue in respect of a worker buying a home, as against one renting a home. I proved conclusively that the poorer a person was the greater should the opportunity be for him to purchase a home because he would be investing his earnings for a long time in an appreciating asset, so that in the end he would have an asset and not just a handful of rent receipts.

Mr. Taylor: This is in a different category. This relates to illness the cost of which is beyond the capacity of the worker. Those who are fortunate in avoiding illness will pay for those who are not so fortunate.

Mr. O'NEIL: I was asked by the member for Collie to comment on the comprehensive national compensation scheme.

Mr. Jones: I raised it to indicate that everyone would be on the same level in Australia.

Mr. O'NEIL: I find as a result of the research that has been undertaken for me, in essence in respect of the acquisition of goods on hire purchase and of homes, the real concern of the average income earner is "Can I afford it out of my weekly pay packet?" I shall not go over the exercise of comparing the purchase and the rental of a home, because I think on that occasion I won my argument.

The SPEAKER: Order! I must ask members to be more quiet.

Mr. O'NEIL: The library reference officer has extracted certain figures for me. He looked into the national compensation scheme that is proposed in New Zealand. I understand the Act has been passed, but not yet proclaimed. These figures indicate that the estimated national compensation is \$40,000,000 per annum in New Zealand. That was in 1967 when the work force was approximately 1,000,000. Therefore the multiplier in respect of that is 40,000,000 as against 1,000,000. I asked what would this be in the Australian context when converted.

The library reference officer indicated that in the Australian context this would be as follows—

Work force approximately	5,000,000
Multiplier	40
National compensation	\$200,000,000

However, as the Woodhouse report on the New Zealand compensation scheme which is expected to come into operation on the 10th October, 1973, envisages a 1 per cent. of income levy towards the fund, this would mean that every worker in Australia would have to pay 1 per cent. of his income to the fund in order that he might receive compensation under a comprehensive scheme.

Mr. Hartrey: That is not much good. The workers do not have to pay for workers' compensation.

Mr. O'NEIL: That is right. Just imagine how attractive this is to a voter if we say to him, "From next year 1 per cent. of your earnings each week will have to be paid into the national compensation scheme of insurance to enable you to receive 80 per cent. of your average weekly earnings, so as to compensate you even for injuries which may result from motor vehicle accidents. This will cost you \$1 a week."

Mr. Hartrey: The reaction would not be very favourable.

Mr. O'NEIL: I agree. This sort of national comprehensive compensation scheme will cost the worker something. If I were to say to a worker, "Do not worry if you break your leg. You will not have to go to work and you will receive 80 per cent. of your average weekly earnings" he would be pleased. But if I were to add, "It will cost you \$1 a week" the reaction would be quite different.

Let us not be fooled by comprehensive national compensation schemes.

Mr. Jones: That was in 1967.

Mr. O'NEIL: This survey is based on the New Zealand scheme which will be put into operation after the Act is proclaimed on the 10th October of this year. These are estimates which convert the insurance situation to the Australian scene. I admit they could be inaccurate, but the library reference officer has carried out this survey for me. He also indicated to me that this sort of payment is expected to cover third party motor vehicle insurance, social security, health benefits, existing industrial compensation, self-employed people, and the like.

It is clear that such a scheme cannot be implemented on a national scale without a contribution of at least 1 per cent. of the weekly income of every worker. If a person receives a wage of \$50 a week he will pay 50c a week; and if he receives \$100 a week, he will pay \$1 a week.

I do not know whether everyone will receive the same amount of compensation; or that a person earning \$100 a week will receive \$80 a week, while the person earning \$200 a week will receive \$160 a week. I do not know whether or not everyone will receive a flat rate. The position has not been made clear.

I regret that I have digressed in replying to the comment made by the member for Collie, and that I cannot be more specific about the matter. He asked me whether I had looked into this scheme. I want to indicate that with the staff that is available to me I did make an examination of it.

Mr. Jones: You mentioned quantum, but not the question of the average earnings and compensation.

Mr. O'NEIL: I cannot be more specific. As I indicated earlier, the debate on the Bill today came about in rather unusual circumstances. I was absent from the Chamber with the Minister for Mines at a function, and I had no idea the debate on the Bill would be brought up within 10 to 15 minutes of my arrival in the House.

I had to rush into my office and pick up my papers. I know the reason why I am on my feet. A certain section of the trade union movement wants to know our attitude to the Bill. I was inclined to say nothing. As a matter of fact, those people know our attitude towards workers' compensation, but not specifically our attitude to the Bill. I do not intend to be specific; in fact, I do not think I should be on my feet. Perhaps some members would like me to sit down so that they can go home.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Do not run away with that idea. They cannot go home when you sit down.

Mr. O'NEIL: Perhaps they will be able to go home earlier than they hoped. I think the Minister appreciates the problem that not only the Opposition but also some members of his own party may attempt physically to relate the Bill and the amendments on the notice paper to the copy of the parent Act in their possession.

I think the Minister is sympathetic towards a proposition I put to him. That proposition will not in any way detract from what he intends to put before the House.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will keep order.

Mr. O'NEIL: The proposition is to withdraw the present Bill. I appreciate he would need permission of the House to withdraw it now the debate has started, but I suggest the Bill should be reprinted to include the amendments on the notice paper. Consequently there would be no change of intent. At the same time, I suggest, a number of copies of the Workers' Compensation Act should be printed in an up-to-date form. We could then relate the reprinted Bill to the reprinted Act. In this way, when we resume consideration of the Bill we will know what we are talking about. This is not a very big request to make of the Minister.

It would also give me another opportunity to speak, in a more specific way, to the Bill. I have already said that I do not intend to go into detail this evening. I have only mentioned generalities and stated our general opinion in respect of this measure. To give the Minister the opportunity at least to give serious consideration to my proposition I intend to ask permission to continue my remarks at a later date.

Leave to Continue Speech

Mr. O'NEIL: I move—

That I be given leave to continue my speech at a later date.

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition seeks leave to continue his speech at a later date. Is there a dissentient voice? As there is no dissentient voice, leave is granted.

Motion put and passed.

Debate thus adjourned.

BILLS (3): RETURNED

1. Seed Marketing Act Amendment Bill.
2. Marine Navigational Aids Bill.
3. Land Agents Act Amendment Bill.

Bills returned from the Council without amendment.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

Announcement by Speaker

THE SPEAKER (Mr. Norton): I wish to announce that the member for Karrinyup (Mr. Lapham) has been appointed Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee and

the member for Narrogin (Mr. W. A. Manning) has been appointed deputy chairman.

I will now leave the Chair until the ringing of the bells.

Sitting suspended from 8.33 to 9.48 p.m.

**EVAPORITES (LAKE MacLEOD)
AGREEMENT ACT AMENDMENT
BILL**

Returned

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

**TOWN PLANNING AND
DEVELOPMENT ACT AMENDMENT
BILL**

Returned

Bill returned from the Council with amendments.

Council's Amendments: In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. Bate-man) in the Chair; Mr. Davies (Minister for Town Planning) in charge of the Bill.

The amendments made by the Council were as follows—

No. 1.

Clause 3, page 2, lines 18 and 19—Delete the words "repealed and re-enacted as follows" and substitute the following—

"amended by adding after sub-section (2) the following sub-sections".

No. 2.

Clause 3, page 2, line 20—Delete the passage "3. (1) Persons" and substitute the passage "(3) A person".

No. 3.

Clause 3, page 2, line 20—Delete the word "are" and substitute the word "is".

No. 4.

Clause 3, page 2, lines 22 and 23—Delete the words "Town Planning Commissioner and" and substitute the word "the".

No. 5.

Clause 3, page 2, line 24—Delete the word "respectively".

No. 6.

Clause 3, page 2, line 25—Delete the designation "(2)" and substitute the designation "(4)".

No. 7.

Clause 3, page 2, line 31—Delete the designation "(3)" and substitute the designation "(5)".

No. 8.

Clause 3, page 2, line 36—Delete the designation "(4)" and substitute the designation "(6)".

Mr. DAVIES: The amendments will effect precisely what the Opposition attempted to effect when the measure was debated in this Chamber; that is, to continue having the Town Planning Commissioner appointed by the Governor every five years under the Town Planning and Development Act as well as having him appointed under the Public Service Act. I do not believe this is necessary but I am not prepared to delay the Committee in arguing the various merits of the case.

The Government attempted to write into legislation something which has existed from the 1st January, 1965. No opportunity had previously been taken to bring the Act up to date. There is a danger in reckless change but it certainly cannot be said that it is reckless change to alter the legislation when this position has existed since 1965. There is a greater danger, I believe, in blind conservatism and this is what is being perpetrated in the amendments.

I do not believe it matters one way or the other. It means that at the end of five years we ask the Governor whether we will continue to appoint a certain man as Town Planning Commissioner. If the Governor says "Yes" the matter rests for another five years. If the Governor says "No" we would not know what to do with the Town Planning Commissioner because he is a permanent appointment under the Public Service Act.

In order not to delay the Committee, I am prepared to agree to the amendments. I move—

That amendments Nos. 1 to 8 made by the Council be agreed to.

Mr. RUSHTON: We appreciate that the Minister has agreed to the points we made when the issue was being debated in this Chamber. We believe the principle is worth while. I realise that it is not desirable to delay the Committee at this stage by arguing out the effect of these amendments but I must mention that the Opposition disagreed with the points the Minister previously raised. Members on this side of the Committee are pleased that the Minister has conceded to the points we made.

Mr. Davies: I do not concede. I do not want to delay the Committee any longer and, for this reason, I will agree to the amendments.

Mr. RUSHTON: It has the same effect. The only point I will make is that the appointment is now in line with other professional appointments. The Opposition supports this principle and we thank the Minister for agreeing to the amendments.

Mr. Davies: It is not the same, but I will agree.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendments agreed to.

Report

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

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

MR. J. T. TONKIN (Melville—Premier) [9.54 p.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until a date and hour to be fixed by Mr. Speaker.

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Leader of the Opposition) [9.55 p.m.]: Mr. Speaker, I gather it would be appropriate to say a few words. On behalf of the Opposition, I would like to wish the Deputy Premier well in his retirement from Parliament and in his new employment as from the 1st June.

The Deputy Premier has been in this place for a long time. I well remember when I first arrived here. I had never struck anyone who could slip into top gear so quickly when he got to his feet. He seemed to take the brake off and go. I think he must have invented the first automatic gear for speaking.

The Deputy Premier has always been a rugged member of this House and of great value to his party. On one occasion recently I referred to him as one of the "ruckmen of the team". He has been an effective member and will, of course, be a loss to his party.

As Chairman of the Licensing Court, he will have a very important and responsible task, and one which may be difficult to handle because it is impossible to please everybody. There is a tightrope to walk between those who want to take the lid off everything and those who want to keep liquor well and truly tied up. However, I think the Deputy Premier has been at this game long enough to know that liquor, at any time, is a very sensitive issue and that he will have to have full regard for the wishes of the Parliament.

It will be interesting to see him on the other side of the fence. I hope when he has an applicant before him he will not treat him as he treated the Opposition because the poor man would be sorry he ever applied for a license! He might not have the chance to reply in the same terms as we do. However, we take this opportunity to wish the Deputy Premier well.

MR. McPHARLIN (Mt. Marshall) [9.57 p.m.]: I would like to apologise for the absence of our leader but I, too, on behalf of the Country Party, would like to join

with the Leader of the Opposition in wishing the Deputy Premier well in his new position as Chairman of the Licensing Court.

I well remember an occasion shortly after I became a member of the House, when I was sitting in the middle row on the other side and the Deputy Premier was sitting on this side of the House. As a new member, seeing him waving his arms about when he was really in top gear, I was quite impressed and a little apprehensive about ever gaining enough confidence to get up and oppose anything he might say. I felt I would need a lot of experience and knowledge to reach that stage. But that wore off quite quickly—after a short time one becomes accustomed to the atmosphere and conditions of this House.

I commend the Deputy Premier for his ruggedness, his capabilities as a debater, and the way he has always attacked legislation. In Opposition he was always aggressive and acquitted himself very well, and since being on the other side he has performed to the best of his ability. I think his departure will leave a gap in the Government side which will be hard to fill for some time.

We wish the Deputy Premier well and trust the change will be one to which he can adjust himself quickly. When a person has had something like 30 years in a position, it must become part of his life, and it must take a certain amount of readjustment to another occupation when moving out of a position in public life—perhaps less for some than for others. Although on numerous occasions since I have been in the House, and no doubt before that, the Country Party has not always seen eye to eye with the Deputy Premier, we wish him well and trust the job gives him the satisfaction he hopes for.

MR. GRAHAM (Balcatta—Deputy Premier) [10.00 p.m.]: It's time! The day arrives when every member of Parliament must face up to the cessation of his parliamentary activities. Some members enjoy the privilege of making the decision themselves; with others the decision is made by their electors.

I thank the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Country Party for the kind remarks they have expressed about me. It will be a wrench leaving this place, because so much has become familiar to me. Parliament has been part of my life; in some respects, perhaps, too much a part. Whilst I have a tinge of regret, at the same time I feel there is a new field opening up before me; a new, interesting vocation, and in many respects I am looking forward to the change that will take place not only in my work-a-day life but in my private and social life as well.

In another context I have already said that the days of political speeches are over. I will make the utmost endeavour to be worthy of the position which I will fill. In no circumstances will there be any suggestion of my showing any party political bias, and with two other members on the bench I am sure we will interpret the spirit and intention of Parliament; perchance from time to time making recommendations based on experience.

There are some people among the general public who seem to think that the Licensing Court lays down the rules, but of course Parliament does that, and the court interprets them. I will be very conscious of that.

Somewhat impertinently I would like to submit one or two ideas to the Parliament before I leave it. Firstly, perhaps consideration should be given to increasing the number of Ministers to enable them to have more time to give more detailed attention to the cares and burdens of office, and to maintain closer contact with the public. With all the pressures upon them it is so easy for them to lose that all-important contact.

Secondly, may I suggest that, irrespective of any public reaction, consideration be given to providing more facilities for the private members of Parliament so that they may be freer to give greater attention to their legislative responsibilities which are so important, instead of, as at present, having to devote so much of their time to functions and operations which, in other spheres, are executed by, say, officers, clerks, and messengers.

I take the advantage of this opportunity to thank, first of all, my political party for having reposed confidence in me; secondly, the people of the electorates I have represented during my parliamentary career—namely, East Perth, and more recently Balcatta—for having returned me to Parliament as their representative, election after election.

I also pay tribute to my colleagues who follow my political persuasion for their co-operation and their general understanding, whether in Government or in Opposition. To those comprising the Opposition parties let me say at this stage that I do not intend to indulge in any reminiscing, but I well remember, many years ago, entering Parliament House and sitting in the Public Gallery. At the time the late Philip Collier was Premier and my reaction, as I looked to the left-hand side of the Chamber from my position in the Public Gallery, was that I saw the "goodies" on that side and the "baddies" on the other side.

Mr. Brady: It has not changed any.

Mr. GRAHAM: I was about to remark that I have often changed from one side of the House to the other, but I have always found myself confronted with "baddies".

May I say to the members of the Opposition it is perhaps true that I have been somewhat volatile and that from time to time I have used strong terms in decrying them, that for which they stand, and the arguments they have adduced. However it is, of course, the spirit of this place that we can have violent differences—not confined to me alone, of course—and yet no member is so sensitive that injury verbally inflicted in this Chamber is not soon forgotten, and quite a happy relationship exists between all of us notwithstanding what we have said, or the differences in our philosophy and outlook.

I say to all officers of Parliament House without enumerating them: Thank you very much indeed for the assistance you have given me in fulfilling your various responsibilities.

During the time it has been my good fortune to be here, I hope and trust that as a private member and as a Minister I have been able to do something, and of course there is very little one is able to do without the assistance of his colleagues. Many members of Parliament have arrived here during the time I have been in Parliament. Indeed, with the exception of my leader the Premier, I have seen all members of this Parliament enter this institution. Among them there have been many characters and many differences in outlook expressed by them. Parliament is not just a building; it is something alive; it is the members of Parliament who are assembled in it for the time being. Whilst there are many occasions when we deserve criticism because of our action or inaction—and perhaps sometimes because of our behaviour—I deplore the attitude which tends to be cultivated in certain quarters that the Parliament and the members of Parliament themselves should be derided and criticised. This country would not be what it is unless members of Parliament were persons of integrity and ability—notwithstanding their differences of opinion—striving their utmost to serve their country.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you and all members of Parliament—particularly those in this Chamber—for the association I have had with them. I will find it extremely difficult not being able to move about this building and to attend to certain matters as I have done over the best part of 30 years. I repeat it is with strong, happy memories, and with a sense of frustration in many respects, that I leave. I believe, however, it is in my best interests, and I suppose a man must think of himself occasionally. Also, in the interests of my family it is necessary for me to prepare

for the day—which is not far distant—when I shall completely retire from a working life.

Whilst I am aware of the duties and responsibilities of my new position—and I am not suggesting that the work of the Licensing Court is light and easy—I suggest that they will be far less exacting than those imposed by parliamentary life; that there will be an opportunity for me to live a more normal life with regular hours and that, to some extent, this can be regarded as a staging camp before I completely retire.

To all members I extend my thanks. I also extend my greetings to every member and I hope and trust that the members of this Chamber will do their utmost in the best interests of our State of Western Australia.

Question put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE

MR. J. T. TONKIN (Melville—Premier) [10.10 p.m.]: I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Approximately two months will elapse before we will assemble here in the Chamber and this will afford the members an opportunity to have some respite from the—

Mr. Hutchinson: Election!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: —arduous duties which confront them in the Chamber from time to time. I hope that you, Sir, will enjoy the holiday break away from the cares of office and that when we reassemble here, probably in the first week of August—we will all be fresh and ready to face what will be the second and final portion of this session.

I personally would like to express to the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Country Party my appreciation of the sentiments they expressed to my colleague (Mr. Graham) at present the Deputy Premier and Minister for Development and Decentralisation, who is retiring from his positions as member for Balcatta, Minister, and Deputy Premier.

I think it will be generally acknowledged that the House will be reduced in debating strength with his retirement because he has shown during the time he has been a member that he is an excellent debater and a very forceful speaker, and in my opinion he has few equals here.

The Government is conscious of the fact that it will be without his very strong support. However, young members in the party have had the opportunity to witness his example and doubtless they will strive

to emulate it, because he has done so well while he has been a member, which has been a very long time.

I met Mr. Graham many years ago in North Fremantle when neither of us was in Parliament, but we were both members of the same A.L.P. branch. I had previously unsuccessfully contested the seat of Murray-Wellington. I had been appointed as first assistant of the North Fremantle State School and I suppose it was perfectly natural that I would seek out the local A.L.P. branch and become a member. It was not long before I became the branch secretary.

Mr. Graham joined that branch because of his debating ability. Previously I had in the same debating competition of the party successfully led the Victoria Park team and had gained a medal for the best debater in it.

Together we had endeavoured to set an example to those associated with us and we have both enjoyed the disputation which takes place in Parliament. However, what pleases me so much is that the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Country Party were on this occasion characteristic of the spirit which has prevailed in the Western Australian Parliament for the whole of the 40 years I have been here. Often violent clashes have occurred on policy and opinion and some hard things have been said during the heat of debate. However, I cannot recall any lasting bad feeling which occurred as a result of such clashes. We have not ever had a single instance of a member refusing to sit with another member because of acrimony which had developed at some time or other. I hope this excellent spirit will continue to prevail in the Western Australian Parliament—

Mr. O'Connor: Hear, hear!

Mr. J. T. TONKIN: —because it is all to the good and shows that despite our strong differences of opinion from time to time we are men enough to appreciate that we must play the game according to our lights, but at the same time there is no necessity to engender hatred and animosity and so create what would be an intolerable atmosphere in which to work.

I again express my appreciation of what the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Country Party have said on behalf of those they represent.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 10.16 p.m.