

were handled by the officers in London. So, to say that our immigration programme was permitted to run down is not true.

Mr Grayden: In three years, your Government brought as many migrants to this State as the previous Government attracted in one year. If that is not a run-down, what is?

Mr HARMAN: The Minister seems to forget that when he conducts an immigration programme, he must compete.

Mr. Grayden: Yes; you had a Federal Labor Government diverting migrants to the Eastern States.

Mr HARMAN: We had to compete with the European Economic Community. People from England were able to go across to European Economic Community countries and receive better wages and standards of work than they could obtain in this State. That is the point I make now. We did not run down our immigration programme; we increased it.

Mr O'Neill: It is an indictment of your Government that conditions were so bad when you were in office.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes—19

Mr Barnett	Mr Jamieson
Mr Bertram	Mr T. H. Jones
Mr Bryce	Mr May
Mr B. T. Burke	Mr McIver
Mr T. J. Burke	Mr Skidmore
Mr Carr	Mr Taylor
Mr H. D. Evans	Mr A. R. Tonkin
Mr T. D. Evans	Mr J. T. Tonkin
Mr Harman	Mr Moller
Mr Hartrey	(Teller)

Noes—25

Mr Blaikle	Mr Nanovich
Mr Clarko	Mr O'Connor
Sir Charles Court	Mr Old
Mr Cowan	Mr O'Neill
Mr Coyne	Mr Ridge
Mr Crane	Mr Rushton
Dr Dadour	Mr Sibson
Mr Grayden	Mr Sodeman
Mr Grewar	Mr Stephens
Mr P. V. Jones	Mr Thompson
Mr Laurance	Mr Watt
Mr McPharlin	Mr Young
Mr Mensaros	(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr Bateman	Mr Shalders
Mr Fletcher	Mrs Craig
Mr Davies	Sir David Brand

Amendment thus negatived.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr A. R. Tonkin.

House adjourned at 10.59 p.m.

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 1st August, 1974

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. A. F. Griffith) took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (13): ON NOTICE

1. ROAD TRANSPORT

Perth-Carnarvon: Bell Bros. License

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR, to the Minister for Health:

In view of the report published in *The West Australian* newspaper dated the 31st July, 1974, in which the Chairman of the Carnarvon Transport Advisory Committee is reported as having confirmed that Bell Bros. Pty. Ltd., one of the two haulier companies licensed by the State Government to operate between Perth and Carnarvon, will withdraw its service from the 1st September, will the Minister advise—

- (1) When tenders were called for this service—
 - (a) did Bell Bros. Pty. Ltd. submit a separate tender;
 - (b) if not, what was the basis of their tender?
- (2) (a) How many other tenders were received; and
 - (b) from whom?
- (3) What effect will the withdrawal of Bell Bros. have on the transport situation as it applies to Carnarvon and the surrounding area?
- (4) Will the Government recall tenders for the cartage of goods to and from Carnarvon?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

- (1) In respect of tenders called in March, 1974, a joint tender was submitted by Gascoyne Trading Pty. Ltd. and Bell Bros. Pty. Ltd.
- (2) Three other tenders were received, these being from J. Wilson (Perth) Pty. Ltd., Thomas Cannington Transport and Carnarvon Consolidated Carriers Pty. Ltd.
- (3) It will be necessary to arrange for another carrier to replace Bell Bros. and negotiations are now in progress to that end.
- (4) It is not proposed to call new tenders at this stage.

2. AVON VALLEY DEVELOPMENTAL COMMITTEE

Function and Membership

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER, to the Minister for Justice:

- (1) Is the Avon Valley Developmental Committee still in existence?
- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) If so—
 - (a) who are the members of the committee;
 - (b) when did it last meet;
 - (c) when is it next expected to meet?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) The Committee was not reformed following a general revision of the constitution of zone development committees and a reorganisation of their membership.
- (3) Not applicable.

3. LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Additional Powers

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Justice:

What powers, at present exercised by the State Government, will be transferred to local authorities?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

At the instigation of the Minister for Local Government a local government liaison committee has been formed to provide direct consultation with the Government, and any additional powers to be given to councils by the State will originate from discussions with this committee.

4. TRAFFIC

Motor Vehicles: Personal Licenses

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS, to the Minister for Health:

Would the Minister for Traffic consider issuing personal vehicle licenses to motorists who apply for them as is presently done in New South Wales on the understanding that an additional premium of not less than \$30 be charged for this service?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

Yes, he will be pleased to consider the proposal.

5. HOUSING

Government Employees

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Justice:

- (1) Does the Government believe that it is its obligation to provide suitable housing for Government em-

ployees who are obliged to serve the State in towns other than Perth?

- (2) Does the Government realise that there is a severe overall shortage of housing for this purpose?
- (3) What does the Government intend to do to overcome this shortage?
- (4) Until the shortage is overcome, will the Government subsidise rentals on private accommodation so that employees forced to rent such accommodation will not be at a financial disadvantage compared with Government employees who occupy Government Employees' Housing Authority accommodation?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

- (1) Yes, subject to availability of funds.
- (2) It is recognised that the shortage has become more pronounced in recent years.
- (3) An endeavour will be made to provide the Government Employees' Housing Authority with additional capital when the 1974-75 budgets are being framed.
- (4) Like its predecessor, the Government does not have the resources to subsidise rentals on private accommodation.

6. This question was postponed.

7. WELFARE AGENCIES

Social Workers

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Community Welfare:

- (1) In view of the Press statement made by the Premier on the 3rd July, 1974, that the State Public Service growth rate would be held at 2 per cent or less, will the Minister advise whether—
 - (a) the numerous vacancies for social workers in the various Government and other welfare agencies will go unfilled; or
 - (b) any special provisions are being made to train extra social workers to meet the growing community needs for welfare assistance in areas such as health, rehabilitation, geriatrics, family and child welfare?
- (2) What steps are being taken to provide adequate social welfare services in country areas where they do not at present exist?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

- (1) (a) The matter of whether or not vacancies for social workers will go unfilled is one at present under close scrutiny in

conjunction with finalization of staff and financial budgets. No decision has as yet been made.

- (b) Training is a matter for the tertiary educational institutions. However, a senior officer of the Department for Community Welfare is currently overseas examining the availability of social workers who would be prepared to come to this State.
- (2) Social welfare services to country areas will be extended as and when funds are available.

8. POLICE STATION

Warburton Range Area

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR, to the Minister for Health:

Further to the reply to question 8 on the 30th July, 1974, which stated that the Aboriginal population of the Warburton Range area was approximately 400, at times increasing to 700, and a European population of 20, will he advise—

- (1) How many other areas or localities in Western Australia have a population of less than 400 and have a police station?
- (2) What is the population of each of these areas or localities?
- (3) What is the staff strength of each police station in these areas?
- (4) Apart from the normal fortnightly visits, how many special visits have been made by police officers to the Warburton Range area in the past five years?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

- (1) Five.
- (2) and (3)

	Population	Staff
Menzies	241 (census 1971)	1 Constable
Nungarin	391 (census 1971)	1 Constable
Koolyanobbing	300 (approximately)	1 Constable
Gascoyne Junction	320 (approximately)	1 Constable
Eucaly	51 (approximately)	1 Constable

- (4) This information is not readily available.

9. TOWN PLANNING

Subiaco: Non-residential Zoning

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Justice:

How many properties in the City of Subiaco were converted from residential to non-residential use in the 12 months to the 30th June, 1974?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

One property was so rezoned.
Three properties zoned non-residential were converted from residential to non-residential use.

10. CONSUMER PROTECTION

Beer Price Inquiry

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has the inquiry conducted by the Consumer Protection Bureau into the price of over-the-counter sales of beer in Western Australian hotels been concluded?
- (2) If the answer is "Yes" will the Minister table the Bureau's report?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) No. The Bureau is still awaiting financial information from several hotels which is being provided through the courtesy of the Australian Hotels Association.
- (2) Answered by (1).

11. PENSIONERS

North-West: Air Transport

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR, to the Minister for Health:

Further to the reply to question 2 on the 30th July, 1974, will the Government consider extending travel concessions to pensioners living in remote areas of the State, south of the 26° Parallel, who are at present not covered by any free transport scheme?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

This matter will be considered in the study of all pensioner State travel and other concessions.

12. HEALTH

Cancer Research

The Hon. Lyla ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Did the Minister see the article headed "Cure for Cancer is Suppressed" in *The Sunday Times* of the 14th July, 1974, reporting a statement by Dr Dean Burk, head of cyto chemistry at the National Cancer Institute in Washington, D.C., concerning the drug Laetrile?
- (2) If so, will he request his department to investigate the claims allegedly made by Dr Burk regarding the cancer suppressing properties of this drug?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No. The matter is currently being investigated by the Commonwealth Government's Department of Health.

13. MARGARINE

Restrictions on Production

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Justice:

- (1) Who are the Western Australian representatives on the Australian Agricultural Council?
- (2) At meetings of the Council will these representatives be expressing the views of the State Government regarding margarine, or those of some other group or organisation?
- (3) Will the State Government request that the Western Australian representatives support the removal of restrictions on the sale and production of margarine in this State?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

- (1) The Hon. W. R. McPharlin, Minister for Agriculture.
- (2) The views of the Government.
- (3) The Government is confident that the Minister will express appropriate views after considering all aspects of this matter.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

On motion by the Hon. T. Knight, leave of absence for six consecutive sittings of the House granted to the Hon. D. J. Wordsworth (South) on the ground of parliamentary business overseas.

SUPPLY BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 31st July.

THE HON. R. THOMPSON (South Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [2.46 p.m.]: From the outset let it be known that I have no intention of registering a vote against the Bill, and this applies to all members of the Labor Party because we have seen what happens to Oppositions which bring about the defeat of supply. Of course, unfortunately, we would not have the numbers in this Chamber to achieve that purpose, but even if we did have, I doubt whether we would resort to that type of move, because it does not reflect very honourably on any party which attempts to refuse supply, because, as has been proved in the recent Federal elections, the public will not accept such a strategy.

This is the normal type of Bill introduced at this time of the session, and you, Mr President, would agree, I am sure, that I could make a speech similar to those you made in each of the three years of the last Parliament.

The PRESIDENT: Not quite the same.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: That may be true. Your speeches may have been better than mine will be, or maybe worse.

I would not know. As time progresses we will find out whether mine are of equal quality or of a lower standard.

It is interesting to note that this measure seeks \$350 million, which is an increase of some \$65 million over that granted last year. It is also interesting to note that an issue of \$315 million is sought from the Consolidated Revenue while there is no variation in the \$30 million and \$5 million sought from other sources.

Of course I could say, as have all those who have stood in this position over the years, that this is a very fortunate Government to have so much money to spend. Other members standing in this position have always been able to say to the Government that in such-and-such a year the Government had much less to spend. But the strange thing about this is that when the Liberal Party launched its policy speech, we had the programme costed and the figure reached, within a few dollars, was \$315 million which is one of the amounts being asked for in the Bill before us.

I think that this supports what I said the other evening; that a reassessment must be made of the Liberal Party's policy, or at least part of it. I certainly would not criticise the Government if it told the people that it could not find the money and that it had made a miscalculation.

Later on I will deal at length with a matter in regard to which I could possibly be accused of anticipating something before a Bill is even introduced into Parliament, but I will do so in a helpful manner so that the Press, the media generally, and members of Parliament will know the actual cost of setting up an independent traffic authority in Western Australia. Such a proposal has been costed.

The Bill now before the House allows members to express opinions on matters which affect their provinces, as well as the general revenue of the State and things which they consider should or should not be done or which they would like to see done in the future. I do not need to go into great detail in respect of the Minister's second reading speech on this Bill, but I refer to the following statement made by the Minister—

In the absence of substantially increased financial assistance from the Commonwealth, there is no way the Government can provide for this huge lift in expenditure without substantial increases in States taxes and charges.

I can appreciate that. It continues—

At the recent Premier's Conference, every Premier stressed the seriousness of the financial situation with

which he was confronted this year and pressed for special addition to the financial assistance grants to enable the inevitable lift in State taxes and charges to be kept within reasonable limits.

Has that not always been the situation? I cannot recall any Premier and Treasurer saying he received enough money from any Commonwealth or Federal Government. Premiers have always come back short of funds and have never been able to extract enough money from the Commonwealth. It has been a perpetual grizzle.

Those who have been members of this House for a long time will remember the speeches of the late Sir Keith Watson and Mr Frank Wise, which were classics on the subject of Commonwealth-State financial arrangements. I commend those speeches to members who have not as yet had an opportunity to read them or have not had them drawn to their attention. Both were men of great calibre; they were great Western Australians who were well versed in the financial arrangements of the State and the Commonwealth.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: They were both very critical of the Commonwealth Government.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I did not say they were not. At the time those speeches were made, we had a Liberal Commonwealth Government. Sir Keith Watson was a Liberal member, and he was critical of the Commonwealth Government.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: They were both critical of the Commonwealth Government for many years.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: That is so. I did not nominate particular Governments. The honourable member caused me to raise that point.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: Exactly the same situation applies today.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Is that not the point I made? Has it ever been any different? Have we ever received enough money from the Federal Treasurer to finance the things we wanted to do in Western Australia? I do not think we ever will.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: We should maintain the same attitude in that case.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: These words have been said many times and I do not think there is any point in my pursuing the matter further. Irrespective of State politics and which party is occupying the Treasury bench in Canberra, the same criticism is levelled against the Commonwealth. The States have never been able to obtain enough money to put all their programmes and policies into effect.

I would like to mention some of the benefits which are probably accepted by the States, although not readily accepted.

The present Australian Government has made tremendous increases in the allocations for education programmes in the States. It has also increased allocations of finance in the fields of health, Aboriginal affairs, and social security, which to a degree have relieved the State Treasury of some heavy costs, particularly by enabling the widow's pension to be substituted for the supporting mother's allowance.

These additional allocations have had a rather good effect, which is not acknowledged by the State Government. These matters are easy to forget but they are meaningful to the people of Western Australia and they are creating better standards of living, education, and health for the residents of this State. Therefore, the Australian Government is making a far better contribution in certain areas than has previously been the case. It is prepared to make a contribution in other matters, but the State Treasurer wants to be able to spend the money in his own way, without any strings attached. When the Federal Treasurer is making money available, he wants to ensure it will be spent in the way in which it was intended to be spent.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: Whose money is it, anyway?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: If the Federal Treasurer is not assured the money will be spent in the manner laid down, we do not get it. This is a fact which the Premier and his Ministers must accept. If the Australian Government makes available a sum of \$50 million for welfare housing, the string "welfare housing" is attached to the granting of the funds. If that string were not attached, the State Government could spend the money to increase the infrastructure involved in setting up a mining town, or something of that nature. Unless the string is attached that the money must be spent for a specific purpose, the money could be used willy-nilly, for anything.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Governments are responsible.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I consider that is the right approach because we are dealing with the masses of the people. We want the quality of life to be improved for the most needy, and I admire the Australian Government for attaching such strings to finances.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Do you not think State Governments are capable of doing that?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The State Governments still receive their normal allocations of moneys for the programmes they put up.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: How do you work that out?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The Minister would not know.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: I know as much about it as you do.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Well, let the Minister tell me one instance in which the present Government has had a total cut-off in respect of a grant from Canberra which the State has received in previous years.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: The comprehensive water supply scheme is one.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: A total cut-off?

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Yes, a total cut-off.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Petrol subsidies is another, although that is not a grant.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: That was never a grant to the State. The honourable member should learn what he is talking about before he interjects.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: It is still Western Australian money; remember that. Western Australia has a responsible Government.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Of course, probably we used to smile whimsically at the fact that we could improve our roads but Victoria could not; and in Victoria the people were saying it was their petrol tax which was paying for the roads in Western Australia.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: They have made up for that in the last lot.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: That is right. We cannot have everything from the Commonwealth. It appears that the present State Government wants to take everything from the Commonwealth and to give nothing in return. It is a sensible observation that in a Commonwealth we must have an equitable distribution of funds; and ever since Federation all the States have been dissatisfied with the allocations from the Commonwealth.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: You are wrong.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: But we did better before 1942.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: If the honourable member wishes to follow that line he had better join the secessionist movement and get away from the Commonwealth.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: Have you forgotten that we had our own tax collection system for many years until uniform taxation was introduced; and at the time that was our source of revenue?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Uniform taxation was introduced for a very good reason.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: I am not arguing about that.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Does the present Government wish to return to the system of State taxation and have no part in Commonwealth taxation?

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: It could be an interesting exercise.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The Minister for Health raised the question. Does he want to return to that system?

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: That is not the question I raised. You used the words "since Federation", and I said we had our own system of taxation for many years before uniform taxation.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: We were then under a dual taxation system which was not satisfactory.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Two-thirds of it stayed in the State, and one-third of it went to the Commonwealth. That is the way it should be done now.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: That is correct. Uniform taxation was introduced, as we all know, during the war; and when income taxation was offered back to the States they would not take it back. Is that right? Of course it is.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Why the cry now when they did not want it back before?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: They did not want it back then. As I said earlier, one of the subjects I wish to speak on is that of a single traffic control authority.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: I hope you know more about that than you do about finances.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Well, it will be a good day when I hear the honourable member make a speech on a subject he knows something about.

We find the Liberal Party has a policy for a single uniform traffic control authority for Western Australia. As I progress I will show how the people of Western Australia, the Police Force, the Country Shire Councils' Association, and even I would think Treasury officials, are confused as a result of the many conflicting statements.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: It was your people who introduced the Bill for that.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: For the benefit of those who may not have been born when traffic control and vehicle licensing were first introduced in Western Australia, I point out that it occurred in 1919, when the metropolitan traffic area was defined by regulation to include part of the Wanneroo Road Board, part of the Greenmount Road Board, and part of the Armadale-Kelmscott Road Board. The Rockingham and Darling Range Road Boards were excluded at that time. In 1955 the areas of Rockingham and Kwinana were included within the metropolitan traffic area. In 1966 the

Armada-Kelmscott area was included, and Broome and West Kimberley were included in 1969. In 1970, Serpentine-Jarradale, Ravensthorpe, Esperance, and Manjimup were included. Merredin, Busselton, Wyndham-East Kimberley, Ashburton, Lake Grace, and Murray were included in 1971. Then in 1972 the Tablelands Shire, Marble Bar, Nullagine, Roe-bourne, Kondinin, Port Hedland and Northam were included. Coolgardie, Halls Creek, Laverton, Leonora, Menzies, Wiluna, Albany, Mandurah, and Tambellup were included in 1973. The Shire of Collie was included in 1974. When the list I have was drawn up at the end of March the inclusion of the Waroona and Dandaragan Shires was pending.

That is a brief history of how shires have handed over the control of traffic to the Police Force.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: You mentioned Northam: I take it you mean the Northam Town Council?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Yes, it is the Town of Northam. Rather than read out "shire of" each time I just went down the list. The list also refers to the Town of Albany.

One wonders why the control of traffic in those areas was handed over to the police. The simple reason is that in many of the areas it was totally uneconomic for the shire councils to exercise control over traffic; and in other areas the councils were unable to make a profit out of traffic control. In some cases it can be proved by studying the budgets of the shire councils concerned that they budgeted each year for a profit from traffic control.

The Hon. J. Heitman: That is not true.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I happen to have studied the budgets, and I have studied the profits that some shire councils made out of traffic control.

The Hon. J. Heitman: What profit has Morawa, Carnamah, Coorow, or Three Springs made?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Mr Heitman has raised the case of Morawa. I do not know about that case because I have not the papers before me; but I have studied the budgets of the shires—I think there are about 100—which still exercise control over traffic in Western Australia.

The Hon. J. Heitman: It would be nice if you mentioned one.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I will in a minute. I recall that earlier this year officers of the Traffic Section of the Police Department visited Morawa for the purpose of taking over traffic control.

The Hon. J. Heitman: No they did not. Let us be honest about that.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: They went to Morawa to have discussions on the taking over of traffic control from that

shire. It looked as though everything would be rosy at that stage, and I do not think that local authority was making a profit from traffic control.

Let me make the position clear. I have no hang-up or hate over country local authorities or traffic patrolmen employed by them. I am completely neutral on this subject. When I was Minister for Police I tried to bring down measures to stop the carnage on the roads. The present Minister for Police has my entire sympathy. I know how hard I worked and I know how hard he is working to achieve the same result. It is a difficult task. Unless there is co-ordination and co-operation between all authorities from one end of the State to the other so that officers can be transferred from one centre to another when pressures are felt in any particular area, during the Christmas period or during public holidays, the administration of traffic control becomes very difficult indeed.

I admit that in some cases country shires have co-operated with the police on occasions but this has not applied in all instances. Co-operation is most invaluable. Such co-operation, particularly along the main highways, is most necessary if we are to achieve efficient traffic control. Such control must start in Perth and radiate along the main highways to Esperance, Geraldton, Albany, and so on. Recently some criminals were being sought for many days by the police. They were seen twice by shire traffic patrolmen but they were powerless to apprehend them. They were not in possession of a stolen vehicle and it was not possible to apprehend them for speeding.

The Hon. J. Heitman: I know they have pulled up many and handed them over to the police.

Point of Order

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: Mr President, I rise on a point of order. I admit, being new to this House, I am not *au fait* with its Standing Orders, but I was under the impression that the subject with which the Leader of the Opposition is dealing was referred to in the Governor's Speech as being the subject of a Bill that will be introduced by the Government later this session. Therefore to my mind, that is tantamount to making the matter *sub judice*.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member will state his point of order.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: The point I make is that Mr Thompson is out of order in speaking on this subject at the present moment.

The PRESIDENT: It is the honourable member's place to ask me whether the Leader of the Opposition is out of order. I do not think he is. It is true that the

Governor's Speech foreshadows the introduction of a Bill to control traffic under one authority, but that Speech also mentioned other matters. Until the Bill in question is introduced I do not think it is out of order for the honourable member to address himself to a subject matter which may or may not be the subject of a Bill.

Debate Resumed

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I thank you for that ruling, Mr. President, because this clarifies the position for other members as similar questions have been asked of former Presidents. Therefore, on your ruling, Sir, we can discuss a subject prior to its being introduced in another place. When the Bill is introduced in another place it cannot be discussed in this House until it is introduced in this Chamber.

In raising these points today I commenced by saying that some people may ask: Why do you not keep this subject matter in abeyance until such time as the Bill is introduced? I want the people and the media to know exactly what is at stake, because it is an extravagant promise that should be reviewed and revised, because everyone, including the Treasurer at the present time, is confused, and if time permits I will attempt to deal with the matters contained in this thick file I have before me.

In view of the fact that some people advocate the retention of traffic control by the shires, I would like to quote a letter which is addressed to the traffic inspector of the Shire of Swan dated the 31st October, 1972. It is from the shire itself, and it reads—

Traffic Inspector.
Shire of Swan.

Dear Sir,

I have to advise that as from receipt of this notice you will be required to comply with the following instructions.

- (1) Your attention is drawn to the Local Government Officers' Award requiring you to work 38 hours per week and in addition the authorised overtime for weekend patrol activity only. You are required to comply with the conditions of the Award as all other patrol activity cannot be authorised by Council and would be termed as breaking of this Award which Council is legally bound to comply with.
- (2) No patrol activity will be undertaken after midnight on any night (the patrol car shall be off the road by 12.20 a.m.), and is not to be used upon the road before 6.30 a.m. unless the Shire Clerk has given his

specific approval, on any day. You are not to work more than eleven (11) hours in any one shift or day.

- (3) Your attention is drawn to the use of the patrol car which is permitted for travelling directly to and from work only; it does not cover any other activity.
- (4) Petrol Supply: The mileage of the patrol car is to be limited to such an extent that petrol supplies will not be required after 4.00 p.m. on Fridays and correspondingly not before 7.00 a.m. on Mondays (except where a public holiday is occurring on that weekend). The additional 4 gallon drum is to be kept for emergency purposes only. The purchase of petrol from other suppliers is not permitted.
- (5) Traffic Accident: Council policy in this regard that where a person is involved in a serious or fatal accident, then Council's Inspectors are not to become involved in any way. Police attendance is to be requested and those officers are to prepare reports and take all necessary action. Under no circumstances are you to become involved with or in any of the duties of a police officer.

Your compliance with the above instructions is required.

M. P. JOHNSTON,
Senior Traffic Inspector.

That is the only letter I have from that shire. It should be noted that the Shire of Swan has control over traffic in a section of the metropolitan area, because that area was extended into the Shire of Swan in 1972. There is a large build-up of traffic in that shire but if the officers are only to work certain hours then my argument is backed up completely. My argument is that we do not have a co-ordinated and efficient traffic control authority close to the city, let alone in country areas.

I was recently in the Katanning and Gnowangerup areas and I spoke with some farmers. I would mention they were not of the same political colour as me but they did comment that they agreed with the Labor Party policy regarding the police control of traffic. They said traffic control was nonexistent in those areas and that drivers—particularly young people—could do anything and get away with it. They did not see any traffic control in the area and thought the sooner the police took over the better.

I will now refer to another discrepancy and it concerns the Dundas Shire. I will refer to two reports and omit the names, but I am prepared to make the names available privately if required. On the 7th December, 1973, a contractor and farmer who permanently resides in the Shire of Esperance, but who also has a farming property in another shire, portion of which extends into the Shire of Dundas, presented a large flat-top trailer of 3 912 kilograms for licensing. The trailer was rejected because of certain faults, including faulty brakes. The faults which had to be rectified were listed on the application form, MRI, which is attached to the report.

On the 11th February, 1974, the trailer was seen in Esperance bearing Dundas Shire registration plates. The number is shown on the report. On the 12th February, 1974, a constable interviewed the farmer who said that after the trailer was rejected at Esperance he took it to a garage at Salmon Gums where he left it. When he picked it up it had been registered but the farmer did not know whether it had been inspected prior to licensing.

Inquiries made by a sergeant from the Shire of Dundas revealed that the application to register the trailer was made by letter with an open cheque. On the 12th February, 1974, the constable issued a further work order which is attached to the report. The faults shown on the report are substantially the same as those listed on the 7th December, 1973.

A constable issued a work order on a Holden car, the license of which had expired on the 17th December, 1973. He also attached a yellow sticker to that car, the owner of which lives in Salmon Gums. On the 9th January, 1974, the owner was apprehended at Esperance while driving his car, and he was charged with driving an unlicensed vehicle, and driving contrary to the work order. When the car was stopped in Esperance it was bearing Dundas registration plates, and the yellow sticker was still attached to the windscreen.

Inquiries by the police revealed that the owner handed the registration papers and the licensing fee to a storekeeper in Salmon Gums—who is also a shire councillor—who arranged the registration of the car. The car was not examined. The report goes on to say that the owner resides within the Shire of Esperance and, rightly, should have had the vehicle registered in that shire after examination. These are only two instances which have been brought to my notice.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Two instances from one shire. What about other shires?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: As I have already said, these are the only two instances which have been brought to my notice.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: What is the honourable member trying to tell us?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I am trying to tell members about the lackadaisical and inefficient manner in which shire councils have been licensing vehicles.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Does the honourable member brand all shire councils in the same way?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: If the honourable member will only listen; I said these were the only cases brought to my attention.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: But you are referring to shire councils in general terms.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I said shire councils were licensing vehicles in a lackadaisical way.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Shire councils!

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I was referring to the shire council I have mentioned.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: And to make a long story short—

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It is possible that if this form of licensing occurs in the shire to which I have referred it also occurs in others. It is a shocking state of affairs when a storekeeper can accept a registration fee for a vehicle and then license the vehicle without inspection.

I give credit to the traffic inspector at Kalamunda for his recent action when a jacked-up car was presented for inspection. Mr Masters would know more about the case than I do but a piece of wood had been jammed into the sub-frame of a vehicle so that it could be driven to the licensing authority for inspection. The Consumer Protection Bureau investigated the instance and the person concerned was reimbursed.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: We can take it that the honourable member will support the Government proposal for a single traffic authority?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I would not jump to conclusions, but if the honourable member has a little patience and cares to listen for another hour and a half he will know why I am opposed to such an authority. If he continues to interject it will take me a lot longer to explain.

Most members would be aware that each year, in Australia, there is a conference which is attended by the heads of traffic departments, and people concerned with the National Safety Council. I intend to quote some figures which are readily

available from the Department of Motor Vehicles, the Police Department, or the National Safety Council. I happened to obtain the figures from the Police Department when I was Minister.

The figures show the ratio of accidents per 10 000 vehicles for each State in the Commonwealth. They are for 1972 because those for 1973 were not available to me. The figures for the metropolitan areas, for the 1972 year show that the number of persons killed, per 10 000 vehicles, in South Australia was four. The number in Western Australia was 4.3; we were the second lowest in the Commonwealth. The number in New South Wales was 4.4; Queensland 5.8; Victoria 5.9; and Tasmania was the highest with a figure of nine.

So members can see that our record within the metropolitan districts is very good—we have the second lowest percentage in the Commonwealth. However, let us look at the country areas of Western Australia using the same statistics of the number of people killed per 10 000 of population. Tasmania has the lowest figure of 5.2 per cent, followed by Victoria with 6.9 per cent. New South Wales has a road toll of 8.9 per cent in country areas, South Australia has 8.3 per cent, Queensland has 8.7 per cent, and Western Australia has the highest percentage in the Commonwealth for country areas—13.4 per cent.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Now will you give us the statistics relative to the amount of mileage of country roads in each State?

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: That is a very pertinent point.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: It has a big bearing on the figures quoted.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I think I have these figures here.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: You will notice that the Tasmanian figures go from the highest in the metropolitan area to the lowest in country areas. Victoria shows the same pattern—these are the smallest States.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I have these figures here somewhere, but I did not intend to use them.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: There are three types of lies, and the worst ones are statistics. I never trust them.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I will be pleased to hear the Hon. H. W. Gayfer when he speaks.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I have a table here which I will show to the honourable member if he so desires. These figures deal with vehicle registrations with the Department of Motor Vehicles to the 30th June, 1973. At that date 424 817 vehicles were registered, to which we can add the 19 641 vehicle registrations transferred to the Police Department, making

a total of vehicle registrations at the 1st July, 1974, of 444 458 or 73 per cent of the total vehicles for the State.

After this takeover the metropolitan area will cover 1 729 513 km so this means that the Department of Motor Vehicles will be controlling 68.5 per cent of the State. On the 30th June, 1973, the other licensing authorities had 180 426 registrations. This is 29.8 per cent of the vehicle registrations for the State, and 31.5 per cent of the area of the State under their control. The honourable member is quite welcome to look at this table.

The Hon. J. Heitman: The records there show that 65 per cent of the State was taken over by the Police Department. That will take in quite a bit of the country area.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: This is the registration of vehicles through the Department of Motor Vehicles and the figures given are 68.5 per cent of vehicles registered with the department and 31.5 per cent registered with country shires.

The Hon. J. Heitman: It does not tell us what we want to know.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: No, not in complete detail, but this is the information available from the Department of Motor Vehicles.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Are you implying that more road deaths occur on Western Australian country roads because these country areas are not controlled by the police?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I have never said that.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: I do not know what you are trying to get at.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: There have been too many interjections—how can he make his point.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: If members will let me get on with my speech, I will finish a lot more quickly. I am trying to tell members something which I consider they should know. I am leading up to the cost involved in creating a new separate authority. When the present Treasurer made his policy speech he told us his party planned to set up independent traffic control throughout Western Australia. I asked the department to cost the setting up of such an authority in the same way as we sought figures for the other items put forward in the Liberal Party policy speech.

At the present time we have 516 people actively engaged in traffic control in Western Australia. Members will recall that I was successful in obtaining finance for another 30 cars plus 50 recruits for the Police Force. Incidentally, these 50 recruits were inducted into the Police Academy on the 7th April—the day on which the new Cabinet was sworn in. At

this stage the normal number of recruits was inducted plus 50 extra men. On these figures at the present time we have an effective force of 566 men controlling traffic in the areas under police jurisdiction in Western Australia. The proposal put forward by the Premier was for a force of 500 people to control traffic in the whole of the State, and this figure has been mentioned many times in the Press. We have 516 people actively engaged in traffic control at the moment and this does not take into account office and administrative staff. These officers work overtime to cover peak periods and I give them credit for the job they do during the Christmas and Easter holidays.

If the Premier implements his policy for overall traffic control for the State, he will actually reduce the number of people actively engaged in these duties.

I would like to tell members the comments that I wrote down at the time the then Leader of the Opposition made his policy speech. I said that the Liberal Party policy contains an extraordinary statement which, if it were not dealing with a serious subject, would be laughable. The Liberal Party claimed it arrived at a decision to establish a new authority after deep research and consultation with various bodies including the Country Shire Councils' Association, etc., etc. It is significant that the only body mentioned is the Country Shire Councils' Association.

I made a notation to the effect and asked what expertise would they have in controlling traffic? They might know something about and have some qualification and expertise so far as farming is concerned; but when it comes to traffic they would know absolutely nothing. Mr Withers need not laugh, and before Mr Heitman interjects I would repeat that these people would know exactly nothing because they send all their traffic inspectors to the police to get trained free of charge.

The Hon. J. Heitman: They want uniformity. You do not seem to wake up to this.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: If this is so, why do they want to send their inspectors to the police to be trained free of charge? Why do not they follow the example of other progressive councils in Western Australia? For example, Geraldton has just handed over control and Geraldton was, for a long time, one of the councils which was involved in wanting to remain autonomous.

But let me finish dealing with this question of "etc., etc." It is merely another red herring that the present Treasurer drew across the television screen on the night in question. He said this had been done "after deep research and consultation with various bodies including

the Country Shire Councils' Association, etc., etc.". But who are the people most versed in traffic control in Western Australia?

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: The Country Shire Councils.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The police of course.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: No.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Of course they are, because the police trained the Country Shire Councils' inspectors.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: They have not been doing a very good job.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: But nobody from the Liberal Party consulted the police on this matter, so how could they have well researched it? What a pack of lies it all is.

The Hon. J. Heitman: That is not quite true. I can remember an inter-departmental committee which comprised the police, the Treasury, main roads engineers, and so on, which researched this thing before your Government came in, and since then it has been researched.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I will give the honourable member an opportunity to get up and say all he wants to. It does seem strange to me, however, that a policy should be put forward indicating that the matter had been well researched by the Country Shire Councils' Association etc., etc. This is the only body that is named.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Various bodies were included.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Did the National Safety Council make a submission for the preparation of the policy speech?

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Who in the Police Department told you there had been no consultation with the Liberal Party?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The assistant commissioner, because the commissioner was away at the time.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Did he say this recently?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I asked a question as to who were the other bodies—the "etc., etc." The Police Department was certainly not consulted so the police was not one of these bodies. I will challenge the honourable member to prove that I am wrong on this matter.

The Hon. J. Heitman: I will take the bet.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Did other qualified bodies support the proposal—bodies such as the National Safety Council and the Main Roads Department? These two bodies should have been consulted.

The Hon. J. Heitman: They were consulted and still are being consulted.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: They were not consulted prior to the election. They may have been consulted after the election.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: How do you know they were not consulted?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: From the inquiries I made; I was told they were not consulted.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.00 p.m.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The idea of a single traffic control authority has been pedalled around by the Country Shire Councils' Association since the early 1960s. It was not accepted by the Brand Government. I think it was in 1965, if my memory serves me correctly, that the Brand Government established a committee to examine the proposal to have one body controlling all traffic throughout Western Australia. On that committee was a representative of the National Safety Council, one from the Royal Automobile Club of Western Australia, and a representative of the Country Shire Councils' Association. That committee came down two to one in favour of the proposal and, of course, I do not need to tell members who was against it. Of course, it was the representative from the Country Shire Councils' Association. The recommendation of that committee was that police should control traffic throughout Western Australia. However, the Brand Government did not adopt that recommendation. If the proposal had been adopted at that time, the Police Force would have grown and we would have an efficient control body in Western Australia at present.

Let us examine the activities of the separate traffic control body which exists in New Zealand. I visited New Zealand in February of this year. I spent a month there during which time I examined closely separate traffic control body. I spoke to officers of the Police Force, the public, taxi drivers in particular, members of the control authority itself and Ministers of the Government. I came to the conclusion that the operations of that body are a joke. In New Zealand, one very seldom sees a policeman walking around the streets. In the month I spent there, I think I saw only two. The policemen are all on patrol. One sees these police patrol cars travelling along the road where the speed limit is 30 m.p.h.—not 35 m.p.h. which operates in our metropolitan area—and one sees them being passed at 60 m.p.h. and 70 m.p.h. When I asked the police about this they said, "It has nothing to do with us. We have no control over traffic. We are not permitted to interfere with traffic; that is up to the traffic control body. That is their responsibility. We deal only with crime."

From the many statements which have been made, it is clear that the intention of this Government is to establish an in-

dependent authority that will supervise all traffic matters, thus releasing the police to look after crime.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: What is the accident rate in New Zealand per 10 000 vehicles? You would have asked that question during your stay.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I cannot give the honourable member the answer to his interjection. I would not be honest if I quoted him figures. However, I will say this: During my visit I examined the situation in both islands and I believe the accident rate would be higher than ours. I do not know what the death rate is but from figures quoted several years ago it would appear that New Zealand's death rate would be at least on a par with ours. This could be checked by referring to the *Hansard* record. However, many other factors must be taken into consideration when studying the New Zealand situation. There is a mountainous terrain and the vehicles travel in this terrain for much of the time.

The restrictions on the importation of motorcars into New Zealand is also a factor to be considered. It is not uncommon to see on any one day half a dozen Ford A motorcars, Chevrolet 4s and Chevrolet 6s, as well as Austin 7s. There are many such motorcars. I think the predominant motorcar in New Zealand would be the old Vauxhall Velox. There are many Ford 10s and vehicles of similar vintage. Although a few Japanese and Australian cars are now entering the New Zealand market, generally their standard of vehicle is not very high. I do not think one could compare the accident rate in New Zealand with that which applies here because we conform to a high standard of vehicle inspection and roadworthiness.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: That is city and country alike, of course.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Of course, down in Dundas they do not have such high standards. One can get a license down there without an inspection. These are points which must be taken into consideration. I understand from speaking with four or five Ministers of the New Zealand Government that the separate traffic control body has proved to be an ineffective force. I do not think it will have a very long life in that country.

In view of the plea of the Prime Minister and of the Premiers for restraints on spending, I wonder why the Government is proposing to embark on such an expensive exercise as the establishment of a single traffic authority. I could bore members with pages of figures. I have them in front of me, but it would take at least three-quarters of an hour to read them.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: You may as well read them while you have them in front of you.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Working on the figures which applied before the last increase in pay and assuming that a traffic inspector will receive the same pay as a policeman, it is estimated that the establishment of this authority will cost—

Point of Order

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: I rise to speak on a point of order and ask for an explanation of Standing Order 83.

The PRESIDENT: I take it that the honourable member is asking me whether Mr Thompson is in order in continuing his remarks on this subject, in view of the foreshadowed legislation.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: I am not too sure of the meaning of the word "impending".

The PRESIDENT: I think the word "impending" means legislation which has been introduced and, to the best of my knowledge, the legislation has not been introduced. A few moments ago during the afternoon tea suspension I read a page of today's *Daily News* and noticed a report of a member attacking some other legislation—the member was not from this place—which, to the best of my knowledge, also has not been introduced. In the light of that, I think Mr Thompson is in order in proceeding.

The Hon. H. W. GAYFER: Thank you, Mr President. I express my apologies to Mr Thompson.

Debate Resumed

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I was making the point that the Prime Minister and the State Premiers have asked for restraints on spending. If we were to establish an independent traffic control authority, it would be the only one in Australia. In the other States, traffic is controlled by police. If the rest of Australia has been so wrong in the past—perhaps, since 1919—in not having established such an authority; what is wrong with our Police Force? I think this proposal represents a sad reflection on the police. Let us go further. Unless the proposal is to transfer 250 experienced personnel from the Police Force to the proposed traffic control authority, it will not get off the ground because the experience and the expertise will not be there without police training and assistance.

I do not know how many shire council traffic control officers there are in Western Australia. I do not even know whether, under this proposal of the Liberal Government, the independent traffic control officers will meet the rigid standards laid down by the Police Force. If they are to have equivalent status to members of the Police Force, it will mean that they must undergo the same type of examination and have the

same qualification. I think this represents a sad reflection on the police officers of our State, who have served their State well.

This proposal has been publicised on many occasions and it would appear that there is to be a traffic control force of 500. Of course, although we have a traffic branch, policemen on normal duties throughout the State do exercise traffic control in their own areas. Is it intended that officers of this new authority will be stationed in areas such as the tablelands, the Kimberleys, Fitzroy Crossing, and other remote areas?

Will there be a duplication in those areas? If this is to be the case, certainly this will be a costly exercise. The cost of setting up a complete and independent authority in Western Australia comprising some 500 men would be in excess of \$8 million, taking all things into account.

The Hon. J. Heitman: That was only a guess based on what was stated last year. You have doubled the cost estimate of last year. Last year, it was \$4 million.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I did not say \$4 million last year. This is the first time I have ever quoted figures.

The Hon. J. Heitman: You came out with a statement in the Press last year and a figure was quoted by your leader.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: That is inflation for you!

The Hon. J. Heitman: You are just plucking figures out of the air.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: This is the first time I have quoted figures because I did not have these figures in my possession until just after the policy speech of the present Premier. I did the costing; I said that just prior to the suspension of the sitting for afternoon tea.

Let us have a look at some of the costs which would be involved in establishing such an authority. These estimates are based on a force of 250 men and apply to the period prior to the last wage increase received by the members of the Police Force. Salaries would amount to \$2 512 398. Today, the cost would be \$3 937 898. Administration would cost \$141 000. Printing, stationery, telephones, and the like would cost \$35 000 and, as houses must be provided, housing will cost \$55 000.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: How many houses do you anticipate building for that amount?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Miscellaneous items such as fuel, lighting, water, and the like would amount to \$415 000. Transport alone would cost \$374 000 and a takeover would cost \$150 000 which would make a grand total of \$5 107 863. In addition it would be impossible for the CIB, the police, and this new super force to use the same radio network.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Who said that?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Anyone who knows anything about police work—and the fact is also acknowledged by the Minister for Police—knows the same network could not be used.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Who said it was impossible?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I said it was impossible.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: And your qualification is what?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: My qualification is experience and research through the departments. I have also made a study myself and have been advised by experts in the field.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Cut it out. You are the only one who has said it is impossible.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: No I am not. The Police Force has said it, too.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: It has not said that. You are the only one.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Nothing is impossible.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: So many confusing statements have been made—

The Hon. N. McNeill: By you.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: —by the Minister and the Treasurer.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: That was in the last Government. We are talking about this one.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I will be reading all these newspaper headings so we will find the one in which it was stated.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Will you explain that \$55 000 for housing?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Does not the honourable member know that police housing must be provided in remote areas.

The Hon. J. Heitman: Where will you build those two.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Explain what you will do with that money.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It will be paid to GEHA.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: You are not sure.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: School teachers and other Government employees are on subsidised rents.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: I know that. I am asking you what the \$55 000 is for.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I have told the honourable member.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Just that, then full stop. In other words, you do not know. Someone has written that for you and you are reading it out.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I thought the honourable member was intelligent. I explained that that money would be used to pay GEHA.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: That is not what you said first.

The PRESIDENT: I think the Leader of the Opposition should address the Chair.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I think it would be a good idea too, and I thank you for reminding me, Sir.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: I think you should send us all a copy of what you have there to save you reading it.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Of course the 500 men will have to be recruited and this will be a costly exercise which Western Australia cannot afford at this time. I have not done any costing on this, but for possibly another \$1 million we could have co-ordinated police traffic control throughout Western Australia and this would be of great benefit to the State. A policeman is appointed to carry out more than one function. He deals with crime of all kinds including drugs, manslaughter, and so on. You name it and he deals with it. This is the situation at the present time. Policemen in outer areas are not appointed specifically as patrol officers.

This Government should be realistic because it is taxpayers' money being used. The Government is complaining about lack of funds but it is extravagantly setting up a new department it can ill-afford.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Don't you think you would be wiser to keep this speech until the Bill is introduced?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I think members should know now, and that is why I am making this speech now. I have plenty of other material to use when the Bill has been introduced.

The Hon. N. McNeill: You will probably have to make a completely different speech then.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: No I will not. The Government should utilise the services of an expert adviser. The police are complaining that they know nothing about the situation. Mr O'Connor changed his tune from day to day and eventually the Premier told him not to make any more statements. So he stopped doing so. We have the shire traffic inspectors having meetings because they do not know what is going on.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Because people like you make wild statements.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The following are some headings from newspapers—

Police worry on traffic scheme.

Doubts about a paler shade of blue.

Then we have a cartoon dealing with the subject. In the cartoon is a notice reading, "‘Highway Patrol’, A Fantastic New Extravaganza, written, produced, and directed by Ray O’Connor." The caption under the cartoon reads, "As backer of this fabulous project, may I ask one small question: What exactly can they do that ordinary traffic police can’t?"

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Do you get your information from cartoons?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Even the Press is ridiculing the patrol. More headings read as follows—

O’Connor rebuts patrol claims.

Police to staff highway patrol.

What happens to us, ask inspectors.

‘No change’ in Highway Patrol plan.

Highway patrol mystery deepens.

Strike threat over traffic.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: That’s more like it!

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The honourable member knows who was going to strike does he not? It was the country shire traffic inspectors.

The Hon. J. Heltman: Don’t be stupid!

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Further headings read—

Union bid to block roads plan.

‘High-risk’ drivers to lose licences.

That is rather an amazing statement. The following appears in *The West Australian* of the 17th July—

The Minister for Police, Mr O’Connor, has ordered the withdrawal of driving licences from "high-risk" motorists who have been at fault in serious accidents.

I do not know why someone did not tell him or he did not find out that numerous people in Western Australia have lost their license under section 24 of the Police Act. When the Act was originally drafted the power to cancel licenses was given to the Commissioner of Police but now the Director of Motor Vehicles has the power. The Act was written for a specific purpose; that is, so that a politician—a Minister—would be unable to pull strings within a department or give orders not in conformity with the laws passed by Parliament.

That article in *The West Australian* was not refuted by the Minister. However, the next day the Director of Motor Vehicles (Mr Athol Monck) had to come to his rescue.

The withdrawal of driving licenses is provided for in section 24 of the Traffic Act which states that the Commissioner of Police may refuse to issue a driver’s license, or may cancel, suspend, or refuse to renew a driver’s license where he has reason to believe that the applicant for, or the

holder of, a license is not of good character. The commissioner may—and now the Director of Motor Vehicles may—for many offences, take this action. For without any reason at all the director can refuse a person a driver’s license. This applies also if a person’s license has been suspended and the suspension period has been completed. The director can order that the license be not renewed. I have received letters from many people who have been in that position. That section has been applied ever since it was placed in the Act. However, now Mr O’Connor has ordered—he has ordered—that the license be taken away. The Act does not say he can do that. He should not have that power and he should not make those statements.

The Hon. N. McNeill: You do not agree it should be done?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Of course I agree it should be done, but not by a dictator.

The Hon. J. Heltman: No, it is Government policy.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It is not Government policy. The law is what is written into the Act.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: It is Government policy to ensure that the Act is implemented.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It is not the Minister’s responsibility.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: The Government can make whatever policy it wants, and it happened to adopt that as its policy.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The law is written in the Act.

The Hon. J. Heltman: The Minister administers the Act.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: He does, but he is not in a position to order the director to do something which is not in the Act, and it is not in the Act—

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: He did not order him to do something which is not in the Act.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: —that the Minister shall order the director to take away the license.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: In other words he cannot tell the director to enforce the law?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Anyone who has had any experience with the Police Force would know that no-one tells members of the Police Force what to do. They live religiously by the Act and they carry it out religiously. God help the day when Ministers can start dictating to members of the Police Force.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: The Minister told the director to do what was in the Act.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: He said he ordered the licenses to be taken away.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: He ordered those concerned to carry out the provisions of the Act.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Without reading articles, members can, by the headlines, realise the utter confusion which exists.

The Press comments are contradictory. At a meeting of country shires everything is happy and so the original scheme is to be put into effect. Then, in another Press report, the patrol is to have the Police Force behind it.

The Hon. J. Heltman: It is no wonder they stopped making statements.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Then it becomes a paler shade of blue. The police do not know what is happening. A meeting of MOA officers was held in Geraldton because they did not know what was going on. Everyone is looking for some guidance, help, and assistance. All the present Minister and Treasurer have done is befuddle the whole situation. No wonder the public is concerned. The public will be more than concerned if they have to face up to a bill of something like \$8 million to duplicate a service.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: That is your figure.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: If that amount of money is not spent it will not be an efficient organisation.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: That is your opinion.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: If the job is to be done only half heartedly and there is to be no special radio network, the patrol will not be efficient. The police radio is already used in connection with crimes. It is used by the CIB and for general police work.

Let us consider the bikie incident in Brooklyn. What would happen if 150 bikes went to a certain country town as occurred on that occasion? Who would be responsible for going to the town—the traffic authority, the policemen, or both?

The Hon. N. McNeill: Why not wait for the Bill.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: If an emergency arose, why not send both?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Will they be trained in police duties? Will they be policemen?

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: You will be informed of this when the Bill is presented.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I can understand why the Treasurer prevented the Minister making statements. The Minister has made so many contradictory statements that no-one knows what is going on.

The Hon. J. Heltman: You will confuse the matter more.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: It is just as well he stopped making statements, otherwise we would have another dozen newspapers for you to quote from.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: There are several thinking members of the Liberal Party, and I hope they will at least question their Minister on the points I have raised in order to find out how much the proposal will cost. Will it be a duplication of services? Will the whole State be serviced? Will the police have control in some areas, such as Halls Creek, Fitzroy Crossing, and the East Kimberleys, as at present? Will there be fragmentation? Can a radio network be used for all these purposes?

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: You said it was impossible. They do not have to go any further with that inquiry because your inquiry has established it is absolutely impossible.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: That is right. The last and most important point I want to make is that most people enter the traffic control section of the Police Force when they are in their early 20s, and they usually remain in that section for five, 10, or 15 years. At the end of that time they usually transfer to another section because traffic control is a high-risk job and they have responsibilities to their families after 15 years. Will those people be riding motorcycles and driving high speed cars until they are 60 or 65? Can it be wondered at that the police have said they will not transfer over to the new authority?

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Not all of them have said that. Some of them are already seeking transfer.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: In one of his Press statements the Minister said he had received telephone calls from some people who wanted to transfer.

The Hon. J. Heltman: Were you not going to transfer some police over to the traffic side? If I remember rightly, the Minister at that time said when they became too old to drive he would put them into the CIB.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: That is what we did, very effectively. Groups of 40 to 50 men went into each school at the academy, and every one of them was given an opportunity to go through the traffic course. If they could meet the rigid requirements, they were able to transfer.

Recently we were given an extra 50 men. We knew it was not possible to pluck out of thin air 50 people who were suitable for this type of work. We therefore invited first-class constables and so on, who had previously done the course and were prepared to come back, to undertake a refresher course. The worst thing one can do is put inexperienced people in

charge of high-speed vehicles. I think 19 men applied within a month of our new scheme coming into operation. Not all of them were accepted; some were considered to be unsuitable. Our scheme was given a great deal of thought in order to ensure that not only would the policemen be protected but also the public.

I support the Supply Bill.

THE HON. V. J. FERRY (South-West) [4.34 p.m.]: I support the Bill now before the House. I do not intend to take up much time in this debate but I would like to mention one particular matter—which, quite appropriately, is one of finance.

It will be recalled that on the 24th August, 1971, this House saw fit to appoint a Select Committee, comprising one member of each of the three political parties then represented here, to examine the potato industry in this State. An inquiry was previously conducted into the potato industry by a Royal Commission in 1955; so it was appropriate that the industry should again be examined in 1971. During the course of its examination, the Select Committee took evidence from 89 witnesses in the metropolitan area and all the potato-growing areas of the State, and it reported its findings to the House on the 2nd May, 1972.

I would like to remind members that during the debate leading up to the appointment of the Select Committee the Labor Government of the day strongly opposed such an appointment. It said the industry was in excellent shape and did not deserve the benefit of an inquiry at that time. The Government was entitled to its view. However, this House thought otherwise and appointed a committee to examine the industry.

When one remembers the strong and vehement opposition of the Government to the proposal, one can be excused for being surprised, to say the least, when on the 20th February, 1973, the Government appointed a private consultant to examine the very same industry.

The Select Committee made a number of recommendations and, as one would expect, among those recommendations were a number of measures which would lead to legislation for the amendment of the Marketing of Potatoes Act. The Government chose not to introduce any amending legislation whatsoever. One wonders why the Government balked at the recommendations, which were in accordance with the ideas of the Select Committee and the industry at all levels.

The firm King Lissiman & Co. was appointed by the Government to carry out another inquiry. For what reason? The Government had earlier said the industry was in good shape and did not deserve that kind of inquiry. However, the private

consultant was employed. I say now, emphatically and clearly, that I have no quarrel with the company or the senior partner (Mr K. H. Lissiman) who led the inquiry. I acknowledge that the firm is highly qualified and competent to carry out such an inquiry.

The consultants were appointed on the 20th February, 1973, but it was not until the 27th December of the same year that their report became available to the Government. It took 10 or 11 months for the second inquiry to be completed. It is interesting to read this statement in paragraph 1.5 on page 2 of the Lissiman report—

In conducting my Enquiry, I have been able to make use of evidence given to the Select Committee which reported on the Potato Industry in W.A. under date of 2nd May, 1972. The Chairman of that Select Committee, the Hon. V. J. Ferry, M.L.C., arranged for me to have access to the transcript of evidence. This avoided unnecessary duplication of interviews, particularly with growers, many of whom gave evidence to that Committee.

Mr Lissiman was gracious enough to acknowledge the work of the Select Committee appointed by this House.

Needless to say, the Lissiman report contained a great deal of detail and covered many facets of the industry. Of necessity, there was a certain amount of duplication by both inquiries; indeed, there was duplication of a number of recommendations. I feel rather satisfied that there was some duplication of the recommendations, because the second report certainly supported the first report. One wonders why it was necessary for the Government of the day to engage the private consultants to carry out the second inquiry.

When dealing with a money Bill, it is interesting to note that the cost of the Lissiman report was \$13 440.89. The cost of the Select Committee set up by this House was less than \$1 000. However, the Government of the day said there was nothing wrong with the industry. One then tries to ascertain the reason for the Government of the day choosing to instigate a second inquiry.

When the Lissiman report was presented to the Government, certain comments on it were made by the then Minister for Agriculture (Mr H. D. Evans). One of his comments was—

... the board and industry generally should recognise the threat posed by increasing Eastern States production.

Efficiency, quality and loyalty must be improved to enable the WA industry to survive and overcome the danger.

The same Press item also quotes the Minister as follows—

Mr Evans said yesterday that the report would be discussed by the board, growers and the Agriculture Department.

The West Australian of the 1st February, 1974, quotes the Minister as saying—

The second inquiry was important because it stressed the need for the industry to meet the challenge of growing Eastern States production.

This could involve a complete re-examination of the board's methods of operation.

To the mind of the previous Minister for Agriculture, the important thing was the danger that Eastern States production would affect the potato industry in Western Australia, and it cost over \$13 000 to find that out when the report of the Select Committee pointed out the very same matter.

I would like to quote from the annual reports of the Potato Marketing Board of Western Australia. The 24th Annual Report for the year 1972 contained this—

The basic cause of this situation arising was the uncontrolled over-production of potatoes in the Eastern States, particularly Victoria, where growers were prepared to accept practically any price in an effort to recover portion of the expense of growing the crops and we understand a selling price in the range of \$12 to \$15 per ton was not uncommon.

It would appear that a number of Growers in Victoria and South Australia adopted the principle of planting larger areas to potatoes to lower their production costs and while they may have achieved this objective to a degree, in so doing, they created a ridiculous surplus for which there was no market with the result that many thousands of tons were left in the ground in some States.

I refer now to the 1973 annual report of the Western Australian Potato Marketing Board, as follows—

In the Twenty-fourth Report—

That is the report to which I referred previously. To continue—

—reference was made to the serious overproduction of Potatoes in some Eastern States in recent years and the view was expressed that the cycle of low and high prices, characteristic of the Potato Industry in areas where no control is practised would not show any significant change.

This has been proved correct as after a period of low prices, high ones are again being experienced.

So it is quite apparent from the submissions I have made to the House that the Potato Marketing Board and other authorities, such as the Department of Agriculture and the Potato Growers' Association, would be aware of the production situation in the Eastern States, because these facts were known. Why it was found necessary to appoint another inquiry into the industry to come up with the same major finding is beyond my comprehension. It is absolutely incredible that the Government should do that. I believe it made the decision purely out of political pique.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Did you say "pique" or "heat"?

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: I believe the Government made the decision because it did not want to be outdone in relation to assisting the rural industries. The inquiry was purely a duplication. Admittedly the Lissiman report did go into great detail in respect of accounting factors, but the main point was in respect of the Eastern States overproduction, and this was already well and truly documented.

It is interesting also to consider an article which appeared in *The Potato Grower*, which is the official journal of the Potato Growers' Association, of August, 1974. It is as follows—

Well over \$100,000.00 worth of Processed Potatoes were Imported into Australia for the month of May bringing the year's total to a value of \$2,092,618.00 from July 1st last year to May 31st this year.

So during that 11-month period potato products to the value of \$2 million were imported into Australia. That sort of information was also contained in the report of the Select Committee; and it was also contained in the Lissiman report. Therefore, I find it incredible that the Government should spend over \$13 000 on an inquiry which came up with similar answers.

Further to that, during all this time the Government procrastinated and did not carry out the wishes of the industry, which had requested a number of amendments to the Marketing of Potatoes Act. I am very confident that the present Government, in the light of what has gone before and in deference to the request of the industry and the board, will bring amendments to the Act before the Parliament in the very near future, and I look forward to that occasion.

I raise this point today during the passage of the Supply Bill to illustrate the incompetence the previous Government in a matter of this nature. I support the Bill.

THE HON. LYLA ELLIOTT (North-East Metropolitan) [4.49 p.m.]: Mr President, as this is my first speech for the session I

would like to take advantage of the opportunity to congratulate you on your election as Presiding Officer of this Chamber. I also congratulate the Ministers of the Government and the new members of Parliament, particularly the lady members, the Hon. Grace Vaughan and the Hon. Margaret McAleer. I do not feel quite so outnumbered now that the odds have been reduced to nine to one from 29 to one.

We are asked to support the first Supply Bill presented by the new Government since it was elected to office; and the first thing I want to speak about is the return to office of the Liberal and Country Parties. Before we go very much further into this session I want to dispel any impression that has been created or may continue to be created by members of those parties that they were swept into Government by a massive vote against the Labor Party.

I would like to quote a few figures to support my remarks. I will quote the percentages of primary votes polled by each of the parties represented in this Parliament, and the number of seats won by them at the recent State elections. Firstly, in the Legislative Assembly the Liberal Party polled 40.2 per cent of the primary votes and won 23 seats. The National Alliance polled 10.8 per cent and won six seats. The ALP polled 48.1 per cent of the vote and won 22 seats. So members will see that, for example, the Liberal Party polled 8 per cent fewer votes than the Labor Party, but it won one more seat.

In the Legislative Council the position was even worse. The Liberal Party polled 45.4 per cent of the primary votes, which gave it nine seats. The National Alliance polled 7.3 per cent of the vote and won one seat. The Labor Party polled 47.2 per cent of the primary votes and won only five seats.

Again comparing Labor and Liberal votes, we find that the Liberal Party polled about 2 per cent fewer votes over all the State than the Labor Party polled, but it actually won four more seats.

Upon further analysing the vote we find in actual fact the slip in votes from the previous 1971 elections was only 0.8 per cent as far as the Labor Party was concerned; but the actual number of seats which changed hands amounted to 7.8 per cent.

I think members will recall that on a number of occasions I have spoken in this Parliament about the imbalance in the value of votes between country and city electorates.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: I think you did mention it once or twice.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I submit that this is responsible for the result of the recent State elections. It seems incredible that in a democratic society a party can poll more votes but win fewer

seats than its opposition. Members may have noticed a Press report of a couple of weeks ago which referred to the death of a former United States Chief Justice, (Mr Earl Warren). The Press article said that one of the great achievements attributed to that gentleman was his ruling which brought about a massive electoral redistribution and reduced the rural domination of the law-making bodies in the United States.

I have quoted before in this Chamber, and I will do so again to refresh members' memories, what Mr Warren had to say. In 1964 in the *Reynolds v. Sims* case in Alabama, Chief Justice Earl Warren said—

Legislatures represent people not trees or acres. . . . To the extent that a citizen's right to vote is debased he is that much less a citizen.

The court ruled that "as nearly as practicable one man's vote is to be worth as much as another's." What I am suggesting is that it is time we in this country also recognised that Legislatures represent people, and it is time we did something about redressing the great imbalance between the voting values of country and city areas.

I believe I have established the fact that there was not a massive swing against the Labor Party during the last State elections, yet four seats changed hands. Although we won one seat, we lost five; and of those five seats four were in the country.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: You were not good enough to win, that is why.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: If Mr Ferry will be patient I will explain why I think we lost those seats in the country. Apart from several areas in which I believe we were disadvantaged by the redistribution, I think perhaps the major cause of the disaffection of the country vote was the rural policies of the Federal Government.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: And it still is.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Country people were not very happy about those policies, and I think we were given the proof of this in a disgusting display of violence in Forrest Place by farmers when the Prime Minister addressed a meeting there.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Do you say that the farmers displayed this disgusting violence?

The Hon. N. McNeill: Were they the only ones who were disgusting?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I was present at the meeting and I came to the very uncomfortable realisation that, contrary to what I had perhaps naively believed about this country, the potential for mob violence is really not far below the surface.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Particularly when encouraged from the platform.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I repeat that I was in Forrest Place at the time and I saw what went on. I was there right from the start, and the booing, the shouting, and the disruption started long before any speakers made any derogatory remarks. If one is being pelted and abused, surely one would not feel very happy about one's audience, and certainly one would not be wanting to pay compliments to them.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Do you think it was organised?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I think the majority of them were farmers, and when I tried to reason with some of them I was abused and in one case I was physically manhandled. I agree that not all of those concerned were farmers, but I am convinced that the majority were or else they were people who have an interest in the question of rural subsidies, etc.

As the meeting was breaking up I met a person I have known for some years who has a very lucrative business in St. George's Terrace. He boasted that he was taking part in the booing. When I asked him why on earth he should do that when he is not a farmer he said, "I have an interest in a country property and I am not too happy about losing my tax concessions or the super bounty." I would say that person would be typical of a number of business or professional people who have been using rural subsidies and tax concessions to bolster their own position. They have exploited the situation, and I have little sympathy for that type of person.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Are you suggesting that they have no right to boo?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I did have real sympathy for the genuine farmers who have suffered financial hardship. I believe, as do most reasonable people, that in times of real hardship they deserve special consideration and support from Governments.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Some people enjoy booing, and others do not.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: They deserve that consideration and support just like anybody else who suffers hardship through no fault of his own. However, I believe that once that period is passed it is reasonable for the Government to say, "It is time we sought expert and impartial advice on the question of assistance for this industry to ascertain whether it is reasonable that bounties and subsidies should be provided."

I would like to ask members to consider, for example, the case of an industrial worker who through no fault of his own—per-

haps it is through the economic policy of the Government—is thrown out of work for a number of weeks.

During this period he is paid a small pension which will prevent him, his wife and family from starving, but that is about all it does. It does not help him to meet his hire-purchase commitments and other debts he has built up during this period, particularly if he is paying a high rental. When such a person resumes work the Government does not say, "We realise you have accumulated all these debts, so we will continue to pay this unemployment allowance until you catch up." Instead, from that point onwards, he is no longer paid this allowance by the Government, and I am sure that farmers would not support the proposition that it should be paid to him.

During the past year most farmers have enjoyed greater prosperity than they have enjoyed for many years. Only the other day the *Financial Review* published an item on the rural economy, the heading of which is—

It's not that bad down on the farm
—incomes up 57pc

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: You should speak to some in my electorate.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Two times nothing still equals nothing.

The Hon. N. McNeill: That is the kind of report the Federal Government reads and believes.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: The Federal Government must be given some credit for this, particularly in the sphere of overseas markets. Immediately the present Australian Government was elected to office it set about expanding existing overseas markets and establishing new ones.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Where?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Further, in the short time it has been in office, it has passed no less than 30 Acts for the protection and reconstruction of primary industry in general, and for such specific industries as wool, wheat, meat, eggs, wine, honey, apples and pears.

Prior to the last Federal election it had drafted a further 16 Bills dealing with nitrogenous fertiliser subsidies, wheat stabilisation, sugar, dairying, pig farming, wool, canned fruits, and the apple and pear industries. I think it must be conceded that by the Government reducing tariffs by 25 per cent the rural industry should have benefited tremendously.

The Hon. J. Heitman: Tell us what the devaluation of the dollar did.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Even your own colleagues seemed to have some doubt on the wisdom of that move.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: It was estimated that by reducing tariffs by 25 per cent it would save the primary producers

\$100 million this financial year. The Industries Assistance Commission, which replaced the Tariff Board, will provide the Government with expert and impartial advice on assistance to primary industries on a regular basis. I cannot see anything wrong with that.

Unlike the previous Commonwealth Government the Whitlam Government I am sure has already provided evidence that it is prepared to listen to the experts who sit on these commissions and to implement their recommendations.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is what what we are all terrified about.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Did you read the trade commission's report which was issued before this?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: So although I feel that the loss of the Tonkin Government was due in the main to the disaffection of the rural vote I think it was quite unjustified and was made in ignorance of the long-term benefits country people would ultimately enjoy as a result of the Labor Governments being in office.

During the State election the main theme of the Liberal Party propaganda was inflation. Press advertisements led the public to believe that if they voted for Liberal candidates and a Liberal Government was elected to office in this State all problems relating to inflation would be over; that somehow or other an anti-Labor Government would be able to cure inflation. However now that the Liberal-Country Party coalition Government is in office it is flat out telling the people that the Australian Government is solely to blame for inflation and only the Federal Government can effect a cure.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Where is that said?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: In practically all statements made by Government spokesmen it is contended that the Federal Government must take full blame for inflation.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You know that all States combined to co-operate with Mr Whitlam but he has not agreed to meet them.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: When the Whitlam Government assumed office in 1972 inflation was already increasing dramatically. The previous Commonwealth Government, headed by Mr McMahon, was responsible for a very high percentage of unemployment, to the extent of 100 000 people. He then tried to retrieve the situation by introducing the "mini" Budget in 1972 which provided for a \$600 million deficit. To begin with, that was an inflationary move. Further, the economy inherited by the Whitlam Government was flooded with overseas investment capital, because the Australian dollar was undervalued. In addition, during the

first full year the Whitlam Government was in office in 1973 the world inflation rate doubled.

Economists will tell us that in an open economy, with a fixed rate of exchange such as that which we have in Australia, world inflation has a substantial effect on the rate of inflation in the domestic economy which will not move too far from the world rate.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Not all of your Labor colleagues will agree with you on that.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: There are many ways by which inflation is imported into the country. Firstly, it is imported by a large inflow of overseas investment capital.

The Hon. N. McNeill: What was the capital inflow during this last year?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Secondly, an increase in the price of our exports because of world markets will affect the price on the home market. This is what happened in respect of wool and meat prices which increased rapidly. During 1972-73 wool prices increased by 144 per cent.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: What are they now?

The Hon. N. McNeill: From what point?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: The third way inflation can be brought into a country is by imports. When the prices of our imports increase, not only do we pay more for the goods imported from overseas, but also local producers and manufacturers can charge more for their products without any fear of losing sales as a result of the articles imported. A classic example of this was seen in 1971 when the price of imported cars rose by 12 per cent. Immediately, General Motors-Holden's raised the price of its then best selling car—the Holden Kingswood—by 12 per cent.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: It would have done that without any increase in the price of products brought into the country. The price would have increased as a result of wage increases.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: This trend is exacerbated by shortages of raw materials and primary products which, of course, has actually occurred. All members know that a Federal Government can take certain steps to mitigate the effects of imported inflation. The Whitlam Government has taken these steps. It has taken the two major steps of implementing tariff cuts, and revaluing the dollar which were designed to make imports cheaper and to curb an excessive capital inflow into this country. Both these measures were recommended by leading economists and it has been accepted that if such moves had not been taken inflation would have been much higher than it is today. I might mention of course, that the tariff cuts would have been much more effective had the business people in this country played the game.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Here we go again! The old hatred of the businessman!

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: I am merely expounding a few facts.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: It's not as bad as your hatred of the unions.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: In last night's *Daily News* and in this morning's issue of *The West Australian* members would, no doubt, have read a statement by the Commonwealth Minister for Labour (Mr Cameron) when he exposed the massive mark-ups that were being made on imported goods. He said the public was being robbed by the importer, the wholesaler, and the retailer jointly by a mark-up of something like 300 per cent.

Because no controls have been exercised over these people, consumers, including the farmers, have not enjoyed the full benefit of the 25 per cent tariff cuts.

This brings me to the point where I will refer to the domestic situation and to what takes place within Australia to influence the rate of inflation. For years, the controllers of wealth—the employers and their representatives in Parliament—have been telling us that working people are the villains in the inflationary price spiral because they seek higher wages. In the speech made by the Minister for Justice only yesterday, he referred to unprecedented wage demands and "unbridled wage claims" that have been made. However, how often do we hear of the unprecedented and unbridled price increases? We do not hear too much about them from the representatives of employers, because while they would like to see wages checked, they desire to be completely free to push prices to whatever limit the market will stand.

I may say that the Labor Party is not opposed to business people making a fair profit, but it maintains that as prices play an extremely important part in the inflationary spiral, it is only reasonable that they should be subject to some sort of restraint and justification. One has only to look at the financial columns of *The West Australian* to note that at the moment companies are making record profits. A report brought down in April of this year by the Australian Department of Labour shows that labour's share of the national product has fallen in the postwar period. Therefore, if working people are not deriving any benefit, who is?

The Hon. W. R. Withers: The Federal Government.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Again, the Australian Government is limited in regard to what it can do to control prices. It was for this reason that last year it sought to gain powers by way of referendum to gain control over prices and incomes so that the whole problem of inflation could

be dealt with effectively. We hear so much from the Liberal and Country Party members about inflation that one would have expected they would have been flat out supporting the Whitlam Government in its efforts to obtain these powers.

However, the Opposition used everything within its means to convince the people that they should vote against the referendum. Unfortunately, they were successful and frightened people into believing that the Australian Government should not have those powers and that some terrible situation would occur, despite the fact that similar powers are possessed by comparable countries almost everywhere in the world. In fact, every time the Australian Government seeks the weapons with which to combat the problems which develop in the economy it is obstructed by the Opposition. One has only to look at the attitude of the Opposition towards the restrictive trade practices legislation and the financial corporations legislation. It is similar to the case of tying a man hand and foot, and then blaming him for not defending members of his family when they are attacked.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: I think we would agree if the honourable member could give a practical example of where such legislation has succeeded. Which country has had successful price control?

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: If the honourable member is really concerned with the economy he should at least give the Federal Government power to handle it effectively. At the moment the Federal Government is restricted in what it can do to efficiently manage the economy.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Up to a week prior to the election the Prime Minister claimed there was no inflation.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Under our Constitution we have six States with sovereign rights. Those States cannot effectively manage the national economy but they will not give the Federal Government the tools with which to do the job. I cannot be convinced that people who drew up the Constitution in 1900 had the wisdom to plan for the complexities of life in 1974.

The Hon. J. Heltman: The referendum proved that they did.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: How could a person who drove a horse and buggy possibly realise the situation which now exists with regard to death and pollution caused by today's automobiles? That is only a small example. I cannot believe that a document drawn up in 1900 is still realistic.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: The people still like to stand by it.

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT: Because they are frightened by conservative people who are afraid of change.

The Hon. J. Heltman: I think they are frightened by the Labor Party, on occasions.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: The people who planned the Constitution were very clever.

The Hon. LYLIA ELLIOTT: With regard to productivity, the workers are continually condemned for their so-called inability to increase productivity. However, it is about time someone had a hard look at management in this country to see whether or not that is where the blame lies.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: No-one has blamed just the workers; the workers include management.

The Hon. LYLIA ELLIOTT: The working people are blamed.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: The Prime Minister has blamed them.

The PRESIDENT: Perhaps the honourable member ought to be allowed to get on with her speech.

The Hon. LYLIA ELLIOTT: Time and time again I have heard employers' representatives blaming the working people for the fact that productivity is not increasing. I am saying that management should be examined to see whether it can improve its method of handling the people who do the work. Perhaps the management is at fault.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: The present Prime Minister made that statement in Melbourne.

The Hon. LYLIA ELLIOTT: Just recently I read an interesting article in *Newsweek* which deals with the position of workers in Japan and America. The article is headed, "Management: The Japanese Touch" and it deals with the position in Japan and America. It reads as follows—

An American semiconductor firm owns a plant in Dallas and one in Japan. Both are virtually identical—using the same technology, the same manufacturing procedures and the same number of workers. There is one obvious difference: the plant in Japan outproduces the one in Dallas by 15 per cent.

The conventional explanation for the difference is that Japanese workers are simply more industrious than Americans. But if that is true, how is it that 200 American employees now working at the television-assembly plant Sony has built in San Diego manage to produce just as many color sets as their Japanese counterparts at an identical Sony operation in Tokyo?

Outclassed: The difference between the American workers in San Diego and in the Dallas semiconductor plant is that the Sony employees work under Japanese managers—and that,

says a recent study by two Stanford Business School professors, makes all the difference in the world. "The Japanese simply outmanage us when it comes to people," declares management specialist Richard T. Johnson, who wrote the study along with organizational theorist William G. Ouchi. "We've done very well coping with the inanimate elements of management. But a shocking number of American managers are really inept in dealing with people."

The article goes on and states the relationship between Japanese management and workers, and lists the human things which the management does to create better relationships with the workers. It states that workers thrive under such treatment.

Only yesterday I received from Germany an article on worker participation in management. It makes very interesting reading and I am sorry I will not have time to quote a great deal of the matter in the article. It deals with the question of works councils in their various forms in Germany. Under the terms of the Works Council Act work councils are set up in all establishments with more than five employees. The tasks of the council are to ensure that labour laws and collective agreements are observed, make recommendations to employers, negotiate suggestions by workers with employers, and protect the social and economic interests of all employees. The article states—

In all companies with more than 100 employees a so-called "Finance Committee" has to be set up, consisting of 3 to 7 members which are appointed by the Works Council.

The Finance Committee has the right to be informed of economic and financial matters of the Company, such as: the production and marketing situation of the company, production and investment programmes, rationalisation plans, production techniques and work methods, reduction of operation or closure of parts of the company transfer of parts of the establishment, amalgamation of establishments, changes in the organisation or objectives of the establishment, and last not least any other matter that may affect workers social or economic interests.

I will now quote an interesting part of the article, as follows—

... the important result of the existence of Works Councils is that complaints, grievances and other causes for conflict are being dealt with by the Works Council, between worker and management, before they become an issue for conflict.

The Works Council is so far an extremely useful instrument for dealing with problems on the shop floor which

might otherwise become a cause for a court procedure or even for a strike.

The PRESIDENT: The honourable member is quoting from a document; she might identify it.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: It is a paper presented by Mr W. Schuetz, Consul for Commercial and Social Affairs, Federal Republic of Germany.

What I am saying is that instead of condemning the working people for not increasing productivity and for going on strike, perhaps management should be looking at its techniques and its industrial relations with the people it employs to see whether or not something can be done to improve the situation, as has happened in Germany. In that country the cause of trouble is often removed before a court procedure or a strike is necessary.

Those are the two points I wished to make tonight. Firstly, it is time that the Liberal and Country Parties stopped condemning the Federal Government and blaming it for inflation. Those parties should be supporting measures which will provide the weapons necessary for the Federal Government to handle the situation. Secondly, I advocate that instead of condemning the working people for not increasing productivity perhaps it might be of some value for management to examine itself, and industrial relations in other countries. Perhaps then productivity will be increased and some of the industrial tension which exists in this country could be lessened. I support the Bill.

THE HON. CLIVE GRIFFITHS (South-East Metropolitan) [5.27 p.m.]: I want to make one or two observations, and this Bill provides me with that opportunity. Firstly, I congratulate you, Mr President, on your election to the position of President of this Chamber. I also congratulate those members who are newly elected to the Legislative Council, and also those members who were re-elected at the recent election. Included in my congratulatory remarks are those members of the Government who have been appointed to the Ministry, and I congratulate the Hon. Jack Heftman on his election to the position of Chairman of Committees.

It has been interesting to listen to the speeches of those members who have spoken for the first time in this Chamber. I would particularly like to congratulate the Hon. John Tozer on the speech he made on opening day, and on the comments he made in connection with the problems which exist in the province he represents. The other speakers, in turn, have indicated that their contributions to the debates during the rest of this session will be very valuable indeed. I congratulate those who have made contributions

so far. Normally, I would have been making these comments during my Address-in-Reply speech.

I am speaking on this occasion because it will be recalled that on the opening day of Parliament I presented a petition to this House on behalf of some of my constituents. I was rather perturbed by a question which appeared on the notice paper, and which was answered, in another place. I was also perturbed to see a newspaper comment which indicates that I, and the people of Western Australia, have grounds to be concerned at the apparent desire of the Labor Party to prevent people from taking up petitions and having those petitions placed before Parliament.

Apparently the member who asked the question is opposed also to the proposition that members of the community have the right to approach their elected member in an endeavour to have that member introduce them by way of a deputation to speak to a Minister in order that they may present an argument to him in support of a particular case. It is very disturbing to find that a member of Parliament, a member of the Australian Labor Party, is advocating that this state of affairs should be tolerated. I feel sure that obviously the member was not feeling well when he suggested that these steps should be taken; I have known him for a long time and I have found him to be an intelligent individual. I have certainly got on very well with this gentleman in the past and I was therefore rather surprised that he should adopt this attitude. When people have a problem they should be permitted to use the facilities that the law provides for them to make their argument known to the Government. It is for this reason that I was induced to rise on this occasion to inform the people of Western Australia about the circumstances of this petition.

First of all, I feel it is desirable that I should read the petition for the record. This has already been read, but I will repeat it. The petition says—

We the undersigned residents of the Langford area hereby humbly petition the honourable members of the Legislative Council of Western Australia to do all within their power to strongly urge the State Housing Commission not to plan future group housing in the Langford area in a similar manner as has occurred in the Wingrove Precinct.

The main reasons for the objection to this type of development are that it is an environmental eyesore, a potential slum area and a type of housing unacceptable to the majority of those who will be forced to occupy it.

And your petitioners will ever pray that their humble and earnest petition may be acceded to.

The petition is signed by S. H. Smith and 569 other residents of Langford. I was approached and asked to present the petition to this Parliament on behalf of these people. This is a true democratic process but this member of the Labor Party seeks to take away from the people an avenue of presentation for their particular point of view.

I am astounded that this state of affairs has been reached in Western Australia.

When the Hon. Lyla Elliott spoke earlier this afternoon, she said that she was concerned at the attitude being adopted by certain people. At the time she was referring to the incident in Forrest Place and she expressed her concern at this intolerable attitude in our community. I share her view in that regard, but I feel it is even more serious to have a member of this State Parliament suggesting that a democratic process which is available to the people of Western Australia ought to be discontinued. I hope on some future occasion some other member of the ALP will rise to reassure me that this is not the official attitude of that party. I will go even further and say that I hope no political party in Australia would advocate action of the type suggested by this member in another place.

Having read the petition to the House, perhaps it is advisable to read a Press cutting which the member in another place referred to in the question he asked of a Minister. The article is headed, "Slum claim over SHC project" and members will bear in mind the petition I have read to the House. The article reads—

A WA government MP has strongly attacked the State Housing Commission over what is claimed to be a "slum-type" housing development at Langford.

Mr Clive Griffiths, MLC, secretary of the Parliamentary Liberal Party, said people who qualified for SHC assistance had complained to him about the project.

Said Mr. Griffiths: "Surely it is misappropriation of public funds when money is spent on something which is not acceptable to the people."

Mr Griffiths said the people objected to an extension of the SHC's recently completed Wingrove Precinct at Langford. They had sent a petition to him which had been presented to Parliament on Thursday.

Mr Griffiths said he had arranged a deputation of objectors to meet the Minister for Housing, Mr O'Neill, on August 9.

One of the main objections to the proposed new development was that it was on the highest point of land in the estate.

Mr Griffiths would press Mr. O'Neill for modifications or redesigning of the project.

"It is the same sort of development which has taken place at Balga and Lockridge," he said. "It is the sort of thing people are constantly complaining about."

Mr Griffiths said one of the obligations of the SHC was to provide a type of housing acceptable to those people who would occupy it.

"It is not good enough for the commission to say it has fulfilled its obligation merely by building accommodation and then saying it's too bad if people don't like the units."

The article clearly indicates the things that Clive Griffiths said. He pointed out that the people had expressed to him their dislike of that type of development—these were the people who would occupy the houses. He went on to say that the people had taken up a petition and he had presented it on their behalf. He said that at their request he had arranged a deputation and he also said that in his opinion it was a misappropriation of public funds for the State Housing Commission to spend money on a type of accommodation which was not acceptable to the majority of the people who were to occupy it.

He went on to say, "It is not good enough for the commission to say take it or leave it" as it has been saying ever since I have been in this Parliament—and as it continues to say. I will not digress onto the subject of the State Housing Commission because I am conscious of the time. I would like to talk about the commission because I have a few things to say about it but I am more concerned about the attitude adopted by this member of the ALP who contends that a member of Parliament ought not to do the things I have done on behalf of my constituents. I hope that the day never comes when a member of Parliament is restricted to the extent that this particular member proposes. I hope that every member of the ALP in this Chamber will let us know that he does not agree with that type of gagging of members of Parliament.

I felt it was imperative for the sake of these people in Langford to put the record straight about what they did and about the article in the Press. These people ought to be reassured that their members of Parliament, whomever they are, are elected to present the views of their constituents to the best of their ability, and to carry out all the democratic processes available to them, without some political party advocating that these processes should be negated. With those few words I support the Bill.

Debate adjourned on motion by the Hon. W. R. Withers.

House adjourned at 5.41 p.m.