

original owner. If we took out a separate registration instead of a dealer's registration, it goes on the register in the name of the firm or person first registering the car, and it is merely then transferred to the man who buys the car and he is not registered as the original owner. That leads to many complications, and is a very serious objection. Another objection has been created by the passing of the third-party-insurance risk. A car used by a motor-trader carries a different premium to that of a car used by an ordinary private user. For all dealers' plates we pay an insurance premium of £1 10s., and that is transferred with the plate to any particular car on which it is used. If we registered each car separately, and paid £1 10s. on it, we are saddling the purchaser of a car with a premium 50 per cent. higher than he should pay. It has a still further important effect, and that is on the purity of the register. If every dealer registered his cars separately, instead of under a trade registration, we would have the big concerns—those concentrated in Wellington, for instance—registering all the cars here, and the register would show an abnormal number of cars registered in the centres, where the big dealers were, and they would not be allocated to their proper territories. We have, for instance, in Napier at the present time a Ford dealer who has become so "fed up" with the trouble over prosecutions, &c., for the innocent misuse of trade plates that he is registering all the cars in his own name, and when he sells them he transfers the registration to his clients. The effect of that is that all the Ford cars in the northern Hawke's Bay district are credited to Napier, and are then transferred to the various parts. All motor-car statistics in New Zealand are prepared from the register, and not the licenses. The effect is to give Napier, for instance, an abnormal number of Ford cars, and the districts in which they are sold practically none. That is a point that might not be understood if the trade plate was done away with. Another use to which trade plates are put is on used cars. As you know, it is a common practice, if a man has bought a new car, to sell to the dealer his old one, which of course, is registered and licensed, and is transferred to the dealer taking it in. The dealer can quite legally continue to use that car under that number-plate; but that, again, gives rise to complications in respect to the insurance premium, because that particular car is registered for private use, and directly a dealer starts to drive it home he is making trouble, because the dealer's premium is 50 per cent. higher than the private user's premium. In practice the way we like to do it, and the way the Department likes it to be done, is not to take a transfer direct in that way, but immediately a car is traded in to lodge the papers and plates with the Deputy Registrar, and he holds them until the car has been resold. In that way the Registrars hold all papers and plates of unsold used cars. When the car is sold the transaction is completed, only one transfer is shown on the register, and it saves a fee of 5s. to the buyer, as there is only one transfer fee instead of two. The car, if it is required to be used during the interim, is used with a dealer's plate, which is quite in order, because it carries the higher insurance rate. There is no concession to the trade in this amendment we are asking for. It is really righting an injustice under which we have been labouring, and to give effect to a promise made to us when we volunteered to pay the full rate. The dealer pays the same rate for a dealer's plate as for any other plate—viz., £2—and so gains nothing from that; but the only thing he does not pay is the registration fee of £1, which is not paid until the car is sold. From the time he puts on a dealer's plate until it is sold the car is running round without having paid the £1 registration fee. That is the only loss the fund suffers—the loss of interest on £1 during the time the car is used under a dealer's plate; but against that, where a used car is being used under a dealer's plate and is already registered by a private owner, it is paying double. It is bearing the £2 fee which has already been paid by the owner before he transferred it—and that continues in force until the end of the year—and the dealer has also paid £2 for his plate, so that that more than covers any loss of interest on the £1 registration fee. There is no concession, from the financial point of view, in holding a dealer's plate, and there is no reason why a dealer's plate should not be used for any purpose that an ordinary plate could be used for, and there should be no question in the minds of the police or any one else as to whether a dealer's plate is being used in accordance with the Act or not. If a dealer's plate is being used on a car, that is evidence that it has paid the full fee and full insurance. We know that it has paid the tire and petrol taxes, and there is nothing it has not paid; and there is no reason on earth why there should be any restriction on the use of that plate. In England, from where our law first came, the position is somewhat different, because they have a different system of taxation. They have met the position there in just the same way as we are asking you to meet it here. If the dealers there pay the same fee for a plate as for a private plate they get an unrestricted use.

*Mr. Harris.]* Does the proposed amendment in clause 15 cover what you want?—It is exactly what we want, and we are only anxious that it should go through as it is. We know that when it comes before the House the position will be misunderstood, and members will think the trade is getting something it is not entitled to.

Why should you use a trade plate on Sunday?—Why should we not? We should use a trade plate on Sunday because it stands in the place of another plate, and there is no reason whatever why the use of a trade plate on Sunday should be different from the use of a private plate. The car belongs to the man who is driving it. He has registered it and paid the full fee and all other taxes, and why should the use of that car be restricted?

But you can transfer the plate from one car to another?—That is so, or there would be no use in it at all. However, it can only be used on one car at a time. I could hold a hundred cars in my warehouse without registering them, and it is quite legal so long as they do not go on the roads.

How would you get over the provisions of the Police Offences Act if you used the car on Sundays?—We will be quite free, just as any other car is. If this Act is amended the police cannot question a dealer's plate. We have no right to do business on Sunday, but you cannot cure it by prohibiting the use of a dealer's plate. The trade plate has no bearing on that.

*Mr. Ansell.]* Are you, as a representative of the retailers of cars and the manufacturers, in favour of the Bill?—Yes; the trade is in favour of the Bill going through as it is. We have had an opportunity of expressing our views through the Transport Council, and although we are not in favour of every detail, yet as a whole we are in favour of it going through as it is.