

Mr. W. A. MANNING: There would be no farmers left at all if the backlog had not been caught up with. I do not think the Minister realises the urgency of the situation.

Mr. H. D. Evans: Are you saying it is possible to handle these applications more rapidly than they are being handled at present? You are talking nonsense. You do not know what is involved. There is a great deal of documentation in regard to deceased estates, and so on.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: I am not referring to the obligations in regard to deceased estates. The cases that have been referred to me do not involve deceased estates that are tied up.

Mr. H. D. Evans: Have they a proposition?

Mr. W. A. MANNING: Yes, they have.

Mr. H. D. Evans: What is the problem?

Mr. W. A. MANNING: I want the Minister to tell me. I want him to investigate the position. I would like to know how much progress the Minister has made in regard to rural reconstruction.

Mr. H. D. Evans: How many current applications are outstanding?

Mr. W. A. MANNING: If the Minister would care to look at some of the cases I have had put before me he will realise how many are outstanding.

Mr. H. D. Evans: You are playing with words. You are making criticism in an area where a magnificent job is being done.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: Let the Minister ask some of these people I am dealing with about the situation and he will soon see that my criticism is justified.

Mr. H. D. Evans: I think in the Federal sphere it is called nit picking.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: The Minister shows a lack of concern for these people who are in dire straits at present. Before the election the Premier said quite joyously that he would ensure that they would not suffer. However, at present they have nothing and the Minister does not care. The reason for the motion is to wake up the Minister and let him realise that these people have an urgent need. That is the reason for my supporting the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. W. G. Young.

HIRE-PURCHASE AND OTHER AGREEMENTS

Honorary Royal Commission: Printing of Report—Order Discharged

MR. McPHARLIN (Mt. Marshall) [9.48 p.m.]: I move—

That the Order be discharged from the notice paper.

Motion put and passed.

Order discharged.

BULK HANDLING ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

House adjourned at 9.49 p.m.

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 24th August, 1972

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

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Postponement

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [2.37 p.m.]: I seek leave of the House to deal with questions at a later stage of the sitting.

The PRESIDENT: Leave granted.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [2.38 p.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, the 5th September.

Question put and passed.

FUEL, ENERGY AND POWER RESOURCES BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [2.39 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to introduce new legislation to make provision with respect to the establishment and functions of a fuel and power commission of Western Australia.

A fuel and energy committee has been in existence for some considerable time, but the commission proposed in the Bill will operate on a wider scale.

In December, 1969, the consultants Kinnaid, Hill, DeRohan and Young Pty. Ltd. were commissioned by the State to explore and report on the energy patterns that can be expected in Western Australia up to 1985. Currently, Western Australia is 28 per cent self-sufficient in fuel, but the report showed that this figure will fall to 20 per cent by 1975 and to 14 per cent by 1980 unless further resources are discovered.

The growing dependence on fuel oil could endanger the future development of the State should imported supplies be cut off, and because of the comparatively high sulphur content of the fuel oils likely to be used, they will contribute significantly to air pollution.

It is not likely that nuclear power will play an important role until well into the 1980s, but even then it will still be necessary to use fossil fuels to a large extent with nuclear power. The most promising indigenous fossil fuel to reduce the dependence on imported fuel appears to be natural gas.

Because of the importance of the low cost and the adequacy of the supplies of electricity to the future growth of Western Australia, provision is made for the Minister for Fuel to also administer certain Acts as included in the first schedule to the Bill, namely—

Electricity Act, 1945

State Electricity Commission Act, 1945

Liquid Petroleum Gas Act, 1956

Gas Standards Act, 1972

Gas Undertakings Act, 1947

The essential duty of the fuel and power commission is for it to determine the means by which the present and future sources of supply of fuel and energy in Western Australia can be developed and utilised to the best advantage of the people of this State, and to promote and ensure the co-ordinated development of those sources and the supply. Close liaison must be maintained between the States and the Commonwealth at both ministerial and officer level to carry out this important duty. The commission is to advise the Minister, and on such advising the Minister determines matters of major policy, the commission being responsible for the implementation of the approved policy.

The Bill includes a provision whereby necessary information may be obtained for the appreciation of the fuel and power requirements of the State, with the right of objection to the Minister in the case of trade secrets and penalties for the breach of secrecy.

It is provided that the membership of the fuel and power commission of Western Australia shall be a commissioner and three associate members representing the State Electricity Commission, the Department of Development and Decentralisation, and the Department of Mines. It will be appreciated that this Government instrumentality and the two Government departments are vitally concerned with various aspects of fuel and power.

The commissioner for fuel and power must be a person highly qualified and with a variety of essential attributes. Provision is made for him to be appointed for a fixed term or for a term not exceeding seven years and, subject to the Public

Service Act, with the right of re-appointment. It is intended that the position will be advertised Australia-wide and overseas.

Because a number of fuels in which the State will be vitally interested are of world significance and will involve overseas capital for their development, discussions have been held on details of the Bill with representatives of industry who work in the fields of fuel, energy, and power. These discussions were held in an atmosphere of mutual understanding, and it is considered that the detailed provisions in the Bill will ensure co-operation between industry and the commission.

In addition to providing for the establishment of the fuel and power commission of Western Australia, similar provisions are included in the Bill for a fuel and power advisory council consisting of—

- (a) The commissioner or other person nominated to preside;
- (b) Permanent members;
- (c) Representative members;
- (d) Co-opted members.

The council is a fluid body without a fixed number of members and appointments being made, and will make recommendations to the commission and to the Government, neither of which is bound to adopt the recommendations. It is envisaged that a close relationship will be established and maintained when dealing with matters of such vital importance to the future development of the State.

As the commission may seek advice from the council on a number of different subjects relating to fuel, energy, and power matters, which involve the competitive commercial interests of private enterprise, the fluid membership of the council will enable experienced members in specific fields to contribute their expertise.

I believe that the Bill before members will provide a means for coping with a major problem which is of tremendous importance to the future growth of the State, and I commend it to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Leader of the Opposition).

MENTAL HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House)
[2.47 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The repeal of section 289 of the Criminal Code by Act No. 21 of 1972, assented to last May, was passed by Parliament on the premise that there is general agreement that persons who attempt to take their own lives are in need of medical treatment rather than being subject to court proceedings.

However, this means that the provisions of section 30(1)(c) of the Mental Health Act, permitting a person who appears to be suffering from mental disorder to be apprehended, will no longer cover those instances where it is suspected that a person is about to take his own life. This comes about for the reason that that paragraph of the section hinges on circumstances which denote that a person is of purpose to commit an offence against the law.

Nor does there appear to be provision in the Police Act which would enable a police officer necessarily to apprehend a person who, he believes, is about to take his own life.

It is therefore proposed that the position be clarified to enable the police to take appropriate action in situations where it is believed that a person is about to attempt to take his own life, by the addition of the words "or of attempting to take his own life" to section 30(1)(c) of the Mental Health Act.

Such an amendment does not recreate the offence of attempted suicide, but does no more than add an extra ground justifying action under this section of the Mental Health Act to ensure that, *inter alia*, the person concerned shall be examined by a medical practitioner by order of a Justice with intention that, if in the opinion of a medical practitioner, the person appears to be suffering from mental disorder he shall be referred to an approved hospital.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon.

AUCTIONEERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [2.49 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill seeks to amend the Auctioneers Act to enable bloodstock auctions to be held during the evening.

Section 11 of the Act provides that "No person shall act as an auctioneer after sunset or before sunrise on any day except for the purpose of selling freehold or leasehold lands or tenements or shares in any incorporated company or wool, included and described in a catalogue issued prior to and for the purpose of the sale of such wool. It is provided, *inter alia*, that this section shall not apply to sales by auction held with the approval of the Treasurer at a bazaar or sale of gifts for charitable or church purposes."

On account of this restriction bloodstock auctions similar to those which are held in the evenings in other States cannot be conducted during the corresponding period of the day in Western Australia.

The breeding of blood-stock represents an important industry in Western Australia today, and it is vital particularly to country breeders, that the auctions be conducted at times and under conditions which will ensure a fair and adequate return. Stock breeders consider that considerable benefits will accrue both to the vendor and to purchasers were sales held during the evening hours.

Accordingly, this Bill which has been drafted to allow this concession, is submitted for favourable consideration by members.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. C. R. Abbey.

NOXIOUS WEEDS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [2.52 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

One of the functions of the Noxious Weeds Act is to prevent the introduction and spread of primary and secondary weeds into the State.

Sections 26, 27, 28, and 29 of the Act and the appropriate regulations control the entry of stock. Over the last 10 years a considerable number of weed-infested animals have been detected on arrival and because of this control it has been possible to prevent serious outbreaks of such weeds as Bathurst burr and Horehound. It is logical to assume that the strict and prompt action taken has discouraged offenders with the effect that the proportion of infested stock has been considerably reduced.

However, the Act does not give adequate control over all sources of noxious weed introduction. Fodder, chaff seed, machinery, animal coats, used sacks, and wool packs are not controllable with the exception of sacks and wool packs which are covered by regulation.

This Bill proposes the amendment of the Act to afford more extensive protection to our primary industries by allowing the exercise of full control over the imports of such produce and articles which I have mentioned. It also seeks authority to destroy soil packing, material, bedding in livestock vans, and similar material found to be contaminated with the seeds of noxious weeds.

Increased penalties for breaches of the regulations are also proposed.

The controls proposed are consistent with the requirements of the State in giving more extensive protection to primary industry, from the introduction of noxious weeds through the various avenues of importation.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. C. R. Abbey.

WAR SERVICE LAND SETTLEMENT SCHEME ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House)
[2.54 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

During the 1971 session of Parliament the Land Act was amended to provide for the relinquishment by the Crown of its rights to the indigenous timber on alienated or partly alienated land.

The amendment did not include perpetual leases issued under the war service land settlement legislation of lands developed with funds provided by the Commonwealth as it was necessary to refer the question of the deletion of timber reservation conditions from these perpetual leases to the Commonwealth authorities. Rather than delay the promulgation of the main legislation, it was proceeded with at that time in relation only to land affected by the Land Act.

The Commonwealth authorities have now advised that there is no objection to the deletion of timber reservation conditions from perpetual leases.

Although the timber reservation conditions at present remain the Forests Department is treating those lands in a manner similar to those leases issued under the Land Act, and is granting brands for the removal of timber thereon on application by the lessees.

This amendment will delete the timber reservation conditions from all perpetual leases issued under this Act or any Act repealed by this Act, and places the lessees of War Service farms on an equal footing with other lessees.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. F. D. Willmott.

TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 23rd August.

THE HON. G. W. BERRY (Lower North)
[2.56 p.m.]: I rise to speak to the Bill before the House. I do not know when previously I have seen such a voluminous explanation being given to such a small measure. Usually members complain that they do not receive enough information on the introduction of a Bill, but they will not be able to do so on this occasion. Even though the Minister's speech did not give us very much factual information, it was certainly lengthy and detailed.

Whilst the Minister's second reading speech may not be a best seller it certainly has been one of the best read speeches I have heard in this House. I do not think I have ever heard any other which has

been so thoroughly digested, and so much taken apart by members who have participated in the debate.

I may say at the outset that I do not intend to support the measure, for the simple reason that I do not see how the passing of it will affect the road toll. I cannot see that it will make any drastic improvement in the control of traffic in country areas.

As was mentioned by my colleague representing the Lower North Province, this area embraces nearly 500,000 square miles. In it there are only two shires to administer traffic control. I understand that the Shire of Leonora has applied to be taken over by the Police Department in respect of traffic control.

However, in the province that I represent I cannot see it makes much difference as to who controls the traffic—whether it be the shire council or the Police Department. I cannot see that traffic control will be any more effective, if it is under police control; I say that because of the vastness of the area.

One of the drawbacks of the Lower North Province is that it is not a closely settled area. It extends from one side of the State to the other, and it contains long sections of roads between the settlements. I cannot see that the takeover of traffic control by the police will materially affect the situation in the Lower North Province, but I do say it will affect the more closely settled areas of the State.

I think that the opposition raised by the shires to the amending Bill is based on very valid reasons. They oppose the takeover by the police. Some indication of this is contained in a letter from the Shire of Beverley dated the 23rd May which refers to traffic control. I understand a copy of this letter was sent to all members of Parliament and one of its relevant paragraphs states—

The councils for whom I write—
He was referring to the Shires of Beverley and York—

—are strongly opposed to the Police take over of Traffic because of the damage it will cause to the financial structure of Local Government without achieving the main purpose of the take over—the reduction of road accidents and resultant loss of life. Councils do not condone road accidents but there is no evidence available to prove that Police Traffic Control as it will be after take over will prevent or even noticeably reduce the number of accidents.

That is certainly to the point. Although I am not aware of the ratio, we find that the road toll in the open country areas is really not excessive. The fatal accidents that occur in the country are mostly on stretches of road between towns. It would just not be possible for the police to be always at the scene of an accident when it occurs.

This is borne out by what happens in the metropolitan area, where there is a large population and a great number of vehicles. This, of course, is controlled by the police, but the police are not getting to the root of the problem which, of course, is the control of the accidents which occur in the metropolitan area. I would say that with the distances involved between towns in the country areas it is virtually impossible to control accidents whether this control is undertaken by the police or by the local authority. Paragraph 3 of the letter states—

Local Authorities will not only lose the small amount of revenue they receive for administering the Traffic Act, but they will lose all knowledge of vehicle numbers in their district and revenue produced. Thus when it comes to arguing a case for its fair share of Commonwealth Aid Road Funds, it will have nothing in the way of Figures relating to Traffic to support its argument.

I have no idea how exactly the police takeover will be carried out. How will the people concerned determine the number of cars in their particular area? I hark back to the days when I was a member of the Fremantle District Road Board which is now the Shire of Cockburn. At that time we received, periodically, an allocation from the Traffic Office relative to the licenses collected by the traffic authority.

I was never able to determine, however, whether we were getting a reasonable share of these funds; nor was I able to determine the formula that was used to distribute the funds—I did not know whether it was directly related to the number of vehicles, or whether it was relative to the amount of bitumen roads in the area in question.

On a number of occasions I asked the secretary and I cannot recall ever having received the formula used, to enable me to check the amounts received against those paid into the traffic fund. Accordingly the argument used by the local authorities is a very valid one—and I now refer to those authorities who are controlling traffic in their particular areas.

In relation to this aspect I would like to quote an extract which deals with the Shire of Swan and which is dated the 8th July, 1970. I think this has already been incorporated in *Hansard* but I will read paragraph 6 which states—

This Council submits for your consideration that traffic control and vehicle licensing be left as it is. The Police Department presently has the power to enforce traffic control in the whole of the State and seemingly could currently do the same things relating to accident prevention as would be the case if it had exclusive control.

I do not know whether or not the Minister has exercised this power in connection with local authorities who have been a bit remiss in their control of traffic—I am not sure whether he has not seen fit to exercise his power—as a means whereby the local authorities could be discredited for not exercising control and a better case could therefore be presented for the takeover of the control of traffic by the Police Department. I do not know the reason at all.

It would appear, however, that there are some reasons why this power has not been used to enforce traffic control by local authorities throughout the State. Paragraph 7 of the same letter states—

This Council suggests that if centralisation of traffic control and licensing is decided upon by the Government, that such centralisation be administered by a new and separate Department. This suggestion is submitted in the context that the new Department would have its own control and licensing staff and would co-ordinate the traffic control and licensing operations of those Local Authorities which desire to retain these functions in their respective areas.

It is quite obvious that not all local authorities desire to retain the matter of licensing and the control of traffic. To continue—

That proposed Department could determine control and licensing standards throughout the State and these requirements in various areas would have to be satisfied either by the Department or the Local Authority, whichever exercised the functions.

I think it is a fair and reasonable operation in view of the fact that so much depends on the local authority's administration and the carrying out of its functions as the third arm of the Government. We have the Federal Government, and the State Government; the local authorities form the third arm.

This being an integral part of our system I think this matter of control should be retained, as far as it is possible within the province of the local authority.

I do not feel that arbitrary powers should be given to the Minister to decree that all local authorities should come under the control of the police in relation to traffic control.

The Hon. R. Thompson: When you were on the Fremantle Road Board did you ever advocate policing your own area?

The Hon. G. W. BERRY: I did not know anything different in those days. We had police control appointed as probably did the local authority represented by the honourable member. This was before the war but since then a number of local

authorities have accepted the responsibility to establish a form of traffic control. Generally speaking I think they administered this aspect very well.

I can speak particularly of the Carnarvon Shire which, I feel, makes a genuine effort in its control of traffic; its effort would be every bit as good as that which may be exercised by the police.

Once again the control of traffic in Carnarvon is confined to the town of Carnarvon and its environs. The next boundary would be approximately 200 miles away, and there would be a similar distance to the boundary of the Shire of Northampton, of Exmouth, or of the West Pilbara Shire.

Wherever the control of traffic has been exercised throughout the State and where it has been retained by local authorities it has proved satisfactory, and I fail to see why the police should wish to take over the entire control of traffic in these areas. By their doing so they will certainly not serve the purpose the Bill is designed to serve. The prime purpose seems to be a reduction of the road toll. While travelling to Carnarvon on one occasion I heard someone on the radio, though I cannot quote the authority, speaking about motorcars.

On this programme he said that the motorcar, since its advent, has killed more people than all the wars conducted up to date. That is quite a broad statement, because quite a few people have been killed in wars. Incidentally, he was referring to the wars which have occurred since recorded history. I have no means of checking the veracity of that statement. I have quoted it as one person's views on the question of the rising road toll. Certainly the motorcar is a more effective lethal weapon than anything else, apart, perhaps, from the atomic bomb.

We hear a great deal said about the control of traffic and what the police will do if they control it throughout the State. We have heard how much more effective police control will be. What do the police intend to do when they control traffic? As Mr. Dans has said, we must get at the people who drive the cars. They are the ones who have this lethal weapon at their disposal. What method do we adopt in an endeavour to obtain better control? I do not think it would be effective merely for the police to have control of traffic.

One of the main reasons for accidents and fatalities is the consumption of alcohol. Excessive use of alcohol tends to dull the reflexes. People probably go to sleep and veer off the road; the car rolls over, and they are killed. I do not think police control of traffic throughout the State would have any effect on the causes of road deaths and it has been said that to reduce the road toll is the prime purpose

of the measure. I think we are making the wrong approach. It may be said, of course, that we are making a start. I concede that may be so; however, there is a very big difference between making a start and making a positive approach.

It could well be, as I have stated once before, that we are not severe enough in the tests we lay down for the issuing of a driver's license. It may, perhaps, be necessary to make the test as severe as the one a person must pass to gain a pilot's license. The number of accidents in the operation of aircraft is not very many, because very stringent rules are laid down for a person who wishes to hold a pilot's license. There is no margin for error in an aeroplane. A person must have his wits about him and know what he is doing. He must abide by the rules laid down. A pilot can only make a mistake once; he never has the opportunity to do so again.

It has been mentioned that a person can obtain a license as a result of his passing a test at 35 miles an hour in the metropolitan area, after which he can then proceed to drive at 65 miles per hour on the country roads. In fact, on the country roads many drivers travel at the highest possible speed of which the car is capable, whether it is 65 or 105 miles per hour. I know because I have seen this happen. I know of a particular instance where a young fellow was given a Monaro—one of the sports-class cars—for his birthday. I think it was his 17th birthday; certainly, he was not very old. I think such a car would be capable of doing 100 miles per hour. I do not know what experience the lad would have had to drive a car like that at anywhere near that speed, but he is able to do so once he has a license. There would be no bar to this unless, of course, he were apprehended by the law. No matter which method we adopt, it will be extremely difficult to ensure that control is exercised over all the country roads. We would need to have inspectors at every mile along the road and there would be more inspectors than motorcars. This would certainly be a wrong approach.

In the recent reallocation of portfolios, the portfolio of Traffic Safety was created and given to the Minister for Works instead of to the Minister for Police. This surprised me because I thought traffic safety would be of more importance to the Police Department than the Department of Works. I concede the connection is probably on the basis of administration of main roads. However I find it hard to understand why such an important portfolio should be given to the Minister for Works instead of the Minister for Police.

The Hon. T. O. Perry: Give it to the Minister for Local Government.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: He has enough to do.

The Hon. F. R. White: The Government has separated road safety from traffic control.

The Hon. G. W. BERRY: I appreciate that.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Give it to the Minister for Community Welfare.

The Hon. G. W. BERRY: A separate portfolio of Traffic Safety has been created because of the seriousness of the problem. As yet, we do not know where to start on it.

I read a little article recently which mentioned the factors associated with road safety. These are the ability of the drivers, the construction and design of roads, and the roadworthiness of vehicles. Perhaps we could consider these points for a start.

As I have said I am interested to know the reason for the portfolio of Traffic Safety being given to the Minister for Works instead of the Minister for Police. Perhaps the Minister may be able to give me some information on this.

I am also very interested in the question of vehicle inspections. We hear so much about this and how effective it will be when the police take over the control of traffic. Will it be part of the curriculum of the training of a police officer? Will he be well versed in vehicle inspection and traffic control or will he have a set of points at which to look when inspecting vehicles. I wish to know whether it will be part of the curriculum and whether the policeman will be well trained in this sphere of operation.

I do not agree it should simply become the duty of the Police Department. I know that the officers who are stationed at various points throughout the province I represent would be in a difficult position if they had to perform duties of traffic control as well as those they already do. I think their duties are quite onerous enough at the moment. The police have to keep law and order in these places.

I think Mr. Wordsworth brought up the question of shire registration plates when referring to the difficulties expressed as to the issue of special country license plates under a centralised system. However I know that an individual can obtain personalised plates in New South Wales. The plates do not carry New South Wales lettering but the individual's own initials. Of course he pays a certain fee to have this done. There must be an effective method used in New South Wales to achieve this. I do not think this should pose any great problem.

I consider that the position, as it exists, is not detrimental to the control of traffic throughout the State. I do not consider the State is suffering in any shape or form through the way in which the present traffic system is being administered. I consider a great deal of thought should be

given by members to deciding whether or not they support this Bill. They should think how it will effect the functions of local authorities throughout the country areas of the State. It is not an easy task to be a member of a local authority and to take the brunt of criticism for what one does in those jobs. I have seen a great number of people who seek to act in the specific interests of serving local authorities.

I remember shortly after I was first elected to the local authority, someone said to me, "I do not know what you all do down there. Why don't you get off your seats and get something done?" I said, "Someone has to give his spare time to these jobs. It is a thankless job and it is unpaid. Why don't you sit for Council?" He said, "I would not want to do that." That is the attitude of most people. They do not have any idea of the time and energy put into the work by members of the local authority.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: What does that have to do with the situation?

The Hon. G. W. BERRY: I do not intend to answer the honourable member's question because he did not answer a question of mine the other day.

There are some further matters referred to by the Shire of Swan. Some of these have already been mentioned but I would like to reiterate a few. The council says firstly—

This Council is more capable than the Police Department in providing a sound traffic control in the Municipality, as it has the specialised equipment and the specialist staff to do the job.

We could argue forever and a day about this point. The next submission is—

The loss of Local Government control of traffic in country areas will further lead to loss of revenue and power in other spheres viz., road construction funds, parking control, and town planning etc.

This argument is quite valid and anyone concerned with Local Government will appreciate the point. The third submission is—

The road toll will not decrease under police control.

I am absolutely certain that this is correct. I cannot for the life of me see how police takeover of traffic will decrease the road toll. No. 4 reads—

Any further erosion of Local Government powers will adversely further affect their capacity to provide the Local communities with essential services.

The more power we take away from local authorities the less work they have to do.

Just to digress a little, I interjected when Mr. Logan was speaking. This brings to mind the subject of the fruit-fly control

schemes. Because the Government did not administer this scheme effectively it was to be handed to Local Government. I mention that because the Government now wants to take over traffic control and I have not yet heard a valid reason which convinces me that this step would be in the best interests of the State. The fifth submission reads—

There is a conflict in the policies of the State Government wherein it is provided that Traffic Control will be centralised under Police control on the one hand, and decentralisation will be fostered on the other hand, these are incompatible policies, the former being a backward step and the latter a progressive one.

I presume we will not use the facilities of the local authorities if and when the police takeover of traffic eventuates. The facilities of local authorities can and should be used. The sixth submission says—

At present the function of Local Government has been geared to the present volume of activities of Councils. Any reduction of these functions will result in unused capacity of buildings, equipment and staff.

I know that this will eventuate because the staff at the Shire of Carnarvon will be reduced by at least two if the control of traffic and licensing is taken over by the Police Department.

I do not wish to labour the point any further. As I said, I am not convinced that there will be or could be any vast improvement effected by a police takeover of traffic. We should give very serious consideration to any schemes which will make the best use of our local authorities. We should endeavour to ensure that these function efficiently and make certain their powers are not eroded to the extent of their becoming simply a rubber-stamp department.

THE HON. R. J. L. WILLIAMS (Metropolitan) [3.26 p.m.]: I would have voted with the Government on this Bill had it been introduced when I first entered the House. At that time I held a very jaundiced view about traffic inspectors as one of them had apprehended me breaking the law and it cost me \$30.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Did you break the law?

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: Oh, yes, definitely. The traffic inspector was doing his job but I thought he should have had something better to do at 2.45 on a Sunday afternoon than to apprehend an innocent traveller.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: You just said you were guilty.

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: I said I was an innocent traveller. However, even though I was later apprehended again by

an inspector working for the Shire of Plantagenet, I came to appreciate the work done by these gentlemen. I received a very nice letter from the traffic inspector and he said he hoped I would co-operate in future when travelling through the Shire of Plantagenet and also hoped I would not wipe myself out.

I listened with interest to the Minister's second reading speech on this Bill. However, I wish to approach the subject from a different viewpoint. I would like to talk about the Police Force and its role.

In 1829 the first Police Force in the English-speaking world was organised by Sir Robert Peel. Sir Robert stated in a speech to the House of Commons in the United Kingdom at that time that the role of the new force would be the prevention and detection of crime. That has been the traditional role of the Police Force ever since.

As time has passed the Police Force has been called on to accept further commitments of duty, one of which is the control of traffic. Perhaps when I was younger we had a greater respect for the Police Force because traffic was not as dense as it is now and the only time we were in contact with a policeman was when something was radically wrong. The present-day motorist is having more and more contact with the police.

The Hon. J. Dolan: Did you ever ride a bike without a light when you were a child?

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: Indeed I did.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I had the local cop after me on a couple of occasions.

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: We had respect for the law and the law enforcement agency. However, from a psychological point of view, as more and more people are coming into contact with police because of traffic offences, the police are not being treated with the same respect. In my opinion, this is bringing the Police Force as such into distinct odium.

Let me say at the outset that I consider the Traffic Branch of the Police Force of Western Australia is one of the finest I have ever come across. I also consider that the head of the Traffic Branch with whom I have spoken from time to time is an extremely competent gentleman.

If we look at a few of the figures which have been presented, we cannot help but realise that the police takeover of traffic is repugnant to some.

It is repugnant, I believe, to the majority of the people living in the country. The Minister said that most people equate our traffic problems with those of New Zealand. I do not. I equate them to the traffic problems of the United Kingdom and the United States of America, because in one country I can see benefits in the

system which I also can in the other. Let me briefly describe the benefits I have seen.

I do not have any up-to-date figures but in 1969 there were 14,067,000 vehicles licensed in the United Kingdom. That year, the deaths on the roads numbered 7,383 and 90,700 persons were severely injured. It was the lowest accident rate per vehicle per mile, in the whole of Europe, and the licensing and administering of those vehicles was carried out by 133 separate local authorities. In the United Kingdom traffic is controlled by 67 police forces; 47 in England and Wales, and 20 in Scotland. It would appear that here is a happy marriage.

The local authority in the United Kingdom is responsible for the licensing of the vehicle. I will deal with this point for a moment and say that any county or county borough can license a vehicle and it does so with all sorts of different number plates, far in excess of what is done in this State. I do not believe we should employ a computer-programmer who cannot include in a computer programme 121 additional files. I think there is something wrong somewhere in this State when people are not allowed, for what the Minister calls sentimental reasons, to keep a unique type of number plate; that is, unique in the whole of Australia. I still think that the E.D.P. systems could cope with this form of vehicle registration quite satisfactorily, and it has yet to be proved to me that this cannot be done.

If we are to talk about sentimentality, I would say if there were a little more sentimentality and good manners among those who get behind the wheel of a vehicle, it would be then that we would get a dramatic drop in the accident rate on our roads.

In his second reading speech the Minister quoted a gentleman by the name of Sir Eric St. Johnston, C.B.E., Q.P.M. He was then Her Majesty's Senior Inspector of Constabulary, at the Home Office, but as Mr. Eric St. Johnston he was Chief Constable for Lancashire. That gentleman instituted road traffic patrols and courtesy controls by the police which were very successful. One can hardly expect Sir Eric St. Johnston to be unbiased when he gives his view on traffic. After all is said and done, one does not destroy one's own child.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You are not casting doubts on his integrity, are you?

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: None whatsoever. If the honourable member knew the gentleman as well as I know of him he would not cast any doubts on his integrity. He is a Queen's Police Medalist and also a C.B.E. He did a great deal of excellent work for the police.

I do not believe, however, that it is realised that the police forces of the United Kingdom are not responsible for

vehicle examination, licensing, or driver testing. That work is left to a Ministry for Transport. So here again there is a fragmentation of duties in a country which has the lowest accident rate per vehicle per mile in Europe.

It is possible—and Mr. White pointed this out to the House when he spoke on peripheral vision—for a registered blind person to obtain a driver's license, because when taking the eyesight test all that one has to do is to read the card, but there are those who are afflicted with tunnel vision who, by looking straight ahead, are able to read the card, but if they move their head only half a degree to either side become totally blind; they are registered as blind people. So it would appear that certain parts of the Bill need tightening up.

In the United States of America they have a geographical situation which is akin to ours. We cannot compare ourselves geographically with the United Kingdom or New Zealand. We must go to a larger area. We must go to the U.S.A. where they have great mileages of roads, and traffic control. In that country traffic control is in the hands of the States' highway patrols. There are three types of law enforcement; the F.B.I. at Federal level, the State Police, and the State Highway Patrol. The State Police are usually made up of sheriffs and their deputies. The State Highway Patrol, as such, is a very efficient organisation and it could be described as a para-police force. They have to perform the duties and exercise the authority carried out by a policeman, and I believe that the traffic inspectors in this State should be in the same position. After all is said and done, a man can be recruited into the Police Force today, and immediately he takes the oath he is a constable with the right of arrest, and 13 weeks after he graduates through the Police Academy he becomes a fully-fledged police constable. He is then required, however, to go through a police traffic school at Maylands which, I might add, is very efficient.

In the United States of America there is no conflict. An offender is picked up by the traffic patrol for committing a traffic offence. This is a very sophisticated body, and I believe there is a body of men in this State who, if they were co-ordinated and clothed with the necessary authority to control traffic, would prove to be a force which would be just as efficient.

In his second reading speech the Minister said that we are in an era of specialists. Perhaps I should say he implied that, because at page 2348 of the current *Hansard* he is reported as saying—

Traffic enforcement is carried out by the police in the metropolitan area by members of the force engaged solely in such work—specialists in specialised sections.

I have no quarrel with that. What I am saying is that we have a wonderful opportunity in this State to create a separate traffic authority; and to remove this odium of traffic control as we know it from the Police Force. This would allow its members to work in their proper field of prevention and detection of crime.

Certainly such a force would have to be interlocked with the Police Force, because all criminals use motor vehicles these days to assist them in the commission of their crimes. They do not do that in the United States, but we could have more sophisticated techniques. I think the police should be provided with light aircraft and helicopters.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: Don't you regard an infringement of the traffic laws as a crime?

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: Not in the way that rape, manslaughter, and other felonies are regarded as crimes. I do not regard my wife as being a criminal merely because she forgets to stop at a "Stop" sign. Certainly it is an offence against the Traffic Act, but it is not a crime.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: How do you reconcile that sort of set-up with what the local authorities want?

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: What the local authorities want now is quite simple. They want to adopt the British set-up, and I suggest that they should, but that we should graft on to it the U.S.A. highway patrol system.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: I am sorry, Mr. Deputy President. The point is that given the opportunity it would not be the first time that Western Australia has led the rest of Australia with a new piece of legislation. There is no reason to say that because other States have a certain system we should adopt it.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I think Mr. Claughton is worried about that pencil you are waving around because if you hit him on the head with it it could be an assault.

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: Aggravated, yes! I will put it down.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I see he is more comfortable now.

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: What we must do in a sparsely populated State like ours is encourage local authorities to do more and more for their own communities. I cannot believe that a police take-over of traffic will do this.

A moment ago the Minister mentioned that at one time he was caught for riding a bicycle without a light, and I daresay that the Minister for some offence or other, was on many occasions caught by

what he then knew as his local policeman. If he were treated in any way like I was treated by my local policeman he would have received a very smart smack across the backside or a clip across the ear and been told, "I will tell your father about you, my lad." That was sufficient in that day and age.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That is right.

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: I had great respect for the policeman.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: It does not appear to have done you much good.

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: I would not say that when I compare myself with you—

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! Would the honourable member please address the chair.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: We are feeling left out.

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: I am sorry. When I compare my character with that of Mr. Clive Griffiths I realise that the treatment did me a lot of good. He could perhaps have done with a bit more himself.

We should encourage the local shires to take on more and more of this type of work. We must have community involvement and separate identity. Do not let us make our shires just "these other shades of grey," and I am not referring to the traffic inspector's uniform either. What I am saying is that the traffic inspectors, like the police of old, know the local characters in the town. They do not necessarily levy a fine on them every time. They can go to the father concerned and say, "Look, can you tell your kid to stop doing wheelies in the middle of the main street at 12 o'clock?" They have become local identities. Certain traffic inspectors are well known to the House.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: They are well known to the whole of Western Australia.

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: That is right. Because they are well known, when one is travelling towards the municipality involved one tends to take one's foot off the accelerator a bit and one's eyes look more sharply in the mirror. I think the traffic inspectors have done an excellent job and the traffic police who serve the State are doing a magnificent task under very difficult and arduous conditions.

What I want is an amalgamation of the two sections for increased efficiency throughout the State. This is what I favour. We have a core of trained men in the Police Force and a core of trained and experienced traffic inspectors who know the country districts and the people in those districts.

The Bill as presented by the Minister does not give this flexibility. It allows no room for manoeuvring whatever. More than most in this House I appreciate the sincerity of the Minister for Police. I can

see what he is trying to do and I also realise that this is part of his party's policy. No-one could be more honest when dealing with Party policy matters than the Minister for Police, who certainly cannot be accused of not having integrity in the matter. One must admire him for that, but I do say that the policy in its present form is unacceptable to me and I will not support the Bill.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.03 p.m.

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (Lower West) [4.03 p.m.]: I will take this opportunity to talk about the principles of decentralisation. I suppose members will be entitled to ask just what decentralisation has to do with the Bill now under discussion. However, if ever there has been a piece of legislation which more arrogantly, succinctly, or callously specifies centralisation of a particular line of activity, I cannot recall it. This piece of legislation, without explaining the means of accomplishing its purpose, drives another nail into the coffin of small towns in this State.

There seems to be a mistaken idea that decentralisation is a matter of getting industry to establish itself in country towns, and then the job is done. However, this is far from the truth. The only real way to decentralise is to decentralise authority. If all this sort of thing is placed in country areas—it does not matter what the activity may be—and the decision-making is left in the metropolitan area, or in a few major towns, then that is not decentralisation. In fact, the authority is centralised and it is that authority which must be decentralised.

We have developed, in this State, a method of traffic control which is decentralised. I am not the least impressed by comparisons with one country or another because almost invariably there are circumstances applying to a particular country which do not apply to our own. We are all conditioned to our country by the way in which we grow up and by the sort of things which happen about us. It is that which makes the people marginally different in different areas. I think people develop systems which suit their own conditions. I do not know of any country in the world to which we could go to find any sort of comparison with the situation which exists in Western Australia.

The requirements of a person living in Halls Creek must, of necessity, be vastly different from those of a person living in the metropolitan area. We can see this sort of centralising going on about us all the time. People who genuinely believe that a certain line of activity is quite advantageous frequently follow this process of centralisation, and I will give one example which has nothing to do with the measure now under discussion, but which I believe will exemplify what I am getting at.

Considerable publicity has appeared in the Press lately about lowering the school-commencing age from the year in which a child turns six to the year in which a child turns five. This would mean that after his fourth birthday a child could commence going to school. The arguments I have seen put forward in favour of this proposition are quite reasonable but the effect would be that those who live in the city, or in the major country towns, would again have an additional advantage.

In the cities and the major country towns the primary schools are in close proximity to the people, but in the small country towns where the children have to travel on buses the children would be severely disadvantaged. The parents would be concerned because their children might be a year behind, and the advantages of moving to the city are further accentuated. It would be found that quite frequently people would move to the city.

We have exactly the same principle involved in this Bill. It is no more nor less than a reversal of what was occurring previously. We have the situation that all the advantages which will occur will necessitate the centralisation of authority. No longer will the fellow who lives in a small country town be able to do the necessary jobs which he wants to do. I believe this is a very bad thing. When we examine the Bill we find, in effect, that it is purely and simply a transposition.

The situation before the introduction of this Bill was that any local authority which desired to opt for police takeover of traffic could elect to do so. There was a local option. All that this Bill will do is to change the law so that there will be no local option. As from the date of the gazettal of the Bill, if the police say that a certain area will be taken over, it will be taken over. It seems that despite all the protestations, this will mean a centralisation of authority.

I am not sneering at that decision because, again, it is a matter of policy. The Labor Government is centralist in its utterances. Mr. Whitlam makes no apology about that so far as Federal politics are concerned, and I think it was Mr. Berry who said that the Minister, Mr. Dolan, was a very reliable and honest fellow and followed the Federal policy of centralisation. That is understandable. All this Bill will do is to transpose the situation which existed previously; nothing more nor less.

Nothing indicates that there has been a study of alternative methods of traffic control, or of other methods which could be used. There is nothing of this in the Bill. Its passage will simply mean a transposition of the local option to a Government order.

The Minister made a long speech explaining a short Bill, and it might be wise to throw the Bill into the rubbish bin and speak to the speech. The speech does tell us something but the Bill tells us nothing, except that the present Government has elected to transpose the original proposition.

Let us suppose for a minute that the Government is correct in its assumption, and that the police control of traffic is all that is necessary to make the situation desirable. In other words, that it is obviously the best scheme. If that were so it would seem to me that this Bill is unnecessary because people are not idiots and if the proposition put forward by the Minister is true then gradually more and more local authorities would hand over to the police.

Certainly, every now and then a local authority has handed over traffic control to the police, but there has not been a rush. The reason is obvious: Police traffic control as a straight takeover is not attractive to people. If the Government were right it could leave the situation as it stands at present so that local authorities have a local option, and they would hand over when it suited them. All this fuss would be quite unnecessary.

The fact of the matter is that the Government is not right, and to its great credit it knows it is not right. For that reason the Government has introduced a Bill which transposes the original scheme and centralises the whole authority. Takeovers will be ordered at the whim of the Government.

I have a telegram which was sent by R. B. Dewar of Gelorup. The telegram was not solicited in any way but it does indicate what I am trying to say. The telegram reads as follows:—

Is decentralization only a gimmick strongly opposed to country traffic control Act.

Of course, decentralisation in its proper sense—that is, decentralisation of authority—as far as the Labor Party is concerned is a gimmick.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Your definition of “decentralisation” is quite different from the definition given in the departmental study of urban development by the Australian National University.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: It is quite likely, because I am talking of a State area, as a man who lives in a small-sized town in the country which has virtually no population when compared with the population in the metropolis. So perhaps my idea is different.

I have seen the advantages which accrued to the people when the previous Government, under Sir David Brand, established an office of the State Housing Commission in Bunbury, staffed by an officer capable

of making decisions on a local level. I have seen the advantages gained from a local hospital administrator being given authority to write off debts owed by people who were in difficulty, and to spend a certain amount of money locally and run a large undertaking as though he were a man of integrity, which he is. I have seen this happen and I have seen the changes that have been made.

Mr. Dans is asking about the effect of decentralisation. This is the way I see it. I have seen the benefits and the effects of it. Now I see a Government hell bent on bringing back into the city area one branch of an authority which can aid people in the country areas. Do what it will, there will be a level of authority-making above which the Government cannot do anything other than bring the people who are in trouble to Perth. I believe this is a great pity.

I can see some advantages in a degree of State-wide liaison, tie-up, and the rest of it, but I cannot see any great advantage in this complete centralisation of authority, which, as I pointed out, is really all this Bill does because it gives no indication of what may happen. Worse than that, it confuses the issue.

Let me give an example of the confusion that can arise when we study the Bill. On Wednesday, the 23rd August, the Leader of the Opposition asked this question of the Minister for Police—

In the event of a member of the Police Force resigning from the Force, is there any rule or regulation which prevents his re-employment in the Force?

The answer was—

No, the selection of applicants for the Police Force is the prerogative of the Commissioner of Police on the advice of the Police Selection Board. In considering re-employment of Police officers who have previously resigned, due regard would be given to previous conduct, diligence and efficiency, to the reason and circumstance of resignation, and to his future potential as a Police Officer in comparison with other applicants.

When traffic control is surrendered by a country local authority, favourable consideration is given to the recruitment of Traffic Inspectors in the Police Force irrespective of whether they were previously employed as Police Officers or not.

Then we go to *The Police News* of March, 1972, and we read this letter which was published in it—

General Secretary,
Western Australian Police Union of
Workers,
257 Adelaide Terrace,
PERTH, 6000.

Dear Sir,

Re: Employment of Members of Various Shire Traffic Staff absorbed into the Police Force on takeover of Traffic Duties by the Police Department.

A Traffic Inspector must meet with all the normal requirements of a Police inductee except that the age limit will be extended to 45 years.

In effect, he will be required to sit for and pass the Entrance Examination and meet the physical, medical and character requirements.

As he will be inducted to be a duly appointed Police Officer with all the powers and responsibilities of that office, he should, if at all possible, pass through the normal Academy training course with other inductees.

If a Traffic Inspector desires employment with the Force and cannot meet the foregoing requirements, he could possibly qualify for a position as a Civilian Vehicle Examiner.

The same conditions apply to ex-members of the Force who, at the time of any traffic takeover, are engaged on the Traffic staff of any Shire.

Numbers allocated any such inductees will be as at present prevails and they will take their position on the Seniority List according to their number, which will naturally be junior to any serving member.

Traffic takeovers are a matter of Government decision after consideration and advice from this Department as to practicability when sought by Shires, and this will remain the practice until legislation to control takeover is introduced and becomes effective.

Incidentally, this letter caused a considerable amount of mental perturbation among traffic inspectors throughout the country areas. I was not surprised at that because I have seen it happen before, and it has never ceased to amaze me that people still continue in this belief that the A.L.P. shows tremendous consideration for the workers—which in fact it does not. It talks about it but that is as far as it goes. I am not talking nonsense. I am stating a plain fact.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: A matter of opinion.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: No. It is a plain fact, proved by example, and I am now giving an example.

How much different this is from the time when the previous Government had to deal with the Collie situation. One of the very first things the workers in Collie were told was, "We will send a special officer there; you will be looked after," and in fact that happened. Members who

were in that area at the time will recall the action that was taken in order that the people would not worry.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I recall it, too.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Mr. Griffith would remember it because, with his consideration for people, he wanted to ensure the people concerned did not go through a worrying period such as that now being experienced by the traffic inspectors.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: Was that officer employed by the local authority?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Will you allow Mr. Claughton to repeat that, Mr. President?

The PRESIDENT: I will not.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I bow to your order, Sir.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: Was that officer a member of a local authority?

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: If the rather persistent member is asking about the officer we sent to Collie to look after the welfare of the men, no, he was not. He was a civil servant who was sent down there by the Government in order to ensure that the men who wanted a change of employment got a change of employment and were placed. That is beside the point.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: I think it is the point.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: My real point is that the people in Collie at the time were immediately told they would be looked after. Imagine the effect the letter in the journal, which Mr. McNeill read out and which I was shown some time ago, had on fellows of 50 and 55 years of age who have given good service.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: I cannot see what it has to do with the Traffic Act.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I can understand that. You cannot see.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: If the honourable member pays diligent attention to what I propose to say and lets me proceed with what I propose to say, the germ of the idea will gradually sink in and something may come of it. According to the letter I read, the people under 45 years of age could be taken in; those over 45 could not. We all know it is much simpler for a man under 45 to secure alternative employment than it is for a man over 45.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: How many traffic inspectors would be affected? On reading the local government journal, I have found in a whole host of areas—

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: May I quote something again? I may be wrong in putting it to this particular gentleman's

credit, but I am fairly certain it was Mr. Dans—if not, someone else in that block and in his party—who said the other day, “If there is one man unemployed in this country it is one too many.” Now we have again a conflict of ideas, a complete switch. There are not many inspectors to worry about, so why bother, why reassure them, why tell them they will not be put out of work? On the other hand, if there is one unemployed man—

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You are not answering my interjection. I said: How many men are affected? How many people hold dual positions as traffic inspectors-cum-shire clerks-cum-health inspectors? I think you might have a look at this. You might know the answer.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: That is right. That question has no bearing on this matter because the particular reference there was to people who held one position only, that of a traffic inspector over the age of 45 years.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I now understand.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: There are several such people in Bunbury. There is Mr. Lee in Donnybrook. They are a couple I can quickly call to mind. Mr. Lee has two or three years to go.

Now we reach the stage where we read the Minister's statement that all existing traffic inspectors will be appointed as special traffic constables if they so desire, if the induction requirements are O.K., if the normal retirement age is O.K., if they satisfactorily undertake such training as is required, if the remuneration is the normal one. If all these requirements are fulfilled they will be employed in their present locations. If the Minister's statement is correct it now appears these people will be taken over: but what a worrying time these fellows have had!

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Are having.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: They are probably still having a worrying time, because we have this conflict between the Minister and his senior officer, Mr. Wedd. I think it is a pity. Mr. Wedd is not arguing with his Minister. Mr. Wedd simply was not informed. I suppose he had not been told—the Minister had not got around to telling Mr. Wedd.

The Hon. J. Dolan: Those conditions?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Yes.

The Hon. J. Dolan: They were in the interdepartmental report to which your former Minister referred. All those conditions were taken exactly from that.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: When it is proposed to bring in legislation which will transpose the whole thing, I do not care whose conditions they are. Surely one does something about it. This is very different from what Mr. Wedd said.

The Hon. J. Dolan: He knew all those things.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: The Minister should have given him a short, sharp smack because what he said is different from what the Minister said.

Most of the talk about accidents seems to beg one very fundamental point; that is, in this State, where it is said if we did this there would be less accidents, nobody has yet tried the system we have in a real comparison with the police system, for the simple reason that the traffic inspectors have never had the powers to arrest offenders against section 31 (reckless and dangerous driving), section 60 (unlawful use of a vehicle), section 61 (unlawfully interfering with a vehicle), section 63 (procuring the use of a vehicle by fraud), and section 25 (refusing name and address). Those are the types of criminal or near criminal activities associated with traffic control.

People talk about how in those States which have centralised traffic control the police handle the situation better than it is handled in this State. Yet the country traffic inspectors have never had the authority that is vested in the police. Again, comparisons are completely invalid and just do not stand up because the situations are totally different.

I have been concerned about traffic inspectors who are over the age of 45 and look like being thrown out with little or no consideration being shown them. I was making inquiries about what should be done for them. I believe that in a Bill of this nature at least there should be a grandfather clause to cover those traffic inspectors. I am talking about the men who at some time in their lives, of their own free will and accord, decided they would take up traffic duties as a means of earning a livelihood. In other words, they commit themselves to this work; and not only do they commit themselves but also the future welfare of their wives and families—always allowing, of course, that they behave themselves and perform their jobs efficiently.

Some of these men have been in this work for a number of years, and have reached a rank equivalent to a sergeant or even an inspector in the Police Force. I know that in Bunbury at one time retired police inspectors were employed in charge of traffic control, although that is not done now.

It would seem to me that among the details in a Bill of this nature should be a grandfather clause. I have heard all sorts of addresses in this House about grandfather clauses and how important it is to ensure that people who have been engaged in a particular line of activity should not be inconvenienced by some new law or regulation.

I believe that a certain fixed period—say, two years—should be set during which time these people would be acceptable under the grandfather clause, without any conditions attached to that acceptance.

They should be given the opportunity to apply to work in different sections within traffic control. I further believe that people who have reached senior rank and are over the age of 40 years and have given, say 10 years' service, should be considered for what we might call brevet rank. I understand that such a system was used—and although I am not trying to entice Mr. Ron Thompson to interject he would know of this—when the waterside police were incorporated into the ordinary Police Force. Mr. Dans is indicating that he knows of this precedent.

It would seem to me to be reasonable that the Bill should include a grandfather clause which allows brevet rank to be granted to those traffic inspectors, within certain time limits and so forth. The Minister when replying may stand up and say, "Oh, we intend to do that." That is all very well. I have always been a great one for accepting on trust what Ministers say. But we in this House have had occasion in the last 18 months to commiserate privately with three gentlemen on the other side of the House. I refer to the three Ministers. On several occasions we have seen them take actions here in good faith and then find that their actions have been countermanded. It is no good gainsaying that fact, because we have all seen the situation and we have indeed felt extremely sorry for the Ministers.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: In what instances?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Well, the bingo Bill, as a quick example.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: That will be back.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Yes. I am sure if the Leader of the House wishes me to I could enumerate some instances—and I am quite prepared to do so—in which a Minister has stood up and said, "Yes, I will agree to that amendment suggested by Mr. Griffith," but he has been dropped like a hot potato a little later.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Again, give me the instance.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: There were several instances; I think we can all recall them.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: I do not think we can.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I will not go into greater detail at this stage.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: The town planning Bill.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Yes, that was another instance.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: The ombudsman Bill was another.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Yes. I could recount them, but I do not wish to. I am not making these up; as the Leader of the House has seen they have come spontaneously from the floor of the House.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: You needed a lot of help to get you through that one. If you had not a lawyer to help you I do not think you would have got through it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Yes, I would have. I am a great one for accepting on trust what Ministers say. A number of speakers have referred to Mr. Dolan's integrity; and our system works on trust. That is fair enough. However, I do not believe it is fair enough to take a step as serious as this which involves the complete takeover of all traffic, particularly when it affects individual occupations and individual livelihoods, and the decentralisation I have spoken of.

I wish to say a little more about the business of accidents and the way they may be prevented by police control of traffic. In his speech the Minister was at great pains to state that the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons is most concerned about the road toll. He mentioned Dr. Bedbrook, chairman of the road trauma committee of that organisation, and B. A. R. Stokes, who is secretary of that committee. Those worthy gentlemen—and I know them to be worthy gentlemen—are concerned about road accidents, and they said—

It is recommended that enforcement remains in the hands of the Police Traffic Department under the direction of the Commissioner of Police. . .

Let us be reasonable. Dr. George Bedbrook is in the field of orthopaedics and, particularly in his work with paraplegics and quadriplegics, second to none in the world; but in the field of traffic control Mr. Dolan, after 18 months' experience should be a greater authority than Dr. Bedbrook. That is no disparagement of Dr. Bedbrook; his speciality is orthopaedics. As I say, he is without peer when it comes to the matter of quadriplegia, hemiplegia, and that type of problem. But traffic control is not his field. For the Minister to quote Dr. Bedbrook and to hope that we will all accept him as an authority is a little ludicrous. It is just not on.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: I am not with you there, because you are elected to Parliament as an ordinary person, and you then train yourself to do certain things in many fields.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: That is right. The point is that all too often we get people who are well qualified in a certain academic field talking on subjects they are not qualified to talk on. I am quite sure, Mr. President, that with your vast experience you have seen this happen

time out of number. We find the fellow who is of eminence in the field of—let us take an absurd case and say archaeology. He is an absolute, undisputed authority on that subject, but for some obscure reason he is led to pontificate on, say matrimonial relations or some other subject.

The Hon. J. Dolan: He could be pretty clued up about those things.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Yes, he may be, but he cannot speak on matrimonial relations on the basis of his qualifications in archaeology. We often hear people pontificate on matters about which they do not know a great deal, although they may be pre-eminent authorities in some other field. All I am saying is that we have no proof that Dr. Bedbrook is an expert on traffic; although there is ample proof he is an expert on quadriplegia.

The Hon. J. Dolan: Dr. Bedbrook and Dr. Stokes have been great students of this for years.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Even they are talking about a statutory body.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: That is right. I was about to come to that. What worries me about this Bill is that it displays a complete lack of imagination, and no evidence of study or research. The previous Government carried out a fair amount of study, to which Mr. Dolan has been good enough to refer. Based on that study the previous Government said, "We believe this sort of control is probably better. Think about it. If you do not want to run your own traffic you can pass it over to the police." As Mr Withers indicated, this was done in the Kimberley. Rockingham passed over control years ago. Busselton, Pinjarra, Esperance, and a number of other local authorities have also handed over traffic control to the police.

All this Bill states is that no longer do local authorities have an option, but rather they must hand over control because the Government wants it.

I am sure—and, again, it was one of the speeches I was unfortunate enough to miss—that even Mr. Dans is coming around to seeing the sense of a statutory body. This is understandable because it is so logical. Mr. Dans wants the matter passed over to the police; that is fair enough because the commissioner would be the fellow to do it. He wants to see the body gradually built up over a period of years.

I said a little earlier that we are conditioned by our history and the circumstances under which we live, and I believe this is of vital importance. The Police Department in this State is conditioned and trained, and all its experience has been directed towards the protection of the community from crime, apart from traffic control in the metropolitan area.

The traffic control system in this State has been built up over the years, and it is a truly decentralised system with power and authority vested in various local authority centres. That is the way it should be allowed to expand. This means, of course, that if we are to tie together all traffic control we must have a statutory body and not simply expand the Police Force. That is the reason I wanted to say a few words on this Bill.

There is only one other matter I wish to deal with, and this relates to the use of the amphoter and radar to which some members have made reference in this House. I say emphatically that the amphoter and radar protect only the low-flying birds; and that is about all. Let me explain what I mean. For an amphoter and radar to work, a straight piece of road is required. It has to be straight both laterally and horizontally, with no bends or dips. By placing the amphoter and radar into position the operator can see vehicles approaching, and he can take down the number of any vehicle that is travelling at an excessive speed. I repeat that all these aids are good for is to protect the low-flying birds.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: What kind of birds in particular?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: The feathered ones, both male and female. These speed-checking devices do not protect the motorists, because on the straight stretches of roads they are able to see on-coming traffic. These things cannot be used on highways or on winding bush roads.

The Hon. S. T. J. Thompson: You would be surprised where these things could be worked.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: It has to be done on straight sections of roads. On one occasion I was apprehended, and that was on a straight section of road over which I could have travelled at 70 miles per hour quite safely.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: Did you pay the fine?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: No, but somebody else who was with me did. I believe there is room for co-operation, liaison, and some changes in the overall traffic control, but not for the reasons that have been given by the Minister.

I refer to a report which appeared in today's *Daily News* under the heading of, "Road accidents cost us \$850m." It points out that the high accident rates amongst young drivers was caused by inexperience, inadequate training, and aggressive rather than defensive driving. This is happening in Australia where the traffic is partly controlled by the police. I do not think that the reasons given for the prevention

of accidents can stand up to test. They have been confounded by arguments put up by members in this Chamber.

It seems to be a great pity that a Bill as important as this tells us nothing except there is to be a change in the procedure. If it is passed then instead of a person being able to elect as to whether or not traffic in his area be controlled by the police, the traffic in the area will be ordered to be placed under police control. Anything which might be in the minds of the Government, the Minister, or the traffic authorities can only be found in the Minister's second reading speech or by asking questions in this House. After all the years that this legislation has been on the stocks I do not think that is good enough; and for that reason I intend to oppose the measure.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. S. T. J. Thompson.

QUESTIONS (6): ON NOTICE.

1. BUILDING SOCIETIES

Merger

The Hon. D. K. DANS, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the recent merger between the Park Permanent Investment and Building Society and the Town and Country Building Society?
- (2) Under what conditions was this merger made?
- (3) Has the Registrar of Building Societies been in contact with the directors of the Park Permanent Investment and Building Society since financial difficulties beset this organisation?
- (4) Who are or were the Directors?
- (5) Where were they contacted?
- (6) If no contact was made, where are these Directors at present?
- (7) How long has this Society been under the control of the present Directors?
- (8) What were the circumstances under which the Directors acquired this Society?
- (9) Are all investors' assets now fully secured under the merger arrangements?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) A transfer of all the engagements of the Park Permanent Investment and Building Society to the Town and Country Building Society.
- (3) Yes, on several occasions over the past twelve months.
- (4) R. Cleaver; D. J. Saggars; E. W. Milner; J. A. Carr; and J. W. Harvey.

2.

IRRIGATION

Collie and Preston Areas

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) What is the irrigation rate in—
 - (a) the Collie Irrigation District; and
 - (b) the Preston Irrigation District?
- (2) What is the water charge in each district mentioned in (1) and on what basis is this charge levied in each case?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

- (1) (a) The irrigation rate in the Collie Irrigation District is \$7 per acre on all irrigable land assessed in the proportion of one acre in three of each holding to be rated.
Subject to a minimum rate of \$35 on each separately assessed holding.
- (b) The Preston Irrigation District is not rated.
- (2) (a) The price of water in the Collie Irrigation District is—
The water allowance in return for rates is 2 acre feet per rated holding.
Water in excess of the 2 acre feet allowance is charged at \$3.50 per acre foot.
- (b) The price of water in the Preston Irrigation District is \$15 per acre foot for all water supplied.

In both (a) and (b) above, the basis for the charges levied is as follows:—

Irrigation rates and charges are fundamentally based on the necessity to recover all operation

- (5) A statutory quorum—Messrs. Carr, Milner and Harvey—was in Perth and Mr. Saggars phoned from the North West.
- (6) Answered by (5).
- (7) Present directors were appointed on the following dates:—
R. Cleaver, J. Carr—16th December, 1965.
E. Milner—4th October, 1968.
D. Saggars—27th July, 1970.
J. Harvey—1st August, 1972.
- (8) The Society was registered as a Permanent Society in 1933. Since then there have been changes in the Board by reason of resignation and death. The present Directors have all been appointed under the Rules of the Society on the dates shown in (7).
- (9) Yes.

and maintenance costs, capital depreciation and interest charges on capital loan funds.

However, in practice, charges to the ratepayer are kept to a minimum and are never sufficient to cover full costs.

3. TELEVISION

Station at Exmouth

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

Is a T.V. Station for Exmouth as reported in the *Daily News* dated 16th August, 1972, to be established in the near future?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

The Australian Broadcasting Control Board advises that a TV station is not proposed for Exmouth. However, it is planned to establish a national broadcasting station at Exmouth by the end of 1974 to transmit the Western Australian regional programme to serve Exmouth, Learmonth, Onslow and the surrounding area.

4. SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

Adjournment of a Week

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

- (1) With reference to my question of the 10th May, 1972, when I inquired whether the adjournment of Parliament for a fortnight coincided with the school holidays and the Minister replied that this was a mere coincidence, is it a fact that Parliament is proposing to adjourn for a week next week?
- (2) Does this also coincide with the school holidays?
- (3) Is this also a mere coincidence?
- (4) How does the Minister explain two such coincidences occurring in the one year?
- (5) Is the coincidence likely to occur again during the months of May or August in the life of the present Government?
- (6) Does the Minister think these extraordinary coincidences rather odd?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) With some of them.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) The Government is unaware of the measures by which coincidences can be avoided or how they can be limited.
- (5) Questions seeking an expression of opinion are inadmissible.
(See Erskine May's Parliamentary Practice.)

- (6) Coincidences are generally somewhat odd but that does not alter the fact that they occur nevertheless.

5. *This question was postponed.*

6. ABATTOIRS

Midland and Robb Jetty: Killing Charges

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

What are the killing charges for cattle, sheep, lambs, calves, goats and pigs respectively at—

(a) Midland Junction Abattoir; and

(b) Robb Jetty Meat Works?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

Fees charged for the slaughtering of stock at both Midland Junction Abattoir and Robb Jetty Meat Works are:

	Cents per lb.
Cattle	
Up to and including 200 lb.	3.35
Each pound over 200 lb.	
up to and including 250 lb.	1.61
Each pound over 250 lb.	
up to and including 450 lb.	1.00
Each pound over 450 lb.	0.67
Minimum per head \$6.70.	
Calves	
Up to and including 100 lb.	3.75
Each pound over 100 lb.	
up to and including 150 lb.	2.95
Each pound over 150 lb.	
up to and including 200 lb.	1.61
Minimum per head \$3.75.	
Sheep	
Up to and including 40 lb.	2.30
Each pound over 40 lb.	1.45
Minimum weight 38 lb.	
Lambs	
Up to and including 30 lb.	3.20
Each pound over 30 lb.	2.05
Minimum weight 28 lb.	
Pigs	
Up to and including 22 lb.	7.10
Each pound over 22 lb.	
up to and including 110 lb.	2.37
Each pound over 110 lb.	
up to and including 179 lb.	1.58
Each pound over 179 lb.	0.79
Minimum per head \$1.56.	
Goats	
Carcases 24 lbs. and under per head.	\$1.30
Carcases over 24 lbs. per head plus 2 cents per lb. for each lb. over 24 lbs.	

Internal service charges are added to the above and include fees collected on behalf of the Public Health Department and Department of Primary Industry.

PERTH REGIONAL RAILWAY BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 15th August.

THE. HON. D. K. DANS (South Metropolitan) [4.55 p.m.]: I rise to support the Bill, and I do so for the reason that I think it is important that the Government gets this project under way to an early start. We have heard a great deal about confidence, and I think it would be correct to say there is some lack of confidence in the community at the present time. It would be in the best interests of the people of this State for the Government to show its confidence by quickly getting on with the job of undergrounding the Perth railway.

There is some history in Australia which indicates reluctance on our part to proceed quickly in matters of national importance, particularly in relation to the transport system. I have read some of this history, but I do not intend to weary the House with a great amount of detail and statistics. I merely wish to go back to the year 1921 when a Royal Commission recommended that important sections of the mainland railways be standardised at a cost of approximately £21,000,000, or in today's currency \$42,000,000.

In 1949 Sir Harold Clapp, the Victorian Commissioner for Railways, recommended standardisation of 11,300 miles of Australian mainland track at a cost of £76,750,000, or \$153,500,000. Both of those recommendations were pigeonholed because of the alleged heavy cost.

It appears to me that the time is never ripe to start such projects, particularly in relation to our transport system. To this point of time in 1972 the cost to Western Australia alone of standardising the railways in recent times has amounted to \$155,500,000. So we can see from that that the cost of vacillation in getting under way the urgent need to overhaul transport systems, particularly in the railway sector and more particularly in the State of Western Australia, is very high. Whilst we have a problem, it is certainly a national problem.

Let me draw attention to an article which appeared in *The Australian* of the 7th August, 1972, under the heading of, "States must get Federal railway aid." It outlines in great detail not only the deficiencies in failing to underground the railways, but also the deficiencies of the railway systems generally throughout the Commonwealth. It makes some recom-

mendation that the railway systems should be assisted in the way that the road systems are assisted by Federal grants.

The issue of the 22nd August of the same newspaper contained a report of what Mr. Wilcox, the Minister for Transport in Victoria, had to say on this matter. The report is as follows:—

Most major cities in the world were extending their underground transport systems.

Melbourne's underground system, now being built, would speed up urban transport with automatic ticket-selling and the introduction of new rolling stock.

But Victoria's public transport had a long way to go before it could be called adequate.

"Our thinking is correct—we have got new trains on the way and tenders have been called for new trams but we still have a huge backlog to overcome," he said.

Because of the time factor, it is important for us to look at some of the cost structures that are involved in the railway systems. In the *National Railway Journal* of April, 1972, a report in this connection appears on page 16. It states that the New South Wales Government Railways will probably end the present year with a record deficit approaching \$28,000,000. The report states further—

The original estimated deficit was \$A14 million but passenger revenue for the first five months was 16% below the budgeted figure . . .

Before I leave that subject I would indicate that the answer to the problem was given in *The Australian*. Let us consider the countries throughout the world which are taking the bit between their teeth irrespective of the cost involved in the feasibility studies, and what-have-you, because I think I can confidently say that it would be pretty nearly an impossible task to estimate the number of passengers we will carry by rail, whether it be elevated or underground, or what the total cost of the construction of this railway will be.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Do you think we are in a position to undertake such projects irrespective of costs?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: If I had time I could mention some of the projects which have been undertaken by private enterprise which have been very successful. They have been successful merely because the people concerned have been willing to take a risk.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That is risk capital not taxpayers' money.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Let me talk about some of the cities throughout the world that decided to go ahead with an underground system. The first such city

that comes to mind is New York. Irrespective of the fact that the central Government did not come to the party with the money, New York went ahead with its subway system. It was prepared to take the risk.

On page 64 of the *International Railway Journal* for 1972 we find reference to London which states—

The second contract for tunnelling on the Fleet Line has been awarded to A. Waddington & Son. The first contract was let out in February to Kinnear Moodie (IRJ March p 17). The latest contract is worth £2.5 million and covers the driving and lining of 2.4 km twin tunnels between Admiralty Arch and Bond Street station.

I will later mention some of the other countries which have taken this very important step and we must appreciate that it is related to the availability of fuel, the question of noise, pollution, and the more important situation of providing fast, clean, and efficient transport. If such transport can be provided it must follow that we will get the people to use public transport.

Before I continue I might say that I firmly believe—and this is my personal belief—that in the not-too-distant future we will have to recognise public transport for what it is; rather than go around saying we lost X number of dollars on a project, public transport will have to be provided by the public for the public, as is done in the case of the provision of electricity and other services, including water, roads, and so on.

It would be interesting to look out of the windows of Parliament House onto the Freeway system and get one of our more energetic economists to estimate the cost to the taxpayer of providing that system at a certain cost per motorcar; appreciating at the same time that one ton of car carries one hundredweight of people.

I said I would mention other cities and now indicate that apart from London going underground to meet its transport problems we also have places like Sao Paulo, Sofia, Bombay, Calcutta, and Copenhagen doing the same thing. In connection with Copenhagen I would like to read the following:—

The recent banning of all private motor cars in Copenhagen's city centre has made 10-12% more motorists use suburban station car parks and commute by S-Bahn,

This of course refers to the underground and the article is to be found on page 69 of the *International Railway Journal* of June, 1972. The same thing applies to Delhi and London.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Before you leave Copenhagen you do not anticipate that this is what we intend to do.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I did not say that. I was saying what had been done in Copenhagen.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: That would surely go a long way towards their being able to afford such a system.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: That may be so, but this was not the case with Bombay, London or Calcutta, and they are still proceeding with their intention. Why does not the honourable member ask me about London? This ban on private motorcars was not imposed in London but that city is extending its underground system.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: If it will help you I will ask you, "What about London?"

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I thank the Leader of the Opposition. There is nothing to show that London is banning motorists from the centre of the city. Let us be logical about this. If we are not going to choke our cities, and despite our love for and our desire to use our own cars, eventually a restriction must be imposed on the use of private motorcars in the cities, even if it is done in the year 2000.

What applies to London and the other cities also applies to Madrid, Oslo, and Perth. Even Perth is given a mention, and we are told that Perth may go ahead with this proposition to go underground. Apart from Perth doing this we also find that the principle is being adopted by Tel Aviv and other big cities.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: How does that establish that we should implement an underground system in Perth.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Let us have a look at the Perth regional transport study.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: Of all the cities you have quoted Perth has the smallest population.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Tel Aviv is not exactly swarming with people.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: What is it swarming with?

The PRESIDENT: Order! I would like to draw the attention of members to the fact that it is distinctly disorderly to interject, particularly in a low key and in a manner that makes it impossible for *Hansard* to hear and report the interjection. I would ask members to take notes of the points they wish to raise and to bring them up when they speak to the Bill.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: On page 24 of the Perth Regional Transport Study, 1970, we find the following:—

With regard to the public transport system, it is important to keep open the option of upgrading the busway system, both along railway reserves and freeways into some form of mass rapid transit. The most likely long term development at the moment

would appear to be a high speed computer controlled, electric railway similar to that under construction in San Francisco. It is possible, of course, that other more desirable systems may be developed during the next twenty years.

The point I am trying to establish is that what I have referred to appears to be almost impossible to carry out. I refer to the undertaking of a feasibility study in relation to the number of passengers that will be carried. If I wanted to continue in this strain I have here a great deal of material that appears to show how many passengers will travel by this system by the year so-and-so. But this is mere speculation. I certainly do not say it is correct.

I feel it would not be possible at this point of time to actually suggest the figure. What I am trying to establish is what we really want before we actually commence the construction of the railway.

Do we wait longer, and wait until we reap the miseries of past years? Do we wait and reap the miseries of New South Wales which put off the construction of its eastern suburbs railways for many years and which now finds that the sum of money necessary for the project is astronomical; that it is out of all proportion with the estimates that were made when it was first mooted? It is just another case of the Sydney Opera House.

Rather than hold up the initial planning stages and the initial starts that should be made, I feel we should give the Government the green light to go ahead at least with the preliminary stages in order that we may demonstrate to the community generally that the Government has the courage of its convictions and faith in the future of the State. If that were done it is possible that some of the benefits may rub off on the people who, at the moment appear to have their zip fasteners tightly closed on their pockets.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: How do you define the preliminary stages?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: By that I mean the preliminary planning stage and the pulling up of a most uneconomic section of railway between Perth and Fremantle. At the outset I said I did not want to weary the Chamber with statistics and facts, because they are readily available; besides which the Minister in his reply will no doubt supply the information required. By getting this off the ground it would be possible to obtain at least some perspective of what the future may hold for us.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [5.10 p.m.]: I will not employ very much time of the House this afternoon while speaking on this Bill. I did not intend to

make any contribution to the debate until yesterday afternoon, when I changed my mind.

I would first like to make a brief comment on the remarks made by Mr. Dans. I do not think any of us object to the idea that a Government should make an early start on projects, but I do agree with him that there is an evident lack of confidence within the community, and, as he indicated, some confidence will be restored if a start is made on this project.

I think the people in the community, however, will be more satisfied if they saw a start made to various projects after they were able to see evidence of planning that should be undertaken for such projects; after they were convinced that the planning had been well done before the projects were commenced. I say this because in this particular instance the people of the State visualise the expenditure of some \$546,000,000 of taxpayers' money over a long period of years.

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

The Hon. J. Dolan: Would you have done that?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It depends on whether I thought I could handle the situation. However at this moment I want to proceed and talk about the Perth Regional Railway Bill, because if I do not I am sure that you, Mr. President, will pull me up.

As I have said, the Minister for Railways has shown commendable restraint while listening to the debate that ensued on the Traffic Act Amendment Bill, and I am sure he will display equally commendable restraint on this Bill; because there is little doubt that the Bill must come under attack from the critics of the legislation on this side of the House who will no doubt voice their opinions on the merits and demerits of the legislation.

When introducing the Bill the Minister told us the Director-General of Transport is chairman of the steering committee of the regional transport study group. The Minister said he was going to make constant reference to the report and, indeed, to some extent he did. The Minister also told us of the Government's recently announced long-term commitment to a regional transport plan which envisages a high capacity rapid rail transit system and an extensive bus system feeding into the rail wherever practical.

The Minister told us the decision was made following comprehensive research that had been undertaken in the Perth regional transport study of 1970 and the subsequent evaluation of specified Government policy. In the concluding portion of his speech the Minister also said—

However, with the Commonwealth Government showing an interest in urban transportation development, it is hoped that within the next three, four, or five years some finance might be forthcoming from that source. If Commonwealth finance is not available we will be forced back onto our own resources and we will be no worse off than we were when the Nielsen bus-ways were suggested. A return to a railway system was envisaged in that plan in the ultimate.

The Minister's speech which occupies a little less than two and a half pages of *Hansard* represents an explanation to the members of this Chamber of the expenditure of \$546,000,000 approximately of the taxpayers' money, without taking into consideration any form of escalation whatsoever.

Be that as it may, I say again to Mr. Dans that nobody objects to planning but we should be in a position to plan properly and to go ahead with projects which are properly planned. By way of interjection I asked the question, "Are we in a position to undertake projects without regard to expense?" Mr. Dans had been referring to the fact that many other countries in the world have gone ahead with certain projects—to use his own words—without regard to expense. I never received an answer to that question, but I do not think that we are in a position to go ahead regardless of expense, particularly because we rely substantially, in the words of the Minister, on Commonwealth money for everything we want to do. At least, that is the attitude taken by the present Government. I am sure the Commonwealth would not be prepared to advance money for projects on a regardless of expense basis. We know what the situation was in regard to the Ord River when we talk about such matters as these. We had to justify the expense on that occasion and we will have to justify to the Commonwealth expense for whatever project any Government comes forward with. So much for that.

When I listened to the Minister, Mr. Logan—who took the adjournment of the debate—Mr. MacKinnon, and Mr. Medcalf I felt that these four people between them were arguing both sides of the question. On the one hand the Minister was advising us to get on with the job. I interpreted his words to mean that, nebulous as the planning for it may be, let us get on with it. The three other members who spoke advised us to take a little more care. They suggested by all means we should

get on with the job, but let it be done after experts have given us advice that we are doing the right thing.

Yesterday afternoon I attended, as I had been invited, a meeting in the common room of Parliament House to see the presentation of the report of the M.R.P.A. I must say I was extremely interested in the presentation of this report by the Chairman of the Town Planning Commission, Mr. Lloyd, and also by Dr. Carr who assists him. One or two things became clear in my mind as a result of that report. The first point which was very evident quite early was that the Ritter report, which was commissioned by the previous Minister for Town Planning in the present Government, was completely discredited. In the words of the M.R.P.A. report—

The M.R.P.A. believes that any further consideration of Mr. Ritter's study is unwarranted.

Yesterday afternoon the Ritter report was discredited completely. I do not enter into the merits and demerits of the Ritter report. I will not endeavour to enter into the merits and demerits of the project which has been foreshadowed with the introduction of this Bill, because I do not regard myself as a person competent to do so. I can only exercise the reasonable amount of common sense I have and apply my thinking to the circumstances in the way I see them.

The first point which registered in my mind was that the M.R.P.A. has studied the Ritter report and has discounted it. The authority said that, in its opinion, the Ritter report does not warrant further consideration. That was that.

I enjoyed the afternoon, because it was informative and interesting to listen both to Mr. Lloyd and Dr. Carr. After hearing their remarks, members of Parliament were given the opportunity to ask questions, particularly of Dr. Carr. Perhaps in a way I owe Dr. Carr an apology because the question which I felt in my conscience I had to ask him was one which doubtless caused him a little embarrassment in answering. To that extent I apologise to Dr. Carr.

After having listened to the introduction of this Bill by the Minister and the comments made by my colleagues, I felt that with an expenditure of \$546,000,000 over the next three to five years and the knowledge that we all have of the importance of transport in the total concept of the M.R.P.A., I had to ask Dr. Carr whether the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority had given any consideration to the concept contained in the Perth Regional Railway Bill. The answer was that the M.R.P.A. has not been asked to give an opinion on the Perth Regional Railway Bill.

The Hon. J. Dolan: The M.R.P.A. had an officer on the committee when it was unanimously agreed to proceed. I will tell the Leader of the Opposition about it.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That was the answer to the question I received.

The Hon. J. Dolan: It was wrong.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: If I was wrong—

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: That was quite correct.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I did not say that the Leader of the Opposition was wrong but the answer to the effect that the M.R.P.A. was not concerned was incorrect.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I will restate the question I asked Dr. Carr. Addressing the Minister for Health (Mr. Davies) I asked whether Dr. Carr would tell me what consideration the M.R.P.A. had given to the concept contained in the Perth Regional Railway Bill, which is the Bill before Parliament. As a matter of fact I had to ask him the question twice, because I did not state it very well in the first place and he did not seem to understand.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I will answer that in my speech when I reply.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Before we spend the \$500,000,000?

The Hon. J. Dolan: Shut up.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is very rude. I heard what the Minister said and it is very rude.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I did not say it to you.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I know the Minister did not say it to me, but I still think it is very rude. Dr. Carr's reply was the M.R.P.A. had not been consulted and he understood the considerations of the Perth Regional Railway Bill had been the subject of a Cabinet subcommittee.

Naturally enough, I did not say any more, because I was shocked to think that the M.R.P.A. had not been asked by the Government to give an opinion on the Perth Regional Railway Bill which involves an expenditure of \$546,000,000. Surely this comes within the total concept of the planning of the M.R.P.A. area, because it involves the city of Perth and its environs. Transport is an integral part of the development of any area, especially of the City of Perth area and its environs. I was quite taken aback to think this had happened.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Were you taken aback by the answer given to the other question you asked when you said it should go underground?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I did not ask that question.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I understood the Leader of the Opposition to ask it.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I did not ask at all whether it should go underground. Both my questions stemmed from the same line of thought pertaining to the Bill which we are now discussing. It is not for me to say what was in Dr. Carr's mind when he answered me and I do not want, or propose, to do him an injustice. However, I had to frame the question differently for him to give me the answer he did. If Mr. Dans was present he probably heard the way in which both questions were framed.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I admired you.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Thank you. Perhaps Mr. Dans even felt a little embarrassed on behalf of the Government.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: Not at all.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I know that nothing embarrasses the honourable member. I want to treat this matter seriously, because it is a serious matter. The Minister culminated the meeting in the common room with certain remarks whereby he thanked his officers and members present for coming along. He said, "We have heard the expressions of the Chairman of the M.R.P.A. and of Dr. Carr. Now all we really want is the report and recommendations of the Select Committee into the Corridor Plan and we will be able to make our decisions. Thank you very much for your attendance." At that point the meeting closed.

Again I was confused, concerned, and amazed that this was all the Government required. I would have thought that the Government should ask the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority for its opinion on the Perth Regional Railway Bill. If the Minister were serious about his remark in relation to the report and recommendation of the Select Committee on the Corridor Plan, I should have thought the Government would have waited for that report before bringing down a Bill committing the Government to the expenditure of \$540,000,000-odd. Whatever that committee comes up with—and I have no idea what it will be—it is worthy of consideration. Apparently, however, the Government is asking Parliament to authorise the expenditure of this money before the Select Committee reports. I think this is a very serious matter.

I also regard seriously the commencement which has been made on the construction of a bus terminal costing \$600,000-odd. If I am incorrectly advised on this, I would like to be informed. I have some photographs in this envelope. I realise photographs cannot be recorded in *Hansard* and I do not want to try to do this. The photographs are plans of the bus station concept which someone lent me to look at. I repeat that the bus station is to cost \$600,000-odd, and, I am told, a commencement has already been

made. Once again members will appreciate my consternation. I repeat I think this is a very serious matter.

It is a very serious matter that we should be given details of the expenditure of this large amount of money and then the Minister's speech terminates with the forlorn hope that the Commonwealth Government will come forward with assistance. If this does not happen the Minister says we will be thrown back on our own resources. Thus I ask Mr. Dans: Are we in a position to undertake projects without regard to expense?

The whole thing is nebulous at the present time because we do not know where we are going. Mr. Logan expressed the opinion that the issue should be referred to an independent authority to draw up a plan of the whole concept before the Government commits itself to an expenditure of this proportion. This idea appeals to me if we are to have legislation of this type.

I am not prepared to give my vote to the Bill. I am not prepared to say to the taxpayers of Western Australia, "My vote will commit you to this huge expenditure" unless I can be satisfied that there has been good planning. Much more investigation must be undertaken before we commit the taxpayer to this outlay.

It seems to me that three or four things have happened. I have already said that the Ritter report is discounted. Mr. Ritter was appointed by a Minister who is no longer holding the Town Planning portfolio. The report was paid for by the Government but it was pushed to one side. The M.R.P.A. discounts its credibility. As well as this it seems to me that the Government has completely breached the PERTS report. The PERTS report came into the hands of the previous Government early in 1971, I think.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: It was presented early in 1971.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: About the same time as the Labor Government took office in this State. I repeat my earlier comments: This matter of transport is a key issue in the planning and consideration of the M.R.P.A. It amazes me that the Government has not asked this authority for its opinion of the report.

A Government acting as irresponsibly as the present Government is in this matter could be asked to resign. I regard it as very serious indeed that the one organisation in the community which is responsible for planning—the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority—has not been asked for its opinion on such an important matter.

I conclude my remarks by saying I am not prepared to give my vote to the Bill. I would like to hear the Minister's reply on the one or two points I have raised.

I would like him to explain why these steps were taken, and why the Government is prepared at this point of time to rest its case on Mr. Knox's report and to proceed into the distant future with a project which will be so costly to the taxpayers of Western Australia.

THE HON. CLIVE GRIFFITHS (South-East Metropolitan) [5.43 p.m.]: I also had no intention of speaking to this Bill but events over the last week or so have led me to change my mind on the matter. There are various aspects on which I intend to comment.

First of all I wish to say something in regard to one or two of the points made by Mr. Dans when speaking earlier this afternoon. He referred to the fact that other cities in various parts of the world are currently embarking on projects to build underground railways, and he mentioned one in New York where tenders were recently called for the second stage.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: No, I did not say that, it was another city.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I am sure it was one in America. He mentioned a cost of something like \$2,000,000.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: It was London.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Well, Mr. Dans certainly mentioned the underground railway in New York, as well as the one in London. These two cities in particular already have an underground railway system to which they are committed. Therefore, the proposed projects in these two cities are merely projections of the existing arrangement and not the installation of a completely new complex for a rapid transport system.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: The majority of the other cities I mentioned do not have underground railways at all.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: They have railway systems of rapid transport which are being extended. I mentioned London and New York because Mr. Dans referred firstly to these and discussed them at some length. I simply mention that in passing.

The most important point in Mr. Dans' speech was his belief that this Chamber ought to agree to the preliminary stages of the rapid transport system being undertaken. Members will recall that just as he was about to sit down I asked him to give his definition of what he considered to be the preliminary stages because I considered this to be very important.

Some, and perhaps all members of this Chamber will agree that there ought to be an agreement as far as the preliminary stages of this plan are concerned. Therefore, it was very gratifying to hear Mr. Dans say that his definition of the preliminary stages is the planning stage of the proposal and perhaps the pulling-up

of the unwanted railway line from Perth to Lathlain. That was the extent of his definition of the preliminary stages. This Bill goes a long way further than that.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: My word!

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: In that case perhaps the reception which the Bill would receive from members would be entirely different.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I did use the word "preliminary."

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I do not think many people would argue the point with Mr. Dans if that were the extent of this piece of legislation. However, I repeat, it goes a long way further than that. Indeed, the estimated cost of the project has been mentioned on numerous occasions—something like \$546,000,000 or \$550,000,000 of the taxpayers' money.

The Bill asks for a blank cheque to carry out this work. It is not a request to perform some preliminary plans. I would say that Mr. Dans is a long way out if he believes that that is all the Bill seeks.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I am fully aware that that is not all the Bill seeks. You and I will be very lucky to have a ride on the train.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: The honourable member has already mentioned that.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: You are so right.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: The Minister should bear this important point in mind. If the Bill were asking for the sanctioning of preliminary plans its reception would be entirely different.

On Wednesday, the 9th August, I asked the Minister a question in relation to a building which I understood was being erected on railway property in the central city. I asked—

Is the Government currently planning the construction of a bus terminal in the Central City area?

The Minister indicated that this was so. I then asked where it was to be built and he replied—

On Western Australian Government Railways land north of Wellington Street between King Street and William Street.

I then asked the total cost of the project and the Minister said it was estimated at \$537,000 for the terminal building and associated roadworks.

I also asked what was the anticipated date for the completion of the project and he replied that it was anticipated that stage 1 would be completed by the 31st December, 1972, and stages 2 and 3 would be dependent on extra money becoming available. I asked what effect would the construction of this terminal have on the

implementation of the PERTS recommendations and he replied that a bus terminal in this general area was recommended by PERTS. My last question was from which districts would the buses using the terminal operate and he replied that they would be from the north-western sector.

While I have no argument about the cost of the structure because I am not competent to know whether stages 1, 2, and 3 of the complex are worth \$537,000, I am concerned about the completion date. This indicated to me that the project was to be completed by the 31st December, irrespective of the result of the Bill we are presently discussing. It indicated to me that the Government intended to go ahead with the bus terminal regardless of the fate of the Bill.

When the Minister said that the PERTS report recommended a bus terminal in this general area, he failed to tell us that the PERTS report had recommended an underground bus terminal whereas the one being constructed is on the surface. Whilst this may be in the general recommended area, I feel it is a bit misleading to suggest that it is not contrary to the recommendation of the PERTS report. I am suggesting it is very contrary to the PERTS report because there is no similarity between the PERTS recommendation and what is being constructed—one is underground and the other is on the surface.

I wish to point out that when I refer to the PERTS report I am referring to the *Perth Regional Transport Study, 1970*. This is the report which members have been studying and considering when looking at this proposal over the past months. Members of Parliament, and indeed the community in general, have come to accept this report by the study team set up under the previous Government. Therefore, I was somewhat alarmed to discover that there was a PERTS report, 1972, which had suddenly come to light. Certainly I had no previous information that such a document was in existence, or, in fact, that such a study was taking place.

In view of the fact that this Bill seeks to spend a tremendous sum of money, I wonder why members of Parliament were not informed that another PERTS report was available. This PERTS report, incidentally, was laid on the table of the House by the Minister on the 16th August.

The Hon. F. R. White: That was after I had spoken.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Yes, it was laid on the Table of the House after many members had spoken to the Bill. Bearing in mind that a debate is proceeding in this House, the investigations I was able to make rather hurriedly—because the report has only just been brought to my notice—in the last half hour are not very comprehensive. In

fact, I do not believe that, at this point of time, the report has been laid on the Table of the House in another place.

The Hon. F. R. White: I am sure the Press is not aware of that report.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: No, I am sure the Press is not aware of it. I am horrified to think that we are discussing a Bill which seeks authority for the Government to spend \$546,000,000.

The Hon. J. Dolan: We are not.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I am sorry about that; I must be on the wrong Bill.

The Hon. J. Dolan: You have not read the Bill; it does not propose to spend.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: *Hansard* indicates that the figure that is to be spent is approximately the amount I have stated. In any case, we are certainly discussing a Bill which seeks to have implemented a rapid transport system which, at this point of time, in no way lines up with the recommendation in the PERTS report of 1970, the only one, up until now, of which members of Parliament had any knowledge. I find this most disturbing indeed.

There has to be some financial justification for implementing a system such as this, bearing in mind that members have had an opportunity to study only one PERTS report.

The Hon. F. R. White: That is, the 1970 report.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Yes. At this stage I point out that if, during the course of my speech, I refer to the PERTS report I want members to understand that I am referring to the PERTS report of 1970. If I refer to the 1972 PERTS report, the one that has just been made available, I will specifically mention it.

The PERTS report arrives at certain conclusions after studying five alternative propositions, and the report recommends a transport system for the metropolitan region based on a central business district work force of 90,000 persons. It is important that members should keep this figure in mind.

The Hon. F. R. White: That is, 90,000 persons by 1989.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Yes, after 1989 the PERTS report makes further recommendations in regard to the transport system, but up until 1989 it recommends that the central business district work force should be contained within the number I have mentioned.

All members of Parliament have had made available to them a copy of this PERTS report, and a copy of the Corridor Plan for Perth. If members have read both these reports they will find that one is linked with the other, because the report on the Corridor Plan makes constant

reference to the PERTS report in an attempt to justify its recommendations, and the PERTS report, in turn, makes constant reference to the Corridor Plan in an attempt to justify its recommendations.

I want to know from the Minister whether a central business district work force of 90,000 people can satisfactorily maintain an underground railway system such as the one advocated by the Government. I presume the Minister will be able to give me some sort of an idea about that when he replies to the debate. In an endeavour to verify that it was the intention of the Corridor Plan to limit the size of the central business district work force, at the meeting arranged by the Government yesterday for members of Parliament to be addressed by members of the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority, I asked Dr. Carr whether that was the intention. Dr. Carr's answer was to the effect that this was not necessarily the true situation. He said that he did not believe that this was so, or words to that effect.

I was somewhat taken aback by that answer, because my interpretation of what was contained in both documents certainly indicated that a limit was to be imposed. So bearing in mind the answer given by Dr. Carr, when I picked up this morning's issue of *The West Australian*, I was surprised to notice on the front page an article headed—

Tax urged to slow city growth.

The article states—

The Metropolitan Region Planning Authority has called for Government incentives to promote commercial development in outer metropolitan centres.

It has suggested a new selective business tax to discourage heavy concentrations of office workers in the city and has advocated the rezoning of 23,600 acres of rural land in the proposed urban corridors.

The M.R.P.A. regards the proposals—contained in a report tabled in Parliament yesterday—as important to the success of its corridor development strategy.

The article then refers to many other things. The main point is that it is designed to limit the central business district work force. Yet Dr. Carr told me that this is not the situation necessarily, notwithstanding the fact that the PERTS report clearly suggests this. Indeed I will read several sections of it in a moment to verify what I am saying.

In the 1972 PERTS report which came to my attention only 30 minutes ago is the following:—

It is therefore incorrect to say that the Nielsen transport plan limits the central area workforce to 90,000. It does not. But it does indicate that

certain measures will need to be taken to avoid vehicle congestion as the figure rises above 90,000.

Let us see what the 1970 PERTS report says in regard to the central business work force, and that report contains many references to it, although I have picked only a couple at random. The following is to be found on page VII-1:—

The point was made, in an earlier section of this Report, that the study is concerned with two different patterns of land use for 1989 and the intervening years. The centralised—

That word is underlined in the report. To continue—

—alternative assumes a Perth central business district workforce of 120,000 persons by 1989. The dispersed—

That word is also underlined in the report. To continue—

—alternative assumes that the central business district workforce will be 90,000 by 1989, with an additional 30,000 workers dispersed in areas outside the central city.

The final recommendation of the study group was that it shows the dispersed alternative as its plan to be adopted. That is the first reference to the 90,000 workforce. The next is to be found on page VII-6, as follows:—

If the dispersed alternative evolves, with a 90,000 workforce potential, the development in subregional centres of office employment will reduce the Perth central business district office workforce by 18,500 persons.

That is another reference to the 90,000 although the report contains many. The whole basis of the report was the fact that the central business district work force would be 90,000 by 1989. The report also suggests that in order to justify a system of transport for the people of the metropolitan region, with the idea of implementing a corridor plan, the economic method of doing it up to 1989 is to put in busways. The railways are to be pulled up between Perth and Midland and Perth and Armadale and the land is to be used for an expressway for buses with an underground bus depot in the central area of the Perth railway station, in the general location where the Minister is building one on the surface. Another underground bus depot to cater for buses from across the Freeway is to be established in the general vicinity of the Perth Technical College in Perth.

Now this complex as recommended by the PERTS report of 1970 is entirely different from that contained in the Bill. It is clear to me that the Government has totally disregarded the situation, and no doubt it has done so on the basis of some information which may be contained in the new report about which nobody knew.

It is quite unfair of the Government to have an entirely different report and study available, and not to present it to members in time for them to consider it prior to discussing the Bill in this House.

The Hon. F. R. White: It is not just unfair; it is plain discourteous.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I was trying to be kind. It is unfair to members who have spoken on the subject over the last week because they were not informed of the recommendations of the experts in this field. Surely somewhere in the report there are arguments and justifications for deviating from the 1970 report.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: You seem to be objecting because the information has been given to you.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: When was it given to me?

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: It is in your hand.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: While Mr. Claughton has been asleep . . .

Point of Order

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: On a point of order, Mr. President, that statement is not true and I object to it. I would ask the honourable member to withdraw it.

THE PRESIDENT: Order! Will the honourable member withdraw his remarks.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Mr. President, I withdraw the remark and rephrase it by saying that whilst the honourable member was not listening to the debate . . .

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Still on the point of order, Sir, the member is making an unparliamentary suggestion and I again request that he withdraw it.

THE PRESIDENT: I take it that the honourable member has withdrawn his remark, and he may continue his speech.

Debate Resumed

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: I do not want the honourable member to feel that he was being unjustly treated by me and if it makes him feel happier I will withdraw the comment. He obviously did not hear me although he is sitting exactly in front of me.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: But I did hear you.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Well, if the honourable member did hear me I made the comment that this particular document was made available to me 30 minutes ago whilst the debate was in progress.

The Hon. J. Dolan: It has been on the Table of the House since the 16th August; that is not 30 minutes ago.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: It has been made available to me now because it was in the possession of somebody else.

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: It cannot be made available until it is tabled.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: During the course of this debate no mention was made of the fact that such a document was being prepared.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You could not find any reference to it in the Minister's speech which was made in May?

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: No, none at all. Irrespective of the full debate which took place in another place no mention was made that such a document was being prepared. Mr. Claughton certainly has not mentioned it.

The Hon. F. R. White: I am sure he did not know it existed until today.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Then why is he criticising the fact that I am saying no information was made available? I think he knew nothing at all about it.

I believe that in making a report such as this available at such a late stage of the discussion on this Bill the Government has not acted politely. I suggest that in the future members be informed that such studies are in the course of being undertaken so that they may contain themselves until they have read the report.

The Hon. R. Thompson: If the report has been on the table for eight days you do not have to be taken by the hand and have it handed to you.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: Many members have spoken prior to the report being placed on the Table of the House.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: The Bill passed through the Legislative Assembly before the report was tabled.

The Hon. CLIVE GRIFFITHS: It seems to me, bearing in mind what my Leader said, during the course of his speech, to the effect that he had received a reply from Dr. Carr yesterday, that the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority had not been consulted on this proposal which is contained in the Bill. I can only assume that nowhere in the document is there a recommendation such as that contained in the Bill because I notice that some members of the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority are also on the committee which prepared the report. Dr. Carr said yesterday that the proposition had not been presented to the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority at all.

I say that this is a sorry state of affairs, indeed, because we have a Metropolitan Region Planning Authority which has been set up to advise and make recommendations in regard to the planning of the metropolitan region but it is not being consulted in issues as important as this.

It seems to me that the Government is totally and utterly disregarding the M.R.P.A.

In another matter concerning the positioning of power lines through the Guildford Grammar School the Government completely disregarded the M.R.P.A.

In this instance a major undertaking on the part of the Government has not even been referred to the competent and important body set up by the Parliament of Western Australia to guide and assist us in the development of the metropolitan region.

For these reasons, Mr. President, I have absolutely no hesitation in saying that I intend to oppose the Bill.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth.

House adjourned at 6.09 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 24th August, 1972

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

BILLS (2): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Youth, Community Recreation and National Fitness Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. T. D. Evans (Minister for Education), and read a first time.

2. City of Perth Endowment Lands Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. H. D. Evans (Minister for Lands), and read a first time.

COUNTRY HIGH SCHOOL HOSTELS AUTHORITY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR. T. D. EVANS (Kalgoorlie—Minister for Education) [11.07 a.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to give effect to the recently announced decision of the Loan Council to increase the ceiling rate of the borrowing powers of small authorities to enable the Country High School Hostels Authority to increase its borrowings accordingly.

At present subsection (4) of section 12 of the Act provides that the Treasurer shall not guarantee in any one year the repayment of any principal moneys in excess of \$300,000, or payment of interest on any principal sum in excess of that sum.