

cubic foot Kelvinator. My wife said, "What about changing it? Get a bigger one on account of the children coming home; we want more storage space." I said, "All right"; although I did not like losing the one we had. I went to four different firms, because I knew them all, to get a quote. There was a bit of a credit squeeze at the time and a man from one of these firms saw my Kelvinator and said, "I will give you £75 for it." The refrigerator I was looking at was a Pope, and its price was £205; and that was the standard price at two different shops.

The other shops sent word to tell me they could not negotiate with me because of the squeeze. So I went to another firm and said to the chap, "Would you be interested in a changeover?" He said, "Too right, Mr. Bennetts. I will have a look at your refrigerator." My wife saw him, and he said, "Tell Mr. Bennetts I will give him £80. Will he be paying cash?" She said, "Yes." He said, "Make it £100."

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: He must have known you had plenty of money.

The Hon. G. BENNETTS: I saw him and he said, "Give me £85 and the new one is yours."

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: You should have delayed another day.

The Hon. G. BENNETTS: Look at the cop they must be making; they are not selling for nothing.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Look at the cop you made.

The Hon. G. BENNETTS: I did all right. He wrote down the terms of the offer; and in order to be fair, I took it to the other firm, and the chap there who had seen me said, "Snap it up; I could not do that." That is what is going on in this line of business; it is terrific.

Because of what we have heard about the mining industry tonight, and the increasing of the basic wage all the time, we cannot blame the worker for trying to get more money, because everything is sneaking up, and it is because of these scroungers. I do not want to be insulting to any members of the House, and I will not refer to anyone, but members' bosses—the big combines, and so on—are the people who are forcing the worker to go for higher rates of pay. If there is an increase of 1s. in the basic wage, we can guarantee that some business firms will add 1s. or 2s. on to every item in the shop. The only thing to do is to do what Ben Chifley said many years ago—peg it at both ends. Everyone should work on a fair margin.

Something that I saw only last week was this: At Foy and Gibson's there was on the counter a clock which played a tune. The clock was a long one—about 18 inches long—and a very nice one, and it was

priced at 79s. 6d. A clock exactly the same on a counter at Boans was marked at 52s. 6d.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Shop at Boans.

The Hon. G. BENNETTS: Yes. But what is happening? What margin is there on these articles? There is another matter. I got a quote for a nine transistor radio for my car. It was about £60 for the aerial and the transistor, but I got it for £30 cash from a dealer—a registered dealer too; there was no undercover business about the purchase. He said, "I know you George; you are a good sort of chap", and he gave it to me for £30.

I will not weary the House longer. I thought I would bring up these matters because this will be my last chance to speak at random. I hope that as a result of the debate tonight on the motion dealing with the mining industry, something will be done to keep the industry flourishing; because if anything happens to that industry, where will we place the people who will be put out of work? We have the spectacle in the southern part of the State of people who have lost everything because of floods. It will cost a few million pounds to fix them up and put them back in their homes, but we will never be able to replace everything they had.

We do not want to see the people in the mining towns who pioneered the State of Western Australia carting their goods away in wheelbarrows and prams. I hope the motion will be carried and that some good will result from it.

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

House adjourned at 9.58 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 19th August, 1964

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

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

SHEEP FROM THE EASTERN STATES

Inspection for Noxious Weed Seeds

1. Mr. MOIR asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Has he taken any action to ensure that stock consigned to this State are free of noxious weed seeds and burrs before entry?
- (2) Would he agree that the inspections carried out at present are completely inefficient?

Shearing of Sheep before Consignment

- (3) Has he examined the possibility of having all sheep shorn immediately before consignment to this State?

Shearing Facilities at Parkeston

- (4) Is he aware that the two-stand shearing plant, shed, and yards provided at Parkeston are entirely inadequate when a large number of sheep have to be shorn?
- (5) If the proposal in No. (3) is impracticable, will consideration be given to enlarging the facilities for shearing now installed at Parkeston?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Imported stock are required to be covered by a declaration by the owner and a certificate from an officer of the Department of Agriculture in the State of origin to the effect that they are free of noxious burrs.
- (2) Noxious burrs have been found on a number of consignments of sheep covered by declarations and certificates issued in the State of origin.
- (3) This possibility is being considered.
- (4) The two-stand shearing plant would be adequate if greater efforts were made to meet import requirements.
- (5) The present facilities are intended to meet emergencies and should have little use. If more extensive

facilities are found necessary, these will be the responsibility of importers or their agents.

MIDLAND POLICE

New Station, Working Strength, and Location of Constables

2. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) Is a new police station likely to be built in Midland in the near future?
- (2) Is the Midland Police Station working on full strength?
- (3) Are police constables required to live in the Midland area for emergency cases?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Only the officer in charge.

NATIVES

Financial Assistance for Welfare Department

3. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Native Welfare:

- (1) What additional assistance by way of funds has the Government given to the Native Welfare Department since the many restrictions were lifted in 1963?

Education and Assimilation

- (2) What action is being taken to stimulate interest by natives in electoral, social, and educational matters since the restrictions have been lifted?
- (3) Are any further booklets to be printed for distribution showing how to assimilate?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) This legislation came into effect on the 1st July, 1964. The estimates for 1964-65 have not yet been finalised.
- (2) The widely publicised education campaign is being continued as far as practicable. A pilot scheme in adult native education is being conducted in six centres by the Education Department. On the experience gained, consideration will be given to establishing a State-wide system in 1965.
- (3) Further booklets will be printed as warranted.

FLIES AND MOSQUITOES

Eradication by Spraying

4. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has any consideration been given to a joint effort to eradicate house flies and mosquitoes by spraying methods similar to the Argentine ant scheme?

- (2) Could a scheme be worked out to permit spraying in various council districts by approval through a referendum of ratepayers?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) A considerable amount of spraying is done to reduce the number of flies and mosquitoes, but spraying alone is inadequate. Control of breeding areas is essential.
- (2) A committee consisting of local authority representatives and Government officers makes recommendations for joint action by local authorities in fly and mosquito control.

SEWERAGE

Installation at South Guildford

5. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) In view of the continued build-up of factories and residences in the South Guildford area will early attention be given to sewerage facilities being provided in that area?
- (2) What is the approximate date at present considered as being opportune to provide sewerage for South Guildford?

Mr. WILD replied:

- (1) The provision of sewerage facilities to South Guildford must be considered in relation to other districts in the metropolitan area.
- (2) No date can be given as to when sewerage will be provided as this will depend upon the availability of funds and the amount of work to be carried out.

FRUIT FLY

Reduction of Menace

6. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Has the fruit-fly menace been lessened during the past five years?
- (2) What records are kept to show whether the position has improved or worsened?

Breeding Grounds

- (3) Is it a fact the fruit fly breeds in many natural haunts other than domestic or kitchen orchards and gardens?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Yes, by virtue of better insecticidal materials and the growth of organised baiting schemes.
- (2) Fruit-fly inspectors report each week on the incidence of fruit fly in their districts. Seasonal reports

are obtained from fruit-fly baiting schemes outside these districts.

Daily lists are made of infested fruit reported at the Metropolitan Markets.

- (3) There is no evidence that fruit fly will survive under native conditions without introduced host plants.

JUSTICES ACT

Amendment of Section 197

7. Mr. EVANS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

- (1) Does the Government intend to amend section 197 of the Justices Act so as to provide that a plea of "Guilty" in the Court of Petty Sessions would not necessarily be fatal to the success of an appeal against conviction?
- (2) If so, is it intended to introduce the necessary legislation this session?
- (3) If not, why not?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) to (3) Yes. A Bill has already been introduced in the Legislative Council.

JURORS: CHALLENGES IN CRIMINAL TRIALS

Removal of Crown Prosecutor's Advantage

8. Mr. EVANS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

Will he give consideration to amending the law relating to jury trials in matters of criminal jurisdiction so as to remove the advantage possessed by the Crown Prosecutor as against an accused person of having an unlimited right to stand by jurors and bring this into line with the right possessed by the accused of six peremptory challenges and the challenge of additional jurors for cause shown?

Mr. COURT replied:

Representations made by the Law Society in the matter are currently under consideration.

EAST-WEST HIGHWAY

Siting through Merredin

9. Mr. KELLY asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) What plans have been developed in determining the siting of the main East-West Highway through Merredin townsite?
- (2) Can he indicate the exact position?

Width and Lanes

- (3) What will be the overall width of the highway?
- (4) How many lanes will this provide for?

Mr. WILD replied:

- (1) to (4) This matter is the subject of further consideration following the undertaking given to the shire by the Minister for Railways to confer with me when he discussed standard gauge matters in Merredin last Friday.

STANDARD GAUGE RAILWAY

Siting through Merredin

10. Mr. KELLY asked the Minister for Railways:

- (1) There being a good deal of uncertainty in the minds of many Merredin businessmen as to the siting of the standard gauge rail through the town, will he indicate what final decision has been determined?

Crossings and Overways

- (2) How many rail crossings have been provided for within half a mile of the centre of the main shopping centre?
- (3) At what point will these be located?
- (4) Is any provision being made for overways or underways?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) As arranged with the honourable member following the deputation on the 6th July, 1964, I visited Merredin on Friday last in company with the Commissioner of Railways and the Assistant Chief Civil Engineer (New Works) for discussions with the shire council regarding the standard gauge route.

As a result of these discussions there should be no uncertainty in Merredin as it was clearly explained that the deviation requested by the shire council was impracticable and therefore the standard gauge route would continue through the present Merredin railway yard area.

However, it was explained that the advent of standard gauge and the development of a new marshalling yard well to the west of the present railway yard would remove many of the present disabilities complained of by the townspeople as practically all shunting and railway operations which involve concentrations of rolling stock and locomotives in the present yard would be removed

to the new marshalling yard. Practically all traffic in future will be through trains.

The shire council was also advised that the railways would shift the locomotive depot to the new marshalling yard thus further improving the position in the centre of the town.

The two alternative proposals put forward by the shire council cannot be implemented because of the very high capital cost without any compensating operational advantages to the railway system.

- (2) to (4) These matters were the subject of discussion with the shire council and I undertook to confer with the Minister for Works as the Minister controlling the Main Roads Department. This is currently being done.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Amendments to Board and Supervision Allowance Regulations

11. Mr. EVANS asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) Are any amendments contemplated to the Education Department regulations, 1960, Division 4—Board and Supervision Allowance?
- (2) If so, when is it expected that such amendments should become effective?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) and (2) These matters are receiving consideration at the present time.

TRANS AUSTRALIA AIRLINES

Operation of Service in Western Australia

12. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Have approaches been made by T.A.A. to operate an air service within Western Australia?
- (2) If so, what are the details of the reply given?

Tabling of Papers

- (3) Will he table all papers relevant to this matter?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) Yes, in 1953; but at that time T.A.A. could not operate in Western Australia without complementary State legislation being passed.
- (2) This legislation was not proceeded with.
- (3) Yes, for one week.

PARKING METERS

Installation by Local Government Authorities

13. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

Has any local government authority the legal power to install street parking meters other than the City of Perth, which receives legal coverage by the City of Perth Parking Facilities Act?

Mr. NALDER replied:

Yes; section 512 (1) of the Local Government Act gives this authority, which in the metropolitan area is subject to the approval of the Minister for Transport.

PROPRIETARY HOLDINGS CO. LTD.

Registration in Western Australia

14. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) With reference to his reply to questions asked on the 6th August, is Proprietary Holdings Co. Ltd. a local or a foreign company?
- (2) If it is a foreign company, is it registered in Western Australia?

Shares in Esperance Breakwater Co. Pty. Ltd.

- (3) What number of shares is Proprietary Holdings Co. Ltd. holding in Esperance Breakwater Co. Pty. Ltd.?
- (4) When did Proprietary Holdings apply for shares in Esperance Breakwater?
- (5) When were the names of the applicants entered in the share register of Esperance Breakwater?

Mr. WILD replied:

- (1) The correct title of the company is Caratti Holding Coy. Pty. Ltd., which is a local company.
- (2) Answered by No. (1).
- (3) to (5) No return of the allotment of shares has been received by the Companies Registration Office.

I would like to advise the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that the name Proprietary Holdings Co. Ltd. was given to my office when the information was obtained over the telephone last week from the liquidator. The name should have been Caratti Holding Coy. Pty. Ltd.

MOTOR VEHICLE LICENSE STICKERS

Improvement of Quality and Issue

15. Mr. EVANS asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) As the motor vehicle license stickers issued this year have proved most unsatisfactory, what action is being taken to rectify the matter?

- (2) When can it be expected that stickers of a more durable nature will be available for issue?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) During the early part of 1963 it became obvious that windscreen certificates were not satisfactory. The certificates are produced by the Government Printer, and this matter was brought to his attention. After extensive research, new equipment was purchased to prepare certificates to the same formula as those issued by the majority of the Eastern States.
- (2) These new certificates are now being issued by licensing authorities for expiry during 1965. As far as can be learned they are quite satisfactory provided they are affixed in accordance with the printed instructions.

POISONED BAITS

Use in Built-up Areas

16. Mr. D. G. MAY asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is he aware of the apprehension which is being occasioned in the metropolitan area to parents because of the increased usage of poisoned baits in built-up areas?
- (2) Is he also aware that the baits are similar in appearance to sweets normally consumed by small children?
- (3) What supervision is made by his department in connection with the use of these baits?
- (4) Has any consideration been given to introducing legislation to restrict the use of baits in the metropolitan and built-up areas?

Mr. NALDER replied:

This question should have been directed to the Minister for Police, but the reply is as follows:—

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) It is not possible to exercise supervision over the indiscriminate laying of poisoned baits by individuals in the metropolitan area, but the honourable member can be assured that every report of baiting received by the Police Department is thoroughly investigated, and if evidence is obtained action can be taken under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, or in certain cases could be taken under the Criminal Code.
- (4) No. Present legislation is considered adequate.

CANNING PARK RACECOURSE

Establishment of Industrial Estate: Negotiations with Mr. W. Davison

17. Mr. D. G. MAY asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

In connection with the proposed industrial estate to be established on the old Canning Park racecourse, Maddington, will he advise—

- (a) Has the British investor, Mr. W. Davison, entered into a firm contract with the Government relative to the purchase of the old Canning Park racecourse?
- (b) If so, when is it anticipated development will commence?

Taxation Department Valuation

- (c) What is the Taxation Department valuation for the land required from the Government and the applicable acreage?

Housing and Rail Service for Industrial Project

- (d) What is the anticipated number of houses associated with the project that will be required for the first three years?
- (e) Is it the intention of the Government to build any homes in this area?
- (f) Will the proposed project require a rail service under private siding conditions?

Approval of Subdivision

- (g) Has the subdivision of the site been approved by the Town Planning Board and the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (a) The heads of the agreement between Mr. Davison and the Government were agreed upon while he was here. The formal contract will be ready for signature by both parties in the near future.
- (b) The contract provides for development to commence not later than June, 1965, but the company principals will be returning from London about November this year for this purpose.
- (c) £120 per acre for approximately 205 acres.
- (d) Provision of housing is not a condition of the contract, but Mr. Davison plans to provide some of the housing associated with the project and has bought additional land for this purpose.

- (e) The contract provides that no assistance is required from the Government in this respect for this project.
- (f) This will depend on the nature of industries finally established. The Government is not committed to any costs in this regard.
- (g) This is a condition of the contract and an outline plot plan for submission to these authorities is being prepared by the company.

JOHN FORREST HIGH SCHOOL

Construction Contract: "Liquidated Damages"

18. Mr. TOMS asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) Has the final amount of "liquidated damages" been imposed in regard to the construction contract of the John Forrest High School?
- (2) If the above determination has been reached, what action has been taken, and with what results?

Mr. WILD replied:

- (1) and (2) Liquidated damages for late completion of £1,000 were initially retained, but following representations from the builder and full examination by the department it was decided to waive the damages and release this sum.

BANKRUPTS

Number and Nature of Business

19. Mr. TOMS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

- (1) What was the number of companies, businesses, and individuals who were declared bankrupt in the years, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963, and 1964?
- (2) What was the nature of the business or trade in each of the above years, of the people so declared?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) and (2) As the bankruptcy laws are administered by the Commonwealth, the honourable member's inquiry should be directed to the Registrar in Bankruptcy, 212 Adelaide Terrace, Perth.

ADVERTISING SIGNS AND HOARDINGS

Control over Erection

20. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) Does any section of the Police Department have any control over the erection of advertising signs or hoardings?

(2) If not—

- (a) what section has this authority;
- (b) what is the extent of such authority;
- (c) on how many occasions has it been used during the past three years?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) Yes. Section 58 of the Traffic Act confers certain powers on the Commissioner of Police; namely, where any light or illuminated sign is used or exhibited at any place in such a manner as to cause risk of danger, or to interfere with the traffic of persons or vehicles.

(2) Answered by No. (1).

RAILWAY LEVEL CROSSINGS

Cost of Installing Flashing Lights and Automatic Booms

21. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Works:

What is the approximate total cost of purchase and installation of equipment, including cost of associated works, to provide at railway level crossings—

- (a) flashing lights;
- (b) automatic booms?

Mr. WILD replied:

- (a) £1,200,
- (b) (i) A complex city installation—£30,500.
- (ii) A simple installation with no associated road works—£6,000.

FREMANTLE PRISON

Visit by Loan Council Officials

22. Mr. FLETCHER asked the Chief Secretary:

Will he at the first opportunity accompany Federal Loan Council officials on a visit to Fremantle gaol, with a view to pointing out the overcrowding and other existing disabilities in an endeavour to stress the need to finance a new gaol in an area conducive to prisoner rehabilitation?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

There is no need for the visit referred to by the honourable member. Our gaol requirements are being progressively attended to having regard to other Government priorities requiring the expenditure of loan funds.

The opening of Karnet Rehabilitation Centre, the expansion of Pardelup Prison Farm, the proposed starting of a new gaol at Albany this financial year, and the

planning of new gaols at Bunbury and Geraldton are evidence of this.

The establishment of a parole and probation service, shortly to be commenced, is a further indication of State progress in this direction.

Numbers at Fremantle Prison have dropped substantially since last year. Nevertheless, the Government is not unmindful of the need for a new metropolitan modern security gaol, the planning and construction of which would proceed when loan funds are available and other urgent governmental undertakings have been taken into consideration.

23. *This question was postponed.*

CHILDREN'S CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

Supervisor's Allowance

24. Mr. BURT asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is the amount paid to a family as supervisor's allowance in respect of a child who is taught at home by correspondence?
- (2) When does this allowance cease to be paid?
- (3) In view of the educational disabilities suffered by people in remote areas, would consideration be given to continuing the supervisor's allowance until a child has completed its correspondence course?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) £40 per annum per child.
- (2) At the end of the year in which the child becomes 12 years of age.
- (3) Yes. Consideration will be given to this request.

McNESS HOMES

Erection and Sale in Midland, Guildford, and Bassendean

25. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister representing the Minister for Housing:

- (1) How many McNess homes have been built in Midland, Guildford, and Bassendean Council areas during the past five years?
- (2) How many have been sold in the same period?
- (3) Are any McNess homes likely to be built in the near future in the above areas?

Financial Position of Trust Funds

- (4) What is the financial position with respect to the McNess trust funds?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) None.
- (2) None.
- (3) There is only one outstanding application for pensioner accommodation at Midland.
- (4) £37,070 was available for maintenance and building as at the 30th June, 1964.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE PRICE OF GOLD

Case for an Increase

1. Mr. EVANS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

As Western Australia is the largest gold-producing State of Australia, and accordingly its goldmining industry is most adversely affected by the continuance of a fixed price for gold, will he detail what action has been taken by the Government to ensure that the strongest possible case is presented by the Australian Government representation for an increase in the price of gold at the meeting of the International Monetary Fund to be held next month?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

I desire to thank the honourable member for giving some notice of this question to the Minister for Mines. On behalf of the Minister for Mines, the reply to the question is as follows:—

The Minister for Mines has been in communication with the Federal Treasurer; and the Government intends to ensure that the Federal Treasurer, who is a governor of the International Monetary Fund, and who will be personally attending the annual meeting next month in Tokyo, is fully informed of this State's opinions and claims for the desirability of a substantial increase in the price of gold.

Mr. Evans: Hear, hear!

PARKING METERS

Installation by Local Government Authorities

2. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

With regard to question No. 13 today, in which I asked whether any local governing authority had the legal power to install street parking meters, other than the City of Perth, which receives legal coverage by the City of Perth Parking Facilities Act, if I heard the Minister aright his reply was

"Yes" and he went on to say that the matter was covered by section 512 (e). That paragraph reads:—

may open, develop, acquire, and work, quarries or gravel pits or brickyards, other than brickyards situated in the metropolitan area as that area is declared by order, and may manufacture cement bricks, and employ and engage persons, and provide machinery, apparatus, and plant necessary for doing so; .

The **SPEAKER** (Mr. Hearman): You want the Minister to reconsider his answer?

Mr. **JAMIESON**: Yes.

Mr. **NALDER** replied:

It is evident from what the honourable member has read that there must have been a misprint in the answer to the question.

Mr. **Oldfield**: There must be something wrong!

Mr. **NALDER**: I will have the matter investigated and let the honourable member have the answer.

MOTOR VEHICLE LICENSE STICKERS

Date of Availability of New Issue

3. Mr. **EVANS** asked the Minister for Police:

Further to my question this afternoon regarding licensing certificates, or stickers denoting a motor vehicle license, could the Minister please indicate when the certificates which were printed by the new equipment, and which he claims are satisfactory, first became available for distribution to local government authorities; and, in particular, can he indicate at this stage when they were made available to the Kalgoorlie Town Council?

Mr. **CRAIG** replied:

I am not in a position to know the exact date when the certificates were issued to the councils, or to the Kalgoorlie Town Council in particular, but I will investigate the matter and let the honourable member know.

ADVERTISING SIGNS AND HOARDINGS

Control over Erection

4. Mr. **DAVIES** asked the Minister for Police:

Referring to question No. 20 on the notice paper this afternoon, I would point out that owing to an error, possibly due to my bad

writing, the second part of my question begins, "If not" when, in fact it should read, "If so". This becomes self-evident when the question is read because as printed it does not make sense. Parts (a) and (b) of No. 20 have been answered by the Minister, but can the Minister answer part (c) which reads—

On how many occasions has it been used during the past three years?

Mr. **CRAIG** replied:

No; but I will endeavour to find out for the honourable member.

FREMANTLE PRISON

Visit by Loan Council Officials

5. Mr. **FLETCHER** asked the Chief Secretary:

Despite the Minister's reply to my question No. 22 on today's notice paper, does he not agree that the Federal Loan Council officials could be favourably influenced for an extra allocation of money as a result of a visit to Fremantle gaol?

Mr. **ROSS HUTCHINSON** replied:

Although prisons are built in places remote from Fremantle, this still results in accommodation problems at Fremantle, because many prisoners are transferred from country districts to the Fremantle Prison. I doubt whether Federal Loan Council officials would benefit from a visit to the Fremantle gaol.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: SEVENTH DAY

Motion

Debate resumed, from the 18th August, on the following motion by Mr. O'Connor:—

That the following Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor in reply to the Speech he has been pleased to deliver to Parliament:—

May it please Your Excellency: We, the members of the Legislative Assembly of the State of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

MR. BURT (Murchison) [4.52 p.m.]: I intend to make the goldmining industry the main subject of my speech.

Mr. **J. Hegney**: Are you opposing it or supporting it?

Mr. BURT: I will leave the honourable member to decide that after he has heard my speech. As we all know, from time to time the goldmining industry is introduced into the debates of both Houses of Parliament by goldfields members and, occasionally, also by other members who, for some reason or other, are interested in the history of the industry in this State and the production of gold generally.

Recently a certain amount of publicity was given to the industry by virtue of a visit of the members of the Opposition of this Parliament to Kalgoorlie; and also by the occasion of the meeting of the Australasian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy, which commenced its meeting in Kalgoorlie last week, and which is to continue in Perth, thus bringing together the prominent mining people of the State.

Unfortunately, however, goldmining is not spoken of nearly enough by the average young person in this State; and, in particular, to schoolchildren the goldmining industry and gold itself are almost unknown subjects. This is very sad indeed, as we all know how much Western Australia progressed in the early days of the industry, because of the discovery of gold. I am horrified at times when I walk into a shop in Perth and order something and ask for it to be sent to my home, only to find the girl or boy behind the counter cannot spell Kalgoorlie. That is a very sad state of affairs.

When I went on a trip to Nigeria a couple of years ago and wore my little badge, the Nigerian children at once knew I was from Western Australia, and mentioned Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie. They knew the names; but the boys and girls here, unfortunately, are not as aware as they should be of places like Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie.

Mr. Evans: Shame on the Minister for Education!

Mr. BURT: I hardly think we can blame the Minister for Education. The fact is that gold is considered by too many people to be a worthless metal. I suppose we can consider it as such in many respects, but in others it is a most valuable metal.

As members know, mining is an extractive industry. In other words, what is taken out is not replaced; and, by and large, that has resulted in the closing down of nearly every major goldmine outside the Golden Mile, together with some more well-known mines within the Golden Mile. Last year five goldmines of varying importance closed in Western Australia. Although perhaps rising costs hastened the closure of those mines, I would say that the real reason was the diminution of the ore bodies. That, of course, is something which no Government, and no body can control.

The greatest and most tragic failure was the closure of the Sons of Gwalia mine, the greatest producer of gold outside the Golden Mile. It had produced 2,500,000 ounces of gold since it commenced operations.

In 1903, which is generally considered to be probably the most prosperous of our goldmining years, 2,160,657 fine ounces of gold were produced, and 20,500 men were employed in the industry. Sixty years later—that is, last year—our production had dwindled to 802,589 fine ounces and the number of men employed in the industry was 4,901, to be precise. The industry continued its downward trend; and what the solution is, I do not quite know. We have been told, of course, that a rise in the price of gold would be the answer; and if that were sufficiently large it would maintain the industry for a great many more years. Subsidies are spoken of fairly glibly; and provided values remain in the ore, subsidies will assist particular mines to continue.

But what sort of subsidy could we have given to such mines as the Sons of Gwalia, or Big Bell, or the mine at Wiluna; or some of the others that have closed in the past two decades? The Sons of Gwalia mine was losing £1,000 a day for the last month or so of its operation; and no government would pay out such a huge subsidy to equalise that great loss.

I feel that governments should, firstly, reawaken to the importance of the industry in Australia; and when we attend the two-yearly meeting of the International Monetary Fund, we should put forth a request that a direct subsidy be paid per ounce of gold produced. The subsidy given in various other countries of the world producing gold, with the exception of America, is a half-hearted way of helping the industry; and, in the long run, it will not get them very far. But a direct subsidy on the price of gold—and it would have to be considerable—would enable the production of this valuable metal to be maintained.

We all know that America is the only nation that buys gold in the free world. America has some pretty realistic ideas concerning its economy, and the Americans are by no means interested in paying any kind of subsidy or in increasing the price of gold. They are not keen to do this at all.

A few months ago a friend of mine who receives an American paper regularly, sent me a cutting from that paper which excited me quite a bit. It was from an Arizona paper, dated the 14th December, 1963. The heading is, "Subsidy for Gold Mines in West, Alaska Approved by House Group," and it reads as follows:—

The Senate Interior Committee approved Friday a subsidy bill designed to stimulate operation of gold mines in the Western states and Alaska.

Under the bill, the government would pay producers the difference in cost of production of a mine in the last quarter of 1939 and the cost in the last quarter of 1963.

The secretary of the interior, who would administer the act, would set a 1939 figure based on costs in comparable mines for those which were not in operation in that year.

The bill would authorise payment of up to 50 million dollars a year in subsidy payments under the program, with the secretary submitting to Congress each year the amount of appropriations actually needed.

As I said, that statement somewhat fired my enthusiasm and I felt that at least the Americans were taking a rather rational view of gold and realised they would have to subsidise that commodity.

Of course, I wrote to our Federal Treasurer (Mr. Holt) sending him a copy of this cutting and requesting that Australia should follow suit with any subsidy granted by Congress. On the 18th March, 1964, I received this reply—

The reference to the Bill in the United States press was misleading as it conveyed the impression that the U.S. Administration was about to institute a gold subsidy scheme. This is not so. The Bill in question was introduced in the Senate by a private member. It had been approved by the Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, which includes many representatives from gold-producing States. The Administration, however, is strongly opposed to this and all other attempts to subsidise gold production in the United States and we understand it is highly unlikely that the Bill will be enacted.

The introduction by private members of Bills designed to support the gold mining industry has been a feature of successive Congresses since 1945.

In that respect, it is very similar to our own Parliament. Continuing—

None has been successful. Successive U.S. Administrations over the entire period have been firmly committed to a policy of maintaining a fixed price for gold at \$35 per ounce and have therefore refused to consider subsidy arrangements for the U.S. gold industry. There are no grounds for thinking that any change in this policy is in prospect.

Turning to the question of assistance to the Australian gold mining industry, the Commonwealth Government, unlike that in the U.S., does provide financial help. Under the Gold-Mining Industry Assistance Act, a subsidy is payable, subject to certain conditions, on the production of gold in Australia and the Territories of Papua and New Guinea. Under

the Gold Mines Development Assistance Act, mines not in receipt of subsidy are eligible, subject to certain limits, to financial assistance to enable them to undertake increased development. These schemes help very materially in maintaining the position of the industry in the face of a fixed world price for gold.

Be that as it may, the subsidy that has been paid to the industry by the Commonwealth Government since 1954-55 until the end of 1963 totals only \$5,500,000 in a period of nine years, which is about £600,000 per year. Of the mines that received that subsidy, about a dozen were in Western Australia and one or two were in the other States and in New Guinea. They are mostly small producers. An amount of \$5,500,000 to maintain an industry that once employed 20,000 men is, I feel, very poor indeed.

Last week, I think, members were circulated with a letter asking for assistance for the dairying industry. Whether this assistance is deserved or not I do not know, but that industry receives something like £14,000,000 annually by way of subsidy. Surely our goldmining industry should have its proportion of assistance increased when we compare the number of men it employs and the decentralisation—that is a word very much used these days—that it causes. As I said earlier, something must be done to get more Federal Government assistance.

To give members some idea how the American Treasury views the economy of gold, I have here an address by a Mr. Leland Howard—who is the Director of the Office of Domestic Gold and Silver Operations—before the 66th National Western Mining Conference and Exhibition at the Denver Hilton Hotel, Denver, Colorado, on the Treasury's gold policy. I will read excerpts from this, because they are very interesting. He says *inter alia*—

In the United States, production reached its peak in 1940, when it amounted to 170 million dollars. In 1961 U.S. production amounted to only 55 million dollars. Free World gold production on the other hand, has increased from 738 million dollars after World War II to 1 billion 220 million dollars in 1961. During the 10-year period 1951-1961, Free World gold production increased 45 per cent. Preliminary figures for 1962 indicate a further increase in Free World production and it is predicted that there will continue to be an increase for many years to come. As it now stands, based on 1961 figures, United States gold production is only 4½ per cent. of Free World production.

Later, he explained this—

Gold in the United States is a monetary metal and cannot be treated as a commodity, as are products of other

industries, or as gold is treated in some countries. The usual reasons, therefore, for urging gold subsidies in other countries or for urging subsidies to other industries in this country are not applicable to gold in the United States. The gold mining industry cannot be viewed simply as a case of a marginal or depressed industry seeking relief from the normal compelling pressures of economic change. An effort to assist a relatively few people to keep or obtain jobs, no matter how desirable, would instead of helping those in the gold industry, run the grave risk of disrupting the monetary system on which not only their own livelihood but the livelihood of all of us depends.

The position of the Treasurer, therefore, which is, of course, that of the President, is to maintain the fixed price of 35 dollars an ounce for gold and to oppose any proposals that would lead anyone to believe that we did not think that the 35 dollar price is the proper price for gold.

In other words, America, whilst willing to buy all the gold other countries can sell to her, is not interested in subsidising goldmining in her own country or in increasing the price. Finally, we have this statement—

The Treasury is deeply interested in the health of the goldmining industry, just as we are interested in the well-being of our other major industries. However, we must think of gold from the standpoint of the national interest as a whole, and not only in its relation to one segment of the economy. As I indicated earlier, we cannot take side excursions in gold that others will interpret as a sign that we do not think the present price for gold is correct. We cannot run the risk of disrupting the monetary system which is so vital to the United States economy and the economy of the Free World. The Treasury intends to adhere firmly to our policy of continuing to buy and to sell gold at 35 dollars an ounce, and we firmly intend to oppose all attempts, whether direct or indirect, to change the 35 dollar price for gold. This has been our policy since 1934. It must continue to be our policy.

That, of course, is not very happy news for Western Australians; and it seems the only way we can look forward to a continuance of this industry, which has done so much for this State, is, as I said earlier, to obtain a direct subsidy on the price of gold. I believe this has been done in the Philippines and Canada. The other way is to pep up our prospecting and our search for new gold ore bodies, because although the ore bodies of Western Australia that were so quickly and easily found in the last century have been, in

most cases, worked right out, there must be other ore bodies close to the surface which can be discovered by modern prospecting methods.

The Sons of Gwalia mine, to which I referred earlier is being prospected by the Western Mining Corporation in an endeavour to see if the company that worked the old mine left behind any worth-while ore. I understand that by a very modern technical method called "induced polarisation", which is the system of driving electrodes into the ground and passing current between them, a sulphide ore body of some sort—that is all they know at present—has been located about two miles south of the Sons of Gwalia mine.

Having located a sulphide ore body, the next step is to costean through the overburden; and if the ore body is still too deep, then intersect it with diamond drilling. This sulphide ore body may or may not have gold in it; but for the future of the back country, we hope this will turn out all right.

At Kalgoorlie on Monday night, one of the leading economists of Australia (Mr. Ian Shannon) delivered an address entitled "The Need for an Increase in the International price of Gold." I only received a copy of his address in the post today. It is quite a long lecture; but I feel, if you will allow me, Mr. Speaker, that certain extracts from it should be read. Amongst other things, Mr. Shannon says—

In May, of 1934, the basic wage in Australia was sixty-five shillings a week.

On the 19th June, 1964, the basic wage was increased by just one-third of the amount payable in 1934 and has now become 308s. a week. Thus, over the thirty-year period, the Australian basic wage has increased 4.7 times—and this has naturally led to a squeezing of the profit margins obtained from mining gold. If the price of gold had increased in line with the basic wage (in other words, to give some sort of rough and ready continuity between mining costs and selling prices),—

and that has applied to every other commodity—

then the price of gold nowadays should be up to \$164½ an ounce. \$164½ an ounce may be quite gratifying, but it is nevertheless most unlikely that the United States Treasury, or European Central Bankers, would be willing to push for an increase in the price of gold on the basis of the changes in the Australian basic wage over recent decades.

Later on he says—

Every increase in the amount of dollars outstanding in foreign hands reduces the United States gold cover ratio. In 1948, for example, dollars owned by central banks and other

official bodies outside of the United States were less than one-quarter of the total United States gold reserves. In 1963, by contrast, the dollar liabilities of the United States were well in excess—in fact by one-third—of the total United States gold stock. Every increase in the amount of dollar exchange outstanding in non-U.S. hands reduces the United States gold cover ratio—it reduces the gold backing the U.S. can give each of its dollars held abroad.

We know that many nations that are selling goods to America are demanding payment in gold and not in dollars; and that, of course, is resulting in quite a substantial drain on the gold stocks at Fort Knox. That, I feel, is the only optimistic hope we can have of the Americans, during our lifetime, ever increasing the price of gold. Mr. Shannon goes on to say that the economists of today are divided into three categories—the traditionalists, those who want to have a return to the gold standard of the 19th century; the revolutionaries, those who would do away with gold altogether and adopt a brand new paper currency; and a third group which wishes to continue with the existing system, which is a bit of each. He goes on to say—

At one extreme, then, in this triangle of interests are the traditionalists, who support the idea of a return to the Pure Gold Standard. They see much virtue in the self-regulatory mechanism of the late 19th century. The aim of the revolutionary group, however, is quite different. They see and wish to create a new international paper money, and thereby replace the use of gold. Although the traditionalist group postulates the use of gold by itself, so as to preserve economic purity, the revolutionary group in contrast, would prefer to get rid of gold entirely, so the new era of economic purity can start! But the deep disagreement between the traditionalist group and the revolutionist group about the monetary functions of gold does not stop them from both being united in considering the present-day system as stupid.

Perhaps this is one reason why the few attempts at making fundamental improvements to the present-day system have had such little success. Both these extremes—that is, the traditionalists and the revolutionists—would prefer to get rid of the present-day system entirely. Both would appear loth to improve it, in case it should become a more permanent feature of the international landscape, perhaps perpetuating those characteristics considered undesirable.

It is a very intricate problem and one that I do not suppose any of us can really solve. However, if the United States of

America is willing to buy unlimited supplies of gold, even at a price of 35 dollars, I feel that for the sake of Western Australia particularly, every effort should be made by Governments to encourage the production of gold at a price which will make 35 dollars economic.

In that regard the State Government is assisting prospectors in no small way by the supply of compressor outfits, which are sent to various districts throughout Western Australia and which are hired at a very nominal rental to prospectors who are willing to go out and look for more gold. Believe me, they are very few and far between! Prospectors as we knew them have really had their day; because there is nothing left, I think, that a human being, without the aid of technical and scientific equipment, could possibly find.

So we have to look to the Federal Government and endeavour to persuade it—and I will back this up to the limit—to reconsider the whole question of goldmining and regard it not just as something which keeps outback towns in existence, but as a very necessary industry producing a commodity we can sell overseas any minute of any day we want to. There is never any doubt about a market for an ounce of gold, and it provides 35 dollars in foreign exchange.

Therefore I trust this Government will do as many have asked it to do before, and take the case of Western Australia to the Commonwealth in an endeavour to keep the industry on a stable basis, despite the tremendous knock it has had in the past few years. This will also allow the few remaining towns such as Mt. Magnet, Norseman, and Kalgoorlie to continue to exist.

There is one other item I would like to mention and that concerns insurance claims on motorcars. Like a number of others who drive through my area—and that includes quite a few members of Parliament—I have to put up with the hazard of the kangaroos. To many, that remark might sound rather humorous. But when one sets forth through the pastoral areas of this State in a motorcar, usually at a speed in excess of 50 miles per hour, the danger of hitting kangaroos is simply tremendous; and this year in particular more and more of these animals seem to be frequenting the roads.

The other day I did a trip through my electorate and I had the misfortune to collect a kangaroo on three different occasions—there were two fairly minor bumps on the side of my car, although I do carry a kangaroo guard; and the third time was when two kangaroos jumped out from the side and I was unable to dodge them and they made a mess of the front part of my car.

My car is insured with the State Government Insurance Office and I purchased it under the hire-purchase arrangements

with the Treasury Department, as have many others. I knew perfectly well I would have to pay the first £10 of the claim and also lose my no-claim bonus when the next payment was due. That alone is bad enough; but what really rocked me was that I was told by the insurance company that each of those hits I received from the kangaroos would be regarded as separate claims, and I would have to pay the first £10 on each one. I feel that is something which really should be looked into.

I suppose I was too honest, because I told the man in the office that I had had three different accidents, and he said, "Well, I am sorry. You have three different claims and will have to pay £30 before you have anything done through us." Naturally enough I only had the damage repaired which was caused by the third and worst accident. That is one instance of how the insurance companies are really attacking motorists in this State.

Mr. Moir: Worse than the kangaroos!

Mr. BURT: I mentioned the kangaroos particularly because there are not many drivers who have more than one accident a year, if they are unlucky enough to have that many; but when travelling in kangaroo-infested country, it is quite possible, as I know from experience, to have two or three accidents in one journey. As I have said, the insurance company has got at me and others like me.

Mr. Fletcher: You should have said that three kangaroos attacked you at the one time.

Mr. BURT: I have heard of many solutions, one being that headlights and tail lights should be put on the kangaroos.

Mr. Bickerton: They have them at Woodstock Research Station.

Mr. BURT: The member for Pilbara is very lucky to have a research station in his electorate.

Mr. Bickerton: You can have the one I've got.

Mr. BURT: The suggestion I would like insurance companies to consider is that a reduced premium should be allowed on motorcars which traverse the kangaroo-infested areas if the motorcars are equipped with kangaroo guards. If I had not had a kangaroo guard on my car the damage, which will probably be about £25 to £30, would have been £60 to £70.

MR. H. MAY (Collie) [5.22 p.m.]: I desire to make some small contribution to this debate; and I want to take this early opportunity of making a few comments which I wish to address to the Minister for Education.

Mr. Lewis: Here we go!

Mr. H. MAY: I am afraid that last session I gave him a bit of a roasting in connection with a matter I considered, and still consider, to be very important; and that is the slow learning and mentally retarded children of this State. However, in fairness to the Minister, I want to say that as a result of what took place last session he has since taken some action, and consequently Collie now has a school for the mentally retarded children in that district. I want to say right here and now that I very much appreciate the action of the Minister in connection with this matter.

Mr. Bovell: Hear, hear!

Mr. H. MAY: I feel that the majority of the people in this State, unless they are intimately connected in some way with these children do not know very much about them.

I want to say also that the people of Collie rose to the occasion and provided everything necessary for the school, and the Minister was kind enough then to appoint a teacher. I also want to take this opportunity of paying a tribute to the mining fraternity in Collie who undertook to pay for the next 12 months the rental for the house in which this class is held.

However, I am still not satisfied with the position generally in this State. I have already mentioned to the Minister outside that there is a great difference between mentally retarded children and slow learning children. I understand that the school at Kensington—which I have not yet visited but which the Minister has agreed he and I will visit—has a number of mentally retarded children.

We have to be honest about this subject, and I have the deepest sympathy for these mentally retarded children; but, at the present time, amongst them the Education Department has seen fit to place a small number of slow learning children, who have all their faculties. They know what is said to them and they understand it; but, despite this, they are being herded together with these mentally retarded children. I appeal to the Minister—as I did last year in regard to the school at Collie—to take some action. Surely there are enough schools in the metropolitan area and in the country to which these slow learning children could be attached to receive their education.

I have had the terrific experience of seeing these mentally retarded children being picked up by the bus in the metropolitan area, and I have also had the experience of having a granddaughter of mine being shepherded amongst them. They did all sorts of things—they did not know what they were doing—including spitting at one another. I think this should be stopped. As a matter of fact, the society for the protection of children should be

brought into it. If the Education Department is not prepared to take some action, then we must take the matter further.

I am appealing to the Minister, as I did last session, to do something in this regard. It is a shocking thing every morning to see this little girl of ours mixed in amongst these other children, who do not know what they are doing. It is also shocking to realise that the Education Department is allowing it.

I am surprised that more members in this Chamber are not conversant with the subject. I hand it to the member for Stirling for having said his few remarks in connection with this matter; but, apart from him and myself, no-one in the Chamber has bothered about the situation at all. I would appeal to members who have children and grandchildren, with all their faculties, to realise the situation. Surely there should be some spark of humanity amongst us. How many members in this Chamber, if they had a slow learning child would like that child to be herded with the mentally retarded ones and sent to the same school? I do not know what the teachers do. As far as I know, they are doing their job; but it is my intention very shortly, either with or without the Minister, to visit that school to see what goes on.

I have said enough about that subject now; and I hope that not only the Minister for Education, but other members in this Chamber also will realise what it means to the parents of these children. I see one member opposite smiling and laughing. I think he should be ashamed of himself for doing so when such a subject is being dealt with in this Chamber.

I have carefully scanned the speech made by His Excellency the Governor at the opening of this session of Parliament, and I searched for some mention of the town of Collie, and of its trials and tribulations; but not until I reached page 5 of the speech did I find the word "Collie." It seems that the construction of the Muja power station is on schedule, because this is what I found in the speech—

The construction of the Muja Power Station near Collie is on schedule and the first 60,000 kilowatt unit will be commissioned in September, 1965. Installation of transmission lines from Muja to Perth is now proceeding. Seven hundred and twenty rural consumers were added to the State Electricity Commission system during the past year.

That is the only reference to Collie in the Governor's Speech. Surely we could expect to find in that Speech some greater reference to a town of the magnitude of Collie! The power house at Muja will not make one iota of difference to Collie, because the staff at the present power house at Collie will almost run the Muja power

house. Therefore it will not mean the employment of any extra men at all. It may mean the use of additional coal—that would occur in any case—and that will mean, of course, a greater production and consumption of coal. But in regard to any information in the Governor's Speech about what is proposed at Collie—not a word! The only spot that was picked on was one 18 miles from Collie, which happened to be the Muja power house.

I was looking for some indication that during the last period of this Parliament—of this Government—there would be some action in respect of prospecting, or research into the use of Collie coal; but no, not a word!

In October, 1962, a member of the Department of Industrial Development visited Collie to try to find some means of using Collie coal so that its production and consumption could be increased over the years. A cutting I have reads as follows:—

"In the long run industrial development at Collie must depend upon some form of processing coal. Until this is done I do not think that expansion here is going to be very spectacular."

Industrial Development Department Officer C. Adams told the Shire Council this on Tuesday night.

He was reporting on an investigation that he made last month into the prospects of industrial and agricultural expansion at Collie.

Mr. Adams made the inquiry as a result of discussions that took place between Industrial Development Minister C. Court and the local Industries Committee.

Big markets were essential before the production of char, coal briquettes and coke could be undertaken on a commercial basis, Mr. Adams said.

MARKETS

The Government was still making every effort to obtain these markets, but so far without success. Some months ago there were bright prospect of obtaining a big market in Japan for char processed from Collie coal. However, an economic recession in Japan caused a break-down in negotiations.

That was over two years ago, and nothing further, as far as I am aware, has since occurred. The *News Weekly*, which does not support the Labor Party by any means—it has no sympathy for the Labor Movement—says, under the heading, "Sources of Power. Coal v. Fuel Oils"—

Over the past decade a number of influences had combined to reduce the relative importance of coal as a basic source of energy in Australia, the Bank of New South Wales says in its *Economic Review*, published recently.

Perhaps the most striking example was in the widespread adoption of diesel-electric traction by Australian railway systems, which had reduced the railways' coal consumption from the peak of 3.2 million tons in 1951-52 to 1.5 million tons in 1962-63.

ROAD HAULAGE

In addition, says the Bank, the structure of the transport industry itself has changed appreciably.

"The growth of long distance road haulage by diesel trucks and trailers has taken an appreciable proportion of the increase in high value traffic from the railways.

"Road congestion has forced the elimination in many cities of electric trams and the substitution of diesel buses, and all these influences have combined to increase the relative importance of petroleum products as a primary source of energy at the expense of coal," the article adds.

I quote that article because that is the situation in respect of the use of coal at present; and it does seem that this State is following the example of the oil companies in regard to reduction in the use of coal and increase in the use of fuel oil.

I have here an interesting letter written by the president of the Loco Engine Drivers and Firemen's Union of this State. This letter was written in July, 1964, and this is what he had to say—

What is happening to our Railways? In spite of the stories we have heard over the last five years in regard to the increased tonnage we will be asked to haul, the Railways are still going backwards.

Here are some interesting figures for the financial year ending 30th June, 1963.

The total deficit was £1,024,801 greater than in 1962; the total rail and road passenger journeys were 367,125 less than in 1962, and 3,077,476 less than in 1959—at the same time the population of the State has increased by 54,000.

Live stock for year ending June, 1963, had decreased by 811 tons, and other paying goods by 548,747 tons, but at the same time the stock population had increased, industries have been built all over the southern part of the State, and production has increased enormously.

The State had just had a record grain harvest yet we lost so much trade in 12 months. The Railways handled 465,449 tons less wheat than the year before—wool decreased by approximately 3,500 tons, and timber by approximately 17,000 tons.

It is interesting to note that 500 tons of peaches were carried from the south-west by road alongside of our Railways.

Mention was made in the financial report in regard to increases in wages. Here are the facts—The total wages bill for drivers and firemen for 1963 was £86,771 LESS than the previous year.

The total wage Bill for the Railways was £181,935, less than in 1962—at the same time the total salaries of the salaried staff had INCREASED by £85,583. This still made a saving of £96,352.

I will leave it to the readers to form their own opinion in regard to the present downward trend of the Railways—if it is due to inefficient administration or that the wages staff are not driven hard enough.

I think the Minister for Railways would know something about that.

Mr. Court: There was a simple explanation for that in 1963, as you know.

Mr. H. MAY: The Minister has, on all subjects, a simple explanation in this Chamber. If he can muck the figures around that I have quoted, I will be interested to listen to him.

Mr. Court: It is an interesting story.

Mr. H. MAY: I do not know whether the figures are correct or not; but this man has gone to a lot of trouble and has spent a lot of time in getting the information, which is not very illuminating as far as the railways are concerned. It proves, I think, that more road services and private enterprise carting are being established at the expense of our railways, and, as a consequence, at the expense of the use of Collie coal. While that sort of thing is going on, we just cannot make ends meet in the State.

Are we going to allow the enormous quantity of coal at Collie to be wasted because we are not prepared to do any research and are not prepared to take any interest in the use of coal in any way?

I want to quote an article by Senator Spooner, who was until recently the Federal Minister for National Development. This is a report of his statement in the House—

Some fuel-oil imports were providing unfair competition for coal, the Minister for National Development, Sir William Spooner, said in the Senate today.

He had placed the matter before the Government with certain recommendations.

Senator Ormonde (Lab. N.S.W.) had asked if claims that oil companies were showing a complete lack of regard for the future of Australia's coal industry were correct.

He also asked whether if it was true that the coal industry was being seriously injured by the unrestricted flow of oil into Australia.

COMPANIES TOLD

Sir William Spooner said he had made representations over a long period to oil-refining companies.

He had told them they were importing oil to a greater extent than was necessary.

Despite this, one company had continued to import fuel oil, although large quantities of it were produced in Australia.

Other companies had continued to import refined oil products.

These could be produced in Australia if the total available refining capacity was utilised in some competitive fashion.

"In my view this constitutes unfair competition with coal," Sir William said.

I would say it is a great pity that Sir William Spooner resigned the portfolio of National Development. The article goes to show that the oil companies are, at every opportunity they get, undermining the use of coal in order to expand the consumption of oil.

I want to make a few remarks about the financial situation, but before doing so I wish to read this statement which appeared in the *Daily News* of the 17th July last—

Japan may import more soft coking coal from Australia to cover an expected shortage in the domestic supply.

The Japanese Iron and Steel Federation has urged the Government to approve the additional imports.

The federation estimated that the labour-caused shortage would be about 460,000 tons.

About 8,600,000 tons would be needed to maintain the increasing pig-iron output which had been prompted by active steel export sales.

Government representatives have visited Japan three or four times but always in connection with the export of iron ore in some shape or other. Surely the Government mining representatives in this State could have read that article and whilst in Japan made inquiries into the possibility of Collie coal being used to fill some of that order! As far as I am aware, nothing was done or said and no reports were made. The only Press reports I saw were

on the visit of the Minister for Mines to Japan about the export of iron ore from Western Australia.

I have here another item taken from the trade and finance section of *The West Australian* as follows:—

Coal Exports Set Record

Australian exports of coal in 1963-64 were a record 3,800,000 tons, of which Japan took 3,500,000 tons.

Exports from N.S.W. totalled 2,995,000 tons, an increase of nearly 25 per cent. on the previous year's figures.

That is a tremendous increase—25 per cent! Continuing—

The Joint Coal Board reports that there was a substantial increase in shipments through Port Kembla (N.S.W.) where a modern high-speed coal-loading plant has been opened.

Shipments to Japan through Port Kembla are expected to reach 2,000,000 tons annually by 1966-67.

Production of black coal in N.S.W. in 1963-64 was a record 20,172,000—nearly 1,500,000 tons more than in 1962-63.

The big lift in consumption was due to the commissioning of a new blast furnace at the Newcastle steel works—increasing coal requirements by 8,000 tons a week—the sharp rise in demand for electric power from the coal-fired power stations, and bigger purchases by Japan.

I know full well that Collie coal is not up to the standard of New South Wales coal. Everyone realises that and we make some allowance for it. Nevertheless, the organisation in this State which is responsible at all times to ensure that these matters are thoroughly investigated and that research is carried out to see what can be done with the native fuel of this State should have taken some steps in the matter. But, as far as I am aware, nothing has been done. If something had been done I feel sure it would have been reported in the Press long ago; because usually, when the Government makes a strike of some sort or another, it is fully reported in the Press.

Mr. Tonkin: Sometimes a bit prematurely.

Mr. Brand: This is nothing unusual for Governments, of course. In using the word "prematurely" I would not have thought the Deputy Leader of the Opposition would come in on that one.

Mr. H. MAY: I wish some of the Government members would come in on something about Collie.

Mr. Brand: Yes; I understood that that was what you were going to say.

Mr. H. MAY: I will now quote a report of a statement made by the Minister for Industrial Development in the *News Review* of February, 1963. It reads as follows:—

Development in W.A.

Preview of the Future

The Hon. Charles Court, Minister for Industrial Development, recently delivered to the Rotary Club of Perth a most interesting and encouraging address on the future of Western Australia. Those who were privileged to hear Mr. Court were greatly inspired by the picture he painted of the future. In the course of his address, Mr. Court said:

Mr. Kelly: He must be bowed down by his halo.

Mr. H. MAY: If I were Mr. Court I do not think I would appreciate the "Hear, hears!". Continuing—

"Western Australia is a giant which is now preening itself for a grand awakening,—

Mr. Court: So it is.

Mr. H. MAY: They are magic words; but they do not apply to Collie, apparently. The article continues—

—but this will only happen as the result of positive, determined and well directed action."

Mr. Court: I must have been in good form that day!

Mr. H. MAY: If there are any other words that the Minister could add I would like to hear them. Further on, the Minister said this—

Western Australia is no place for the faint of heart, the lazy, the indifferent. Our forbears achieved much but the surface is only scratched.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: That part of your speech will read very well.

Mr. H. MAY: This is the Minister for Industrial Development speaking.

Mr. W. Hegney: He always is!

Mr. H. MAY: This statement continues—

Do not let us, however, mesmerise ourselves with the successes of the last few years—steel, alumina, chemicals, paper, standard gauge railway agreements, huge additional acres of farm lands, record harvests, or the commencement of the Ord Scheme. All these things are wonderful and important in themselves, but they are only a beginning.

Mr. Court: So they are, too.

Mr. Brand: There were never truer words!

Mr. H. MAY: If the Minister had been in Germany during Hitler's lifetime he would have been his right-hand man with his propaganda machine.

Mr. Brand: I think you will agree that those words are true.

Mr. Court: I hope it is only the beginning in this State.

Mr. H. MAY: I do, too; I quite agree with the Minister. Some reference has been made to foreign finance entering this country. I have an article here which I intend to quote. Just prior to the Premier going overseas he made this statement—

The State Government was ready to start building a satellite town now at North-west Cape for the U.S. communications centre project, the Premier, Mr. Brand, said last night.

All that was needed was the go-ahead from the U.S. and the Government would swing into action.

That is a wonderful term!

Mr. Brand: What is wrong with that?

Mr. H. MAY: I would have been inclined to think the Premier had been to America before he said that, because it is a common American term.

Mr. Brand: It is an American Government project.

Mr. H. MAY: I am talking about foreign finance, and I am coming to that. This article continues—

"We are anxious to get cracking on the project—

Mr. Brand: There is nothing wrong with that, either; the sooner the station is built the better.

Mr. H. MAY: Yes, except that every time someone visits a foreign country to obtain finance for investment in this State, is sufficient notice taken of what is a fair amount of foreign finance being introduced into this State, and whether it is being overdone? From what I read, I would say with all sincerity that, at the moment, the United States of America has a half-nelson on us financially. If we were called upon to meet our overseas commitments we would not be in the race; and if all those countries from whom we borrow money—

Mr. Brand: Are we likely to be called upon?

Mr. H. MAY: —said, "We are now going to put you into liquidation", could we stop them? I feel sure we would not be able to stop them.

Mr. Brand: Why is it that every Premier, whether he be a member of the Liberal Party, the Country Party, or the Labor Party, goes to America with the same story?

Mr. H. MAY: It does not matter; they are all as bad as one another when it comes to getting a few quid from somewhere. I did intend to quote another article written by the economist John Eddy. I do not seem to have the article with me at the moment; but he said there

is a great danger of Australia going beyond the limits of its borrowing powers and its commitments to outside countries.

Mr. Tonkin: The late Sir Norbert Keenan said that 20 years ago.

Mr. Brand: Of course he did!

Mr. H. MAY: I am making this statement this evening so that someone may do some thinking about it.

Mr. Brand: I think we should go on and get as much good investment money as quickly as we can.

Mr. H. MAY: That may be so, but we will have to call a halt somewhere. If we are not prepared to stop, and it is likely that we may go into liquidation, I think it is time we got another Premier.

Mr. Brand: Let us get it first.

Mr. H. MAY: I do not want the Minister for Water Supplies to take exception to what I am now about to say, but recently we suffered extremely severe floods at Collie. When the Premier visited that town a week ago last Saturday he said he was terrified at what he saw. I believe he meant what he said whilst he was in Collie; namely, that he was going to do his utmost to rehabilitate the people who had been affected and endeavour to restore the homes that have been completely washed out by the floods.

The member for Wellington the other evening was talking of the floods at Harvey; and, in appreciation, I want to say that the engineers responsible for the building of the Harvey weir must have done a wonderful job, because the volume of water that went through there a fortnight ago was tremendous, and everybody expected the weir to give way. If it had given way the disaster at that centre would have been much greater than that at Collie. Luckily, the weir did not give way; and, as a result, none of the homes at Harvey were destroyed. The occupants evacuated them temporarily and then put their furniture back, because the homes were dry and fit for habitation. Unfortunately, the same does not apply at Collie. In fact, some of the homes that have been flooded at Collie will never be lived in again. The people just cannot return to them.

I want to be fair to everybody concerned in this matter. I want to be fair to the Minister for Water Supplies, the Collie people, and, in particular, the Collie Shire Council.

Mr. Tonkin: The Minister for Water Supplies is away trying to work out the new water rating scheme.

Mr. H. MAY: If any member knows anybody who wants to buy some water I know where there is plenty at present. On the 4th May, 1962—over two years ago—I received a letter from the Collie Shire Council as follows:

At the last meeting of my Council I was instructed to request that you take up the matter of river clearing

with the Under Secretary for Works and request that, if possible, he arrange for an inspection when the river is in flood this year and not after the winter.

It is felt that by doing this the Under Secretary and the Department will gain a better appreciation of the actual conditions existing at the time when the flood occurs.

After receiving that letter, I wrote a letter to the Under-Secretary of the Public Works Department, under date the 7th May, 1962, which reads—

re River Clearing at Collie.

Attached is a letter I have received from the Collie Shire Council, which concerns clearing of the Collie River.

In connection with this matter I feel I must support the request of the Council, as it is only by being on the spot when the river is in flood, that a true appreciation of the position can be gauged.

I shall be very glad, therefore, if arrangements can be made by you to have an inspection made when the floods are at their peak, in order to obtain a true picture of the position at that time.

In reply to that letter the following was received from the Under-Secretary for Works, dated the 21st May, 1962:—

River Clearing at Collie.

I refer to your letter of the 7th May wherein you made representations on behalf of the Collie Shire Council concerning clearing of the Collie River.

Departmental Engineers have closely watched the functioning of the Collie River under peak periods since the improvement works have been undertaken and photographic evidence is on Departmental files to indicate the River behaviour at the peak flow period of the 1960 winter following a rainfall of 817 points between the 11th and 28th July. Conditions in the 1961 winter were below normal and the River did not reach flood proportions.

A close watch will be kept during the coming winter of the river behaviour to assess whether further work can be recommended.

On the 2nd April, 1964, I received the following letter from the Shire of Collie:—

I have been instructed by Council to request you to make an approach to the Minister for Works for a special grant for further clearing of the Collie River to permanently eradicate the danger of flooding.

Two years have gone by since I first made an approach to the department, but nothing has been done. For that reason the Shire of Collie wrote me that letter.

As a result I wrote to the Minister on the 27th April, 1964, as follows:—

Re River Clearing at Collie.

Under date of 7th May, 1962, I wrote you regarding the necessity for clearing the Collie River, in order to try and avoid the river flooding which causes so much damage to Collie residents.

I received a reply from your department dated 21st May, 1962, which indicated that a close watch would be kept during the year 1962, on the behaviour of the river in order to assess whether further work could be recommended.

No further advice has been received from you regarding this question.

Last winter the town was again flooded and some residents were forced to leave their homes. This continual winter flooding is having a bad effect on the properties concerned, and this state of affairs will continue so long as the Collie River remains in its present condition. Actually, as each year passes and nothing is done to prevent the flooding, the situation becomes worse.

Collie is a most unfortunate town compared with most country towns.

The local government authority is severely penalised because it is estimated that 60 per cent. of its area is controlled by the Forestry Department, which pays no Shire Council rates. The town is in the centre of the Wellington Weir catchment area and, as a consequence, no further land can be made available for expansion of primary production.

Surely such restrictions are worthy of a special Government grant to enable the river to be cleared so that the danger of flooding the town can be reduced to a minimum. No local government authority could meet all its requirements if restricted financially, as is the town of Collie.

I attach hereto cuttings from the local newspaper which concisely sets out the position at Collie, and the feelings of the residents, who have over the years, suffered considerably as a result of the flooding of the Collie river.

May I finally appeal to you for your sympathetic consideration of this problem and, as a result, that you will be convinced that the assistance asked for is genuinely warranted.

The Minister replied to that letter on the 8th June, 1964, as follows:—

Reference is made to your letter of the 27th April, wherein you request that the Government make available special funds to clear the course of the Collie River with a view to reducing the flood hazard in the town.

It is agreed that additional clearing work on the Collie River is warranted to further ease the flooding hazard. The estimated cost of work proposed is £1,500, which the Department will undertake during the 1964-65 summer on the basis of sharing costs as previously with the Collie Shire on a £ for £ basis.

I shall be pleased if you will ascertain from the Collie Shire whether they would be prepared to contribute on this basis towards the cost of this work.

I forwarded that information to the Shire of Collie, and received the following letter dated the 18th June, 1964, in reply:—

Council acknowledges receipt of your letter, enclosing copy of a letter from the Honourable Minister for Works in regard to the cost of clearing the Collie River in the 1964-65 summer, viz., £1,500, and the suggestion that the council undertake to meet half the cost of this work.

At its last meeting I was instructed by council to seek an interview or deputation to the Minister for Works, with a view to asking the Government to accept full responsibility for the cost of the work.

Would you be good enough to endeavour to arrange such a deputation and advise in due course.

I conveyed the contents of that letter to the Minister in a letter to him dated the 25th June, 1964, as follows:—

Re Clearing of Collie River

Concerning recent correspondence in regard to the abovementioned subject, I desire to advise having received a letter from the Collie Shire Council, in which is contained a request that I approach you with the object of arranging for a deputation from the Shire Council to meet you for the purpose of discussing further the problem of the clearing of the Collie River.

For your information, I enclose the letter I have received, and I shall be much obliged to be advised of your willingness to meet the deputation at a time and date to suit your convenience.

The reply which I received from the Minister was dated the 30th June, 1964, and is as follows:—

I refer to your communication of the 25th June re the clearing of the Collie River and your request for a deputation to further discuss the problem.

I have again perused the file and discussed the matter with departmental officers and am unable to alter the decision previously given. I

therefore regret that no good purpose could be served by receiving a deputation.

I am not blaming the Minister, but his advisory officers for this. Someone in the department has led the Minister up the garden path on this matter. When the people of Collie heard about this letter they became enraged.

However, at that time the flood came. On the Tuesday afternoon, in this Chamber, when the flood was at its height, I asked the Minister if he was still of the opinion that no useful purpose would be served in bringing a deputation to see him in connection with the clearing of the Collie River. The Minister told me he would take immediate action. I subsequently received a letter from the Minister dated the 6th August, 1964, as follows:—

With reference to your earlier representations for a deputation on the Collie River, etc., I have to advise that after further consideration I shall be pleased to receive such deputation some time after 10 on Tuesday morning, 18th August.

I would appreciate it if you would advise me of a suitable time.

I read that correspondence to show that it was not the people of Collie, or the Shire of Collie, who were wanting in this matter, because for a long time they have raved about the need to clear the river. They knew the town would be affected by flooding if nothing was done.

The Premier said that he would make a grant of £10,000 towards alleviation of the flood damage. Would it not have been much better for everybody concerned if the Premier had made a grant of £10,000 to overcome the trouble in the Collie River? The Minister did not do that. The people of Collie had to undergo all the suffering and disasters before the Minister agreed to receive a deputation. Surely that is not the right way to govern the people! The first flood I experienced in Collie occurred in 1926, and the records show that was the worst flood until the recent one. But there is always flooding in Collie during the winter months.

I made some representations to the Minister for Railways concerning the quantity of water which flowed from the locomotive depot and marshalling yards into the surrounding areas at Collie. His engineers informed him that the quantity of water from that area represented only a "fleabite" of the quantity of water which flowed into the Collie River. On this occasion the water coming from the railway property was in such volume that the Collie River was unable to take it, because the river was already flooded. The water from the railway property therefore flowed back into the town.

Surely we have engineers in this State who are capable enough to appreciate the seriousness of this problem! Why should the people of Collie have to move out of their homes, almost every year, because no-one in authority wants to assess what is required to overcome the problem? I would much rather prefer £10,000 being spent on river clearing than on alleviating the position of some of the people of Collie. Their losses have been terrific, and it is estimated from a survey that the damage to the homes of the people of Collie, and to the town is in the vicinity of £800,000. In these modern times we should have officers in the department who are capable of sizing up the situation; and there should be in office a Government which is able to provide the finance, so as to overcome these floodings every year.

Those who live away from rivers may not be able to appreciate the plight of the people of Collie who suffered from floods. Those people went to bed at night; and later, when they put their hands over the side of their beds, they felt water around them. The water rose so very quickly. Some members in this Chamber appear to think this is funny. I only wish they had had to go through the same experience as the people of Collie suffered. If they had they would not think this matter so funny.

The people at Collie knew the river was rising and they were making preparations; but something above the Collie River gave way and down came the volume of water. Those people did not have a chance to salvage their belongings. Their furniture was all ruined, and some of them will never be able to return to live in their homes.

These events have occurred in this modern age in a democratic country, where the individual is supposed to be looked after. Grave doubts arise in my mind. I felt I was justified in bringing forward the subject of river clearing in this House, and in reading the correspondence which has ensued since April, 1962.

The Shire of Collie controls an area, 75 per cent. of which belongs to the Forests Department. That department does not pay anything to the finances of the council. Surely that should be sufficient to warrant some interest being taken by the Government.

When the Wellington Dam was built, the area of land around it right back to Darkan and Boyup Brook was reserved as a catchment. No-one can secure an acre of land in that area, and all settlement in it has been stopped because of the need to keep the water as clean as possible. Settlement was all right when the water was used for irrigation, but now it is also used for domestic purposes.

In conclusion, I wish to point out that every septic tank in Collie, and the town sewerage system, were out of commission

during the flood. The effluent from the septic tanks overflowed, and a special pump had to be obtained to rectify the sewerage system.

Mr. Tonkin: All that effluent goes into the Wellington Dam.

Mr. H. MAY: Of course it does, because it has nowhere else to go. No officer in the department concerned considers action should be taken to alter the position. If £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 is required for development of the Ord River scheme, the money is made available, and no-one seems to be worried; but when it comes to relieving the position in a settled area, which has prospects of production from the surrounding land, not a penny is forthcoming from the Government. During the recent flood a financial grant was made only after many of the people had lost their homes.

I hope I have not wearied the House unduly. I felt so intensely on this subject that I considered it was necessary to bring it forward, to enable members to become aware of what goes on in an electorate other than their own.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

MR. WILLIAMS (Bunbury) [7.32 p.m.]: I wish to take this opportunity on the Address-in-Reply to pass a few remarks concerning my electorate. The matter foremost in our minds over the past few weeks would be the flooding that has occurred in the south-west. We have heard the members for Wellington and Collie say something on this matter. Therefore I thought I might have a few words to say myself and possibly make a few recommendations to the Minister at the end of my speech.

Firstly, I feel I should pay a tribute to the people of Bunbury—not just to those in Bunbury, but to the whole of the areas affected by the floods. The assistance which was given by the people in those towns was very great. One did not have to make many requests before there were plenty of people only too willing to give assistance and do whatever they could for those who were affected; and those who were evacuated from their homes quite often came around to see how they could help other families. In Bunbury, at least 500 homes were affected to varying degrees. One family lost quite a bit of furniture; but the main damage was to floor coverings and some furniture.

I felt the effort made by the civil emergency group in Bunbury was very great indeed. Very late on the Monday night, when the emergency occurred, the levee banks of the Preston River broke and the river flowed through the town. The people comprising the civil emergency group immediately started the evacuation of families whose homes looked like being flooded, and they also took the welfare side in hand. The civil emergency group took

over and did a sterling job in putting these people up overnight in various halls and seeing that meals were ready for them next morning.

I must mention the radio station, as those in charge were very helpful in this particular case. The station gave repeated calls over the air for assistance and also gave directions to people as reports of the flooding of different areas came in. This was very helpful because most of those who might be affected were tuned in. In any case, in such a situation word gets around very quickly. There is a firm in the town with radio-controlled trucks, and that firm made a sterling effort. Its trucks were able to contact one another and were therefore able to direct people who were in distress.

It is very good to know that throughout Australia in a case like this the community spirit is engendered. People have their brushes at various times during the day; but when an emergency arises such as this, those same people work shoulder to shoulder and are only too happy to help out when and however they can. To give an idea of this community spirit, on the Tuesday morning a number of people who had been affected fairly considerably were assisted by a call put over the radio station. People were requested to leave their names and addresses and also the number of people they could billet in their homes. Within one hour billets were provided for 500 people, which is really amazing. The accommodation ranged from private homes to hotels, guest houses, and such like. It was good to see the appeals meet with such a good response.

Bunbury, as most members know, is very flat; and while the water was running there was no health danger to the town whatsoever. However, on the Tuesday morning we had to drive through a considerable depth of water to look at the Preston River. The mayor, the town clerk, the town engineer, local members, and I went to survey the situation; and during the drive there was a distinct smell in the air because quite a number of septic tanks had blown off their tops; and it appeared as though there could be an emergency after the flood water receded, in the form of a health problem. However, when the water did recede, the health inspector, in conjunction with the local authority, was right on the job with the necessary type of lime to treat the pools which were left, and consequently I am sure there will be no health problem in Bunbury as a result of the flood.

We realise the flood was caused by the amount of rain received over a wide area in such a short time. I suppose that is how floods are normally caused. In this case, during the previous two months there had been a considerable amount of rain, which was followed by between five inches

and eight inches over most of the south-west there in a period of three days. That was a little too much for the ground and the rivers to take. Consequently the water flowed down and away it went.

During the summertime in the south-west there is a considerable area of land under irrigation, which is a good thing because it does quite a lot for the area. Bunbury relies on that irrigation for its economic stability. However, with such constant irrigation the ground never seems to really dry out, and I believe there must always be a relatively high water table in that area. Consequently, when there is a considerable amount of rain the water table rises above its normal level and a situation such as I have described is reached. As I said before, the situation was one out of the box.

Over the years in the area surrounding Bunbury—Capel and far into the hills and lower areas—a considerable amount of clearing has been done in order to develop farms. I believe that trees consume quite a great quantity of water, so for every tree that is knocked over, there must be an excess of water somewhere. The Bunbury water table is affected by this development, which must take place; but I feel that over a considerable number of years the drains and outlets of our rivers, and particularly the drains, have not been increased in size so as to cope with the amount of water coming down.

Here I refer particularly to the case of Five Mile Brook, which has been discussed in this Chamber on several occasions. It is fed by a series of swamps behind Capel; and I believe the Minister for Works and his officers are in the process of trying to divert some of the water from Five Mile Brook and stop it going through Bunbury by taking it out to sea through the Capel area. That could create a problem for the people in Capel. However, if it is done in the correct manner it should be all right as, generally speaking, the engineers on the job would know how to overcome that problem.

I feel that serious consideration should be given to those areas and the amount of water which is going to accumulate because of the clearing and development that is taking place. It should also be kept in mind that with the amount of water that will come down and have to go out to sea, it is no use having the same sized openings now that were suitable 50 years ago, because I feel all the clearing that has taken place has had a great effect on the situation.

During the flood in Bunbury there was considerable feeling regarding the Plug. The Plug is a stretch of stone, concrete, and steel placed across the mouth of the estuary for various reasons, one being to prevent the silting of the harbour. I feel—and this is the general feeling—that some suitable system should be placed there

to control the water. Admittedly, at one stage we had exceptionally low tides. On the Wednesday it was very low, and we had no high north-westerly winds, which also bank up the waters in the rivers. However, at one stage, on the estuary side of the Plug, the water was 5 ft. to 6 ft. higher than it was in the ocean.

That immediately alarmed people, as well it might. It alarmed me; and I feel some system should be incorporated in the Plug or around the Plug whereby this excess water can be let out if and when that is desired. It would also play its part in freshening that end of the estuary which at times in the summer has an unpleasant odour. Therefore, in the summertime, the engineers should devise some system so that these gates can be opened or closed when the tides are suitable; and that would not affect the harbour.

Mr. Brand: The engineers have been asked to examine the position in the light of the recent floods.

Mr. WILLIAMS: That is good to hear; and the people in Bunbury will be happy to hear it. We hope that at least the engineers will have a look at it and make an early recommendation.

I referred earlier to Five Mile Brook and its diversion. At present this Five Mile Brook goes through a fairly large residential area in the town of Bunbury; and it has been there for many years. Prior to approximately 10 years ago there would have been few homes in its vicinity; but during the last 10 years there has been a considerable expansion by way of housing development alongside the Five Mile Brook, and consequently the brook now runs right through the middle of a residential area. I do not live very far from it, and many other families are in the same position as myself.

I have three small boys; and my wife and I, together with most other families in the vicinity, are always worried when one of the children is missing. We naturally think of Five Mile Brook and always head down that way. That is one of the things a parent would do. If sufficient water could be diverted through an area where there are no houses there would be no risk of the area being flooded and people would sleep much better at night.

In connection with the flooding of Five Mile Brook, the engineers did a good job. The brook reached the stage where it looked as though the water would burst over its banks. If that had happened approximately 100 to 150 homes would have been affected. The engineers constructed a compensating basin on the southern side of Goldsmith Street. It did affect four houses, but not to any great extent. The people concerned were told that if any damage had occurred they could apply for

compensation because the situation was man-made. The construction of this basin stopped the water from flooding, and it allowed the western end of the brook to clear by a few inches. The basin helped to drain the water to some extent. This continued for a period of 3½ days until the whole thing was brought under control.

Last summer considerable work was carried out on the Preston River. The Public Works Department deepened the river considerably and built up the levee banks. Nobody expected the floods that came, and the levee banks which had been built up were not consolidated with grass. Consequently they were washed away and a lot of the department's work was undone. On the Monday following the floods employees of the department were back with bulldozers and began blocking the holes in the levee banks. They did a good job in undertaking repairs.

Something should be done about certain sections of the Preston River. There is one section south of Moonlight Bridge where the river diverted its course during the flood. By resuming about a chain of land on the western side the bend could be taken out of the river and the pressure on the levee banks eased. The section in question is in the area called Glen Iris. At this bend in the river the levee banks gave way with a rush and the water inundated the suburb of Glen Iris.

Another suggestion that I wish to make concerns the civil emergency organisation. One of the members of the Bunbury Apex Club is in charge of the rescue section. He has constantly asked for volunteers to join the section but he has had only a fair amount of success. The words "civil defence" are apt to make people reticent about joining. Many feel that if an atom bomb dropped—and that is what they are apt to think of when we speak of civil defence—then what good would it do if they were members of the organisation? In order to attract interested people to the organisation I suggest that the word "defence" should be dropped and that it should be called the civil emergency service.

It was noticeable during the period of the floods that there was a great need for a central control for directing operations and for receiving reports from outlying districts and from areas further up the rivers. On the Tuesday morning we had no idea what was happening at Glen Iris. We knew that the levee banks had broken away because the department's engineer told us that some telephone communications were out of order and reports that came through dealt only with the situation in certain areas. No-one was interested in taking a boat out to find out the situation in other areas because the flood waters were running at a fast pace, in some cases at 12 and 14 knots.

Careful consideration should be given to this matter. There should be central radio control, which should be on a frequency which could be used for aircraft and walkie-talkie radios. Walkie-talkie radios were very helpful during the war and they have been helpful on many occasions since. Members of the rescue service, equipped with these radios, could be sent to different areas and they could send back information on what was happening, how much water was expected to come down the rivers, how high the waters had risen, and so on. Communications are so easily broken in an emergency. The P.M.G. Department did very well, but there is always an occasion during an emergency when a cable is brought down and communications are broken.

Roads are often washed out and, as the Minister for Railways knows, railway bridges are washed away. Central radio control is necessary not only for the Bunbury area but also for other areas; and not only in case of flooding but also in case of fire and any number of emergencies.

I wish now to deal with the port of Bunbury. Over the past 12 months there has been a marked rise in imports and exports into and out of the port. I maintain a constant watch on the port. During the past 12 months there were only one or two days when there was no ship in port. On some occasions there have been five ships at the jetty, one at the land-backed wharf, and two more waiting to come in. I said to a neighbour, who is a waterside worker, "You have plenty of ships in", and he replied, "Yes, we have just about one apiece."

The total of imports for the year 1964 was 197,816 tons. For the previous year, 1963, the total was 139,544 tons, representing an increase of approximately 60,000 tons. Total exports for 1964 amounted to 491,611 tons. In 1963 the total was 442,594 tons, representing an increase of roughly 50,000 tons. Total trade for the port in 1964 amounted to 691,142 tons, compared with a figure for the previous year of 583,004 tons. This represented an increase of over 100,000 tons. In 1964, 141 ships called in at Bunbury, compared with 114 in 1963. That represents a considerable increase. The future of the port is assured. Exports of mineral sands have increased considerably, the increase for the year, being 100,000 tons. There has also been a sharp increase in the amount of fruit which has been exported. Apples, mainly from your area Mr. Speaker, have been exported through the port of Bunbury in large quantities.

The future export of mineral sands appears to be very bright. It is considered that within the next few years the total

amount of mineral sands that will be exported through the port of Bunbury will be half a million tons per year; and Bunbury will be one of the major ports of the world for the export of these mineral sands. Companies in the Capel area are geared for greater production. They are also building their own bulk terminal. The money is being supplied by the companies and no assistance is being given by the Government. The construction of storage bins and conveyors will cost in the vicinity of £300,000. The cost will be shared by the companies according to the number of bins that each company is constructing and according to the various types of conveyors to be used.

During the recess I had a visit from someone in the Eastern States. He spoke to the manager of Western Titanium and asked him what the production figure was for the year. The manager replied that it was 120,000 tons. My friend then asked him what his sales were, and the manager confounded him by saying that the figure was 150,000 tons. Apparently the company is producing 120,000 tons and it has to find 150,000 tons to sell. That will give members some idea of the growth of this industry in the Bunbury area. With the construction of bulk storage bins on the harbour site, approximately 800 tons per hour will be loaded. This will mean a quicker turn-round of ships, and it will mean a great deal to the industry in and around Bunbury.

In 1961 about 139 tons of apples were exported from Bunbury. This figure represented approximately 3,500 cases. This was done purely on a trial basis. The whole thing worked very well and in 1963 the figure increased to 3,437 tons or approximately 85,000 cases. In 1964 the figure increased to 6,235 tons or approximately 160,000 cases. The companies which are handling the export of apples through the port consider that within a few years anything from three-quarters of a million bushels to one million bushels of apples will be exported through the port each year.

There is a need for a second land-backed wharf in Bunbury. This will be necessary in order to keep pace with the development of the area. The apples which have been exported over the past few years have been well received overseas. Handling of the fruit has been very good, particularly the loading operation carried out by the waterside workers. But if we had a second land-backed wharf the loading could be speeded up considerably. At the moment only railway wagons can get on to the wharf, but with a second land-backed wharf there would be both rail and road facilities, and exporters think this would be the best combination. It would lift export tonnages considerably.

The last matter I would like to mention is the need for a solid-fill causeway from the present reclamation work at the Bunbury Harbour across to the existing jetty-type wharf. I did discuss this matter last year; but if and when a solid-fill causeway were constructed it could and should conform with the general harbour development plan for the port. It would also reduce the costs of maintenance for the Bunbury Harbour Board because it would virtually cut out a third to a half of the existing jetty thereby reducing maintenance costs considerably. The jetty is not getting any younger, and each year the costs of maintenance are going up and up, whereas the maintenance for a solid-fill causeway would be negligible in comparison.

It would or should also provide for rail and road traffic to the present jetty-type wharf. This would provide for the transport of men from and to the jetty, whereas now they have to go to the end of the wharf and walk or ride a bicycle for a distance of approximately three-fifths of a mile. A very real problem with the present set-up, as I mentioned last year, is when an accident occurs on the wharf or in a ship. At present there is no quick means of getting a man from a ship, or from the ship's side back to the hospital. If a man is injured he has to be placed on a flat-top wagon and the wagon is pulled by an engine. If a solid-fill causeway were constructed it would mean that an ambulance and a doctor could arrive at the scene of an accident by road and the patient could be speedily transported to the local hospital for treatment.

Any other remarks I wish to make I shall leave until later in the session when an opportunity will be given during the debate on the Estimates, or on other occasions.

MR. GRAHAM (Balcatta) [8.3 p.m.]: Mr. Speaker, perhaps first of all I should observe it is a little unfortunate that on a number of occasions during the short period this session has been in progress you and I have had occasion to clash. I was going to suggest that next year, when you are a private member on this side of the House, I hope you will not be having similar clashes with the member who then occupies the Speaker's Chair in this Chamber. However, may I officially extend to you a welcome upon your return from the trip you made to Great Britain, where you were the representative of this Parliament at an important gathering dealing with procedures and matters of direct interest to the functioning of Parliament.

I do not know whether it is your intention to deliver verbally, or have prepared and delivered to us in writing, a report of what transpired, or whether perhaps at some time in the future there might be a convenient opportunity for you to give

at least an outline of some of the matters dealt with, which no doubt would be of interest to a majority of the members of this Parliament.

The **SPEAKER** (Mr. Hearman): I intend to do both.

Mr. **GRAHAM**: Thank you, Sir. I think I had a clash with the Premier in respect of the appointment of members of the Joint House Committee and I recall that among other items I discussed the chandeliers in this building. I do not know how many of them there are, but I would think they would number approximately 200 with lamps ranging from six in number, in some cases, to 10 in others. I have not counted the number of lamps on the £700 chandelier which is in the main entrance hall and I know there are dozens of other chandeliers adorning the halls of this building.

However, my chief concern, apart from the fact that these chandeliers are completely out of place, in my view, is that they are so unsatisfactory for the purpose for which they are used. They do not give even a reasonable light for members who are required to do a great deal of reading, frequently at night-time, in the performance of their duties.

Mr. **Brand**: Without clashing on the point, is it fair to say that the chandeliers—

Mr. **GRAHAM**: What about my time?

Mr. **Brand**: You can get some more later on. Don't you think the chandeliers are there for decorative purposes rather than perhaps specifically to give light? Is it not for both purposes?

Mr. **GRAHAM**: We all have fancies in certain directions, but I think it is possible to go to excess. I can think of no more unsuitable, or less suitable type of lighting than chandeliers in offices. I think this is borne out by the fact that some 10 offices were cleared of these adornments because it was impossible for members of the *Hansard* staff to work under the inadequate lighting. I think I am right in saying the majority of the members of the staff—and I am envious of them—are working under lights other than chandeliers; and I noticed only this evening in the President's Room, and in the rooms of the Clerk of the Legislative Council and the Assistant Clerk, that the chandeliers have been removed and a new type of lighting—fluorescent tubes—has been installed.

The Minister for Works was good enough to indicate to me that the Public Works Department, Electrical Branch, is investigating the matter; and, depending on the tests being conducted at the present time at the other end of the building, it is likely that many chandeliers will be removed. I hope and trust as a consequence of this there will be fewer of us being

required to attend opticians for the first time in our lives in order to have reading glasses prescribed for us.

Mr. **Tonkin**: It looks as though there will be a few cheap chandeliers about.

Mr. **GRAHAM**: I do not know about cheap. I understand there is some thought of placing them in the new multi-storey Government office building on the other side of Harvest Terrace.

Mr. **Tonkin**: That will be funny.

Mr. **GRAHAM**: Whether the affliction which has struck members of Parliament is to be imposed on the Public Service, I know not. However, I am gratified to know that action is being taken to correct a palpable wrong.

Mr. **Brand**: I would like to make the point that the decision to install the chandeliers was no doubt one which was decided upon by the architects and the House Committee, which represents us all.

Mr. **GRAHAM**: No; the House Committee did not come into it.

Mr. **Jamieson**: They never dealt with it.

Mr. **GRAHAM**: Anyway, let bygones be bygones.

Mr. **Brand**: I just wanted to make the point.

Mr. **GRAHAM**: I appreciate the fact that a change is being made. Whilst in this present mood may I compliment the Minister for Lands for what I understand is his generous approach to the matter of the closure of rights-of-way in suburban areas. There is a feeling in some official quarters, I understand, that where these rights-of-way are closed the land should be offered or made available to the adjoining holders, but at market prices, or something approaching them, on the ground that it is wrong in principle that the Crown should be giving land without any reward for the State.

But of course there is simply no logic to that having regard for the fact that originally the land was purchased by the initial holder who subdivided the area and these rights-of-way are the residue of a subdivision. The land concerned was paid for by somebody many years ago, and I am complimenting the Minister for what I understand to be his generous view of this question. It is one which conforms to the attitude of many local authorities that unless there are good and substantial reasons for not doing so these places—which become repositories of rubbish, dead cats, old boots, clippings, prunings, and stragglers, and eventually become fire hazards, and serve no useful purpose—should be made available to the adjoining holders. It is pleasing, after several years of questioning the Minister, that something is being done and some legislation might be introduced this session further

to simplify the procedure. I look forward with great anticipation to that development.

I now wish to discuss something that pertains to all of us. I think most members will agree that I have been reasonably controversial in my utterances, and that I speak rather strongly when on this side of the House. I am exceedingly critical of the Government and in a political sense I try to poke my finger in the eyes of those who are politically opposed to me. Notwithstanding that—and from time to time all of us engage in that pre-occupation—my feeling is, and has been for many years, that the term applied to those who are members of the side opposite to the Government, namely Her Majesty's Opposition, is a most inappropriate and inadequate description of those who are on this side of the House. It implies that on all occasions there is a need for what is today called the Opposition to oppose the Government.

Those who have been here for any time know perfectly well that while there are strong differences of opinion on many issues the great majority of Bills that come before Parliament receive the support of both sides of the House. Therefore, why create a public illusion that there are two irreconcilable and totally different aspects when this description applies only occasionally? I suggest in all seriousness, Mr. Speaker, and with a full realisation of how steeped you are in traditions and feel that we should conform, that serious thought should be given to describing those who are on this side of the Chamber, and not of the Government at the moment, as "Her Majesty's Alternative", or some such description.

I think that upon reflection, members will agree that something along those lines would be far more appropriate than something which indicates a strict division of opinion all the time. Accordingly I would have no objection whatever if we were officially recognised or referred to as members of "Her Majesty's Alternative", or some other name if a more suitable one could be thought of.

Mr. Brand: I will have a close look at that one:

Mr. GRAHAM: I suggest it might be a matter of months only before the Premier could be the leader of a group such as "Her Majesty's Alternative", or something like that.

Mr. Brand: I am prepared to wait.

Mr. GRAHAM: Anyway, enough of that. Time slips by and there are several matters I want to discuss.

Mr. J. Hegney: The Premier had those views five years ago. He quoted them to me once.

Mr. Brand: About the Opposition?

Mr. J. Hegney: Yes.

Mr. Brand: I did not.

Mr. J. Hegney: Don't you remember?

Mr. Brand: No, I do not.

Mr. GRAHAM: Mr. Speaker, I hope you are taking time off for this. Notwithstanding what I have just said there are some occasions when there is some hard-hitting, and last night I think there was some hard-hitting from the member for Claremont. From what I heard him say, and from what I read of the transcript of his speech this evening, he did not make a direct statement. But in view of his approach, and the manner in which he was insistent, it would appear he was deliberately endeavouring to create the impression that somewhat unparliamentary conduct was being engaged in by members from this side of the House in the car park not very far distant.

I intend to say something that perhaps strikes a personal note, but there will be no innuendo about it; there will be no guesses about it. Within recent weeks I have become possessed of a circular letter of which I have the original here. You may be interested, Mr. Speaker, to see that it is on parliamentary paper, quite heavy paper, with the embossed crest. It is, in other words, paper of good quality. It is headed Parliament House, Perth, and as I have said, it is a photostat copy; and I have removed certain incriminating words. It is dated July, 1964. I repeat I am reading from a photostat copy from which certain words are missing. The letter reads as follows:—

Dear Mr. —,

During the coming weeks every Liberal supporter in the — district will receive a letter from me. The main purpose of this letter is to point out to you the value of having a strong party branch at which individual opinions can be aired and conveyed to the divisional executive of the party and thence to the State Council. These are views that assist in establishing Government policy. In this way your viewpoint reaches Parliament. Our branch must also be strong in numbers so that when elections come upon us we have the financial backing of our members to support the campaign to a successful end. This is where I hope you will help.

My Divisional Executive Officer, —, will call on you within two days of your receiving this letter and I trust that in the meantime you will have given thought to my appeal.

In order to assist my Executive, I am enclosing a Bank Order form, which is the most convenient way of making a membership subscription.

If you wish, I shall be pleased to call on you, particularly if you think I can help with any problem you may have.

In conclusion, I would stress my personal appeal to you to add your support to the — Branch of the Liberal Party.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Accompanying this document, as was promised, is a bank order form. It is headed, "To the Manager", and here they have to fill in the name of their bank, together with the branch. This is all in small letters. It reads—

Dear Sir,

Commencing on presentation and annually on . . . and thereafter until further notice, please debit my/our account with the sum of £ . . . and remit this amount annually to the credit of the Liberal and Country League of Western Australia Inc., 1140 Hay Street, Perth, at the National Bank of A'sia Ltd., St. George's Terrace, Perth.

I suppose all is fair in love and war, and if finance is necessary for an election campaign it is necessary to take steps to see that the funds are available. But as there have been a number of actions taken with which I disapprove—shall we say because of niggardliness on the part of the Government towards members—I think I have a perfect right to disclose this original letter which is on Parliament House stationery and which is being used for party-political approaches by a member of the Liberal Party.

Mr. O'Connor: A member of the Labor Party sent out circulars dealing with insurances on Parliament House paper after he had left this House.

Mr. GRAHAM: I am unaware of that. If the member for Mt. Lawley has, or had, evidence of that I suggest it is his duty, or his obligation, to do something about it. It is quite easy to interject along these lines, but when there is a submission along such lines some evidence should be produced. As I say, I have the evidence before me, but I do not desire that the individual person who committed this breach should be named, or that his name should be publicised. I think it is a procedure that is definitely wrong, and I suggest therefore that the Premier talk to some of his enthusiastic supporters. If the Premier likes, I could give him one reason, apart from the member for Claremont, as to why I brought this matter forward. Incidentally, it is not the member for Claremont to whom I refer, but a colleague of his whose electorate adjoins his own.

I am also interested in the activities of certain business firms—and I am now talking about their political activities. I feel that the administrators of firms—the directors and managements—are entitled to their political opinions the same as anybody else. Nobody cavils at that. But we do have some extraordinary procedures. When

Labor was the Government there came into being in Western Australia what was known as Pope Engineering (W.A.) Proprietary Limited. This concern started business in Western Australia with 30 members on the staff. When Labor left the Treasury benches there were 400 persons employed. By 1963 that number had fallen to 250; and in this year of grace—or disgrace—there are none employed, because the firm, under this Government, has folded up and departed these shores.

Incidentally the management of this firm refused to allow political speakers on to the property to address the workmen there during their lunch-hour. This attitude is so different from that of other concerns of one sort and another. They did allow union representatives into the factory premises, but did not encourage them. The firm to which I am referring employed female labour wherever possible. It had the men afraid. Anybody standing up for his rights or union principles was told to get on his way. The men left the firm, and that was probably a contributing factor to its downfall. In other words it was described, and generally recognised, as a bad work place; and, because of the factors and circumstances prevailing, employees were not interested in belonging to the union while they were there; but after they left the firm they were anxious to belong to unions for obvious reasons.

The reason why I have given some background is because of the attitude of this firm whilst it was still in existence, before the Minister for Industrial Development had delivered his *coup de grace*. On the 13th November, 1963, a circular was distributed among employees of the firm; and the 13th November, 1963, was 17 days before polling day for the Commonwealth elections. The heading was "Pope Engineering (W.A.) Proprietary Limited" and the subheading of the memorandum is styled "Housekeeping". It reads as follows:—

We are to have a courtesy visit from Senator Paltridge and Mr. Douglas Cash, the Liberal candidate for Stirling, on Tuesday, 19th November at 2.15 p.m.

Departmental heads and supervisors are requested to ensure that the plant condition regarding housekeeping is of a high standard.

Empty and broken boxes, stillages and pallets are to be removed. Defective and scrap material wherever located are to be cleared and, if possible, put to good use.

Yard stocks etc. are to be placed in an orderly manner.

Overtime may be necessary for this operation and will be considered on a departmental basis.

F. W. BEAKEN,
Works Manager.

The Federal Minister who, I suppose, had an opportunity of visiting this firm at any time from 1956 onwards until its demise chose eleven days before polling day to do so. What earthly business Mr. Doug. Cash had in visiting this place and paying a courtesy visit I do not know, because he lives at Mount Yokine and has a business in St. George's Terrace selling Christmas cards. It was, of course, palpably an electioneering visit. So it was fortuitous that this firm bit the dust, particularly if that was the way it played politics. It was a most unworthy action on its part.

I want to reserve a reasonable amount of time to direct some remarks particularly at the Minister for Transport on transport and traffic matters generally. I have other important matters with which to deal, but before proceeding to my main theme I feel I would like to make reference to a particular matter.

The member for Albany has asked questions regarding sex offences and the rest of it. To give some idea of the point at which I wish to arrive I will read an extract from *The West Australian* newspaper of the 13th July, 1963. There is a date line at Bunbury for Friday. It reads—

Bunbury, Friday.—Three sisters, aged 13, 15 and 16, all admitted sex offences when they appeared in the Bunbury Children's Court today.

Six youths, aged from 16 to 19, were charged with offences against the girls.

Bunbury welfare officer M. T. Penton said the eldest girl had admitted having intercourse on three occasions.

Both her sisters had admitted sex offences, the 13-year-old girl on numerous occasions in the last five months.

On one occasion two of the youths had booked accommodation in Bunbury and slept the night with the two elder sisters.

Two of the youths, aged 18 and 19, were charged with having unlawful carnal knowledge of girls under the age of 16.

They pleaded guilty and were released on bonds of £100 to come up for sentence if called on within two years, in default 100 days' gaol with hard labour.

I asked some questions of the appropriate Minister last year and I find there are many cases of where youths up to the age of 19, and around 19 and 20, had been guilty of such offences against young girls who were approximately 14 years of age. I quote several of them:

A man of 21 years of age had unlawful carnal knowledge of a girl 14 years of age for which he was given six months' imprisonment. He had two previous convictions and appeared before the court on a number of occasions. I fancy it was in connection with sex offences.

There was one aged 20 in an offence against a 14-year-old—six months' imprisonment; one aged 19 years against a 14-year-old—a bond for 12 months, although he had previous convictions; a man aged 41, unlawful carnal knowledge against a 15-year-old, previous convictions—12 months' imprisonment; then a man 19 years old against a 15-year-old—put on a bond for two years; and he had had a previous conviction.

There was another case—and this is one over which the Premier and I fell out—where a 19-year-old had unlawful carnal knowledge against a girl 14 years old, and he was sentenced to two years' gaol and 12 strokes of the birch. This youth had had no previous conviction against him. The newspaper report says—

After a 2-hour retirement a jury of 10 men and two women found this man guilty of having had unlawful carnal knowledge of a girl under 16.

The judge said to the jury—

I think you have taken an extremely lenient view.

And he said to the prisoner—

The only thing I regret is that this verdict prevents me giving you punishment which you so richly deserve. The maximum punishment which I can impose for this offence is two years imprisonment with or without a whipping. In this case I propose to give you the maximum.

It will be seen there that the penalty imposed upon that young man, whose conduct no-one will condone, is completely out of proportion to the penalties inflicted upon others who had committed a similar offence; and in all of the cases I have given, those who appeared before the court had had a previous conviction. Yet we have a justice imposing this savage penalty and at the same time criticising the jury. The jury has a job to do, and I suggest it is no part of the duty of a presiding justice to be critical of the jury which has acted in accordance with its conscience. The following is a report which appeared in the paper this year:—

Bad Verdict Judge Tells Perth Jury

A Criminal Court judge yesterday castigated a jury of eight men and four women after it had acquitted two men on a charge of breaking and entering. Mr. Justice . . . told the jury, "That is the worst verdict I have heard in this court. I hope that it fills you with satisfaction."

The judge responsible for this utterance was the same judge concerned before; and I am suggesting in all seriousness that he who presides over a jury—and in this case it was eight men and four women—has no right to cast a reflection upon the jury, or be critical of it. I have in my mind the

gravest doubts as to whether he is a worthy incumbent for that position, particularly in view of the earlier example I gave when he handed out a most savage sentence. There had not been one case of birching here for a couple of generations until this one, for a person found guilty of a lesser offence.

This justice became so incensed and so irrational that he took it out on the person who was found guilty, after having expressed himself about the jury. I suggest in all seriousness that the Premier and his Government ought to look at this justice whose fitness to occupy the important post, in my mind, at any rate, is open to extreme doubt—and I refer to Mr. Justice Virtue.

Mr. Jamieson: That is not his only fault either. If you examine his overall record it is terrible.

Mr. GRAHAM: I am aware of that. I pursue that matter no further. I do not desire to move a deliberate motion in connection with it, but I think it is of transcending importance that the Government should analyse the record of this judge in order to satisfy itself as to whether he should not be posted to other duties. I hasten to add that I have no feelings of personal rancour towards that gentleman, but I am moved to say what I have from a sense of duty, because I feel he has displayed that he is not fit for the position he occupies.

I will skip the other matters to which I desired to make reference and now say something with regard to traffic. Two years ago I moved an amendment to the Address-in-Reply motion deploring the situation. Quite a lengthy debate ensued, but it was so important to the Government that the responsible Minister occupied approximately 10 minutes. Following him, fortunately, there were many speakers from both sides of this House who were appalled by the loss of life and the injury to persons, which was occurring and increasing.

This year we have reached an all-time high. From the latest figures available, 147 persons have met their death as a consequence of road accidents. This is in a period of 33 weeks, which means that almost five of our citizens died as a result of road accidents every week. We call them accidents. I often feel they should have a different description. An accident is some misfortune, surely, which is, by and large, unavoidable; but so many of these crashes which take place involving loss of life and injury to people, are occurring when there is no justification for them at all.

There appears to be a spirit abroad of "couldn't care less"—a feeling of irresponsibility, of day-dreaming at the wheel, being more or less oblivious of what lies ahead or on either side, failing to see interactions, or pedestrians, or approaching

trains, or bends in the roads, or trees on the side of country roads, or things of that nature. People's minds are not registering. They are not concerned with the lives of others, these drivers; nor are they concerned with their own lives. I repeat that things do not appear to be registering.

However, to my mind the most appalling thing about this is that my impression is that the Government itself is half-hearted in this matter. It is day-dreaming, thinking out grandiose things, such as a hospital scheme that will involve expenditure of so many millions of pounds by the turn of the century—

Mr. Oldfield: They will need the hospital scheme the way they are going.

Mr. GRAHAM: —or what is likely to occur in respect of the export of iron ore. We have been listening to that for years, but no iron ore has been exported, and that, of course, is a great pity. But what I am suggesting is that the Government ought to be showing more concern for the welfare of its own people by bringing its head out of the clouds, and getting its feet well and truly on the ground. That is why the Opposition has complained that after 5½ years of the greatest leap forward in the history of Western Australia—according to the Liberal Party and, to some extent, the Country Party—the best the Government can offer the ordinary people of the community is 3s. 10d. a week, about the price of a bottle of beer; and that ought to be currency understood by the member for Claremont. That is the extent of the great leap forward!

I do not know whether the Government is not sufficiently aware of the problem; but it should be because the daily toll is surely a sufficient reminder. Is the Government afraid that in this, the last term of this Parliament and perchance the Government's last year in office, if it adopts stern measures it may lose popularity at the polls?

Mr. Brand: It is not!

Mr. GRAHAM: Perhaps we will shape up to that one in a moment. It is easy to say, "It is not"; but if time is not against me I intend to outline quite a number of points.

I am aware that the Government has made additional impositions upon the motorists; and instead of those funds being used to provide better training, greater safety, and instructor tests, a great deal of the money has been going into Consolidated Revenue and used for all sorts of purposes which I will not bother to outline at this juncture—far less worthy than making a contribution to save human lives and avoid suffering.

It is true that speed and liquor are responsible for many of the accidents that occur; but of course they are by no means the only problems. An instance of the Government's lack of imagination is surely

demonstrated in the fact that it was, I think, a magistrate who suggested that the co-operation of television stations should be sought in order to portray to the viewers some of their obligations under the traffic regulations. That is only a minor matter, but these are the sort of things which should be coming from the Minister's officers through him to us. The Government should not await a crisis before it does anything.

Two years ago I suggested a number of things. I am pleased to see that the Government has taken some action in regard to probationary licenses. Legislation was passed on that subject last year. I suggested there should be more traffic police appointed, and there has been a half-hearted attempt to do this, because there are a few more employed, but not nearly enough. I suggested also concentrated blitzes on erring motorists, and I think there have been one or so a year—again not nearly as many as there should be. I suggested that there ought to be a better training scheme for motorists, and there is admittedly now licensing of instructors. However, all this amounts to fiddling while Rome is burning. The contribution is next to nought.

I also expressed myself in regard to the give-way-to-the-right rule, with which I will again deal in a moment. That situation has gone from bad to worse. It is my intention to suggest about 20 different ways in which either the Government is falling down on the job, or in which the Government could do something about this carnage.

I suggest in the first place—and there is no order of priority about these—that the Government could either control, or if it has not the power, it could persuade newspapers, television stations, and broadcasting stations, to adopt a code with regard to advertising.

Here let me quote from a paper called *Report* issued in June of this year by the Australian Road Council in Melbourne. Under the heading, "Speed-Power Ads Are Spreading," we find this—

The "Speed and Power" advertising blight which is neutralising much of Australia's road safety educational propaganda, and encouraging young drivers in particular to perform deadly stunts on the nation's roads, is spreading.

Advertisers who are quite unrelated to the automotive field, including cigarette manufacturers, are now using speed and power as a background to their advertising.

This development is going on despite condemnation of the practice by a number of State Ministers; leaders in the automotive field; resolutions of automobile organisations and warnings issued by road safety organisations.

The members of this media of information and entertainment are, by and large, responsible people who are aware of what is going on. No doubt they have friends and relatives whom they have lost, or who have been maimed. Accordingly I think they would be prepared to listen sympathetically to a Government which asked them to tone down, or to place a ban on, a form of advertising which is encouraging the young adventurers of the community to see how much they can zip it up on the highways when the glamour and the attraction are there.

I felt six years ago—and I have indicated this to the Minister—that it was necessary to have a simplification of the traffic code—a document which nobody can understand—instead of having approximately 300 pages of the Act and regulations which we are expected to understand, plus clippings-out and pastings-in on every second page; and the verbiage which is employed is, of course, impossible of being understood by the average citizen. Why this has not been done, I do not know.

I suggest, too, there should be greater emphasis on basic issues. Whilst many traffic regulations are necessary, there are certain cardinal driving rules fundamental to safety. If there are breaches of these, then the Government should provide the machinery to hit and to hit hard. In respect of others—the elbow out of the window a few inches, and that sort of thing—I suggest they could be more or less forgotten.

I suggest, too, that training should be a prerequisite to the issue of a driver's license. What purpose does it serve if I get a friend to lend me his car to drive around a paddock and then around a few suburban streets until I have gained confidence, and then I proceed to the police station and drive around the block, and then get my driver's certificate provided I can answer a few questions? I repeat: This should be a matter of training, and there should not be one test but a series of tests. A bad driver can fluke a decent performance once in a while, and all he has to do is to do it when a police officer is with him, and he receives his driver's license.

It is too serious a matter to allow all this horsepower in a tremendously heavy vehicle, which can move at terrific speeds in all directions, to be let loose amongst the community generally, and particularly amongst children, old people, people who are halt and maim, and the rest of it, without a competent driver.

I suggest more assistance should be given to the National Safety Council so that, particularly in the metropolitan area, it can devote more time and attention to training.

Mr. Oldfield: It will spend the money if you give it to it.

Mr. GRAHAM: I suggest, too, that that authority, or some other authority, should be responsible for checking persons; in other words, providing them with their driving tests before they receive their license.

The traffic police should be busy on their duties around and about the streets; whereas there are other people unskilled in the ways, or without the knowledge, of the police who would be just as proficient in the matter of examining candidates for driving licenses. I suggest, too, that where driving licenses are suspended they should not be reissued until the person has done a course of training, for which he must pay; and subsequently he must pass a most stringent test.

Seeing that these things have been talked about for a long time, I suggest that in order to make vehicles more distinct at night, there should be a changeover to reflectorised license plates. I think, too, the Government should be taking the lead in discouraging red neon, and other red lights for advertising purposes, so that in the minds of the public a red light will mean danger and warning. Today, however, there are many red lights. Admittedly they look beautiful in the country towns and in the city and suburbs, but they are accustoming the mind to an automatic process of ignoring a red light; and later on, notwithstanding a hurricane lamp with a red glass, or some other warning device, accidents will take place because people's minds have become so accustomed to the red colour.

I also suggest that it be made compulsory for all vehicles to have standard blinker lights to indicate the turns the vehicles might make. Before I ceased to be Minister for Transport it was made obligatory for every car licensed for the first time in Western Australia as from the 1st January, 1960—giving a couple of years' grace to the motor firms—to be equipped with blinker lights of a standard pattern.

As the Minister insists that all cars shall have blinker lights to indicate a turn to the left and to the right, I suggest he might make it a compulsory requirement for a motorist to indicate when he is about to turn to the left. Those members who are motorists will not need any elaboration from me to indicate the necessity for that.

I think, too, the Minister might give consideration to rendering the installation of car horns as something secondary; in other words, that there is no basic requirement for their installation. I can say that over a period of years—I do not know how many; and I suppose I am not much better or much worse than the average motorist—there has been no occasion for me to use the horn of the car. All it requires is reasonable attention and care. I think that because of this beep-beep device which is so conveniently

placed on cars there is an encouragement, particularly to the bolder spirits, to carry on regardless by giving a blast on the horn and feeling that everybody to their left or right can give way.

I think it is time—indeed the time is overdue—that something was done to improve the lighting at pedestrian crosswalks. This is so obvious it should require no emphasis. On the busier highways—this cannot be done at every point where people cross the road—attention should be given to pedestrian overways. It was done in connection with the Kwinana Freeway, and it should apply to Canning Highway, Stirling Highway, and other busy thoroughfares, not only in the metropolitan area but in country towns too.

I feel also that the Government should really get down to the job of appointing more traffic police. There are insufficient of them to do the task which is necessary. I would say, too, that in addition to traffic police in uniform, there should be an increase in the numbers of the plain-clothes traffic men. I would be disposed to make traffic a career branch of the Police Department. There should be specialised men undertaking responsibility in respect of this all-important matter.

Notwithstanding the protests which will inevitably come from the country districts, I say this problem is so serious in its impact upon our people that the Government should have no hesitation in placing traffic under the complete control of the police on a State-wide basis; but as a prerequisite it should guarantee, and it should legislate, that local authorities would receive adequate payments to cover license fees. Personally I would allow local authorities at least 95 per cent. of the traffic fees collected in their districts, and I would be prepared to consider up to 100 per cent.

This is not a matter of pounds, shillings, and pence, but a matter of the lives and well-being of our citizens. If the local authorities are to be relieved of the obligation of providing, to the extent to which they did provide, traffic inspectors, then surely they should make some contribution. However, if it is a matter of a few pounds one way or the other, or a few thousand pounds, I do not think the Government ought to bother about it. Because the shire of whoop-whoop might feel its nose is a little out of joint because of the police being given control, I do not think that should be a consideration.

As is well known, in most country districts, where there is a local authority, it may or may not have a traffic inspector on a full-time or a part-time basis, but invariably in those places there are police officers at several points. Therefore, police move about quite freely; and, with the appointment of additional police, they should do a satisfactory job. Naturally these local authorities would be given

a considerable voice in the matter of local parking arrangements. I think it would be possible to arrive at a worth-while and workable arrangement satisfactory to everybody who is conscious of the seriousness of the problem.

I think, too, it is time the Government conformed to what has been decided by practically every traffic authority in Australia; namely, that there should be a maximum speed limit of 60 miles per hour outside of built-up areas. If we agree with the concept about which I have spoken, it would be possible for the police to deal with this matter, but at present a motorist can go 80 or 90 miles an hour, and nobody knows and nobody cares.

The Government should be installing booms and flashing lights at major level crossings. I urge the Minister to scrap the "Stop" signs and make it clear to every motorist that it is a definite and absolute rule to give way to the right at all times. I wish I had the time to deal with some of the specious figures and forms that have been given to me by the Minister from his department. They do not prove his viewpoint or that of the department about "Stop" signs having an effect other than that they transfer the accidents to the next corner in greater numbers than at the corner where the "Stop" sign is installed. In other words, "Stop" signs are a menace and do the opposite to what they are intended to do. The motorists, of course, are confused; and that is recognised everywhere. One has only to speak to visitors from other States to find that out.

Amendment to Motion

It is because of the seriousness of this matter and because I want it ventilated so that members on both sides of the House can indicate their feelings to the Government that I move the following amendment:—

That the following words be added to the motion:—

and we express our profoundest concern that the Government has failed to take appropriate and effective action to meet the critical situation of large and increasing numbers of persons being killed or suffering personal injury as a consequence of traffic accidents.

The Government could proceed by putting some loading on third party insurance premiums paid by those who are involved in accidents and by allowing the insurance companies—indeed, by encouraging them—to give greater rebates to those motorists who do not make any claims. It is of no credit to this Government that it made the State Government Insurance Office reduce its rebate from 60 per cent. to 50 per cent. All of these

moves and many more would make a contribution to the way of dealing with the most serious problem facing the State of Western Australia.

As a final word, I do not want to be misled by the figures produced by the Minister—which, to my mind, are meaningless—indicating that the number of accidents per 1,000 vehicles in Western Australia is falling. The soundness of the argument supported by those figures in my view can be debunked by children in a grade not far above the kindergarten class. I hope, therefore, that we can consider these matters that I have raised, together with any other suggestions that members have, so that the Government of the day will act fearlessly, knowing it is doing the right thing for the people, including the motorists, and that the matter of votes at the forthcoming general election will be of secondary importance.

MR. CRAIG (Toodyay—Minister for Police) [9.2 p.m.]: Normally, I suppose it is the custom to ask for the adjournment of the debate on an amendment such as that submitted by the member for Balcatta. On this occasion I do not think it is necessary, but not because of the seriousness of the matter which has more or less forced the honourable member to move the amendment now before the House. However, he did refer to the occasion two years ago when he took similar action on the Address-in-Reply debate. Following my response to his remarks at that time he said that I took something like 10 minutes to dispose of his motion despite the fact that there were a number of speakers who offered various suggestions in regard to his amendment.

If I recall correctly, I was the only speaker following the honourable member, and the motion was subsequently defeated. However, I do not necessarily adopt the same attitude on this occasion, because, as I have said in this House time and time again, I welcome any constructive suggestion from anyone, regardless of whether he is a member of this House. I welcome any suggestion whatsoever that may overcome or reduce the ever-increasing toll on our roads. For the honourable member to say that the Government has been neglecting its duty on this matter is ridiculous. The Government feels its responsibility deeply—just as anyone else does—in trying to overcome this problem.

No-one wants to see a life lost, and no-one wants to be the main cause of a person losing his life. It is the responsibility of both the Government and the members of the Opposition to do everything possible to resolve the difficulty that faces us. I would point out that it is not common to Western Australia alone. The same problem exists in all States of Australia, as I discovered when I attended a conference of Ministers three weeks ago. I

was alarmed at the figures that were produced when I attended that conference; but the fact is that we are no worse off than any other State; in fact, we are better off than many of them.

Mr. Moir: That is no excuse.

Mr. CRAIG: I know that; but I do not want any member of this House to think that Western Australia is doing nothing in regard to the matter. I was of the opinion when I attended that conference, and in regard to making certain suggestions to amend the traffic code, that Western Australia was well ahead in its endeavours to overcome this problem by the legislation it had introduced. The representatives of other States talked about trying certain moves such as the introduction of probationary licenses, and the like. I would remind members that Western Australia was the first State to introduce probationary licenses issued to all new license holders, and it was the first in the field in regard to many other reforms. Nevertheless, I repeat that I welcome any constructive criticism that is forthcoming. I would not like any member to think that the Government has been negligent in this regard.

Members will no doubt recall that I brought forward a number of amendments to the Traffic Act last session. In fact, it was fast approaching the stage where members were asking, "Is this amendment No. 19 or 20?" because there were so many of them. Nevertheless, there was a purpose behind their introduction. I am now going to take the opportunity of quoting from a Cabinet minute that I submitted on the 23rd April last when I had an analysis taken of the fatalities that had occurred on our roads. Although I was drawing the attention of Cabinet to this matter, I think the Cabinet members were fully aware of it because they drew the matter to my attention in the first place. They considered that some ways and means should be found to reduce the number of road fatalities.

I will not read the whole of the minute, but I have here an analysis of the cause of road accidents and the places where they have occurred, either in the metropolitan area or in the country. The significant features of this analysis are that 40 per cent. of these fatalities occurred in the metropolitan area and 60 per cent. in the country. At this point I would mention that these figures have all been published before. It is also significant that the greatest number of accidents that occurred as a result of collisions, vehicles overturning, and so forth, was in the lower age group. Drivers under 30 years of age accounted for approximately 60 per cent. of the fatalities.

Mr. Graham: They probably did about 60 per cent. of the driving.

Mr. CRAIG: The reverse is obtained in the age group of pedestrian fatalities in the metropolitan area. That is, the elderly person is the one who is mostly involved in pedestrian fatalities. Therefore, we have approached the problem by concentrating on those two aspects. The member for Balcatta himself referred to that. Of the total of 43 fatalities that occurred as a result of collisions and overturnings, 32 occurred in the metropolitan area and no doubt the main cause was excessive speed. I have used the words "no doubt" when I have said that they were caused by excessive speed because, in fact, at the time this analysis was made we had no proof that they were caused by excessive speed. In so many cases no explanation could be given why a vehicle which apparently had been proceeding along the road in a normal manner suddenly veered off the road and collided with a tree. Therefore, we can only assume that many of these accidents were caused by excessive speed.

The National Traffic Code has recommended a speed limit of 60 miles per hour on country roads, and I know that many people have suggested that that limit should be adopted in this State for country travelling. On the other hand, there are just as many who oppose such a suggestion. In my opinion, no matter what speed is laid down as the limit, there will still be drivers who will disregard it and who will cause injury not only to themselves but also to others. We know that the speed limit in the metropolitan area is 35 miles per hour, but we also know that a great many offenders are prosecuted each week for exceeding that limit. Therefore, how many prosecutions will be launched against people for breaking the speed limit of 60 miles an hour in the country?

However, a committee has been formed comprising representatives of the motoring industry and other interested bodies to inquire into this matter with a view to introducing a system whereby advisory speed signs and the regulation speed signs can be erected at certain sections of our roads outside the built-up areas where it is considered that vehicles should not be driven at speeds in excess of 60 miles an hour.

Mr. H. May: On the number of fatalities that have occurred, have you any figures showing how many metropolitan drivers and how many country drivers were involved?

Mr. CRAIG: No; I have not.

Mr. Graham: Many of the city drivers are also country drivers.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Do not let us go into that!

Mr. Graham: Is the Minister aware that in Great Britain they put up signs, and tests showed that the number of people who exceeded the speed limit was reduced by one half without any enforcement? So

if a 60-mile per hour limit were put into effect in this State it would probably have a tremendous effect.

Mr. CRAIG: I think the question of fixing a 60-mile per hour speed limit is only part of the problem to which the honourable member has drawn attention. I am merely referring to it at this stage of my remarks because it is among the pertinent points that I want to bring forward.

It must be realised, of course, that there are up to 30,000 additional vehicles coming on our roads every year, and if the same accident pattern continues the number of accidents will correspondingly increase. Therefore, if within five years the number of vehicles on our roads will be doubled, it naturally follows that within five years, if the same accident pattern continues, we must expect the number of accidents to be doubled. In addition, there will be 30,000 newly-licensed drivers on the road each year and they will have to be educated. The Government has already acted in that regard by placing new license holders on probation. From now on every applicant for a motor driver's license must serve a three years' probationary period.

Mr. Crommelin: Only those drivers under 21 years of age.

Mr. CRAIG: No; the probationary period applies to any new license holder.

Mr. Graham: The member for Claremont has been out in the car park again.

Mr. CRAIG: The remarks with which I concluded this minute to Cabinet are applicable to what has been said by the member for Balcatta and other members. My concluding remarks were—

I am, of course, deeply conscious of this tragic loss of life and endeavours have been made to counter it by corrective legislation. However, any constructive suggestion for further improvement in an endeavour to reduce the toll would, indeed, be most welcome.

I am sincere in this and I feel that the member for Balcatta appreciates my point of view. All that has been said comes down to this: It does not matter what corrective legislation is introduced, or what education is provided for a driver the matter still hinges on his or her responsibility, and his or her appreciation of the responsibility that is expected of any sensible motorist.

Mr. Graham: If that is your attitude you might as well throw up your hands and give it away.

Mr. CRAIG: I do not intend to do that. So I repeat that there is always the fool who will not make any effort to protect himself, and he is a menace to others on the road. The member for Balcatta said that he had made similar suggestions on previous occasions by moving an amendment to the Address-in-Reply

debate, and he more or less implied that I ignored the suggestions completely; but I did not. As a matter of fact, on the occasions to which he referred, I think nearly every member in the House had something to say on road safety during the course of the Address-in-Reply debate, and I took a note of everything that each member said and followed it up. In those instances where a reply or explanation was warranted I supplied it to the member who had raised the query.

Some of the suggestions that came forward have already been put into effect by bringing down amendments to the Traffic Act. Therefore, to say that I ignored any constructive suggestion is completely untrue. In fact, the honourable member himself said that I did take action as a result of one of his suggestions.

Mr. Graham: Too little, too late!

Mr. CRAIG: As I have said, as a result of the alarming increase in the number of road accidents I took steps to have this committee formed and it is now meeting regularly. Sometimes it meets once a week, but on other occasions it meets twice a week. I do not have the minutes of its last meeting, but I will have them in my office tomorrow morning. I feel sure that certain suggestions will be forthcoming from that committee and they will be acted upon.

Some criticism was made of the penalties that are imposed for breaches of the Traffic Act. I agree that sometimes there may be some inconsistencies in the penalties that are imposed, because we read in the Press on occasions that a certain fine or penalty has been imposed on a motorist for speeding, and in the same newspaper one may see a report that another person who has committed what appears to be the same type of offence has had inflicted upon him a harsher penalty. That all depends upon circumstances. We tried to overcome the position by setting aside two magistrates to deal with traffic cases, in order to obviate discrepancies or differences of opinion in the imposition of penalties.

Mr. Graham: I think the most serious traffic breach appears to be the cartage of potatoes by road transport.

Mr. CRAIG: I do not think this debate calls for any facetious remarks.

Mr. Graham: That is judged by the penalties which are imposed.

Mr. CRAIG: I am not able to lay my hands on the list of action which has been taken by this Government, but from memory I can recall that this was the first State to introduce the probationary licensing system for motor vehicle drivers. We also amended the Act in regard to persons whose licenses were suspended. In the past if licenses were suspended for six months the people concerned could apply

the next day and obtain a return of their licenses. This Government imposed a minimum of one month's suspension.

We also introduced the licensing of driving instructors. We all appreciate the fact that the licensed driving instructors teach about 60 per cent. of the new drivers on the roads, and we realise their value in the education of motorists. When the driving instructors came up for their course under the new licensing system their numbers were reduced by half, but they themselves admitted that was the best thing which could have happened, because they were all put on the same footing and they all had to be qualified to the degree where they could pass their knowledge to the license holders.

Despite what the member for Balcatta has said about the National Safety Council, and the provision of additional money by the Government, I want to point out that the Government has made additional money available to that council. This year our contribution is about £37,000. I think I am reasonably correct in saying that Western Australia contributes more to the National Safety Council than any other State of the Commonwealth; if it does not, then its contribution is very close to the highest. Of the large amount which Western Australia provides to the council, it only gets £8,000 back from the Commonwealth.

Mr. Davies: Does the council use all that money on traffic?

Mr. CRAIG: All of the money is used on traffic.

Mr. Davies: All the money contributed by the Government is used by the council on traffic?

Mr. CRAIG: If the honourable member means that it is all used on road safety, I assure him it is not necessarily so, but about 90 per cent. of the money is used in that way. Another section of the Traffic Act which was amended covered the re-examination of licensed vehicle drivers on reaching the age of 75 years. Originally I wanted re-examination to commence at 70 years of age, but the member for Balcatta opposed this and put up the suggestion that it be higher, and I compromised by agreeing to 75 years of age.

Mr. Graham: You were not able to produce evidence that drivers of that age were a menace.

Mr. CRAIG: Evidence has been given that someone died at the wheel of his car while he was being tested, and that person was 75 years of age.

Mr. Tonkin: One swallow does not make a summer.

Mr. CRAIG: We are also contemplating the introduction of legislation covering used car dealers, so as to bring about a stricter form of inspection of vehicles which the people handle. We are also

going into the question of compulsory, or voluntary vehicle inspections. I feel this will make a big contribution towards ensuring that vehicles on the roads are in a roadworthy condition.

Through the co-operation of the Perth City Council we have brought about certain alterations to the traffic flow in the city area, by the building of pedestrian islands. The Main Roads Department has installed quite an additional number of traffic lights throughout the metropolitan area; and it is also going ahead with a large channelisation scheme to assist the flow of traffic at intersections, and with many other improvements in hand.

I say this sincerely: More has been done in this direction in the last two years than in the previous 20 years. I challenge anyone to supply evidence that that is not the case. The member for Balcatta has come forward with some suggestions, one of which is that we should persuade the newspapers and the television stations to publicise traffic safety measures. It might be a coincidence, but I have already written to one television station and congratulated it on the way it is publicising road safety. I hope that station will continue to give this publicity. Its action has contributed a great deal towards solving the problem.

Mr. J. Hegney: They do not do as much in publicising these matters, as they do in publicising merchandise.

Mr. CRAIG: Of course the sponsors pay for the advertisements, but in this case the television station was very generous to give the publicity without charge. That shows it is accepting the responsibility in the way we accept it.

Mr. Graham: I think you have missed the point. I acknowledged the good work they did, but suggested we should have a second look at the type of advertising that is influencing the young people.

Mr. CRAIG: I follow what the honourable member means; he is referring to the advertising of certain brands of petrol which give more zoom or zip. This matter has been discussed by the Government, and is still under consideration. I do not know what legislative action can be taken, but it was felt that an appeal to the people concerned might bring about the desired result.

Mr. Graham: I do not think legislation will be necessary.

Mr. CRAIG: The member for Balcatta also referred to the traffic code regulations, and suggested that the regulations be printed in a condensed form. He must have been in the House during this session when I referred to this matter in answering a question. I outlined the amendments which I proposed, to remove the fiscal provision from the Traffic Act. When that is done the regulations could be reprinted

in a condensed form and made available to motorists. This will be in line with the present traffic code.

The member for Balcatta also referred to blitzes, and mentioned one or two only. I want to point out there is a constant blitz by the Police Force; the only difference is that publicity might be given to a particular blitz. I can assure the honourable member that every member of the Police Force acts as a traffic officer. The members of that force have been told time and time again that they need not necessarily leave traffic matters to the patrolmen. They are all police officers, whether they are engaged in the C.I.B., in plain clothes, or are in uniform on street patrol. They all take part in the administration of the Traffic Act.

Mr. Davies: Some of them have to chase cars on foot.

Mr. CRAIG: The honourable member is being facetious. Reference was made to reflectorised number plates. As soon as any suggestion is made by members on the Government side towards increasing taxes, drivers' licenses, and motor vehicle licenses there is great hue and cry from the Opposition. In this instance who will pay for the reflectorised number plates? The poor old motorist will pay, and these are the very people who members opposite claim are suffering. Have members any idea of the cost of reflectorised number plates? It is much more than the cost of the plates which are now used.

Mr. Graham: The present ones cost only about 7s.

Mr. CRAIG: What is the advantage of reflectorised number plates, other than for the purpose of identification? They do not give added warning to pedestrians or motorists. Motor vehicles are supposed to be fitted with flashing lights, and these should be used. It is compulsory for a motorist to use the right-hand blinker light when making a right-hand turn, but it is not compulsory to use the left blinker when making a left-hand turn.

Mr. Graham: Why then are not the left-hand lights compulsory?

Mr. CRAIG: That is a worth-while suggestion, but it has already been made by someone else, and the matter is being inquired into. Reference was made to lights at crosswalks, and this matter is also being investigated by the special committee, in conjunction with the Main Roads Department.

Mr. Graham: We need action.

Mr. CRAIG: How can all these things be done in five minutes? If everything was left to my responsibility, possibly I could get action quicker, but I have to be guided by the experience and advice of

the officers, the main roads traffic engineers, the police, and others. A chaotic state of affairs would be brought about if I tried to force my ideas on the people, as I am sure the member for Balcatta would like to do if he were Minister.

The question of "Stop" signs was raised. I say the honourable member is completely out of touch with traffic movement, and he seems to want a return to the days when there were no "Stop" signs, when the maximum speed over intersections was 15 miles per hour. The stop signs are the best method of preventing accidents at intersections, and I will oppose any move which seeks to remove them.

I do not think it needs any more on my part to try to convince the honourable member and the House that the Government and I, in particular, have been active in this matter, and will continue to be so. Despite my opposition I would not like members to think I am opposed to every suggestion they put forward. The member for Balcatta has come up with quite a few good suggestions, but I am satisfied that we have investigated, or are investigating them already. A number of these suggestions will be acted upon. If any other honourable member offers constructive suggestions I assure him they will receive the same attention. I oppose the amendment.

MR. FLETCHER (Fremantle) [9.26 p.m.]: I support the amendment. It was a strange coincidence that I was preparing some rough notes and material on this subject for use during the debate on the Estimates. Some of the material which I have collated roughly is eminently suitable to support the amendment.

I draw attention to a report which appeared in the *Daily News* of the 17th August. It contained a photograph which showed a Holden car smashed on the Wellard Road crossing, Medina, in which two children were killed. The mother of those children and two other children were seriously injured and in the Fremantle Hospital. Immediately below this tragic photo appeared a report of another crossing smash miles away from the first one. This occurred at the Robinson Road crossing at Bellevue. The driver of the semi-trailer involved in this crash was thrown out of his vehicle and he sustained serious head injuries. Three diesel rail passengers in a diesel railcar were taken to hospital.

On the front page of *The West Australian* of the 18th August appeared a report that the Kwinana Shire Clerk, Mr. S. W. Morgan, said that the shire had applied last January to the Main Roads Department's flashing lights committee to have lights installed at the Wellard Road crossing. According to the shire clerk, application was made in January of this year but, according to the report, in June

the committee had replied that an investigation of the crossing showed that the lights were not warranted.

On page 7 of the same edition of that newspaper, Mr. Morgan is reported as having stated that there were five train movements a day over the crossing. The report further states—

The shire was pressing for flashing light signals at all crossings in its area.

The Wellard-road crossing was used a lot in summer by people going to the beach.

Yesterday's accident was the second at the crossing this year. Two people were injured in a collision between a car and a train there in April.

The deaths have brought the State road toll this year to 146, compared with 124 at the corresponding time last year.

It would appear from the contribution by the member for Balcatta and the Minister that we are groping with trial and error attempts to reduce the toll of lives lost on the roads.

The education campaigns for juveniles and adults are undoubtedly expensive when used on the radio, Press, and TV, but the slaughter still continues; and it will continue to increase in the approximate ratio to the increase in vehicle registrations. We do not seem to be able to reduce traffic accidents per medium of the campaigns I have mentioned. We bully, cajole, and threaten with apparently little effect. The toll on the road still goes on.

As was mentioned in *The West Australian* of the 18th August, the Kwinana Shire Council applied in January for lights at the Wellard Road railway crossing, and heard nothing until June; and then the answer was in the negative. Despite the fact that there had been a previous accident on that particular crossing, when the Kwinana Shire Council asked for lights, the argument was that there are only five train movements a day. I would point out to the House that there are constantly more and more car movements over that crossing; and there is a growing prospect of rail-road traffic conflict.

Members know that very few drivers proceed through the red lights. I have no figures to support that, but I would assume there would not be one in a thousand who would transgress the red lights at a railway crossing or the lights at controlled accesses to highways, other roads, or streets. Red lights would have been the answer at the Wellard Road crossing. Had they been installed when the crossing was put in, there would be a thousand to one prospect that the mother behind the wheel of the car would have seen those warning lights.

Mr. Court: I agree the warning lights are an advantage, but I suppose you realise that at the other accident reported there were, in fact, lights.

Mr. FLETCHER: That is beside the point. My submissions are in regard to the Wellard Road crossing, at which there was a previous accident. I know it is easy to be wise after the event.

Mr. Court: I am making the point that lights themselves do not make a crossing foolproof. The other accident reported was at a lit crossing.

Mr. FLETCHER: I am submitting that there would not be one driver in a thousand who would pass through red lights. I also say that had there been lights at the Wellard Road crossing, the lady driving the car involved in the accident would undoubtedly have seen those lights. The first accident on this crossing should have been sufficient warning to the department. It should have been wise after that event and not waited from January to June to say "No" to the Kwinana Shire Council.

I know that money is scarce and has to be spread thinly throughout the State and that it is required for many projects, but surely no project is as worthy as one which will save lives. We are having trouble in preventing death on our roads, but we can prevent death on rail crossings with lights.

Mr. Davies: With booms.

Mr. FLETCHER: The member for Victoria Park has wisely interjected and said, "With booms". Surely human life cannot be measured in money, particularly when it comes to the lives of children! I would submit that if human life can be measured in money, it will have cost the taxpayer many hundreds of pounds to bring the people involved in that tragedy to Western Australia as migrants and establish them here. Another aspect is that the deceased boy and girl were potential parents of children to help the State's future economy.

When measured in relation to the cost of putting lights at the crossing at which these people were killed, I submit the lights were justified and the Government was remiss in not having them installed, as sought by the Kwinana Shire Council. I do not blame the Minister. This is only one particular aspect of the Government's shortcomings. I blame the Government for not making a larger allocation of money for lights.

Mr. Court: It is not only a question of money allocation; it is a question also of getting equipment. I think they are going in as fast as they can.

Mr. Tonkin: I do not think you think anything of the sort.

Mr. Court: I do. It does not come under me, but I watch it very closely; and the railways do not fix the priorities.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. W. A. Manning): Order!

Mr. FLETCHER: I think the Minister is groping.

Mr. Court: I am not groping at all.

Mr. FLETCHER: I blame the Government for not making a larger allocation of money for the installation of lights at railway crossings. I pointed out earlier that it was difficult to control all the high-ways and byways, but lights on crossings do deter people from crossing in the path of a train. I admit having read that the driver at the Bellevue accident did drive across lights, but it is also reasonable to assume that there were other vehicles present; and he may have had the sun in his eyes. It is also possible there were other reasons. However, lights at a crossing where a single vehicle is involved would, I am sure, deter a driver of a car from proceeding in the path of a train.

I am sure figures will reveal that there are fewer collisions at those railway crossing and intersections that are equipped with lights as the traffic can be controlled. Even though the accident rate increases on metropolitan, suburban, and country roads through speed, drink, negligence, and perhaps other reasons, I think rail crossing lights would almost certainly have saved life and injury at the Wellard Road crossing, as they would at all other railway crossings, busy or otherwise.

Lights at these crossings would help to eliminate future tragic losses of life, and priority should be given in future to the installation of crossing lights. I support the amendment moved by the member for Balcatta.

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [9.22 p.m.]: This is a very serious question and one which, no doubt, is exercising the minds of traffic authorities all over the world. It is part of the price we pay for the increased use of motor vehicles using conditions which have not been adjusted to the new difficulties; and, no doubt, the Minister for Transport feels that he is doing all that can be reasonably expected of him under the circumstances. I do not think he has yet got a full appreciation of the dilatoriness which exists in certain quarters; and, when he comes to realise that, I think he will get better and quicker results. It is the purpose of the Opposition to try to emphasise where these shortcomings exist in order that they may be remedied, as I believe they will, when they are brought to the notice of the Minister.

The Government appears to be somewhat inhibited by the cost of some of these things. When one is weighing up the loss of human life against cost, I think we have to forget about the cost. We need a lot more policemen; and I think the Minister would like to have them, but he cannot

obtain the money to get them. I think he has got to get the money, because we need the policemen. I frequently make a journey from East Fremantle to Perth without seeing a single policeman on the journey. That is easy to understand if you take the number of traffic policemen in the metropolitan area who are on duty at one time and divide them into the miles of road in the metropolitan area. Then it is a pretty low density of policemen on the roads.

I may be wrong, but my view is that a large proportion of accidents are due to excessive speed; and unfortunately, more often than not, it is young people who are driving the cars which speed. Plenty of cars pass me on the road when I am coming from home to Parliament House. I glance to see who the driver is, and I would say that every two out of three are very young persons. The insurance companies realise that a certain car goes faster on the road than others and so there is an increased premium for that car. That is my experience.

I see such cars going past me frequently, and I assume their speed to be anything from 50 to 60 miles per hour on the main highways of the State. The drivers give themselves no chance of avoiding an accident if they are suddenly confronted with a difficult situation. So, if we can cut down the speed, I am certain in my mind we will reduce the number of accidents. Of course, we will never eliminate them, but we will reduce them if we can cut down the speed.

It is remarkable what a difference it makes to the drivers when they know there is a traffic policeman in the vicinity. One sees drivers shoot past going like mad and then suddenly slow down because they spot a traffic policeman somewhere. If there are more of them about these fellows will not risk their license as they do now. They take a long shot, the odds against them being rather long odds, because there are not many traffic policemen about to catch them.

Increase the number of traffic policemen and without doubt the speed of the drivers on these roads will be slowed down. That is something the Government has to face, even though it means additional expenditure. The next thing is that, in my view, the flashing lights committee is not fully seized with the necessity of putting these flashing lights in as quickly as possible. It is too dilatory. A question has been put up to the Government in connection with this matter already regarding a decision which was previously made by the flashing lights committee; and the Government has now indicated that this committee will look at the matter in October. Why not in August? If there is a reason for looking into the matter again, why wait until October to look at it? Why not call a special meeting of the committee and look at it now?

I was trying to make some sense out of the intersection of the Minister for Railways when he was pointing out to the member for Fremantle that recently a driver was killed even though there were flashing lights on the crossing. It appeared to me that he was trying to convey that the provision of flashing lights does not make any difference.

Mr. COURT: No, in my previous interjection I conceded there were advantages in having flashing lights; but you could not escape from the fact that here was a case where a driver had had a mishap in spite of the lights.

Mr. TONKIN: All right. If there is an advantage—

Mr. COURT: I do not deny that they are an advantage.

Mr. TONKIN: —in having flashing lights there must have been justification for putting in flashing lights.

Mr. COURT: Booms are even better than lights.

Mr. TONKIN: What did the Minister say?

Mr. COURT: Booms are better than lights.

Mr. TONKIN: They cost seven times as much.

Mr. COURT: But they are more effective. I do not think anybody has been killed in this State at boom crossings.

Mr. TONKIN: I will go along with this if the Minister can find the money to put in booms; but the argument has been used that there is not enough money to put in lights. I would rather have lights than nothing, and I would rather have booms if I can get them.

Mr. COURT: It is all a question of degree.

Mr. TONKIN: No it is not. Firstly, if it is conceded that flashing lights are an advantage at crossings then we should put them in with the greatest expedition. My view is that if a railway crosses the road there is an obligation on the Railways Department to take protective measures. It is the department's railway that is cutting the road, or a number of roads, so it should protect people who have to go over the crossings. The department will not hesitate to prosecute you, Mr. Acting Speaker (Mr. W. A. Manning) if you go over a crossing when a train is within a quarter of a mile of it. The department should assume the responsibility for the cost, which should be added to the cost incurred by the railways in putting in the track.

Mr. COURT: You know there is an old established formula in connection with the responsibility for protection at crossings?

Mr. TONKIN: I am not so much concerned with the responsibility so long as it is somebody's, and the lights go in. I am not at all satisfied that there is a

proper realisation of the necessity for putting in these lights quickly; and when the Government gives an answer that the desirability of putting in flashing lights in a certain place will be considered by the flashing lights committee in October, that does not suggest to me that it is fully seized with the great importance and seriousness of this matter. The correspondence which I am now going to read will emphasise that point of view.

The unfortunate accident which occurred on the Wellard Road crossing this week involving this poor woman and her children might well have been prevented—one cannot say it would have been—if flashing lights had been installed on the crossing. Let us follow carefully what has taken place in connection with this matter. On the 30th January the Shire of Kwinana wrote to the secretary of the Main Roads Department as follows:—

(Flashing Lights Committee)

Dear Sir,

At a meeting of my council held on the 22nd inst. I was directed to communicate with you requesting approval for the installation of flashing lights on the Wellard Road level crossing adjacent Mandurah Road.

It is considered by my Council that traffic on Wellard Road and the increasing number of trains warrant this request.

Your advice in due course would be appreciated.

No reply to that letter was received up to the end of May. The letter was written on the 30th January. There was no reply to say that the matter was being considered; that inspections were being carried out, or anything like that. So the shire felt it was time to call in the aid of a member of Parliament. It wrote to the member for Cockburn, Mr. Curran, M.L.A., under date the 5th June. The letter reads as follows:—

Dear Mr. Curran,

I attach hereto copy of a communication dated 30th January, 1964, addressed to the Main Roads Department (Flashing Lights' Committee), requesting approval for the installation of flashing lights on the Wellard crossing adjacent Mandurah Road.

To date we have had no response in respect of this request and at my Council Meeting held on the 27th ult., I was requested to let you have a copy of the attached letter.

My Council is most anxious to have flashing lights installed on all Railway Level Crossings within this district. At present there are three crossings on Wellard Road without lights. Would it be possible for you to press this matter with the responsible Authority?

I ask you, Mr. Acting Speaker (Mr. W. A. Manning): Why should there be a necessity for the member for the district to press the matter which has been submitted by a responsible local authority? That letter was dated the 5th June. On the 8th June, Mr. Curran, the member for Cockburn, addressed the following letter to the Minister for Works:—

Dear Sir,

Attached please find copy of correspondence to the Main Roads Department from the "Shire of Kwinana" to which no reply, as yet, has been received.

The request presented by Councilors is in view of the mounting road toll, extremely important and I feel sure that you yourself must feel that every precaution that may prevent some casualty should be taken.

The Government, in this respect, should indeed be setting an example by taking all precautions necessary and so I confidently appeal for urgent consideration to this urgent request.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

H. Curran.

On the 23rd July, which is a long while after the 8th June, Mr. Curran received the following letter from the Minister for Transport:—

Dear Mr. Curran,

With reference to your letter of the 8th June, enclosing copy of correspondence from the Shire of Kwinana to the Main Roads Department concerning the provision of flashing lights on the Wellard Road Level Crossing, I forward for your information copy of letter dated 17th June, 1964, which was forwarded to the Kwinana Shire by the Secretary of the Main Roads Department.

The Level Crossing Flashlights Committee, which is comprised of representatives from the Railway and Main Roads Departments, Shire Council and Local Government Associations, receives many requests for the provision of lights at various crossings throughout the State, and recommends installation of lights on a priority basis to the Commissioner of Main Roads, who provides the funds for installation.

As the amount of funds available for this purpose in each year is limited, it is regretted that only a few crossings can be provided with flashlights from the many requests which are received.

The Minister for Railways had the idea, or so he told us, that one of the reasons preventing the faster installation of these flashlights was that the equipment was unavailable.

Mr. Court: There are limitations.

Mr. TONKIN: I do not accept that for one second.

Mr. Court: We know that you do not ever accept anything that we tell you. I am telling you something that happened to be a problem that you had.

Mr. TONKIN: I say, without the slightest fear of successful contradiction, that there is sufficient equipment available to allow this flashing lights committee to increase manifold the number of flashing lights it is putting in.

Mr. Court: Did you find it that way?

Mr. TONKIN: Yes.

Mr. Court: I didn't see them.

Mr. TONKIN: To increase manifold the number it is putting in. The Minister has given the answer in the letter. He does not say that it is a shortage of equipment which is causing the situation. What he says is, "As the amount of funds available for this purpose in each year is limited." Not that there is a shortage of equipment or that the department has more money than it can spend. Not that; but that the funds are limited, and therefore "it is regretted that only a few crossings can be provided with flashlights from the many requests which are received."

I put this to you, Mr. Acting Speaker (Mr. W. A. Manning): We have, first of all, to determine whether or not the flashing lights are any good. If it is the opinion, the considered opinion, of those who have studied this matter and studied the statistics that they are no good, then what are we putting any in for? If they are no good, it is a waste of money to put them in. But if it is the considered opinion of those who should know that they do make a contribution towards road safety, and that a crossing that is equipped with flashing lights is a safer crossing than one without them, then there is the strongest possible case for equipping all crossings as quickly as we can, and the only limiting factor should be inability to obtain the equipment—not shortage of funds in any one year.

I understand that an authoritative answer has been given by the Government that the average cost of installing a set of simple flashing signals is £1,200. If the department wishes to put in a boom crossing the cost is nearer £8,000. That could present the Government with formidable problems if it intended to equip all crossings with booms in a short space of time; so I think it would be far better to equip them all with flashing lights—every one of them—rather than leave a lot of them without equipment at all; and not wait until October to think about it, either!

I want to try to bring home to the Government that a little more thought on the urgency of this question, rather than on the funds available, is what is necessary.

Funds should be taken from some less worthy objective and made available for this purpose. What is the argument that could be advanced to support the idea that it is all right to go along quietly until sufficient money becomes available over the years to equip the very many crossings which are unequipped? But that is the thought in this letter; because it states—

Many requests for the provision of lights at various crossings throughout the State are received. As the amount of funds available for this purpose in each year is limited it is regretted that only a few crossings can be provided with flashlights from the many requests which are received.

At that rate we are going to go on for years and years without the benefit which the flashing lights would bestow. Surely the Government does not expect that we are going to be satisfied with that situation!

I have another complaint about this. It was not until the Minister received the letter from the member for Cockburn that a reply was sent to the Kwinana Shire Council.

Mr. Wild: As a matter of interest can you tell me whether that letter, which apparently I received on the 8th June, was acknowledged by my office to Mr. Curran? Because we do endeavour to do that all the time.

Mr. TONKIN: I cannot guarantee that I have all the correspondence, but there is no letter here from the Minister to Mr. Curran until that date. What I am going to complain about is that Mr. Curran wrote on the 8th June and on the 17th June, obviously prompted by Mr. Curran's letter, the Secretary of the Main Roads Department wrote this letter to the shire clerk—

I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 12th June, 1964, in regard to the level crossings on Wellard Road.

A committee investigated some 22 level crossings on the Kwinana-Mundijong-Jarrahdale railway line earlier this year with a view to recommending flashlight signals where the circumstances merited such treatment.

The committee consisting of Main Roads and Railways Department engineers, could not recommend flashlight signals at any of the level crossings inspected. The committee reported, however, that Wellard Road (West), Wellard Road (East), Hopkinson Road, Bishop Road could possibly be considered for the provision of "Stop" signs at the crossing itself if need arose.

When does the need arise?

Mr. Fletcher: After a smash.

Mr. H. May: After an accident.

Mr. TONKIN: The letter continues—

The committee felt that such provision would adequately cover any need for additional safety at these crossings in the future.

From the third paragraph of your letter, it appears that you have in mind three level crossings for flashlight treatment. In order to clarify the exact locality of these crossings could you supply the railway mileage for each crossing as shown above?

It should be noted that the W.A. Government Railways advise that the line serves only about five train movements per weekday, none during the weekend, or during peak hour traffic periods at these crossings.

Although that was sent to the shire on the 17th June, it was not until the 23rd July that Mr. Curran was told anything about it. I do not think that is a fair proposition at all. If the member for the district has been called in to assist, and he writes to the Minister, and as a result a reply is sent to the body concerned, common courtesy should require that the member should be advised and given a copy of the letter.

Mr. H. May: That is what the Federal people do.

Mr. TONKIN: Here was the member himself completely in the dark for some weeks after the shire had been notified that the proposition had been turned down because there was insufficient money and so many requests had to receive attention. That forces me to no other conclusion than this: that despite what the Minister has attempted to do there is not yet a complete realisation on the part of a number of persons serving under him of the extreme seriousness of this question and the absolute necessity to do all that is humanly possible to save life.

Here is a crossing which up to date the powers that be have considered does not need even a "Stop" sign. Yet in April two men were injured on this crossing and now there have been two deaths, with the possibility of more, from the one accident. Yet these officers have the effrontery to say that "Stop" lights might be put on this crossing if the need arises. They already had the knowledge that there had been one accident on this crossing in April, and yet they talk about putting "Stop" signs there if the need arises.

It is perfectly obvious that there is not yet a full realisation of the need to concentrate on this question and do what is possible in the circumstances. I suggest to the Government that it should considerably increase the allocation to the flashing lights committee up to the stage which the Minister for Railways contemplates—when there is no more equipment to buy. Keep on installing flashing lights

at crossings until it is impossible to install any more because there is no equipment available for the purpose, if such a situation can be reached; and the Minister for Railways thinks it can—I do not.

I would suggest in conclusion that changes in Governments do occur from time to time; and if the Government cannot show courtesy to members of the Opposition with regard to their correspondence it cannot expect any different treatment if a change takes place; and then, of course, it will not be so palatable. We did not set this pattern. I heard no complaints when we were the Government that members were bypassed in this way, but there have been plenty of examples of it under this Government, and I think it should stop, more especially in a matter of this kind when the member who took the matter up at the request of the local authority was entitled to be advised of the progress that was being made with his representations—at the time and not weeks afterwards.

Mr. Brand: Do you remember the matter of a school bus when I first became a member? I had been approaching you on this subject when you were Minister for Education and I said, "Who presented you with the case?" and you said, "You did." But I had not heard anything of it. You said, "I have overlooked advising you."

Mr. TONKIN: Does the Premier remember the occasion?

Mr. Brand: Yes; I do remember.

Mr. TONKIN: Well, what was the name of the school bus?

Mr. Brand: It was Three Springs east or Three Springs north.

Mr. TONKIN: Or Three Springs west or Three Springs south.

Mr. Brand: There is no need for that.

Mr. TONKIN: I suggest to the Premier that before he makes a charge he should have the evidence correct.

Mr. Brand: This is all very clever!

Mr. TONKIN: I deny it!

Mr. Brand: I do not deny it!

Mr. TONKIN: It is up to the Premier.

Mr. Brand: Of course you would say that!

Mr. TONKIN: It is up to the Premier to get the information, and that is easy for him because he remembers.

Mr. Brand: Of course it is!

Mr. TONKIN: Well, all right! But in due course, and pretty quickly, I anticipate the Premier will come along here with the necessary information.

Mr. Brand: I have given you the information.

Mr. TONKIN: Oh no you have not! The Premier has given me no information.

Mr. Brand: You did not advise me about the school bus that came into Three Springs.

Mr. TONKIN: What was the school, and in what period was it?

Mr. Brand: When you were first—

Mr. TONKIN: Yes, when I was first what?

Mr. Brand: Minister for Education.

Mr. TONKIN: And what did I say?

Mr. Brand: I cannot tell you that now.

Mr. TONKIN: I deny it and I throw out to the Premier an invitation to get the details.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. W. A. Manning): I think we will get back to the subject we were discussing.

MR. HEAL (Perth) [10.12 p.m.]: One does not want to refer to the Wellard Road rail crossing for too long, because I can imagine why no flashing lights are installed there. Apparently one must cut his way through a terrific amount of red tape before a decision is reached on these matters. I have in hand the correspondence that passed between the Secretary for the State Labor Party and the Minister for Railways in regard to the installation of flashing lights at the Wellard railway crossing. The replies that were given by the Minister in some degree cut across the information that was sent to the Kwinana Shire Council and also the member for Cockburn. Instead of having three Ministers involved in the installation of flashing lights at rail crossings—that is, the Minister for Works, the Minister for Railways, and the Minister for Transport—I think any Government would be well advised to bring this matter under the jurisdiction of only one Minister.

On the 16th July, 1964, a letter was sent to the Minister for Railways, which read as follows:—

Dear Sir,

At the last meeting of the State Executive of this Party, attention was given to a request for the establishment of flashing lights at the rail crossing in Wellard Road, East Rockingham.

It was submitted that one accident has already occurred at this crossing and increasing traffic provides a death-trap to motorists and pedestrians alike.

It was decided that the matter be forwarded to you for favourable consideration.

Yours faithfully,
General Secretary.

An acknowledgment from the Minister's office dated the 21st July, 1964, was as follows:—

The Honourable Minister is at present in the Eastern States but your letter will be brought to his early attention when he returns next week.

On the 7th August, 1964, a letter was forwarded to the Secretary of the State Labor Party, signed by Mr. Court, which reads—

I refer to your letter of the 16th July, 1964, in which you request consideration for the establishment of flashing lights at the railway crossing in Wellard Road, East Rockingham.

The priority for installation of flashing lights at level crossings is determined by the Level Crossing Protection Committee, which is comprised of representatives of the Main Roads Department, Railways Department and Local Governing Authorities, under the chairmanship of the Commissioner of Main Roads.

The Commissioner has advised me that your request will be referred to the Main Roads Department for consideration at the next meeting of the Committee.

I shall advise you further when the Committee's views on this crossing are received.

That is an amazing statement, because the committee had already considered the installation of flashing lights at this rail crossing. This is borne out by the fact that when the Deputy Leader of the Opposition read a letter dated the 17th June, 1964, which was forwarded to the Kwinana Shire Council, it was revealed that only a few flashing lights could be installed at rail crossings as the money became available. At the bottom of this letter, the following appears:—

I shall advise you further when the committee views are received.

I do not know how often this committee meets, but I should imagine it will be meeting shortly and will now agree to the installation of flashing lights at the Wellard Road crossing. Apparently it has to wait until some serious accident occurs, or a life is lost, before it will take action. Further, on the 17th May, 1963—some time earlier—the secretary of the State Labor Party wrote a letter to the Minister for Railways in the following terms:—

At the last meeting of the State Executive of this Party, attention was given to a request to ask the Railway Department to instal a set of flashing lights at the main Parkerville town railway crossing.

It was decided that the matter be forwarded to you for favourable consideration.

On the 24th May, 1963, the following reply was forwarded to the secretary of the State Labor Party:—

Your 17th May letter, requesting installation of flashing light signals at the main Parkerville town railway crossing, has been received.

There is a special Committee which deals with the provision of flashing light signal protection for railway crossings.

I will have your request referred to this Committee for consideration and let you have further advice as soon as possible.

On the 12th July, 1963, the secretary of the State Labor Party received a letter from the Minister for Railways, as follows:—

Further to my 24th May letter, I have now received information from the Commissioner of Railways concerning your request for installation of flashing light signals at the main Parkerville town railway crossing.

This request has been discussed with the Chairman of the Level Crossing Protection Committee, but it is considered, that with the introduction of the Avon Valley route in lieu of the present Bellevue-Northam section in approximately eighteen months time, the installation of flashing lights would not be justified for such a short period.

The Committee has outstanding commitments from earlier programmes and when considering the time involved in obtaining equipment, the crossing—even if deemed of high priority—

members will note the words “even if deemed of high priority—

would only have a very short term under protection before becoming redundant.

Regardless of whether the lights were installed for only a short period, or for a longer period, at least they could save one or two lives. However, perhaps the Minister or somebody else could inform the House as to whether, when a set of lights is installed at a certain crossing and the railway line becomes disused, the same set of lights cannot be shifted to another rail crossing. I feel they are all of the same make and apparently are obtained from the same source; and, therefore, if they are no longer required at one rail crossing surely they could be transferred to another.

The Government should have a close look at what previous speakers have mentioned; namely, that more finance should be made available for the installation of flashing lights at rail crossings. In answer to a question from the member for Balcatta, the Minister for Works said that a simple installation of flashing lights

cost about £1,200, together with associated road works. If an automatic boom was erected at a rail crossing the cost was in the vicinity of £6,000, and if it were a complex city installation the cost was approximately £13,500.

No doubt the latter figure would apply to the flashing lights that have been installed at the Moore Street rail crossing in the city of Perth. As the Minister has said, since those booms have been installed there has not been one single accident, let alone the loss of a life. That should be encouragement to any Government to try to make automatic boom installations available as soon as possible at every rail crossing; because, to my mind, that is the only safe method.

Mr. Graham: That was done by making a 10s. additional charge on the transfer of motorcars.

Mr. HEAL: If that is so, there must be a considerable amount of finance available in that fund. As somebody mentioned, the present Government increased the fees for drivers' licenses and placed a surcharge of £1 on the licensing of cars. That money has gone to the Treasury. Such a levy would mean an increase in revenue of hundreds of thousands of pounds over 12 months, and surely it is not asking too much to have some of it spent on the installation of automatic booms.

Within a short period of time the level crossing at the bottom of Greenmount Hill will be removed, and an overhead bridge will be installed. That will be a blessing in disguise, because I would say there have been more accidents at the bottom of Greenmount Hill than at any other single crossing in Western Australia. The overhead bridge in question is only being erected because of the installation of the new standard gauge railway. Money should be no object at all when we have an urgent problem relating to railway crossings. The Government does not hesitate to pay certain firms from overseas large sums by way of attraction. We have had this in the case of A.P.M., which will cost the Government £2,000,000 before it is established in this State. If such amounts of money can be provided for matters of this kind it can surely be provided for automatic boom gates.

I would now like to support the member for Balcatta in regard to "Stop" signs at intersections. I know they do have some effect on the motoring public, but on many occasions offenders are treated very harshly. Before "Stop" signs were installed we had erected "Go Slow" signs or signs reading "15 Miles an Hour" at certain intersections.

I would like to refer to a particular area in Wembley which leads from the West Subiaco subway and proceeds to

Salvado Road where a "Stop" sign is installed. Fifty yards further down, Cambridge Street is met where there is another "Stop" sign; another fifty yards away there is a "Stop" sign at the Boulevard. So there we have three "Stop" signs within 200 yards. These signs will not help prevent accidents; they could on the other hand cause accidents.

Mr. Craig: As soon as the traffic flow justifies the removal of "Stop" signs this will be done. At present you have the Boulevard and Oceanic Drive.

Mr. Bickerton: Why not have "Give Way" signs?

Mr. HEAL: I admit that these roads are taking a large volume of traffic from the West Subiaco subway. Another point to which I wish to refer is that in relation to traffic constables who station themselves at intersections to check motorists who happen to be going across. Unfortunately for the motorist, these constables do not take up their positions in close proximity to the corner, but stay out of sight about 40 or 50 yards down the road. I feel sure the Government is not anxious to get as many fines as it can to increase its revenue, and I am certain it would be better from the motorist's point of view, and from the point of view of reducing the accident rate, if the constables were brought out into the daylight and were told to sit where the motorists would see them at the corner. As long as a motorist sees a constable while approaching the corner he will abide by the law and come to a halt. But if the constable is out of sight, there is always the odd person who will sneak up, see nobody around, and go over without stopping, thus breaking the law.

I feel sure that preventive measures are better than fining people after the law has been broken. So the Minister for Police should give consideration to instructing police constables to sit on the corner where they can be seen, rather than a few yards down the road. I am sure this would have a better effect on the flow of traffic.

Mr. Craig: So many of the offenders are warned on the spot.

Mr. HEAL: I know, because I have been warned myself. I have had complaints from many people who have been charged with a first traffic offence that not only have they been fined but they have had their license suspended for one month. They do not mind the fine so much because they know they have broken the law, but they feel a month's suspension of license is a bit harsh. I know the Minister mentioned that there were many thousands of new cars on the roads each year. What will eventually happen I do not know. It will probably be necessary to enforce more stringent measures in the issuing of a

license. The National Safety Council is doing a great job in its instructional work, and it would be a good thing if more bodies like this could be set up, and if the younger people when going for their licenses would spend more time under instruction. That might help cut the accident rate.

I do not think greater penalties will curb the accident rate to any extent, because there are always the odd two or three people who get together in a car in a frivolous state of mind, and, before they know where they are, they are in trouble. If these young people are made to attend lectures and are given instruction it will have a beneficial effect.

I support the amendment not as a censure motion, but merely to place on record our anxiety at the many serious traffic accidents that are taking place.

MR. JAMIESON (Beeloo) [10.28 p.m.]: I would like to make a few comments on this amendment to the Address-in-Reply which states that we express our profoundest concern that the Government has failed to take appropriate and effective action to meet the critical situation of large and increasing numbers of persons being killed or suffering personal injury as a consequence of traffic accidents.

I join with the member for Balcatta in requesting that early consideration be given to the removal of "Stop" signs, despite what the Minister has said. I would ask the Minister to indulge in this little exercise if he would care to do so: I would like him to ask every member in this House to write down what a person is supposed to do at a "Stop" sign. He will get 50 different answers. We all know that the interpretation given by the police themselves is contrary to the regulation. I know that because I have attended lectures. The police advise the general public one way; whereas the regulations say something quite different.

The only way to overcome this difficulty is to do away with "Stop" signs altogether, and use the right-of-way theory—giving way to the man on the right. A person would then know when somebody hit him whether he was within or outside the law. It is clear and should not cause confusion to anybody. At present, "Stop" does not mean what it says. If one were to stop what would he do?

Mr. Craig: From the statistics it has been proven that the provision of "Stop" signs at certain intersections has reduced the accidents by up to a half.

Mr. JAMIESON: The Minister should erect give-way signs on the same intersections, and see what happens. They will have the same result. These signs will indicate to the people that they are expected to give way.

With the present "Stop" regulation, one is virtually supposed to yield the right of way in both directions, because it is incumbent on him to ensure that the way is clear in both directions and is safe to proceed. In other words, what the "Stop" sign is doing is to indicate to a motorist that when he comes to it he has to give way.

If we accept what the police say, after a motorist has stopped, then as long as the way is clear on the right and the motorist is able to get over the road in time he can proceed, because he has complied with the regulation; but that is not so at all. This confuses the motoring public.

I will say this for the "Stop" signs: they have a good effect on railway crossings. The reason a motorist stops is to see whether a train is coming; and if a train is coming he does not contest the right of way.

Mr. Graham: The train cannot stop.

Mr. JAMIESON: No, and a motorist does not contest the right of way with a train. There is some sense in having "Stop" signs on railway crossings, but not elsewhere on the roads, because the instruction is not clear enough.

If we were to examine the American system, as was suggested to the Minister, we would find that the "Stop" sign is not used there. In that country the yield-right-of-way sign is used on all the highway systems. A motorist knows what he has to do, the same as a motorist here knows what to do when he sees a "Give Way" sign. A motorist has to give way when he comes across a "Give Way" sign, and if a motorist does not observe the regulation he will be in for it. In the case of a "Stop" sign a motorist can get into as much trouble as if the sign were not there.

One matter which concerns me greatly is the position at level crossings. As was pointed out, there are some 22 of these crossings in a short stretch of line between Jarrahdale and Kwinana. Whilst some of them are only access crossings linking a person's property which has been split into two by the railway line, there are quite a number on what might be regarded as major roads.

I can recite a personal experience, which occurred not so long ago. I was travelling outside my territory and proceeding south from Byford to Mundijong along a good bitumen road. I do not know the name, but it might be the north-south road No. 2, at a rough guess. After passing through a heavy glade of redgums I was amazed to find myself on a very new railway crossing. I thought I had come up against the south-west line, but I could not recognise my bearings, because I thought I was running parallel to the south-west line.

On realising I was crossing the line which runs between Jarrahdale and Kwinana I was able to reorientate my position. Fortunately it was a Sunday and the ore trains were not running, and therefore I was in no particular danger. There were no "Stop" signs or other indications that there was a crossing. It was some years since I had been in that particular locality.

It may be there are a number of crossings on this particular line, similar to the one I came across. It seems wrong in this day and age for level crossings to be built without adequate treatment. Whether the treatment should be to construct the roads so that a motorist must slow down, or whether the road be built not as a direct approach to the line, I do not know. That is a matter for the traffic engineers and others to work out.

The equipment required at these crossings is not a complicated electronic type. We have an abundance of engineers in the various Government instrumentalities who—if we are faced with a delay overseas in the supply of the equipment—can design the equipment to be manufactured locally very quickly by the State Engineering Works. I am sure this does not present a great problem.

The fact that there are 22 of these crossings, but only several of them are fitted with lights, is a condemnation of the action of the present Government in building a new stretch of line in that manner. If that occurs on this small section of line I have referred to, what will happen when the new standard gauge line comes into operation in the rather heavily populated Swan area? The Minister for Police is the parliamentary representative for that district, and he would be aware that many of the roads are in conflict with the railway line in that locality. Unless the Government includes in the initial expenditure the amount required for the effective treatment at all crossings in that area, there will be more tragedies.

We had enough of these tragedies with the few trains which were run by the Midland Railway Company at the crossing at Morrison Road and Toodyay Road. That should be sufficient warning that when heavy rail traffic commences more conflict will occur, and there will be more accidents and tragedies. I draw the attention of the Minister for Railways to the need to include in the initial cost of a project, such as a railway system, the cost of treatment at the crossings. It would not be unreasonable to amortise the cost of such provision when the line is being built. That is preferable to having the requirements at crossings built as subsidiaries, after the line has been completed; as was obviously the case in the Jarrahdale-Kwinana line.

That seems to be the crux of the matter which was raised tonight. The Government has not taken the necessary precautions initially to provide some kind of signalling device at crossings which are potentially dangerous points to the motorist public.

I do not know what is contemplated in this respect in my constituency, but it is obvious that the conflict which exists along Railway Parade in Welshpool will also exist at other crossings. I understand there will be another level crossing in this area, and possibly one other at the Welshpool Road junction.

It is true the Government has prepared plans for regional roads with fly-overs and similar systems, and these will obviate confusion. In the meantime what is to be done with the problem that faces us? It is the problem of the motorist, who, for some reason, has lost concentration for the moment, and finds himself in conflict with a locomotive or train. I suggest the placing of signals temporarily at these crossings is a desirable feature with which the railways commissioner must go along in the development of new lines.

When the auxiliary crossing at Bellevue was built flashing lights were installed, despite the fact that they will be removed by this time next year when the overway is built over the crossing, and the road to Greenmount will not conflict with the Midland traffic. That is an instance of the traffic engineers having deemed it right and proper for lights to be installed as a temporary expedient.

We must have confolutions for a time because at present there is no overall provision for limited access roads with fly-overs alongside railways; and when the main line goes from West Midland across Maida Vale Road, across the main road back to Guildford, and across several other roads—these roads are heavy carriers of vehicular traffic—they should be given immediate treatment—not something done next year, or just an examination after two or three ballast trains have gone over them and run into an automobile. The lights should be put in at the time the railway line is constructed. The cost must be included in the cost of the railway construction in this day and age. The member for Balcatta indicated there was a 10s. impost on license fees whilst we were on the Government side.

Mr. Graham: Transfer fees.

Mr. JAMIESON: Transfer fees; and this money was to be used expressly for warning facilities at crossings and the like. That money needs to be fully used, and I am not aware that it has been. We have not heard any complaints from the Minister to the effect that this money is overdrawn.

Mr. Graham: There should be a large surplus.

Mr. JAMIESON: I am informed that there will be a large surplus in that fund, so that avoids any immediate problem in the financing of such installations. Ultimately, I think the only way to avoid all accidents will be to have no motorcars; but for the time being at least, that looks to be out of the question. The automobile cannot be discarded, and it is obvious that the more confusions of traffic we have, the more accidents we will have; and with the ever-increasing number of vehicles on the highways, the only thing to do is to have better control by limited access roads, by fly-overs, and by a hundred and one warning devices.

I say to the Minister for Traffic: Let us stop all confusion and let us get down to the fundamental sign language that is desirable—something clear and concise—and whether it is adopted in the Eastern States or not does not mean it is wrong. The Minister has already indicated that we gave the other States a lead in respect of probationary licenses. Whether they will have the desired effect or not, I do not know. That would appear to be doubtful, because statistics are inclined to show many new license holders are not so accident prone as those who have gained a bit of courage after holding a license for possibly two or three years. That, too, may be a matter for statistical examination because, as the member for Balcatta has indicated, this must be balanced against the percentage of drivers on the road that are in that particular category.

It is no use saying that people under 50 are involved in 90 per cent. of the accidents, and those between the ages of 50 and 60 are only involved in 10 per cent., when you find that 90 per cent. of the drivers are under 50 and only 10 per cent. are over 50. When the matter is examined in that light, it naturally means nothing from the statistical point of view. So there would have to be a very close examination of statistics, ages, and other matters, to determine whether age does have a great bearing on the number of accidents.

Getting back to my original theme, the only way is to stop confusions. I think this has been amply demonstrated to the Minister and all members by the Kwinana Freeway. Despite the reasonably fast speed at which one can travel along that four-mile stretch, there have been only two fatalities, and both could be classified as inevitable accidents that will occur from time to time on a stretch of road like that. In these two cases one vehicle ran into the back of another, possibly because the drivers were not paying attention. Human error must eventually prevail and cause deaths on the road. The concentration of a human being is limited to the person concerned.

Some people can concentrate for longer periods than others, while some have a complete lack of concentration and are inclined to be led aside from their immediate job. This can be caused by some particular matter that has interested them, or by somebody saying something on the radio which is installed in their car. They may also see a passing motorist or something on the river; and that is a situation that will always be with us. Because of this, we will never completely overcome the problem of drivers running into the back of a stationary vehicle or colliding head on with another vehicle on the open road. It is something against which one cannot legislate; and one cannot make regulations against it, because whilst provision might be made for one not to drive on the right-hand side of the road, obviously when there is a head-on collision, somebody is driving on the right-hand side of the road. Whilst this may be against the law, it is doing nothing to preserve lives.

The stopping of confusions between heavily drawn vehicles and diesel trains is a desirable feature of present-day traffic control; and if the Minister examines the position he will find the Government has not gone along with that. The Government provided a small railway between Jarrahdale and Kwinana on which there are 22 level crossings; and with the exception of several in the busy area round Kwinana, they have no protective lights whatsoever, nor anything effective which would warn an approaching motorist that a crossing exists.

I support the amendment to the Address-in-Reply, as I consider it is desirable to bring this problem very much to the public mind, and to the mind of the Government of the day, so that we can see if some pressure cannot be brought to bear in order to get over the problem with which we are faced and to avoid any future crashes like the one that occurred at the Wellard Road crossing a few days ago, causing the unfortunate loss of life in the families concerned.

MR. O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley) [10.49 p.m.]: I have no doubt that every member of this Chamber is gravely concerned at the number of road deaths in this State. I have no doubt either that every member in this Chamber has carried out a great deal of research into this matter—and this includes the Government departments. I know the Minister has been quite concerned about this, and the National Safety Council has done a wonderful job. In addition, the Press has given a tremendous amount of space to this particular subject in an effort to reduce the road toll to the greatest extent possible.

I have no doubt either that a number of the points brought forward by the member for Balcatta are warranted. As a matter of fact, if he has a look at my Address-in-Reply speech he will see that I

myself raised several of the points he has mentioned tonight. One of them was the re-checking of drivers licensed, or their capabilities of driving before the re-issue of a license.

Mr. Graham: Our complaint is lack of action on the part of the Government.

Mr. O'CONNOR: On that point I do not agree with the member for Balcatta and that is one reason why I rose to speak. The member for Balcatta stated that the Government was doing nothing at all in this regard, and on that point I do not agree with him. One day about three weeks ago I was talking to a member of the Police Force who had been doing a fair bit of research into this item in order to furnish the Government with details in an effort to reduce the number of road deaths in Western Australia.

The member for Balcatta also said that very little was done in regard to pulling up offenders on the roads or in the streets. Recently a blitz was held on pedestrians in the metropolitan area. I feel this must have done a great deal of good because statistics prove that the accidents in the city mainly involve pedestrians and most of those pedestrians are elderly. I think that a blitz such as was held does a fair amount of good.

Mr. Norton: No warning should be given of them though.

Mr. Craig: If we didn't give a warning we would be criticised.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I have seen a number of policemen in the metropolitan area both on bikes and in cars; and while these men are doing quite a good job, I feel that there are perhaps not a sufficient number on the roads. The member for Melville mentioned that this evening. However, my main purpose in speaking was to read the following extract from the Governor's Speech from page 7:—

Ministers are gravely concerned at the rising toll of road accidents and are giving close attention to means of improving road safety. The Police Force is being increased by an additional 20 men to provide primarily for extra traffic control, and radar speed checking units are operating on highways to control speeding.

Mr. Graham: Twenty men would not make up for the difference between the two weeks' and three weeks' annual leave.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I would say they will be of assistance and will do the job as well as the men already on the road.

Mr. Craig: There were an additional 27 put on.

Mr. Graham: Chicken feed!

Mr. O'CONNOR: I merely desired to raise those points because I feel the Minister is doing a good job, as is the Government, and I therefore oppose this amendment.

Mr. Graham: You would! You'll get on!

MR. MOIR (Boulder-Eyre) [10.52 p.m.]: The emphasis on this question tonight has been placed on traffic in the metropolitan area, but I think I should draw attention to the fact that most accidents occur in country areas. I propose to deal with certain aspects of that, but before I do so there are one or two matters I wish to mention in regard to the city.

I am quite in agreement with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition when he says that there are not enough traffic patrol officers in the metropolitan area. Of course, we all know that everyone behaves very well when there is a traffic officer in sight. I believe there should be a considerable number of patrol officers in plain clothes riding in cars not identifiable as police cars.

I believe the answer to a lot of this problem is to force people into doing the right thing because they cannot be persuaded—or at least some people cannot be persuaded. Surely there is enough propaganda and there are enough warnings in the Press by responsible people, including the National Safety Council? But still these accidents occur. All of us who use the roads know perfectly well that people tend to become irresponsible when they get behind the wheel of a powerful motor-car, people who would otherwise probably in all other dealings be responsible. However, for some reason or other when they are in a car they become irresponsible and utterly selfish. It is that type of person who has to have forced upon him the realisation that he cannot go on in that way.

With regard to "Stop" signs, I agree they are confusing. They do serve a useful purpose provided they are observed. Only in this morning's paper, or yesterday's, it was pointed out that even though a motorist was approaching a "Stop" sign, a motorist proceeding across the intersection at right angles to him had to give way if that vehicle was on the right. I believe that if a motorist is going along the road and knows there are "Stop" signs on either side—and particularly on the right side—and a car is approaching that "Stop" sign he will assume that the car will stop when it reaches the "Stop" sign and allow the motorist on his left to go through. But apparently, according to the police views on the matter, if that motorist proceeds across the intersection and a person goes through the "Stop" sign—as does happen—and an accident results, the driver who does not give way to his right is equally to blame with the driver who goes through the "Stop" sign.

I do not know how that can be overcome. I find I cannot give any suggestion. I do believe the "Give Way" signs are very good, too. There again, if they are not observed the same situation could arise as in the case of the "Stop" signs. I believe the only answer is rigid policing and the

fining of offenders when they transgress. That is the only way this can be borne home on those who offend.

Another matter, too, that must cause a lot of concern is the very light penalties imposed on people who drive while under suspension. Every now and again we read in the Press of people driving while under suspension. The suspension is a punishment; and instead of another period of suspension being imposed, these people should be charged with contempt of court. We read of cases where offenders have several times been charged with driving while under suspension and have had further periods of suspension added to the already existing period. I think that only drastic punishment will bring home to that type of individual that they must obey the law.

With regard to the problem in the country, I think more attention should be paid to road construction in the first place. We are all very much aware of some very dangerous bends and turns which are subsequently removed. Is there any reason why these roads should not be constructed that way in the first place so that they are straight and do not contain these dangerous bends which cause accidents? There are many such accidents on sharp bends in the country because a motorist comes on them very suddenly. True, the Main Roads Department does erect warning signs on most bends, but not on all of them. Therefore, when a motorist is used to warning signs and looks for them, it is reasonable for him to assume that if there is no sign, the road is perfectly safe for him to proceed at a reasonable speed. When I say "reasonable speed" I mean reasonable speed. However, entirely unreasonable speeds are travelled on our country roads.

Members here tonight have mentioned 60 miles an hour and over on our country roads, but there are drivers who travel at over 100 miles an hour on some of the roads. My attention was drawn only recently by the person involved to the fact that a journey of 256 miles from Kalgoorlie to Esperance was made in three hours. It does not take much mental arithmetic to decide that he must average over 80 miles per hour. He said that he had left Kalgoorlie at six o'clock on the Sunday morning and he was in Esperance at 9 o'clock. I know he was there at 9 o'clock, but I cannot vouch that he left Kalgoorlie at the time stated. He had a powerful car and he is a man who is noted for travelling fast. He would have had to travel at speeds of 100 miles per hour. Of course, he would have had to slow down to 60 miles per hour in some places and in some places he would have had to slow down a lot more than that. Also, he would have been breaking the law if he had passed through certain places where the speed limit is 35 miles per hour. At one

place near Norseman there are "Stop" signs, and they would stop him from proceeding.

That is not an isolated case. We might be travelling at 60 miles per hour and somebody will whiz past us at high speed. Accidents that occur on the road are not always the fault of the persons involved in them. Even though two cars are involved, the manner of driving of a third person might be the cause of an accident. That person is not actually involved, but he is often the cause of accidents between two drivers.

There should be closer control over the speeds at which road transports travel. The police have been pulling up these drivers and some of them have been charged with exceeding the speed limit. I am referring particularly to the more powerful vehicles that carry heavy loads, some of which vehicles travel at 60 miles per hour. Anyone passing these powerful transports know that wind disturbances are set up. As one passes the vehicle one can feel his car lurch and pull towards the transport.

Earlier this year a person told me that while he was travelling towards Kalgoorlie a transport passed him at very high speed. As it passed by, it rocked his car. He watched the transport through his rear vision mirror and a baby car which had been following him somersaulted. Although the little car rolled over the two people in it were not seriously injured. The driver of the little car did not know what had caused his car to leave the road; he thought there was something wrong with it. But the person who was telling me this, and who had been watching in his rear vision mirror, knew what had happened. The accident was caused by the terrific speed of the transport and the little car could not stand up to the suction. That is a matter which should be looked at.

Mention was made of flashing lights being installed on crossings in the metropolitan area. We know that accidents occur at crossings where flashing lights have been placed. At certain times of the day, in the morning and in the evening when the sun is low, it is most difficult to see whether a flashing light is on or off. I consider that the hoods over the flashing lights do not offer sufficient cover. The lights should be completely surrounded with a projecting cover, which would keep the light of the sun off the glass, and motorists would not be confused. I have experienced this difficulty on several occasions when driving on country roads in the morning and in the evening.

Whenever I approach a railway crossing—whether or not there are flashing lights—I slow down and look in both directions before I go across. I am not unmindful of the fact that there could be a mechanical defect in the lights and they might

not be flashing correctly. I have approached lights when they have appeared to be on, but the apparent flashing has been caused by the sun. I have also approached lights when they have been flashing, but with the sun shining on the lights, I have mistaken the flashing for the light of the sun.

Mr. Brand: I presume this matter has been looked into. It has been my experience, and I am sure it has been the experience of others, that at certain times of the day the flashing red light is not apparent. It would seem that either the makers or the authorities have looked into it. Either there is no way of solving the problem, so far as greater coverage is concerned, or there is no way of getting a more suitable reflector that would show the light up.

Mr. MOIR: That may be so; but if there is a remedy, then I think something should be done.

Mr. Brand: It should be looked at.

Mr. MOIR: It is a matter that should be looked at. Although we are fortunate in having excellent bitumen roads in most parts of the State some of the roads pass over undulating country. Often roads that pass over crests of hills are not wide enough. The bitumen should always be widened on the crest of a hill. The Main Roads Department has marked some places. Motorists are reluctant to move over on to the earth alongside the bitumen to allow other cars to pass. In some cases it is dangerous to go off the side of the road on the crest of a hill. A few months ago a large transport moved to the side of the road to allow a car plenty of room to pass. It was at a place called Spargo's on the Coolgardie-Esperance road. The big trailer hit some soft earth. It was in the wintertime and it had been raining. The big transport hit some soft earth and it turned completely over. Fortunately the driver and his assistants were not hurt. That illustrates how dangerous it can be if the bitumen is not widened on the crest of a hill.

Many bitumen roads in the country are allowed to get into a bad state of repair, and in some cases they are permitted to go too far before they are repaired. I am referring particularly to what is called the apron of the bitumen, where the bitumen adjoins the soil. After the rains and because of the volume of traffic passing over the bitumen, there can be quite a drop between the bitumen and the soil. I am quite prepared to get off the road to allow the other fellow to pass, because I have a strong objection to having my windscreen broken; and that is the best evasive action to take. But in moving to the side of the road, it could be dangerous and in a number of places one could be forced into an accident.

Many country roads have been established for some time, and the bitumen has narrowed. Not enough attention is paid to the patching of country roads. After heavy winter rains there are potholes that are very dangerous indeed. In some places there is a sharp difference between the level of the bitumen and the level of the soil, which places a good deal of strain on a vehicle as it passes over the potholes. It is a very dangerous situation.

I consider that more inspectors and patrol officers should be used in the metropolitan area and I think we have to get down to some basis of having country roads patrolled. After all, where traffic inspectors are employed they mostly do their policing on roads in the vicinity of the towns where they are employed. One can travel the roads day after day and seldom see a traffic inspector very far from a township. Perhaps we will see one a mile or two away waiting to catch somebody who does not reduce speed when approaching the town. However, there is no-one policing the open roads to deal with misdemeanours committed out there. While I am aware that there is no speed limit on the open road, other offences are committed in what could be termed negligent or dangerous driving, such as passing other cars too close and too fast.

In think the need is emphasised for police officers to be employed in large numbers when we find that the radar squads, that have been in operation such a short time, are detecting so many speeding offences in the city. It was reported in *The West Australian* of Saturday, the 10th August, that the radar squad had charged 281 drivers with speeding during their first 29 days of operation to the 12th August. Of these, 117 drivers were booked in 21 days when only one radar car was operating. Another 164 were booked during the eight days ended the 12th August when two cars were operating. The Minister for Police said that traffic patrols had charged a total of 667 drivers with speeding during July.

So we can see that the offence is very prevalent; and when we know that there are only a limited number of these squads and a limited number of patrol officers on the road, we can imagine how many other offenders have not been apprehended during that period. They have got away with it. I do not belong to the school of thought which believes it is not sporting to put police patrol officers in plain clothes. I believe that people do behave themselves when they see a uniformed patrol officer about, and when he is not about they tend to misbehave. It is just for that type of person I believe that the plainclothes method should be adopted and we should not be worried whether it is sporting or not.

MR. GAYFER (Avon) [11.14 p.m.]: In rising to oppose this amendment moved by the member for Balcatta, I take particular notice of that section of the amendment where he says—

... the critical situation of large and increasing numbers of persons being killed or suffering personal injury as a consequence of traffic accidents.

I agree with the member for Balcatta that the accident rate on the road is indeed alarming and must be prevented if at all possible. But whilst we have vehicles, and conditions prevailing such as we have, we must expect—in line with other States throughout the Commonwealth and other countries throughout the world—to have a certain number of accidents wherever any risk is involved.

Looking at the number of deaths on the road in Western Australia this year, I find that in January we had 17 deaths, which was nine less than January, 1962. I find that in February we had 11 deaths, which was seven less than 1963, and two deaths less than 1959. In March, I find we had 16 deaths this year which is also five deaths less than March, 1960. However, in April we had 29 deaths which was seven in excess of 22, the figure for April of 1961. In May we had 23 deaths which was six in excess of the high figure of 17 in May, 1962. In June we had 19 deaths which equalled June of 1963. In July, last month, we had 14 deaths which was three less than the deaths of July, 1960, which totalled 17.

In other words, we had two very bad months, and six good months.

Those extra 13 deaths in the two bad months have caused quite a lot of consternation; that, on top of the fact that in 1963 we had 198 deaths, which was one less than the total for 1960.

We of the National Safety Council—I am a representative, together with the member for Claremont, and the member for Maylands, of the Government parties on the National Road Safety Division—consider that all that is reasonably possible to be done is being done.

We consider that the Minister, in regard to any item he is advised to have a look into by the council, gives due weight to the circumstances before any decision is made, and usually his decision is in line with that of the National Safety Council.

We notice that in *The West Australian* on the 28th February the Minister said that new license tests would start on the following Monday and a probationary period would be brought in. He then gave about 25 reasons for the suspension of licenses following the contravening of certain points. That, I think, would show that the Minister is undoubtedly trying to do something to help control the young drivers and prevent them from creating accidents on the road.

On the 25th February I noticed a headline stating "Car Inspections Plan: Craig Acts." That is the exact heading in *The West Australian*. And yet we are told that Craig does not act. The article says that Transport Minister Craig will appoint a committee to examine the need for a system of vehicle roadworthiness inspections in Western Australia. There is a footnote to state that last month police mobile inspection units stopped 307 vehicles in the metropolitan area and ordered 78 from the road.

This brings me to an important part of the member for Balcatta's remarks. He stated that a central licensing authority would be the answer to quite a lot of problems in the country. When talking to one of my colleagues and showing him an examination form that is required to be filled in by one of the country shire councils in order to get a secondhand vehicle licensed, I noticed that an examiner's report is required on certain details. The council wants to know if the following items require attention, or what condition they are in:—engine, head and park lights, side marker and clearance lights, stop and tail lights, trafficators, steering and linkage, king pins, wheel bearings, suspension, shock absorbers, door locks and handles, windscreen and windows, condition of tyres and horn, windscreen wipers, rear vision mirror, exhaust system, transmission, footbrake, handbrake, and chassis.

There is not a single traffic office in the metropolitan area that would ask these questions and go into such complex detail regarding the description of a vehicle as does this country shire. It so happens that this is the only paper I have with me in that regard, but I can honestly say that vehicles are religiously checked in regard to all those matters by practically all country shires in Western Australia before licenses are issued.

Yet if one comes to Perth and one drives down a street it is often amazing to see a dilapidated vehicle, licensed, driving in front of one. Many of them should not be allowed on the road. One quite often sees flapping mudguards and a lack of clearance lights on trucks and several other faulty items.

Mr. Davies: How often do the country shires have these inspections?

Mr. GAYFER: The honourable member can make his point in a minute. The member for Balcatta said that if a central licensing authority were established approximately 95 per cent. of the money for country licenses would be returned to the country shires involved. I do not see how that would be possible, because in certain parts of the Eastern States they have found that approximately one third of the

country license fees are absorbed in administrative costs when a central licensing authority is established.

The country shires at least are on the spot and their officers do not have to travel considerable distances to handle vehicles as would be the case if a central licensing authority were established and its officers had to check certain aspects of licensing throughout the State. We all realise that that sort of control would use up a good deal of the revenue received by the authority.

It is also ironical to note the Minister admitted tonight that in the Eastern States when they—the State Ministers concerned—discussed certain aspects of the increasing road toll in the Eastern States, both in the country as well as the metropolitan areas, this State was found to be the only one in Australia which has retained licensing by individual shires. Therefore, the fact that licenses are controlled by central authorities in the Eastern States has not reduced the accident rate to the degree that perhaps the member for Balcatta would like it to be reduced.

I would go so far as to say that the Country Party will never support a central authority for the issuing of licenses or for the control of licenses throughout the State. I know also that research into road defects and the effect of alcohol on the number of road accidents is taking place in Adelaide under the auspices of the Road Research Board. It is conducting a combined medical, engineering, and enforcement exercise into the causes of accidents and it is the intention to cover the whole field. This could have an important effect on future developments, and no doubt when the findings of this committee are made known the Minister will be able to produce further plans in an effort to control this menace.

I do not intend to delve any deeper into this matter. I think members on this side are fully convinced that the Government is doing all it can do at this moment; and I agree with the sentiments of the Minister when he opposed the amendment.

MR. OLDFIELD (Maylands) [11.25 p.m.]: I am astounded at the speech just made by the member for Avon—

Mr. Gayfer: You would be.

Mr. OLDFIELD:—because he is a councillor of the National Safety Council, and also because when he states that the Minister is doing all he can do he knows very well that the Minister is not doing all that could be done. Possibly the reason why the Minister cannot do all that he could do is because he is bound by party decisions or Government decisions.

Mr. Craig: Not necessarily.

Mr. OLDFIELD: The member for Avon, as a delegate to the National Safety Council, is well and truly aware of the policy

of the National Safety Council in relation to a single or sole traffic authority throughout the State of Western Australia. He knows that for many years the National Safety Council has advocated just that. Yet he stands here in this House and as a delegate to the council says he is concerned with everything we have been discussing tonight but that he and the rest of the Country Party would never tolerate a change from the existing traffic licensing and policing set-up. He also went further and said, in trying to defend the Minister—

Mr. Craig: I do not need any defending.

Mr. OLDFIELD: He was saying what the Minister was doing and what a good job he was doing. He was defending the Minister; but I would draw his attention to the fact that the motion is not directed against the Minister for Transport. It is directed against the Government for not doing all that it could do. We know what can be done and what should be done. I know that probably the Minister would like to put more patrolmen on the road, but the Government will not give him the money to do it. That is why the Government is being censured.

If the Government were true to its trust, and wanted to do something about this menace that has come amongst us, and not just pay lip service to it, it would give the Minister for Police sufficient policemen so that they could all carry out their duties efficiently and make the roads safer than they are today. I honestly believe that the Minister, although he cannot state it publicly, or in this Chamber, in his own heart feels that the National Safety Council is correct in its contention that there should be a sole traffic and licensing authority throughout Western Australia. But, of course, party politics play their part and the Minister cannot do what he wants to do and knows should be done. That is why the Government is being castigated by members on this side of the House.

It is obvious from the way the member for Avon spoke that he was speaking not as a delegate to the National Safety Council, or somebody who was really concerned with the question, but as a Country Party member, which party we know is more concerned with shire council revenue than it is with road safety. In fact it is prepared to sacrifice road safety in the interests of trying to retain a measly little bit of revenue in the clutches of some of these shires.

Now I would like to deal with the "Stop" sign confusion, and confusion in this regard is rife. Not many people know what the regulation means. Until I checked it this evening I was under the impression, or the misapprehension that once one had stopped at a "Stop" sign one could then assume the normal rules of the road and

proceed, provided no other vehicle was approaching on one's right. In that case, of course, one had to give way. But this is the way the regulation reads—

Where pursuant to Division (7) of this Part an official traffic sign displaying the word "STOP" is marked, erected or placed on a road at any approach to an intersection or a junction, a person driving a vehicle or an animal towards the intersection or junction, as the case may be, past the sign

- (a) shall, before entering the intersection or junction, stop the vehicle or animal, and, having stopped it,
- (b) shall not, unless he can do so with safety, proceed without
 - (i) giving way to any vehicle or animal approaching from his right side, and
 - (ii) ensuring that the intersection or junction is sufficiently clear to enable him to proceed.

That obviously means that if a vehicle is approaching from the left, and one cannot proceed with safety, the vehicle at the "Stop" sign must still give way. Members of the general public have been told—until being enlightened by a recent TV programme—that once a vehicle has stopped at a "Stop" sign and there is no vehicle approaching from the right it can proceed in the normal manner, as though there were no "Stop" sign at the intersection.

This aspect of our traffic laws was highlighted in tonight's *Daily News* in Kirwan Ward's column. Portion of the article published reads as follows:—

One chap rang to say that he had approached the Hay Street-Rokeby Road intersection, thought the road was clear to his right, pressed on and nearly cleaned up a character on his right, on a scooter, who had run through a "Stop" sign. He asked the cops to rule who would have been to blame had they collided.

I interpose here to point out that I am quoting from the newspaper article, and am not myself using such derogatory terms in making reference to our local constabulary. This article continues—

The Law said (as I tipped it would) that two wrongs don't make a right. Both parties were in the wrong. The bloke who shot through the "Stop" sign committed a serious traffic offence, but that still didn't absolve the other man from giving way.

In Sydney's hectic jumble of cars and people, traffic sorts itself out remarkably well, without many of the aids and controls that most big cities have, simply because everyone automatically gives way to the vehicle on the right.

They don't give way for long to the driver who hesitates and won't come on and they don't give way, as we do sometimes, to a car that's on the right but 100 yards away. But when it comes to a question of give way or collide the man on the right always goes through with confidence.

That's what our police are aiming at here—where there's the slightest doubt about safety, without any ifs, buts or maybes you must give way to the right.

If the writer of that column has obtained that information from the police it conflicts with the regulation, which clearly states that one must give way to the right and left. However, I understand the true effect of this regulation is that if a vehicle has stopped at a "Stop" sign and no vehicle is approaching from the right and the left is reasonably clear, once the driver commences to proceed into the intersection, despite the fact he has ensured that everything is clear on the left, the driver of the vehicle on the left must give way, but if an accident occurs the argument arises as to whether the person at the "Stop" sign should give way.

Mr. Tonkin: What is the position if the driver on one's right goes through a red light and one is proceeding on a green light?

Mr. OLDFIELD: If there are no independent witnesses, I understand that the man who failed to give way to the right is in the wrong.

Mr. J. Hegney: He is dead wrong!

Mr. OLDFIELD: The mere fact that a driver has the green light is no indication that he is in the right. I think the same applies when one stops at a "Stop" sign. If a driver goes through a red light it would be just the same as if he went over an intersection and disregarded a "Stop" sign; he has committed a traffic offence. But if he collides with another vehicle approaching on his left, the driver of that vehicle is somewhat to blame.

Mr. Tonkin: That is a little stupid.

Mr. OLDFIELD: The Minister shakes his head. If the Minister and I collide and he is on my right, I am naturally in the wrong despite the fact that he may have gone through a red light; because whose word is to be accepted as to whether the Minister had a green light or I had a green light? If there are no independent witnesses the man who fails to give way to the right is clearly in the wrong.

Mr. J. Hegney: If you are proceeding across an intersection on the green light, even though a driver comes through on your right against the red light, do you mean to say you are in the wrong?

Mr. OLDFIELD: Who is to prove that he has gone through the red light? Actually, we know who is in the right and who is in the wrong. But when it comes to a

court case, who is to prove who has gone through a red light, or who had the green light? As a matter of fact, one motorist could have gone through a red light, and the other could have had an amber light, and both could equally be wrong. I understand that in Sydney the provision in the Act is that if a motorist fails to give way to the driver on his right he is in trouble. If one can produce witnesses to prove that the driver on the left failed to give way to the driver on his right, despite the fact that he had the green light, he is in the wrong.

The member for Balcatta was correct when he advocated the removal of all "Stop" signs. We should be on the basis where everybody is fully acquainted with what the law provides; and that should be that, at all times, a driver must give way to the vehicle on his right. If we had one rule everyone would be able to understand it. Members of the motoring public are confused today because they do not know that they are supposed to give way to the driver on the right at all times. When one reads regulation 191A it naturally causes confusion in one's mind, because if a driver stops at an intersection where there is a "Stop" sign, one feels that that driver must give way to the driver approaching on his right.

Let us have traffic laws and regulations which everyone can understand. At the moment we have a Traffic Act comprising 150 pages and 200 pages of traffic regulations. That is the Act and regulations which the ordinary motorist has to observe. He may have taken 10 or 12 driving lessons, or may have been taught to drive in a paddock by his father, and yet he is supposed to know the law. It is ridiculous to expect people to know all that is contained in our Traffic Act and regulations. The Minister for Police himself does not know half the regulations or half the provisions in the Act; he has to check them. And yet he expects people to observe the law! It is high time we had an Act containing only about 10 or 12 regulations so that everyone could clearly understand them. All we need laid down in the traffic regulations is the speed limit in the metropolitan area, the rule relating to giving way to the vehicle on the right at all times, and the rule providing that a vehicle shall not travel too closely behind the vehicle in front, keeping to the left, and other basic rules.

Mr. Graham: Six years ago they assigned to Sergeant Court the task of consolidating the Traffic Act and the traffic regulations.

Mr. OLDFIELD: How do you spell "Court"?

Mr. Graham: C-o-u-r-t.

Mr. Court: No relation.

Mr. OLDFIELD: In my opinion, a little thin booklet could be published covering the whole of the regulations that are required for the motoring public.

Mr. Craig: I have explained that that will be done as soon as the amendments to the Traffic Act are made.

Mr. OLDFIELD: It is years and years since the consolidation of the Traffic Act was made. I think the last time this was done was in 1954. The National Safety Council has only recently completed consolidating the regulations. Today, I doubt whether the Minister could get a complete copy of the traffic regulations from the Parliament House library.

Mr. Craig: I have my own copy.

Mr. OLDFIELD: The Minister has an office staff to keep his up to date.

Mr. Craig: I have explained that the regulations will be brought up to date and published in a concise form.

Mr. OLDFIELD: When members of Parliament cannot obtain an up-to-date copy of the regulations, how can we expect any motorist to conform with them? If one goes to the Government Printing Office to obtain a copy of the traffic regulations and the amendments thereto, one finds it is out of print.

Mr. Craig: The regulations have been in force a long time.

Mr. Graham: They were on the job in 1958.

Mr. OLDFIELD: It has got to the stage when something has to be done. Up till now all we have had is talk and more talk, words and more words, but this will not get us anywhere. It is a strange thing, but this Government has done nothing but set up committees. It has just been a case of passing the buck.

When we make an inquiry we are told that a committee is investigating the matter and that we will get the report of the committee in due course and then something will be done about it. Or we might be told that the committee's report is being drawn up now. It is like the iron ore which was to have been exported to Japan, but which never eventuated. The only public work being undertaken at present is the filling-in of the river. The present Government has relied upon committees.

Let us for a moment consider the committees dealing with traffic. There is the National Safety Council which is purely advisory. It has no powers except to ask for and spend money. We also have a crosswalk committee, and a schools crosswalk committee, and there is the railway crossing committee. Surely to goodness there are people with sufficient experience in the Police Traffic Branch to make decisions on matters like this without having to await the decision of a committee! Some of these matters have been before the committee for six months; in fact, the matter to which the member for Balcatta referred—that of the sergeant

who was supposed to prepare a condensed booklet of regulations—has been going on for six years.

In dealing with the school crosswalks committee, it is apparently necessary to get a committee to decide whether a crosswalk at a school should be manned by the old age pensioners who generally control them in the morning or the afternoon. If a crosswalk is necessary outside a school, and if it is not protected by traffic lights as is the case with that in East Victoria Park, it should be protected by a crosswalk inspector. Every school should have an inspector. But we find that crosswalk inspectors are only appointed to the favoured areas. I doubt whether there is a crosswalk near a school in an electorate in the metropolitan area represented by a Liberal member of Parliament which has not got a man on it.

Mr. Craig: That might be coincidental. I would not know which crosswalks were manned. Each one is treated on its merits.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I know that the Maylands School cannot get a man to look after the crosswalk. The local policeman has been doing the job for years. He is still doing it because there is no-one else to do the job. It is necessary for the policeman to drop his other duties and man the crosswalk at the Guildford Road-Seventh Avenue intersection. When the policeman is on other duties or is ill and is not able to do the job in the morning or the afternoon, the crosswalk is left unmanned. There is no-one to protect it.

It is a strange thing, but the greatest casualty rate in the metropolitan area is not caused by speeding but by failure to give way to the right. This is caused because of the confusion that exists. I know that most drivers in the metropolitan area have the idea that if they are on a main thoroughfare, or what they consider to be a main thoroughfare, they have the right of way. There is endless confusion because of the number of times that the regulation in question has been amended in recent years.

A classic example of what occurs in connection with failure to give way to the right is in connection with traffic moving south in Market Place and intending to make a right-hand turn to travel west in Wellington Street. The failure of the westbound traffic in Wellington Street turning north into Market Place to give way to southbound traffic making a right-hand turn creates chaos. The same offending drivers also refuse right of way to eastbound Wellington Street traffic. Not one driver in 10 turning from Wellington Street west into Market Place will give way to the traffic turning from Market Place into Wellington Street. It is a clear case of the regulation being breached, but they do not know they are committing an offence.

Nobody can tell me that the majority of motorists are wilful law breakers. They are in complete ignorance of the law because the traffic regulations have not been kept up to date. Since the Government has been in office the regulation dealing with giving way to the right has been amended three or four times. Possibly the member for Balcatta would have the true figure.

Mr. Graham: What about the regulation for pedestrians on crosswalks?

Mr. OLDFIELD: When we consider the existing regulations for crosswalks it becomes more essential than ever that every school crosswalk should be manned by a crosswalk inspector, if that is to be his title. I would say most emphatically that there is not enough being done in regard to level crossings. The expenditure of £1,200 on equipment at a level crossing to protect life and limb is pin money when compared with the possible loss of life. I would now like to read from the subleader of tomorrow morning's paper. It is headed, "Saving Lives at Crossings" and reads as follows:—

There are disturbing features about the Wellard-road level crossing near Medina where two children died tragically on Monday.

The bauxite railway is new and it should not have been built with level crossings in the first place. These death-traps should not be allowed in new projects. But the bauxite line has 15.

On top of that, the shire council applied for flashing lights at the Wellard-road crossing, but the application was rejected on the ground that lights were not justified. Yet this is the second serious accident at the crossing this year.

However conscientiously they are applied, the yardsticks used by the Government's flashing-lights committee are clearly not good enough. The committee, which includes representatives of the Main Roads and Railway Departments and local authorities, examines such factors as accident patterns, traffic volume and visibility.

No doubt the committee which is doing this wonderful job for the Government decided to wait till it got this accident pattern before installing the lights that were necessary. It probably felt that it would wait 12 months and that if there was no accident in that time the installation of lights would not be necessary. Or perhaps it thought it would wait for an accident to occur before recommending that lights be installed. To continue with the quote—

But it has no way of knowing to what extent motorists may be careful at obviously dangerous crossings and careless at those which carry little traffic.

The major weaknesses in the present policy are that the committee acts only on applications from other bodies and in doing so it has to make arbitrary decisions.

I understand that the local authority did make application, as did the member for Cockburn. The subleader continues—

There should be no need for this. It should be a rule that all level crossings be equipped with flashing lights, and that this type of crossing be barred in all new construction.

When it is considered that the metropolitan area alone has 171 level crossings, of which only 46 have lights, the cost of putting lights at all crossings would be high. Each set costs at least £1,200. But the Government cannot be prevented by cost from providing an elementary warning system to help save lives.

I think every member of this Chamber agrees with that subleader.

Mr. J. Hegney: What newspaper is that?

Mr. OLDFIELD: That is *The West Australian*. I give it credit for these views. It is not often deserving of credit, but in traffic matters it is always right on the ball. It is always attempting to bring forward better traffic laws and regulations, and it is always quick to criticise when criticism is warranted. I think the criticism in this subleader is more than warranted.

As a matter of fact, it is this very tragedy that possibly brought things to a head and precipitated this amendment being launched to the Address-in-Reply. If any member of this Chamber is really concerned with the fatalities, casualties, and the number of traffic accidents occurring in both the country and the metropolitan area, he should have no hesitation and no compunction whatsoever—in fact his duty would be—to support this amendment.

MR. MITCHELL (Stirling) [11.52 p.m.]: I would like to say a few words on this amendment in defence of the Government, particularly on three phases of the points which have been discussed. Firstly, I am rather surprised that the mover of the amendment should be the member for Balcatta. I remember that last year we had some serious discussion, when the honourable member and I got into some heated argument, because the Government sought to introduce a measure which had as its object the improvement of instruction for people desiring to learn to drive motor vehicles.

The honourable member will recall that I expressed amazement at the fact that he, being a former Minister for Transport and a supporter of the National Safety Council, should seek publicity by trying to have passed a motion the only object of which was to ensure that people teaching

others to drive, and accepting money for doing so, gave instructions in the proper way. I said at the time that the member for Balcatta was seeking publicity. I say now that the only reason he is trying to censure the Government on this phase of its activities is to obtain publicity.

Mr. Graham: I think the Speaker should spring to my defence.

Mr. MITCHELL: The member for Balcatta, like the rest of us, is very perturbed about the accident rate in Western Australia. We all do what we can to save as many lives as possible; but to move an amendment to the Address-in-Reply is nothing more than another form of publicity seeking on the part of the honourable member.

Mr. Graham: You are like a gramophone stuck in the groove, which keeps on saying the same thing over and over again. Can you not think of anything new?

Mr. MITCHELL: Much has been made of the desirability of having one single traffic authority, and much has also been made of the point that local authorities do not accept their responsibilities. I say definitely that in most—I do not say in all—country towns there is more traffic control per car than there is in the metropolitan area. In shire councils which license 2,000 cars, a full-time traffic inspector is engaged and he is travelling all the time in the district. He has more chance to inspect traffic, than the number of people who are engaged in this job in the metropolitan area.

Shire councils, or municipalities like Albany, have as many as three traffic inspectors engaged fulltime; and they are assuming a greater responsibility in traffic matters than perhaps the Police Department is assuming in Perth. I make no complaint about the efforts of the Police Department in controlling traffic in the metropolitan area, but I join forces vigorously with anyone who says that country local authorities do not accept their responsibilities in regard to traffic.

Mr. Graham: I do not think that has been said.

Mr. MITCHELL: It has been said on numerous occasions; otherwise, why was the suggestion to take away the control of traffic from country authorities put forward?

Mr. Graham: It is silly to have 100 authorities controlling traffic.

Mr. MITCHELL: Not as silly as the honourable member thinks.

Mr. Graham: You may have a reason for that.

Mr. MITCHELL: One feature of traffic control is that one cannot save the people from themselves. Much has been said this evening about the necessity to install flashing lights at railway crossings. That is considered to be the main method by which accidents at crossings can be avoided.

Recently a disastrous accident occurred in Albany at a railway crossing, in which two men were killed. One of them had a wife and five or six children. This accident happened at a level crossing—which was equipped with flashing lights—at 7.30 o'clock in the morning, when the train was running on time. Those men knew the train was running on time, and they were not under the influence of liquor, yet they drove on to the crossing despite the fact that the lights were flashing.

Mr. Tonkin: Was there not some suggestion that those lights were out of order at the time?

Mr. MITCHELL: There was a suggestion, but it was not proved. In the metropolitan area on one day I saw on two separate occasions near mishaps at two railway crossings. At one crossing in Victoria Park which was equipped with flashing lights, a line of cars stopped. One train went through, but the lights continued to flash. The driver of one car pulled out of line and passed three cars ahead of him, and went across the crossing not many yards ahead of a diesel train.

Less than an hour afterwards at the Jewell Street crossing I saw a similar occurrence. These incidents prove that although there are flashing lights and they are working properly, if motorists fail to pay attention to what they are doing they will run into trouble.

Mr. Tonkin: Do you think the flashing lights are of no use at all?

Mr. MITCHELL: I think they serve a good purpose; but if motorists do not heed the warning then they cannot be saved from themselves. I vigorously join issue with anyone who thinks we can enforce a 60-mile per hour speed limit on country roads.

Mr. Graham: What about giving it a go?

Mr. MITCHELL: To me that would be absolutely ridiculous, because there are cars which can be driven quite safely at 60 or 70 miles an hour, but there are others which cannot be driven safely at 30 to 40 miles an hour. Similarly, there are drivers who can control a car travelling at 60 or 70 miles per hour, while there are others who cannot control one travelling at 10 miles an hour. For that reason the introduction of an overall speed limit is not desirable.

Mr. Graham: The Main Roads Department builds roads designed for speeds not in excess of 60 miles an hour.

Mr. MITCHELL: That is so. One of the greatest troubles with motoring in the country areas is that people who are taught to observe the regulations in the metropolitan area where they travel at a restricted speed, consider they are entitled to drive at whatever speed they like on country roads, and can break whatever

regulations that exist. As a matter of fact, as far as the country area is concerned, most of the metropolitan drivers do not know that a traffic regulation exists.

Mr. Norton: You are talking out of the back of your hat now.

Mr. MITCHELL: One has only to go to a country town and see the cars that are not parked in the parking bays; and drivers from the metropolitan area break every regulation that ever existed. I would say that one of our greatest troubles on country roads is the uneducated metropolitan area driver. He has only to see a bit of gravel or a tree and he does not know what it is there for. He is one of the biggest problems we have. These people are under the control of the metropolitan traffic authorities when they get their license; and once they get out into the country they believe they have free license to do whatever they like under whatever conditions they like.

Mr. Graham: Every serious accident in the country has to be investigated by the police. Country inspectors cannot do it, especially where there is a fatality.

Mr. MITCHELL: They do it.

Mr. Graham: Not even for drunken driving; they are only half equipped for the job.

Mr. MITCHELL: If one traffic authority with an overall control of traffic in Western Australia would reduce the toll on the roads by one single person, I would be in favour of it, but I am not convinced of that; and while I am not convinced I say that the traffic authority as it now exists is doing just as good a job as any other scheme that could be introduced.

These are the only three comments I wished to make: Surprise that the member moved this amendment; the fact that the Government has done as much in the last two years that I have been here as is humanly possible to control this menace on the road; and the fact that one cannot save people from themselves. The only way to do it is by strict enforcement of the law to see that they do not get licenses until they are entitled to them; and to see that people are educated to be aware of the danger they are in when they take control of a motorcar.

MR. DAVIES (Victoria Park) [12.3 a.m.]: I regret that the member for Stirling should make the claim that the member for Balclutha moved this amendment for publicity purposes. I think the fact that so many members from both sides of the House have taken part in this debate tonight shows we are all very conscious of the need for a matter of such importance to be debated. Of course, the honourable member, as well as all other members, is aware that we are fighting a losing battle as far as road accidents and the road toll go.

This was brought to my notice in the current issue of the *Commerce, Industrial and Mining Review* which I received in the mail yesterday; and on page 70 there is an article headed "Road Accidents Versus Medical Science." It reads—

Road accident casualties are neutralising much of the success gained by medical science in recent years in reducing the incidence of disease.

Figures issued by the Australian Health Information and Research Service recently show that deaths from infant whooping cough, which numbered 304 in 1931, claimed only one life in 1961.

Other remarkable advances between 1931 and 1961 were:—

Poliomyelitis—423 deaths to 21 deaths; pulmonary tuberculosis—2,838 to 413; pneumonia—3,795 to 2,824; influenza—846 to 100; scarlet fever—74 to 5; nephritis—3,306 to 998; and infant deaths under one year from 42.14 per 1,000 live births to 20.4.

In addition, bubonic plague, cholera, typhus, smallpox and yellow fever, which were a grave and constant threat early in the century, have been virtually excluded by Australian quarantine controls.

For the above diseases the death rate has in a 30-year period been reduced by almost two-thirds.

Meanwhile: In the past twenty years road accident deaths have increased from 1,340 to 2,575 and injuries have increased from 16,000 to more than 66,000 per year.

I think that shows the very real need for this question to be debated in this House; and it certainly was not with a view, I am sure, to seeking publicity that the member for Balcatta moved the amendment this evening, which I support. It is a very serious position indeed; and I want to explain that when I made an interjection this evening while the Minister for Police was speaking, I most certainly did not intend to be facetious, as he claimed. He was pointing out that all policemen are virtually traffic policemen, and I interjected by saying that it would be hard for a policeman on foot to catch some of the cars. Indeed, it was not being facetious; it was being practical.

I do not know what good a policeman on foot could do in the case of a speeding car or even one travelling at an ordinary pace. Whilst they may, on occasions, be able to secure a prosecution, I maintain their success would be practically negligible. I feel there is an urgent need for additional patrolmen, but I cannot agree with one member on this side of the House when he says they should be in plain clothes.

I feel the sight of a uniformed patrolman is the greatest deterrent to any driver. I have heard drivers tell their children to keep a lookout for patrolmen, and if one should hove in sight there is always a great difference in driving attitudes.

Mr. Graham: But the moment the speed cop has gone the game is on again.

Mr. DAVIES: As the member for Balcatta says, the game is on again. I would like to see more patrolmen, but not in plainclothes. I do not like this at any time; and I am not too much in favour of the use of radar. We will just have to wait and see how that works out. However, if it is a deterrent to speeders and does reduce the road toll, even by one death per year, my vote would have to be in favour of it as it is at the present time.

We must do all we can to foresee trouble; and here again I interjected on the member for Avon tonight when he was explaining details of a very comprehensive check of vehicles used by a country shire of which he has knowledge. It was indeed, from the points they checked and of which he gave details, very comprehensive; but I asked him how often the test was conducted, and he was unable to give me a reply. It may be this test is conducted every time a vehicle changes hands, which might be on an average of three years, but it may not be for ten years. So whilst it may be a very good system, I believe that unless it is carried out regularly there would be little value in it.

When I say that we have to look ahead and foresee trouble and try to meet it before it arrives, I refer not only to traffic problems inasmuch as they affect motor vehicles, but also to pedestrians, and I think a few pounds spent where there is a chance of saving life is money well spent. In this regard, following representations made from the Millen Infants School in my electorate I, in turn, made representations for the placing of a footpath in Carson Street outside the school. Possibly it is not the busiest street in Victoria Park by a long way, but it is busy enough inasmuch as two streets run into it. It forms a dead end and also provides a back access to the Edward Millen Home.

Approaches were made to the Perth City Council, but it advised me that it would not do anything unless the Education Department was prepared to meet half the cost. I might say here that the footpath would only be about 100 yards long but I believe that under the new Local Government Act where works of this nature are required a claim can be made against the Government authority. As the Perth City Council was prepared to pay its half, I referred the matter to the Education Department asking if it would meet the other

half of the cost; but I am sorry to say I had a letter back on the 10th August, the final paragraph of which reads—

This department's funds are fully committed for additions to schools and improvements inside of school properties, and it is felt that if a footpath is required, that is the responsibility of the Perth City Council.

This is an occasion where a few pounds spent by the Government could save a life because at present there is no footpath on either side of the street. There is a danger to children, and a growing danger because of the ever-increasing traffic. I feel it is rather a short-sighted view on the part of the Government not to put aside at least a few pounds or half the cost of a slab footpath measuring about 100 yards. Surely to goodness the Education Department can find a small sum of money for this work! Is it going to be the Government's attitude in cases like this that it will not spend any money outside school grounds? Once again I say that if it is, it is a very narrow view.

I asked a question of the Minister for Police this evening as to whether the Police Department had any authority regarding the erection of advertising signs of any description. I was pleased to receive the reply that where there is a danger or risk or likely interference with the traffic of persons or vehicles, action can be taken by the Police Department. I presume that it can order the sign to be removed.

In this regard I would mention the sign which prompted the question, and that is the new one erected on the Causeway Flats at the Perth end of the Causeway. Perhaps some members have had the same experience as I have had. It is a large sign erected by the Dunlop Rubber Company and it is illuminated day and night.

Mr. H. May: I have already told the Minister about that one.

Mr. DAVIES: Have you?

Mr. H. May: He is going to have a look into it.

Mr. DAVIES: That saves me a lot of time; but I am sorry I missed the debate, because I thought perhaps it was only the windscreen on my car that was affected by the light and created quite a glare. However, I had occasion last week to use a taxi and the driver commented on it and said he thought it was a danger. When swinging into town from the Causeway he found, as I found, that the glare impeded the view of traffic coming from the left. I hope the Minister will have a look at that although I am not against electric signs of any description. I like them. I think they brighten a place up; and of course they use more electricity, which we are always very pleased to sell.

The member for Maylands made some comment tonight on the various committees that are in existence to deal with crosswalks, level crossings, and the like, and I could not more thoroughly agree with anyone than with him on the statements he made that one committee should control crosswalks. I do not know whether any of the other members in the House have had the frustrating experience I have had of endeavouring to obtain crosswalks. Although I have submitted a number of cases, I have been unsuccessful in all but two.

With regard to the first one, I started writing letters on the 3rd May, 1962, but it was not until January, 1963, that I finally got the authorities to agree to place that crosswalk. Surely to goodness these matters do not have to go from one department to another! Do we have to get the views of the Police Traffic Branch, the local authorities, the Commissioner of Main Roads, and apparently take a survey of local residents to find out what is going on?

I think I did mention the other one in the House last year. It was a crosswalk outside the Rivervale Hotel. The initial suggestion I received from the Main Roads Department was that as most of the traffic was between the hotel and the T.A.B. shop on the other side of the road, the shop should be resited. I was not very impressed with that answer and so I did some further research on the matter.

This made me wonder just what influence one requires to get a crosswalk, because I feel that the final point I made which persuaded the decision in my favour was that along Canning Highway within a distance of two miles from the Causeway to Comer Street there were—and there may be more now—no fewer than five crosswalks, one equipped with flashing lights. In addition, there are two sets of traffic lights. Therefore, for pedestrians crossing, there are, in effect, seven safety zones within two miles.

However, along Great Eastern Highway in the other direction there was not at that time one crosswalk between the Causeway and Guildford—not one crosswalk anywhere in the whole of that distance. As I have said, I was successful in having one installed outside the Rivervale Hotel, and since that time another one has been installed at Belmont. So it does make me wonder what influence is necessary to obtain the installation of a crosswalk or what is the authority which can finally decide.

In regard to the same matter I have one other very good example of the tardiness of the various Government departments in dealing with this subject. On the 2nd May, 1963, I wrote to the Commissioner of Main Roads following representations from nearby residents asking for a crosswalk over Shepparton Road

at the intersection of Teddington Road. I repeated that letter on the 19th June and on the 7th August, which meant then that the matter had been five months receiving consideration.

I finally received a reply on the 20th August telling me that, although the maximum conflict there was sufficient to warrant the installation of a crosswalk, the department did not think it should proceed with it at that time. It suggested then that it might be a suitable point for a guard-controlled crossing and that I write to the Deputy Commissioner of Transport, which I did the same day—the 20th August, 1963.

I received an acknowledgment on the 28th, and I repeated the letter on the 10th January. Finally, on the 6th February—another six months later—I received a reply from the Deputy Commissioner of Transport saying that the site had been inspected, but that it was felt it was not one that warranted a guard-controlled crossing.

I did some further research into the matter. I made further investigations of the section. Because of the traffic flow and because it was on a bus route, and because one of the buses turned off Shepparton Road at that point, I wrote to the secretary of the Main Roads Department on the 27th April. On this occasion it did not take him so long to reply, because his mind was apparently made up. I received a reply on the 13th May, which was just 12 months and 11 days after I had originally placed the matter before him. On this occasion he apologised for perhaps giving me a wrong lead in regard to the guard-controlled crossing, but although the pedestrian traffic complex was sufficient, he would not agree to putting a crosswalk on that point.

I might say that during that period there was a tragedy at the intersection. The mother of one of the women who had made the original representations to me was knocked down and killed one evening. It was a great shock to her family. I do not know whether the pedestrian crossing, if it had existed, would have been of any use in preventing the tragedy, because I do not know the exact nature of the accident; but I do believe it would have had some effect. Possibly the driver would have seen the crossing and slowed down, or perhaps the woman might have taken more care.

As was stated earlier in the debate, this is a point which requires attention. Will we have to wait until an accident pattern is apparent, or can we anticipate the need to do something now before any accident occurs? I suggest that the intersection at Shepparton Road and Teddington Road is one where a further accident will occur this year, and some action should be taken to provide some warning to motorists of the danger, and some safety for pedestrians.

I now wish to comment on a question that I asked earlier in the session regarding the same crosswalk that I was referring to earlier; namely, the one outside the Rivervale Hotel. I believe this is one crossing where there should be greater indication of its existence for drivers. Cars travel over the Rivervale railway crossing at high speed. Motorists have usually just got up speed and they then find that they are on top of the crossing. I believe there have been only four accidents to pedestrians since the crossing was established, but there have been a great number of near accidents.

I asked the Minister whether something could be done to provide more indication of the existence of this crossing. He said consideration was being given to the installation of sodium lighting at pedestrian crossings, and that this type of lighting is of a distinctive orange-yellow colour. Whilst this might be very well for the evening, it would be no good during the day. Surely some other signs could be devised which would give motorists warning during daylight hours of the existence of this and other crossings!

Like the member for Maylands, I would like to see one authority handling all matters relating to the placing of crosswalks. It could be that some crosswalks have been wrongly placed and should be shifted. There seems to be a great disparity in the number of crosswalks, flashing lights, and other warning signals which exist on some highways compared with those that exist on other highways.

I propose to close on the note on which I started, by saying that this is certainly not a move by the member for Balcatta to seek publicity. I am sorry the charge was made. The fact that members consider this to be a very urgent and pressing problem is evidenced by the fact that many members on both sides of the House have taken part in the debate. I do not think there has been any occasion, during the short time that I have been a member of this House, when there has been such interest shown in a debate.

MR. W. A. MANNING (Narrogin) (12.25 a.m.): There is no justification for this amendment moved to the Address-in-Reply. The Minister has replied setting out what the Government has done towards preventing the great toll of accidents and loss of life on the roads. We are all concerned with the problem, but we are not so clear on some of the remedies. I wish to deal with only two points. The member for Balcatta does not have a full comprehension of what is done in the country with regard to the policing of traffic and with regard to inspections.

The honourable member's suggestion was that there should be more police enrolled and that they should be career police

specialising in traffic. I would point out that this is exactly what the situation is in the country at the present time. They are specialised men who are dealing with traffic and they are also uniformed men, as someone on the other side of the House mentioned. They specialise in traffic control and they are doing an excellent job.

If a special force of policemen were enrolled, or if there were career policemen who specialised in traffic, who would be selected for the job? The very first men to be selected would be those men who are now controlling country traffic, because they are specialised and know the job. What would be the difference in efficiency between the job they are doing now and the job that they would be doing if they were enrolled as a special force? They are already in charge of traffic in country towns. I suggest there would be no gain whatever in the suggestion. I would also suggest that whatever is done, we cannot stop people from having accidents on our roads.

An accident occurred recently about 73 miles along the Albany Road. In this accident two people were killed and four people were seriously injured. I was told that the accident was caused by the widening of the road by the Main Roads Department. The widened strip was of a brown colour, and the original road had been constructed of black metal. It was said that one of the drivers did not know the road and he had mistaken the edge of the black part for the edge of the road.

I had a look at this particular section of road and it is a perfectly straight stretch of road and almost level. If any driver travelled on the edge of the black part of the bitumen he would be straddling the white line down the centre which has been provided by the Main Roads Department as a guide for motorists. It seems to me that we cannot protect drivers who will do things like that, whether the inspector is a special police officer or is a traffic officer in a shire or town council.

The other point which I wish to raise concerns a matter that was referred to by—I will call him the Deputy Leader of the Queen's alternative.

Mr. H. May: Who is he?

Mr. W. A. MANNING: He was very concerned about the matter of finance. The Deputy Leader suggested that it did not matter what it cost to install traffic lights; that the matter of saving lives was the paramount thing, and that we should go ahead with the installation of traffic lights wherever they were required regardless of cost.

That might be his idea. But the same honourable member was the Minister for Works a few years ago; and as far as I can understand, the installation of traffic lights at railway crossings is not a new

idea which has been instituted over the last five years; it was something which was in operation before that time; and I wonder what the opinion of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was when he was Minister for Works, and why he did not spend sufficient money to put flashing lights at every railway crossing in the State. Had he completed the job in his term of office that he suggests should be carried out now, it would be only a matter of installing lights at the Wellard Road crossing and on the Jarrahdale line.

I cannot understand the Deputy Leader of the Opposition supporting an amendment such as this and using as his main argument the fact that sufficient finance has not been made available for the installation of flashing lights. That argument simply throws the whole question back at his own feet. If he was not prepared, during his term of office, to do what he now suggests the Government should do, how can he support a censure motion such as this is when someone has merely followed the line that he himself set? That is all I wish to say on the subject, because I think it has been well and truly covered.

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

Ayes—19

Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Brady	Mr. D. G. May
Mr. Davies	Mr. Molr
Mr. Evans	Mr. Norton
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Graham	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Heal	Mr. Sewell
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. H. May
Mr. Jamleson	

(Teller)

Noes—20

Mr. Brand	Mr. Lewis
Mr. Burt	Mr. I. W. Manning
Mr. Cornell	Mr. W. A. Manning
Mr. Court	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Craig	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Crommellin	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Gayfer	Mr. Runciman
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. Wild
Dr. Henn	Mr. Williams
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. O'Neill

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Bovell
Mr. Curran	Mr. Dunn
Mr. Rowberry	Mr. Grayden
Mr. Hall	Mr. Hart
Mr. Toms	Mr. Nimmo

Majority against—1.

Amendment thus negatived.

Debate (on motion) adjourned, on motion by Mr. Gayfer.

House adjourned at 12.36 a.m. (Thursday)