

sent indications of improvement will continue, and that at the opening of next session we shall find the outlook much brighter than it is at present. I support the motion.

On motion by the Honorary Minister, debate adjourned.

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1), £2,200,000.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

House adjourned at 5.30 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 7th August, 1934.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION—MOTION PICTURES, DISTRIBUTORS' RESTRICTIONS.

Mr. MOLONEY asked the Premier: 1, Has his attention been drawn to the clause in the agreement between the distributors and exhibitors of motion pictures operating in Western Australia setting out that no picture shall be shown except at an admission price specified by the distributors? 2, If so, could he ascertain from the Crown Law Department the legal position of the distributors in inserting such restrictive clauses

in the agreement? 3, Has his attention been drawn to recent legislation in New Zealand which has had the effect of prohibiting restrictions imposed by the distributors on the exhibitors?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, The matter is receiving consideration. 3, Yes.

QUESTIONS (2)—WHEAT.

Carting Subsidy.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Premier: 1, In order to give farmers concerned some heart to carry on fallowing operations, do the Government intend again to pay the wheat carting bonus in those districts in which it was paid last year? 2, Will the payment be on the same scale as last year?

The PREMIER replied: 1 and 2, The matter will receive consideration.

Wheatgrowers' Relief Act.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Minister for Lands: 1, What amount was received by, or will be made available to the State Government from the Commonwealth Government under the Wheatgrowers' Relief Act, 1933? 2, What amount has been distributed to wheatgrowers? 3, At what rate per acre were payments made? 4, Were all participants paid on a like basis? 5, If not, what were the different rates paid, and why the differentiation? 6, What amount has been retained for further assistance to necessitous cases? 7, Is such assistance, if any, to be confined to clients of the Agricultural Bank?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, £639,493 is available under the Wheat Growers' Relief Act, 1933. 2, Distributed to 21st July, 1934, £447,728. 3, A preliminary advance was made at the rate of 3s. per acre, but in July instructions were issued to pay an additional 6d., making in all a total bounty of 3s. 6d. 4, Yes. 5, See No. 4. 6, Approximately £65,000. 7, No.

QUESTIONS (3)—RAILWAYS.

Footwarmers.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Minister for Railways: Will he take steps to have footwarmers placed in railway carriages on long-distance country trains during the winter months?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: The matter will be considered in due course.

Parcels Charges.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is he aware that parcels of varying weights may be sent through the post to different destinations at a lower charge than when sent by rail? 2, Is it proposed to review those charges? 3, As the importance of convenience should not be overlooked, is it proposed to give consideration to the establishment of central depots in Perth for the receipt of parcels to be sent by rail?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Yes, in certain cases up to 11 lbs. in weight. 2, No. 3, This matter is under consideration.

Rate Book.

Mr. FERGUSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is it the intention of the Commissioner of Railways to issue a new Rate Book? 2, If so, when?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, This matter is at present under consideration. 2, Answered by No. 1.

QUESTION—PSYCHOLOGICAL CLINIC.

Mr. NEEDHAM asked the Premier: 1, Do the Government intend to establish a State Department of Psychology as requested by numerous deputations representative of every section of the community? 2, Has the main equipment been kept intact at the former clinic, as promised by both previous Governments? 3, If the Government do not accede to the request, what action will be taken to meet this deep social need which all Governments have admitted exists, and which has received the sympathy and support of every section of the community?

The PREMIER replied: 1, It is not the intention of the Government to re-establish the Psychological Clinic, for the reason that it is extremely difficult to find sufficient funds to maintain public and social services at present existing. 2, Yes. 3, The matter will be considered when finances permit.

QUESTION—STATE TRANSPORT CO-ORDINATION ACT.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Premier: In view of the expressed opinion of the magistrate hearing the transport appeals that it is a pity the court cannot sit in country centres to obtain country evidence, will he make the necessary financial arrangements to enable the court to sit in some country towns?

The PREMIER replied: If, in the opinion of the magistrate who is hearing these appeals, it is necessary for him to sit in country centres he can request the Crown Law Department to permit him to do so, and the department would then give the matter consideration.

QUESTIONS (2)—NORTH-WEST.

Cattle Pleuro Test.

Mr. FERGUSON asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, How many Anna Plains cattle have been subjected to the Turner Complement Fixation Test? 2, Have any reacted to the test? If so, how many? 4, Have beasts that have reacted to the test been slaughtered? 5, If so, how many? 6, Have any of those beasts shown definite symptoms of pleuro? 7, If so, how many?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, 2,318. 2, Yes. 3, 46. 4, Yes. 5, 46. 6, No. 7, Nil.

Aerial Medical Service.

Mr. RODOREDA asked the Minister for Health: 1, How far have negotiations proceeded for the inauguration of an aerial medical service for the North-West? 2, Are the Government taking any active part in the negotiations? 3, Will the Government exercise any real control over the service when in operation? 4, Can he give an approximate idea when the service will commence in Hedland, Roebourne, and Onslow districts?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH replied: 1, Negotiations have proceeded as far as they can with the company that is due to take over the North-West aerial contract on the 1st October; an offer from that company of aerial transport is awaited. 2, Yes. 3, Yes; through its departmental representatives on the West Australian Aerial Medical Services Committee. 4, Not at present, but

the Government are desirous of assisting the service to commence at the earliest possible date.

QUESTION—ELECTRICITY SUPPLY.

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Will the extensions to the East Perth Power House enable electricity to supersede steam on the suburban railways? 2, Is the Claremont tramway showing a profit? 3, Have the recent restrictions on bus and taxi passengers between Loch Street and Bay View Terrace, Claremont, had any effect on the tramway returns?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, No. 2, No. 3, Yes.

QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL BANK.

Royal Commission's Report.

Mr. LATHAM (without notice) asked the Premier: Will he give the House an opportunity fully to discuss the report of the Royal Commission on the Agricultural Bank after the disposal of the Address-in-reply and before giving effect to the recommendations contained in the report?

The PREMIER replied: Yes, every opportunity will be afforded the House to discuss the report of the Royal Commission.

SITTING DAYS AND HOURS.

On motion by the Premier, ordered: That the House, unless otherwise ordered, shall meet for the despatch of business on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays at 4.30 p.m., and shall sit until 6.15 p.m. if necessary, and, if requisite, from 7.30 p.m. onwards.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS, PRECEDENCE.

On motion by the Premier, ordered: That on Tuesdays and Thursdays Government business shall take precedence of all Motions and Orders of the Day.

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1), £2,200,000

Standing Orders—Suspension.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.41]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable resolutions

from the Committees of Supply and of Ways and Means to be reported and adopted on the same day on which they shall have passed those Committees and also the passing of a Supply Bill through all its stages in one day, and to enable the business aforesaid to be entered upon and dealt with before the Address-in-reply is adopted.

Question put and passed.

Message.

Message from the Lieutenant-Governor received and read recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

In Committee of Supply.

The House having resolved into Committee of Supply, Mr. Sleeman in the Chair.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.44]: I move—

That there be granted to His Majesty on account of the service of the year ending the 30th June, 1935, a sum not exceeding £2,200,000

This is the familiar Supply Bill such as is introduced at the beginning of each session, and it is necessary to enable the Government to finance their operations until the passing of the Estimates. These I hope, will be introduced at an early date. If the Bill provided for a period of two months, it would be necessary to introduce a further Bill in the next two or three weeks, and to obviate that, I am asking on this occasion for supply for three months, and the Bill has been framed accordingly. The amounts required are as follows:—

	£
Consolidated Revenue Fund ..	1,300,000
General Loan Fund ..	600,000
Treasurer's Advance ..	300,000
Total	£2,200,000

Revenue expenditure for the three months under special Acts is estimated at £1,300,000, and that under Loan expenditure at £600,000. Treasurer's Advance is, of course, expenditure which cannot be determined at the time as a charge against either fund. It represents an amount of £300,000 advanced to the departments at the beginning of the financial year. The Loan Council, as hon. members will have read in the newspapers, propose a Loan programme of £3,150,000 for the year. The amount is,

naturally, contingent, as all Loan Council approvals at the beginning of the financial year are, upon that body being able to raise the necessary funds. Of the amount mentioned, £150,000 is intended for the extension of the East Perth Power House.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported, and the report adopted.

Committee of Ways and Means.

The House having resolved into Committee of Ways and Means, Mr. Sleeman in the Chair,

The PREMIER: I move—

That towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty for the services of the year ending 30th June, 1935, a sum not exceeding £1,300,000 be granted out of Consolidated Revenue, £600,000 from the General Loan Fund and £300,000 from the Public Accounts for the purpose of temporary advances to be made by the Treasurer.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported, and the report adopted.

Bill introduced, etc.

In accordance with the foregoing resolutions, Bill introduced, passed through all stages, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Second Day.

Debate resumed from the 2nd August.

MR. LATHAM (York) [4.53]: Last Thursday we had the opportunity of listening to the Speech of His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor. I cannot say that that Speech conveyed to the public much information that they did not already possess. It gives a very full account of the work of the Government during the past year, and that feature has already been amplified in the Press of the State. I repeat, very little information of a new character was given to the people. The Speech sets out concisely the position of public affairs, though I would not say, after having stood in another place for a long time, that the Speech does so briefly. At this stage may I join with the Government in expressing the great pleasure that

is felt at His Majesty's having been pleased again to allow a member of the Royal family to visit the State. This will afford us an opportunity of showing the loyalty of the people of Western Australia to the Crown. I know of no better link to bind the Empire together than that a member of the Royal family should visit the various portions of His Majesty's Dominions. More particularly will such a visit be of value to this State in view of the fact that Western Australians are making an application to be permitted to secede from the Commonwealth. The visit gives us an opportunity of proving the fact, which sometimes has been questioned, that this State is absolutely loyal, notwithstanding its desire to be dissociated from its Eastern friends. I think it will generally be admitted that no part of the British Dominions has been more loyal to the Crown than Western Australia has been, and that fact remains, notwithstanding our application to be permitted to secede from the Commonwealth. I notice that the Speech again emphasises the desperate financial position of the State. I am pleased that that reference has been made, since it enables members of this Chamber to realise how much greater were the difficulties of the previous Government.

Mr. Moloney: The present Government have rectified many things.

Mr. LATHAM: I am not in any way sorry that the task of the present Government is easier, but I bear in mind that in the past I have sometimes heard unkind things said about the previous Government because of their lack of finance. I am glad that the present Government, although they have additional national income, still deem it advisable to draw the attention of the public to the desperate position of State finance.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: One cannot do much without finance.

Mr. LATHAM: I wish that fact had been fully appreciated by hon. members opposite when they were on this side of the House. May I point out to the Government that it is very little advantage to call attention to the facts unless steps are taken to check extravagant expenditure. It is useless to tell the people that the Government have great difficulty in financing unless the fact is brought home to the public. We have to realise where Government money comes

from. Too much thought is given to the spending of money rather than to the earning of it. Like every other member of the House, I realise how easy it is to spend other people's money. In this Chamber the Ministry have every opportunity of spending other people's money. We should realise that, after all, it is no use merely saying that things have improved. Of course things are better, but all the betterment of State finance comes from our industries. Until our industries are firmly established we cannot again have that prosperity which until a little while ago we enjoyed. Let us turn our attention to the earning side rather than to the spending side. We all know that the expenditure of borrowed money is a mere palliative which eventually must get us into trouble. Last session, I drew the attention of the House to the fact that about 50 per cent. of the State revenue goes in interest. That represents a tremendous amount of money to draw from industry. If we go on continually borrowing money, we must reach a stage when industry will not be able to pay the interest bill. Therefore we must turn our attention to care in the expenditure of money. Undoubtedly things have improved and are improving, and our industries are returning a great deal more than they did a year or two ago. It is our duty to see whether it is not possible for us to do with less in the way of loan funds, by living within our means. In the case of gold mining there has been a considerable advance.

The Minister for Justice: The price of gold has advanced.

Mr. LATHAM: Yes, but we must not lull ourselves into the belief that gold is going to remain at that enhanced price for all time. Undoubtedly we should make the most of the position while the price is high. Last year there was an improvement in the price of wool. I accept the word of the Government for it that there is an improvement in the timber industry, but I cannot accept their word that there is improvement in the fruit and dairying industries.

Mr. Mann: Nor in the wool industry.

Mr. LATHAM: There was a certain improvement in the wool industry last year, but we have not had an opportunity of testing what price wool is likely to bring this year. I hope that if we are to be disappointed in our anticipations, the disappoint-

ment will be on the right side. I have watched the Press closely, and the only sales of which I have seen reports have been in London. In view of my knowledge of the Murchison stations, I regard an average price of 1s. 2d. as fairly reasonable, especially as 25 per cent. has to be added to Australian currency. But Australia has not yet been able to test out what the price of wool will be for this year. Although prices are improving, I warn members opposite that we should profit by the lessons of the distressful period of which we have had such experience. It is useless living in a fool's paradise, and we are apt to forget too easily. Moreover, I am anxious that members opposite shall have no opportunity to say that they received no warning in this respect. The second matter referred to in the Governor's Speech to which I will refer, indicated how the Government had been able to improve the position regarding unemployment. Everyone in the State is anxious to see an improvement effected, but the Government neglected to tell the people—the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Wise) thought it better to leave the matter alone—how the improvement had been effected. It has been made possible because of the additional loan funds available to the Government. Even so, it must be borne in mind that the improvement arises not from the standpoint of the direct employment of men by the Government, but from the fact that more money is set in circulation. It will be realised, therefore, that the provision of additional loan funds had a great effect on the improvement regarding unemployment. If we desire to effect any real improvement, however, we should aim at placing men back in their customary avocations or forms of employment. It is unwise, as the member for Gascoyne pointed out, for the Government to be the employers of all the additional labour. On the other hand, industry should be encouraged to absorb more men. We must admit that the recent Commonwealth loan flotation may be regarded as an indication of the amount of money that is available. We cannot forget that the money was invested at 3 per cent. and 3½ per cent., whereas people who have money to invest would, one would think, be more inclined to place it in industry that would return a considerably greater percentage.

Mr. Hegney: How can we induce industry to place more men in work?

Mr. LATHAM: We can do that by watching for the opportunities that are available for the absorption of men. I will give the hon. member some further enlightenment on that point later on.

Mr. Hegney: The workers have been looking for those opportunities for a long time.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member had better address the Chair.

Mr. LATHAM: It is the duty of everyone to endeavour to ascertain how the difficulty can be overcome, and we can do that if we set ourselves to the task.

Mr. Moloney: You do not aim at being a Micawber!

Mr. LATHAM: I am not too sure that there has not been a lot of "waiting for something to turn up" in the attitude of many people, and to an extent that applies to the Government as well. I have already indicated the circumstance that admitted of the improvement being effected by the Government. The loan allocations available to the Government represented £795,000 more last year than previously. The latest amount available was £2,750,000, whereas during the previous year the loan funds available represented £1,955,000. To that we have to add the increase of revenue, which was £140,544, and then we arrive at the total increase of revenue and loan funds that the Government received at £944,544. That amount should be sufficient to provide 5,249 men with full-time work at the basic wage. In that event, it would have absorbed all the men who were provided with sustenance last year. The increase in the basic wage will not affect the Government to a great extent. They will have to pay 1s. 6d. extra, but most of that money will be derived from loan funds. At the same time 1s. 4d. of the additional amount will be returned to the Government as revenue under the financial emergency tax, so that in reality the Government have merely to find an additional 2d. On the other hand, it will appreciably affect the private employers.

The Minister for Justice: It will affect the railways to the extent of over £30,000.

Mr. LATHAM: But the Government will receive that 1s. 4d. out of each additional 1s. 6d. they have to pay.

The Minister for Justice: That is not so. Very few railway employees are on the

basic wage; nearly all are in receipt of more than that amount.

Mr. LATHAM: The increase in the basic wage will probably have the effect of bringing a large proportion over the 10s. margin, and they will have to pay an additional 4d. in tax. I am sure there will be a considerable amount of additional revenue for the Government. Then again, those who are working for private employers will have to provide more revenue because of the increase in the basic wage.

The Minister for Justice: Do you know that 10 per cent. only of the workers are in receipt of the basic wage, and they are all subject to the tax now?

Mr. LATHAM: Quite a large number were not subject to the tax. The Minister for Employment did not tell us how many men were on part-time work, and they will also, in all probability, be affected.

The Minister for Employment: No.

Mr. LATHAM: Of course they will.

The Minister for Employment: They will not be affected. You have not read the Act.

Mr. LATHAM: If they are not in receipt of the basic wage, they will not be affected, but I know quite a large proportion of them will be affected.

The Minister for Employment: Of course some will be.

The Minister for Justice: But very few.

Mr. LATHAM: It is logical to conclude, therefore, that the additional amount of £1,000,000, in round figures, that the Government have at their disposal will be the means not only of providing work for those who are unemployed, but already it has considerably aided private enterprise in making more work available to men who were formerly a charge on the State.

The Minister for Employment: You are not complaining about that?

Mr. LATHAM: No, I am merely drawing attention to the fact. I am not here all the time to complain, but if the Minister desires me to do so, I will have to change my role.

Mr. Ferguson: And you would be too miserable.

Mr. LATHAM: The improvement regarding the employment problem has been manifest throughout Australia, but the probabilities are that Western Australia shows a greater real improvement than any of the Eastern States. I would draw atten-

tion to figures that appeared in the Press recently, for they disclose the position clearly. The following table gives the percentage of unemployment as at the 30th June, 1932, and as at the 30th June, 1934, respectively:

	1932. Per cent.	1934. Per cent.
New South Wales ..	32.2	25.0
Victoria ..	27.7	18.0
Queensland ..	19.9	12.7
South Australia ..	35.2	25.4
Western Australia ..	30.3	18.3
Tasmania ..	27.4	17.9
Australian average ..	30.0	20.0

Those figures give us hope for the future and hearten our belief that the position is improving. At the same time, on account of that improvement, we should be more careful now than we were when we were compelled to safeguard the position. I propose to say something regarding the compulsory unionism policy of the Government. This matter has received a great deal of publicity, and has been freely discussed in nearly every quarter. I feel that the action of the Government in dismissing men from employment because they would not join the Australian Workers' Union, was not in the best interests of the State. Nothing should be more strongly condemned than the adoption of such a policy.

The Minister for Justice: You are sure of your statement?

Mr. LATHAM: Yes.

The Minister for Justice: The men were dismissed because they would not join one union?

Mr. LATHAM: Well, at any rate, to join a union.

The Minister for Mines: Can you quote one definite instance?

Mr. LATHAM: Yes, and the Minister knows I can.

The Minister for Mines: Well, your statement is absolutely untrue, and you know it.

Mr. LATHAM: I claim that my statement is perfectly correct. Men were dismissed from their employment because they would not join a union.

The Minister for Mines: That is not what you said before.

Mr. LATHAM: Which union are men most likely to join? The A.W.U. is the cheapest union.

The Minister for Mines: Do you expect us to pick the union for them?

Mr. LATHAM: Men are not likely to join the most costly union. If they happened to be financial members of a union, they would probably be allowed to remain in their organisation. It was a miserable trick to dismiss men because they would not swear allegiance to a union of another man's choosing.

The Minister for Justice: That is not fair.

Mr. LATHAM: I do not object to a man joining a union, but I do object to compulsory unionism. What would present-day Ministerial members have said if, when the previous Government were in power, we had stipulated that no man could secure employment unless he joined the Primary Producers' Association or the Wheatgrowers' Union?

The Minister for Employment: They certainly did not push ahead men who were members of their unions, did they?

Mr. LATHAM: No, and I hope that is not being done to-day.

The Minister for Employment: You would not do that!

Mr. LATHAM: No.

The Minister for Employment: Membership of a union should not be to a man's detriment.

Mr. LATHAM: It was not in our time, and never has been done, so far as I am aware.

Mr. Hegney: It has been done.

Mr. LATHAM: Our attitude was always that so long as a man could do his job properly, it did not matter whether he was a unionist or not.

The Minister for Employment: That was the theory, not the practice.

Mr. LATHAM: It will be admitted that men's views regarding an individual's capability, his judgment, character and so on, may vary. It was never our policy to do as the Minister suggests.

The Minister for Agriculture: The Primary Producers' Association members have their fees deducted from their cream cheques.

Mr. LATHAM: That is not compulsory; it is purely voluntary.

The Minister for Lands: Oh, no.

Mr. LATHAM: Yes, it is. They can give an order on their cream cheques, and the deduction is made. On the other hand, we have never said to them, "You shall not have a block of land unless you give us a procuration order."

The Minister for Agriculture: You are skating on thin ice.

Mr. LATHAM: One of these days we may advance so that we will stipulate that persons concerned should be members of our organisation. When that day arrives, I can imagine what will be said by members sitting opposite.

Mr. Moloney: You would do it in a more scientific way than that.

Mr. LATHAM: I do not flatter myself that we could do it better than the Government.

The Minister for Agriculture: You have made a mistake in this instance.

Mr. LATHAM: No. I do not know what the Government's present policy is, but there must have been some change, because I have not heard much about it recently.

The Minister for Mines: That is because the complaint died a natural death.

Mr. LATHAM: It may be that the Minister concerned endeavoured to give effect to his ideas but the error of his ways was pointed out to him, and he was led back to the narrow path. To revert to the point I was making, there are workers on part-time employment who are not in receipt of the basic wage.

Mr. Wilson: But they get more than they received from your Government.

Mr. LATHAM: If we had had the money the present Government have had at their disposal, we could have placed the men in full-time employment.

The Minister for Mines: In your last year you had as much as we had.

Mr. LATHAM: I wish the Minister for Mines would visit the Under Treasurer and get the facts from him. It is absolutely deplorable that a Minister should come here with a lack of knowledge, such as he has displayed.

The Minister for Mines: There is no lack of knowledge. For instance, there was that £750,000 that you had no right to have. I would like to know where you got that from.

Members: That was a printer's error.

Mr. LATHAM: That is so. Anyhow, that does not justify the statement made by the Minister just now.

The Minister for Mines: It is true, just the same.

Mr. LATHAM: We here protested when the financial emergency cut was partially restored; we pointed out that if

there was anything to give away, we ought to bring the unemployed back to full time. I regret that the Commonwealth Government have seen fit partially to restore the financial cut, without giving the States an opportunity to do likewise for their employees. I notice that the Economic Council have come in for their usual commendation from the Government. I am pleased to know that they are rendering such valuable services. The only opportunity I have had to judge of their work was afforded by the building of two houses on the City Beach estate. I hope that is not to be taken as an indication of the value of other work they are doing.

The Minister for Employment: The Economic Council did not build those houses.

The Minister for Mines: No, they had nothing to do with the building.

The Premier: The houses were like Topsy, they "grewed."

Mr. LATHAM: And they "grewed" very crookedly. Will the Minister tell me that the chairman of the Economic Council was not the chairman of that building committee?

The Minister for Employment: The chairman of that building committee was Mr. C. P. Smith.

Mr. LATHAM: Then what position did Mr. Harold Boas fill? I saw that Mr. Boas presided at some of the meetings of the committee. I notice that these people through the Press are asking the Government to build cheaper homes. They want to go on with this work, but I hope the Government will not agree. If there be a more highly qualified authority for the building of homes than the Workers' Homes Board, I should like to know where they are to be found. Let me give the House some figures, so that members may determine for themselves whether we should hand over to this unauthorised body the building of cheaper houses, or whether we should confine it to the Workers' Homes Board. Those people had £1,000 given to them by the Lotteries Commission for labour on those two buildings. Then they had the land given them by the City Council, and as far as I know every bit of material was supplied to them. I do not know of any that was purchased. I went through the buildings and I saw that this was given by somebody, and that was donated by somebody else, and the fittings were

supplied free of cost, right through both buildings. They were given the material and the land and the cost of labour; that is to say, if the cost of labour was £1,000, for I doubt whether they spent so much in labour on those buildings. The supervision was free, the architect's services were free, yet those two buildings were sold for £1,850. And there was great difficulty in getting a sale for them, for when they were put up by auction there was not a reasonable bid offered. It demonstrates that, after all, the departmental officers are not such bad business people as some would have us believe; we can take this as proof that our own people can do the work very much better than can any outside authority.

The Minister for Mines: I am afraid the houses are not of the class that is going to take on in Western Australia.

Mr. LATHAM: What we require to do is to put up a class of house in which the worker can afford to live.

Mr. Sleeman: That is right.

Mr. LATHAM: I know of no better investment for a worker than the procuring of a house from the Workers' Homes Board. It may be that we shall have to get back to a cheaper design than that which we have built to at Subiaco, but no doubt there is good value in those houses. What this building committee have done has shown us what ought not to be done, namely build a house at a very high cost and sell it for less than that amount.

The Minister for Employment: The purpose in building those houses was to give an impetus to the building trade.

Mr. LATHAM: Does the Minister seriously suggest that the building of two houses at the extremity of metropolitan settlement provided an impetus to the building trade? The greatest impetus given to the building trade was the using of the cheaper material that was being offered at the time.

Mr. Moloney: Certainly that was cheap material.

Mr. LATHAM: Yes, but no one else can build houses on those lines. In view of the donations made, the building of the two houses had no effect at all on the building trade beyond glorifying a few people in that trade.

The Minister for Employment: It is not fair to say they were in the business for that.

Mr. LATHAM: I did not say so. However, I hope the Government will not hand over the building of cheap homes to anybody outside the Public Service. The Workers' Homes Board could well be employed in building cottages of cheap design.

The Minister for Mines: You ought to have a word with the local authorities and induce them to desist from declaring brick areas.

Mr. LATHAM: The Minister has not a good memory. When in office, we tried to urge the local authorities to permit the building of wooden houses, and it was surprising the opposition that came from this side of the House. But I say that instead of building houses, we should turn our attention to efforts to help our primary industries. If once they again became flourishing we should get back to the position of increasing the national income. His Excellency's Speech made reference to the improvement in the timber trade. In a trade publication I noticed the other day that for the first quarter of this year Great Britain imported 70,000 cubic feet of sleepers from within the Empire, but brought in from outside the Empire a million cubic feet of sleepers. Something might be done to see if we could not get part of that increased trade. We have to get money overseas to meet our overseas indebtedness, and I know of no better way to assist our own people than by trying to obtain that market available at Home. While the secession delegation are in England, if they have any spare time they might turn attention to placing some of our hardwoods in the Old Country. Another improvement we might bring about would be to induce the Transport Board to be reasonable in their administration of the Transport Co-ordination Act. By that means we might prevent a good deal of increased unemployment. Many people who to-day are driving motor trucks or working in repair shops will find themselves out of employment if the Transport Board do not take steps to carry out the instructions of Parliament. We should protest against the appointment to the board of men who are already fully occupied, and so cannot give to the work of the board the time and attention it deserves. Take Mr. Munt, the chairman of the board: he still carries on his work as Under Secretary of the Public Works Department. He is a very capable officer, but he can be overloaded. A seat on

the Transport Board should be a full-time job, instead of which Mr. Munt has first to attend to his departmental work, after which if he has any time to spare, he can devote it to the administration of the Transport Co-ordination Act. Then we have as a member of the board, Mr. Bath, another capable man already fully occupied. I suppose there is scarcely a busier man in the State than Mr. Bath, for he has interests in co-operative concerns, in bulk handling, and in other activities, notwithstanding which he is appointed to the board. Then the remaining member, Mr. Hawkins, also is fairly fully occupied. In my view the importance of the Act would justify the members of the board devoting the whole of their time to their work.

The Minister for Justice: But good men are always busy.

Mr. LATHAM: Quite a lot of good men are idle to-day.

Mr. Sleeman: Too right!

Mr. LATHAM: While we might not have got the very men we wanted, it would have been wholly desirable to appoint to the board men who would have left their previous employment for the new work. All that the board has done has been to reduce licenses. Parliament did not intend that. The Minister in charge of the Bill, and the Government themselves, led us all to believe that they wanted the board to co-ordinate transport services. There is no co-ordination in refusing licenses to people who want them.

The Minister for Justice: The board has been operating for only a month.

Mr. LATHAM: Longer than that. The Minister knows that he asked for certain powers by setting aside the Interpretation Act so that the board might be appointed beforehand and draft regulations, and get everything ready for the administration of the Act. The board should have set about seeing what it was possible to do in the matter of co-ordinating services. I am disappointed that they did not go to the Railways and say: "We find that the country people complain that your service is not efficient. Cannot that be improved first?" That should have been the initial step in the co-ordination of services.

The Premier: But you do not know that they have not consulted the railways.

Mr. LATHAM: I daresay they have, through Mr. Hickey.

The Minister for Justice: You and your friends did not hesitate to criticise them.

Mr. LATHAM: We were justified in putting up the criticism, for all the board did was simply to refuse licenses. The Minister did not intend that.

The Minister for Justice: They have not done that. They refused some licenses.

Mr. LATHAM: About 50 per cent. They sat in their office, did not go into the country to see what services the applicants for licenses were rendering. The board had not time for that. They simply let things go, saying "they will adjust themselves afterwards." In my view the Government did wrong in appointing a board which could not devote their full time to the work. The Premier just now asked how did I know that the board did not consult the railways. I know one man running a truck who informed the board that he would pick up the goods in town here, convey them to the railways and, if they would give him a railway truck he would, at the other end of the railway journey, lift the goods and deliver them. The board said they had nothing to do with that, and advised him to put it up to the railways. He did so, and the Railways said, "Nothing doing." What he had in mind was proper co-ordination, and what had been done in South Australia. That would have been the right thing to do here.

The Minister for Mines: Were any licenses reduced in South Australia.

Mr. LATHAM: I daresay.

The Minister for Mines: I thought you were suggesting that none had been reduced there.

Mr. LATHAM: I did not say that. In South Australia, the authorities went out into the country to see things for themselves, and to find out whether it was not possible to use all the transport on the roads for the same purpose that Parliament intended the transport to be used in this State. Parliament intended that all forms of transport should be of service to the railway system.

The Minister for Justice: It took them two years in South Australia to do anything, whereas we have done something in half the time.

Mr. LATHAM: What are these men going to do for a living? They will have to go to the Government for employment.

The Minister for Justice: What happened to those teamsters who used to cart things out to your farm?

Mr. LATHAM: They went somewhere else. As the railway went through, it opened up new country, and instead of carting on one side of the line the teamsters carted on the other side. I want to see members of the board out in the country investigating complaints. Let them see if they cannot put up to the railways something that will give a better service to the people. If they do that I will be satisfied. The doubt in my mind is whether the members of the board can do this work.

The Minister for Justice: The Government have every confidence in them.

Mr. LATHAM: Does the Minister think that either Mr. Munt or Mr. Bath can do this work?

The Minister for Works: Mr. Bath is thoroughly acquainted with the country.

Mr. LATHAM: Does he know enough about it to decide every point from his office?

The Minister for Works: There is no need for me to travel all around the country to decide points in my office. It is the same with Mr. Bath.

Mr. LATHAM: The Minister frequently goes into the country and satisfies himself on one point or another.

The Minister for Works: Mr. Bath has travelled over the State as much as you or I have done.

Mr. LATHAM: I venture to say that no man in the city was more surprised than Mr. Bath when this position was offered to him. He has never been educated up to this class of work. He has, through his association with the co-operative movement, been more interested in the parts of the State along the railway lines. He has not been acquainted with anything concerning the transport services of the country.

The Minister for Works: No man knows it better, except perhaps Mr. Munt.

Mr. LATHAM: I do not agree. The board has not done right in reducing licenses as they have. They should have gone into the country to find out for themselves how the transport services could be co-ordinated.

The Premier: No purpose whatever would have been achieved if a considerable number of licenses had not been refused.

Mr. LATHAM: I do not think the Premier ever believed that so many licences

would be refused. He said the board would be used in such a way that employment would be found for delicensed persons on feeder roads to the railways. What opportunities have been offered to delicensed persons to engage in transport along feeder roads?

The Minister for Works: Everyone of the delicensed persons was offered feeder roads, and only one man accepted the offer. Now these fellows are appealing to the Court and asking for adjournments in order that they may look for feeder roads.

Mr. LATHAM: If the Minister has information on that point, I shall be glad if he will give it to the House. I should like to know what offers were made, and whether the men concerned were likely to be fully employed if they accepted such offers.

The Minister for Mines: Of course, they all want to carry stuff alongside the railways.

Mr. LATHAM: That may be so. Our railways are the cheapest in the world from the constructional point of view. I cannot understand how private enterprise can compete with the service. People have to buy expensive trucks, and it costs a good deal to run them.

The Premier: But they work from 18 to 20 hours a day.

Mr. LATHAM: Power was given in the Act to limit the hours of employment.

Mr. Raphael: Some of the drivers, married men, are paid only £2 a week.

Mr. LATHAM: I see the hon. member has arrived. We also said that the awards of the Court must be abided by. I have no desire to stress this matter further, but I do wish to enter my protest against the board having failed to do what Parliament intended.

The Minister for Works: I think every member of Parliament knew what would happen.

Mr. LATHAM: I did not know.

The Minister for Works: Later on I will quote from some speeches that were made on the subject.

Mr. LATHAM: It is unnecessary to delay the proceedings by quoting speeches, but, if the Minister so desires, I can quote several. We do not want the whole business gone over again. Reverting to the Speech, and the references in it to wheat and wool, it must be pleasing to those who are engaged in the agricultural industry, and

others who are dependent upon it, that there has been an improvement in the price of wheat, and that for this year the Federal Government have guaranteed a price of 3s. per bushel. That will mean a considerable improvement in the price to the growers. It represents 3s. a bushel f.o.r. at port, plus the distribution of £1,000,000 amongst the wheat producers of Australia.

Mr. Raphael: That will disappear after the elections.

Mr. LATHAM: We do not know why wheat has been so cheap for a number of years. Possibly adverse reports from America and the Continent have caused the price to improve. We do not wish other countries any harm, but we hope the price will continue to improve so that our wheat farmers may derive some benefit from the situation. The wool position is not so encouraging, and it is difficult to say what lies ahead of that particular industry. Statistical returns indicate there is no great carry-over of wool, and we hope for better prices in the near future. It is pleasing to know that there has been an improvement in the gold position. The Government have certainly taken every opportunity to encourage the development of mining while the price of gold has been high. As gold is so attractive a proposition to-day, a large number of mining companies have come into existence, and many shows have been foisted upon an unsuspecting public. Every precaution should be taken to provide that reliable information is forthcoming whenever advice is sought regarding the industry. We cannot afford to let Western Australia get a bad name over gold-mining, seeing that this State has done so much for Australia by its gold production. It is highly essential that we should preserve our good name. I am now going to say something about the distribution of last year's wheat bonus. For the two years prior to 1933 the distribution of the wheat bonus was satisfactory, but of recent date there has been a good deal of dissatisfaction over it. I cannot understand from what source the officers concerned have obtained their advice. The Federal Act provides that those persons who are entitled to any share in the crop shall receive their share of the bonus. Take the case of a person who holds letters of administration, and is given power by the Court to carry on farming oper-

ations and possesses the power to mortgage. The authorities are refusing to give the bonus in such cases, as they contend they have to make the distribution to the beneficiaries. Surely very little commonsense is required for a person to understand that the holders of letters of administration are in the same position as those to whom probate has been granted.

The Minister for Lands: The Act is quite definite on the point.

Mr. LATHAM: The persons holding letters of administration, are responsible for the administration of the estate. I do not know who was the genius who devised this part of the Act.

The Minister for Lands: Quite a number of important questions relating to the bonus have been referred to the Federal Government.

Mr. LATHAM: It is remarkable that only in Western Australia is this sort of thing being done.

The Minister for Lands: I suppose you are justified in assuming that. I have no facts to support the statement.

Mr. LATHAM: I can supply information to the Minister if he wants it. The system of distribution in this State seems to be quite different from the system in other States. In New South Wales the authorities are paying a flat rate of 4s. a bushel on all wheat harvested, and in Victoria are doing the same thing. In South Australia the distribution is on the basis of 2s. an acre, plus 1s. 6d. in the case of necessitous farmers. The term "necessitous" is interpreted very differently in the other States from what it is in Western Australia. Everything there depends on the average per acre. In this State the necessity of a farmer is determined by whether or not he has a motor car. That is a scandalous state of affairs. A farmer may have had a motor car for many years, and it may be quite useless to him. In other instances, it may only be used as a means of conveyance from the farm to the town, and yet the owner of such a vehicle is refused a share of the bonus. The Minister for Lands is a farmer, and he knows that some means of transport from the farm to the town must be provided.

The Minister for Lands: But you adopted that policy yourself.

Mr. LATHAM: I do not admit I ever adopted that policy. In any case it was the wrong policy to adopt.

The Minister for Lands: But you did adopt it.

Mr. LATHAM: Surely it is wrong to determine a person's necessity by whether or not he possesses a motor car.

Mr. Lambert: A very sound reason, too.

Mr. LATHAM: It may have some effect in Yilgarn. A farmer may be 10 miles from a siding, and the only light vehicle he may possess may be a motor car. Is it to be imagined that he should walk to the nearest township, and then carry back his stores on his shoulders?

Mr. Lambert: A farmer is allowed a utility runabout.

Mr. LATHAM: What is the difference? Who would find the money for the conversion of a car into a runabout? That is only beating about the bush. The necessity of the farmer should be determined by his case. I know of one man who seven years ago was presented with a motor car by his father-in-law. Because he is in possession of that vehicle, he cannot get the bonus. Last year he suffered badly through rabbit invasion.

The Minister for Lands: You supported that policy in your last year of office.

Mr. LATHAM: This is the first time I have heard any criticism regarding the distribution of the bonus.

The Minister for Lands: And now that you are in opposition you criticise the policy.

Mr LATHAM: It is only lately that the occasion has arrived for criticising the system of distribution. As regards distribution among persons reputed to have incomes, I have pointed out that in Victoria and New South Wales the payment is 4s. on an acreage basis, and that in South Australia it is 2s. plus 1s. 6d. for necessitous farmers. Although the Commonwealth send out the same form to all the States, this is the sort of thing to which our farmers are subjected. They are asked to furnish particulars of sales of wheat, oats, barley, hay, sheep, and of bales of wool, particulars of "sundry sales" and income from other sources, particulars of expenditure on super, sacks, oils, twine, and wages. If the form were completed, I would not mind; but it is not completed. No other State has adopted this form. As

regards other States, there is only one form, and that is the Commonwealth form, which is available in every State. I have forms of other States here, and they are available for the Minister's perusal. In Western Australia, on the other hand, there are three forms. After the farmer has informed the department that he had a taxable income last year but did not anticipate having one this year, the following letter is sent out to him by our Agricultural Bank—

In connection with your application for assistance under the Commonwealth Wheat Growers' Relief Act, I have to advise that before your claim can be dealt with, the trustees require that you complete the attached special declaration in respect to your farming operations for the past two seasons. I shall be glad if you will have this done and return the form to this office, together with your taxation assessment notice.

What a piece of impertinence! A privileged document to go into the district office of the Agricultural Bank. The Minister should see that that is not asked for. In a court of law the judge would probably hand over such a document to be read by certain specified persons, but assuredly he would not make it available for everyone in the court to see. The letter concludes—

Please note that the declaration will need to be witnessed by a J.P. or other competent witness.

Now I propose to read to the House what the Prime Minister said when the Act was being passed—

It is known that many who have received Government assistance in the past have not needed it. Either they were farming wheat under more favoured conditions than most, or they had incomes from other sources. The object of the Government is to assist those who are really in need of assistance, and it considers that a man who is in a position to pay Federal income tax has not a just claim for financial help from the public purse. It is realised, however, that since June, 1933, there are people who have suffered reverses, and it is likely that there are many who, though they are subject to tax in respect of their earnings during 1932-33, might not be similarly circumstanced in respect of the current year. The Government, therefore, proposes to meet these growers by permitting them to claim on the ground that though they received income to a taxable amount in 1932-33, it is unlikely that they will receive taxable income in 1933-34, and that there are circumstances by reason of which it is just that they should receive assistance.

The Government should carry out that instruction. It is not the State Government's

money, but the money of the Commonwealth Government sent here to assist our wheatgrowers.

The Minister for Lands: The farmers must satisfy the trustees.

Mr. LATHAM: I have no objection whatever to that.

The Minister for Lands: Yet you say it is an impertinence to ask for that information.

Mr. LATHAM: To ask for the farmer's assessment notice is an impertinence. Why should the Prime Minister provide that the Commissioner of Taxation shall certify that a farmer was a taxpayer or was not a taxpayer?

The Minister for Lands: That refers to last year. I am referring to this year.

Mr. LATHAM: Would the Minister for Lands like his assessment notice to be sent into the Geraldton office for everybody to see? A farmer perhaps paid £2 tax, or may have paid only 2s. 6d.; and so he may be in a worse position this year because of not receiving any bonus. After all, it is not the State that finds the money, but the Commonwealth; and we must not lose sight of that fact.

The Minister for Lands: The farmers will get every penny of the money.

Mr. LATHAM: I hope so. Of course, by the payment of the bonus the State Government are relieved to a certain extent. Probably the Minister has not had time to go into the matter so far, but he ought to see that a farmer is not deprived of the bonus simply because he has a motor car stuck in his shed and is unable to use it.

The Minister for Lands: In the main I do not agree that the man who runs a car and buys petrol should be granted assistance. If the trustees give way to one man, they will have to give way to all. I do not consider—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition is making a speech.

Mr. LATHAM: I am getting a little enlightenment. I have always objected to duplication of services, and if the bonus is going to be distributed on that basis, I should prefer to see the Commonwealth officials come here and distribute the money, though I do not think that, in those circumstances, the State would get as much benefit.

The Minister for Lands: The Act is not understandable.

Mr. LATHAM: It is understandable in Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia, if not here. In the East the measure is interpreted liberally, as it ought to be; whereas here, it is interpreted conservatively. If I did not know the Minister for Lands, I would probably blame him for that. The bulk handling system, of course, is not anything new. In 1932 it was started in the Wyalkatchem area, where installations were made at sidings, and it was found that farmers carted their wheat past other sidings in order to obtain the benefit of the system. Most of them saved from £50 to £100 in that year by reason of bulk handling, and such a sum means the difference between success and failure. I hope the member for Middle Swan (Mr. Hegney) will assist me in my efforts to induce the Government to furnish help in that direction.

Mr. Hegney: I see that bagged wheat was higher in price than bulk wheat.

Mr. LATHAM: Naturally. We know that bagged wheat is a halfpenny per bushel higher. The offset against that is the cost of the bags. Last year the bulk handling company installed the system at 53 sidings. Those 53 sidings were installed at a cost little more than that of the cost of bags for one year's operation. These things should be noted especially as it is sometimes urged that the system has had only a short life. There seems to have been some sort of opposition to bulk handling from various sources. The merchants, although they can do just as they like, buy wheat in bags or in bulk, or even put up bulk handling systems of their own if the Government will grant them the sites, yet seem to be putting obstructions in the way of the system. Last year, when the 53 installations were made, the company frequently had to accept unsuitable sites for bins. In consequence, upon the occurrence of unusual rains this year, they discovered that many of their sites were in low-lying country. The sites held by the merchants had a capacity of 1,400,000 bushels, and not 100,000 bushels in bags was received at those sites. The second point is the Railway Department. This is the only Australian State where the Railway Department has set its face against the installation of bulk handling. If the price of wheat remains low for another year or two, a great deal

less wheat will be carried over the railways. The excuse usually offered for decline in the railway revenue is that the railways have not been carrying the usual quantity of wheat.

The Minister for Justice: That is a contributing cause.

Mr. LATHAM: A highly important contributing factor. Here is an opportunity for the farmer to get a little more income by saving handling costs, and the Railway Department do not assist him. The railway officials should be told that they must make themselves subservient to the industry.

The Minister for Justice: You have a warped idea of the Railway Department, and you seem to express it on every possible occasion.

Mr. LATHAM: I shall continue to express my opinion at every opportunity. At the moment I am merely quoting the excuse that is put up. The Railway Department say it does not pay to carry wheat. Nevertheless, immediately there is a fall in revenue they say the reason is that the usual quantity of wheat has not been carried.

The Minister for Justice: As you yourself said earlier this afternoon, almost half the revenue goes away in interest, whether wheat is carried or not.

Mr. LATHAM: Of course. If the wheat farmers cannot continue their operations, the Railway Department will find themselves in a very bad way. One would think that the Railway Department would use every effort to get more wheat from those areas. That ought to be their aim. I shall not allow the Minister for Railways to take all the blame in this matter, because I am aware of the attitude of opposition the Railway Department of this State adopt towards bulk handling. Unreasonable and unnecessary charges are made. Motor transport cannot compete with the railway service.

The Minister for Justice: Let the railways carry the wheat and the motors carry the rest?

Mr. LATHAM: I did not imply anything of that nature. I have never suggested such a thing.

The Premier: Let the railways carry the wheat and super and deliver bags and so forth, and let the motors carry the other traffic!

Mr. LATHAM: Not all the commodities carried on the roads are for the storekeepers.

The Minister for Justice: Yes, and they pass on the cost.

Mr. LATHAM: I am quite well aware of what happens in that respect. Last year the bulk handling system dealt with 11,150,000 bushels of wheat. Adjoining farmers are naturally anxious to save costs by having that facility extended to them, and they are hoping that something will be done in the near future.

The Premier: Do they handle the same quantity out as they handle in?

Mr. LATHAM: Pretty well. I will put the Premier right. The loss that occurs is between Fremantle and the port of out-put, not between the railway siding and Fremantle. That is where the Premier erred.

The Premier: Where did the inferior quality arise?

Mr. LATHAM: I have not heard of that. I can make available some particulars, if the Premier desires them, of the out-turn, showing no dockage.

The Premier: And not subject to arbitration.

Mr. LATHAM: Of course, in this sort of business there is very often arbitration. Unless the departmental certificate is available, it is frequently made an excuse for that step. The board of arbitrators have at times fixed a dockage of 3d. per quarter, but on occasions they have not done so.

Mr. Patrick: There were big losses on bagged wheat.

Mr. LATHAM: There always have been losses. The heaviest losses were experienced seven or eight years ago under the bagging system; there were tremendous losses in the out-turn. It is nothing new.

The Minister for Justice: The system of storage is not good.

Mr. LATHAM: If the Minister is not careful, I will quote to him something from his own paper at Geraldton.

The Minister for Justice: I do not accept my gospel from that quarter.

Mr. LATHAM: There is no bulk handling system there. I want the Minister to explain the necessity for the extra charge of 9d. a ton for haulage. He knows that he cannot justify it.

The Minister for Justice: I think I can convince you.

Mr. LATHAM: In New South Wales the railways have not charged a penny extra for haulage, and there is a big difference between the attitude of the railway author-

ities in New South Wales and that adopted by the Railway Department here with reference to bulk handling. In this State the Westralian Farmers Ltd. and the Wheat Pool provided the necessary money for the conversion of 200 trucks for the bulk handling of wheat, and the work did not cost the department one penny.

The Minister for Justice: That is so.

Mr. LATHAM: Under the old system five different merchants might be engaged in buying wheat at one siding, and when the wheat came in there would be four trucks at the site where one firm was located, four or five at another site, and so on until the wheat was distributed between the five buyers. The difference between that and the bulk handling system is that under the latter the wheat is concentrated at one centre, and there is no shunting to be undertaken. There is far less handling with bulk wheat than with bagged wheat, and yet the Railway Department have imposed an extra charge of 9d. per ton on bulk wheat as against bagged wheat. There is no justification for it.

The Minister for Justice: I still say that I can convince even you on the point.

Mr. LATHAM: Perhaps the Government may get Mr. Hale and his friends to investigate the question.

The Minister for Justice: You might be sorry.

Mr. LATHAM: How can the Minister justify the extra charge of 9d. per ton for haulage? The money I have referred to was provided by the Westralian Farmers and the Wheat Pool, so that it did not cost the Railway Department anything at all.

Mr. Lambert: It was the farmers' money that was made available.

Mr. LATHAM: Then why should the railway authorities charge 9d. a ton extra in the circumstances?

Mr. Lambert: It was money that should have gone to the farmers direct.

Mr. LATHAM: That is not the point. The Minister cannot justify the additional charge.

Mr. Wansbrough: Do you say that the 200 trucks were converted to deal with the whole of the bulk wheat?

Mr. LATHAM: No. Alterations were made to other trucks, but the money for the work was provided by the bulk handling authorities. Freight was levied on

the conveyance of the materials required, so that there was no charge against the railways at all. It is no wonder that those concerned with bulk handling are talking about altering the converted trucks back to their original condition and then saying to the railway authorities, "Now, if you have any complaints, make them." Will the Government forego the additional charge of 9d. per ton then? The Government have to pay the same amount for haulage, and yet with the bulk system have less shunting to do.

The Minister for Justice: You say so, and other people say the contrary. That is how you start an argument and reach no conclusion.

Mr. LATHAM: I want to draw the attention of the Government to the self-help nature of the undertaking. The farmers themselves—I know I will have the approval of the Minister for Employment in this instance—decided that instead of buying bags and sending some £600,000 out of the State, they would handle the wheat in bulk and so save that expenditure. Most of the profit would have gone to—

The Minister for Justice: Calcutta.

Mr. LATHAM: No, I was thinking of the foreign shareholders who are outside Australia. The farmers, through their organisations, have not asked the Government for a pennyworth of assistance beyond requesting the use of sidings where bins could be erected, and for that privilege they had to pay.

Mr. Sleeman: And they ought to be proud of what they have got.

Mr. Seward: They are.

Mr. LATHAM: It is not a question whether they should be proud of them or not; the point is whether the bins are of service. The bulk handling system nearly paid for itself in one year, and the saving was represented by the money that otherwise would have been expended on bags. I think that this must be about the only time a request has been made to the Government for anything, without assistance being requested in one direction or another. It is true that the bulk handling authorities asked for sites, but they were prepared to pay for them, and they did not ask for a monopoly. Anyone else was to be allowed to engage in bulk handling, and the farmers, if they desired to do so, could deliver their wheat in bags. Farmers were allowed to pool their

wheat, to sell it direct, to warehouse it, or deliver it in bags.

The Minister for Justice: It is just as though you have all the shop frontages in Hay Street, and are prepared to allow anyone else to set up a shop at Wembley.

Mr. LATHAM: That is not the position at all.

The Minister for Justice: You have all the best sites.

Mr. LATHAM: If zones had been selected by the merchants, they would have taken Geraldton first of all, because the facilities there are most advantageous.

The Minister for Justice: Surely the Fremantle wharf is just as good as the Geraldton wharf.

Mr. LATHAM: But not better. There is shorter haulage and so forth up there.

Mr. Sleeman: Anyway, you are sending wheat away in shocking condition.

Mr. LATHAM: We heard that sort of assertion when we sent wheat away in bags.

Mr. Sleeman: And the charges were substantiated.

Mr. LATHAM: When the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman) was dealing with that subject, I went down to the port to inspect the wheat when it came in from the outer sidings in bulk, and I also inspected the wheat taken from bags. Had I been asked to select the better wheat, I would have chosen the bulk wheat.

The Minister for Works: I think you had better be careful.

Mr. LATHAM: That was the position. I will read something from a very responsible newspaper for the information of the Minister, if he so desires. The cheapness of the bulk handling scheme is what appeals to the farmer, and he can pay for it in two years.

The Minister for Justice: Cheap and nasty!

Mr. Mann: You cannot prove that statement.

Mr. LATHAM: The scheme is cheap and effective.

The Minister for Justice: Of course it is not.

Mr. LATHAM: I claim that it is. It has cost the farmers less than a penny a bushel to handle their wheat, and they can develop the scheme with the funds now available. The Government are aware of the facts. Money is available in London

for the completion of the scheme and if that money is procured, it will represent a considerable sum. If that money were obtained at once, we could provide a lot of employment for artisans and other workers.

The Premier: Of course; as it is there will be a lot of work for men on reconstruction and so on.

Mr. LATHAM: The Premier has had this matter under consideration for a long time and I do not know what is the trouble. I noticed the other day that another committee had been set up.

The Premier: No, be fair!

Mr. LATHAM: I noticed some mention of the matter. I saw the Minister eight weeks ago and I thought it was merely a question of procuring a few particulars, but now I notice that he wants a balance sheet for every siding.

The Minister for Works: And we must have them, too.

Mr. LATHAM: Why?

The Minister for Works: I want to know whether the scheme is payable. Why should the balance sheets not be produced?

Mr. LATHAM: The merchants are quite prepared to buy scrip, as I explained just now, and would they pay the amount required if the scheme were not profitable? That surely should be a definite answer to the Minister. I do not know why the Minister for Works should object to bulk handling, seeing that just outside his office sand has been bulk handled, and no objection has been raised to it.

Mr. Sleeman: The Minister did not have anything to do with that.

Mr. LATHAM: As the Minister for Public Works, he would have something to do with the work that has been going on in Malcolm Street. The Premier himself complained of the obsolete methods we were applying to the construction of drains.

Mr. Sleeman: What does the Wheat-growers' Union think?

Mr. LATHAM: There are a few misguided people among the farmers, as there will be found in the Labour movement as well; that will always be so. The other day the "West Australian" published a picture of the new hopper trucks that the Railway Department have had constructed. Why were those trucks procured? The Minister knows they were built to save handling costs. That is a definite reply, too.

If it is good enough for the Railway Department to make use of the cheapest methods possible, the Government should not refuse the farmers the right to act similarly for themselves.

The Minister for Justice: We may have different points of view on the question.

Mr. LATHAM: But bulk handling has been used not only for sand in Malcolm Street: the system is in operation in the South-West as well. It will be recognised that those engaged in various industries are not in as favourable a position as the Government from the standpoint of borrowing money, and outside organisations have to save every penny they can. If we can save £400,000 a year for the farmers, we should do so quickly. I have a picture of the ballast trucks that have been constructed for the Railway Department in order to effect a saving in costs. If the Department can do that, surely we are justified in asking for the same consideration on behalf of the farmers.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. LATHAM: Before tea I was pointing out the remarkable opportunity given to the State to avail itself of the money that would be provided for this purpose, and how it could absorb a great number of artisans during the winter months. That is one of the things we ought to take into consideration, because it would be of advantage to get foreign capital into the State and would mean increased employment. Another point is the passive resistance that has been put up to this progressive scheme of the farmers themselves. Every day there are increased demands coming in for further extensions of the scheme. I have here a lengthy petition asking for further facilities, but until the Government have determined their policy towards the scheme, it is impossible for me to reply to it. So I hope that whatever I may have to say this evening will serve to bring finality one way or the other in this matter. One big item is the saving of bags. The Minister for Employment is continually pleading, and rightly so, that we should save money for Western Australia. No less than £600,000 goes to Calcutta for bags every year, and of that amount we shall be able to save £400,000, which will mean so much money in circulation within the State. The farmers require a lot of work done on their

farms, and if this money is available it will assist to increase employment. Another even more important thing is that unless the Government determine this matter in the immediate future, we are not going to get any thing like the bags that will be required in this State should the Government decide against further extension of the bulk handling. Not 25 per cent. of the normal quantity of bags has been ordered this year. This will be a very serious matter, especially if the price of wheat goes on rising as rapidly as it has done within the last few days. Even if the Government were to say no to any further extension, it would be better than leaving the farmers in their present state of uncertainty. Members of the House, and the Government also, are interested in trying to find the last penny piece for the industry. If we can save, not only the money that goes to Calcutta for bags, but also money for twine and for handling costs and suchlike—

Mr. Sleeman: And throw a few thousand men out of work.

Mr. LATHAM: I cannot get that idea out of my friend's head. The adoption of the system may mean changing the workers round a little, but it should not deprive them of any work. After all, the farmer does not put his money in some receptacle in the back yard; if this money is available to pay his debts, then the people who have supplied his services will also have money for further employment.

Mr. Sleeman: You will not give the farmers a choice of systems.

Mr. LATHAM: Yes, we do. The man that disagrees with us can always put his wheat in bags. We are not compelling anybody to do something he does not desire to do. The hon. member knows that the definite reply to his interjection is this: At every siding where we have installed bulk handling there is very little bagged wheat, hardly any indeed, and at some stations none at all; whereas at others, where wheat of inferior quality comes in, it has to be bagged and stored separately. Last year a lot of our trouble arose because we had to provide accommodation for wheat that ought to have gone to other sidings. Again, I think we might give some consideration to the farmer, who has to work in the broiling sun longer hours than the usual run of workers have to endure. Not having to sew his bags gives him some relief in the summer, in addition to which he gets his wheat more quickly to

market. Some remarks have been made about the dockage of bulk wheat. Naturally, the bulk wheat is open to inspection, and the agents can quickly tell whether it is of inferior quality, as against bagged wheat.

Mr. Sleeman: Yes, and they have turned back quite a lot.

Mr. LATHAM: No. The agents of the bulk handling company docked 11,021,000 bushels of bulk wheat £405, and the same agents docked 9,213,000 bushels of bagged wheat £428. That is accounted for by the fact that some of those people think they can get an inferior quality of wheat into the bags, whereas they cannot do so in the bulk.

Mr. Sleeman: Down at Fremantle I saw a bag of gravel amongst the wheat.

Mr. LATHAM: What did you do about it?

Mr. Sleeman: I showed it to the ex-Minister for Works, Mr. Lindsay.

Mr. LATHAM: He must have been pleased. Bulk wheat, of course, is better protected than is bagged wheat. Insects cannot get into it, and mice cannot affect it as badly as they can affect bagged wheat. There was certainly a great deal of damage last year, but less amongst the bulk wheat than in the bagged wheat. Where bagged wheat was stacked at railway sidings, there was more damage than ever before, because of the abnormally heavy rains at a very early period. I told the Minister for Railways that I would read him some notes from a paper printed and circulated in his own district. Here is the extract from the "Geraldton Guardian and Express" of Tuesday, 31st July, 1934—

Storage of Wheat. The Weevil Pest. Prevalence in Geraldton. We are informed that during the past few weeks considerable quantities of wheat have had to be disposed of locally and in the metropolitan markets owing to the ravages of weevil.

The climate of Geraldton, being warm and moist during the winter months, is particularly conducive to this pest, and unfortunately this year it has been very difficult to sell wheat overseas, with the result that merchants have had to stack considerable quantities of wheat in the Geraldton yard awaiting sales and shipment, and this, in many instances, remained in stacks for periods varying up to five and six months.

The March rains seriously aggravated the weevil menace, and made it particularly difficult to deal with the wheat in this zone, and trucks loaded with bags of weevily and rain-damaged wheat have had to be railed to the metropolitan market or sold wherever possible.

There still remains a considerable quantity of wheat unfit for shipment.

So it is of no use blaming the bulk system when we get the pest in the bagged wheat.

The Premier: Is that from the wheat-growers' newspaper?

Mr. LATHAM: The Premier will agree with me that the wheatgrowers' newspaper is a fairly reliable publication. In addition to all these obstructions thrust in the way, there are still a few misled farmers.

Mr. Sleeman: You will not say that photographs lie?

Mr. LATHAM: If the hon. member has given any attention to photography, he will know how photographs can be made to lie. Surely he has seen pictures of buildings under construction looking like veritable abortions of things, whereas when finished they looked quite all right.

The Premier: The hon. member would not comment on photographs of ourselves.

Mr. LATHAM: None of the finished buildings was ever photographed, for they do not do that sort of thing. However, with bulk handling there is better organisation on the railways, for there is less shunting, since the bulk wheat is always in the one place, wheat belonging to different owners being stacked under the one roof. Then, as the trucks are pushed up, it does not matter whose wheat is loaded, and so much time is saved. I would point out the improved treatment enjoyed by the New South Wales farmer as against the farmer of this State, although wheat has played an important part in the progress of Western Australia. In New South Wales the whole cost of construction is borne by the people themselves. The railways assist in every possible way, and there is not any departmental officer who will say a word against bulk handling. Every assistance is given in that State, and I ask that it be given also to the farmers in this State. It is most remarkable, too, that the rent for the land upon which these bins are built is treble the amount demanded for the ordinary stacking of wheat. There is no reason for it. Some, of course, maintain that the bulk handling system will throw out of employment a lot of men. Those engaged in handling bulk wheat at Fremantle have a very much easier job than they had when handling wheat in

bags. On this point I have here some information, which reads as follows:—

It is now possible to consider the actual number of hours worked in loading bulk wheat as compared with bagged wheat. On the 223,710 tons loaded by bulk machines, 54,005 man hours have been worked, compared with 143,244 man hours in the case of bagged wheat, so that bulk wheat has reduced the man hours by 89,239 man hours. This is equal to a reduction of 39 men on full employment for one year, so that the loss to Fremantle is equal to constant employment for 39 men.

Mr. Cross: Does bulk handling compensate the men thrown out of employment?

Mr. LATHAM: This applies only where we can show what it has actually done, but the amount of money to be saved will provide for a great many more than 39 men.

Mr. Cross: That is a matter of opinion.

Mr. LATHAM: Of course it is. There are some people whom it would be impossible to convert, no matter how much one might attempt to do it. Some would still declare against the evidence of their eyes that black was white. I appeal to the Premier to get Cabinet to make a decision within a few days. Otherwise farmers will be handicapped through not having bags. I have presented arguments in favour of bulk handling and, if the policy of the Government is opposed to bulk handling, the Premier should let us know that they are not going to permit any more sites, so that farmers can make the necessary arrangements for bag supplies.

The Premier: We will give a decision some day this week.

Mr. LATHAM: Then I shall be perfectly satisfied. I appeal to the Premier not to have any more committees appointed. I should not like to be a Minister burdened with the task of wading through the reports submitted to Governments. Probably 39 man-hours would be required to consider the reports.

The Minister for Employment: It would provide work for the unemployed.

Mr. LATHAM: I thank the Minister for that interjection. That amount of money saved would provide full-time work for every man now engaged on part-time work.

The Minister for Employment: I said that probably you could give employment to unemployed by getting them to go through the reports.

Mr. LATHAM: I misunderstood the Minister. The reports, of course, do not come into my hands.

The Premier: We have had a lot of light reading provided for us during the last few months, the reports on secession, the case for union, the report of the Agricultural Bank Commission, and the report of the State Grants Commission—heaps of light reading.

Mr. LATHAM: I wish to point out that we are anxiously awaiting the decision of the Government regarding the personnel of the delegation who are to present the Case for Secession to the right quarter. Parliament was summoned specially to consider the matter, and sat for six weeks. Two months have elapsed since Parliament decided what was wanted, and agreed with the Government in all their proposals. We are now waiting to hear what the Government propose to do to give effect to the decision of Parliament. The Premier is aware that the Federal Government propose to spend £20,000 in circulating copies of the case for the union. It will not cost the people of this State £20,000 to give effect to the decision of Parliament.

Mr. Sleeman: How much would it cost you to go home?

Mr. Thorn: Just the cost of the passport.

Mr. LATHAM: The member for Fremantle has asked a rather embarrassing question.

The Minister for Justice: Ask him to give notice of it.

Mr. LATHAM: I hope an early announcement will be made because, even though the delegation consists of some members of the committee who prepared the Case for Secession, they might desire to obtain quite a lot of information before leaving, and early notification of appointment would give them opportunity to obtain it, while it would also satisfy people in the State who wish to reply to the Federal Government and to the State Grants Commission. If ever this State was treated badly it was so treated by those gentlemen who investigated our disabilities. I do not wish to go fully into the question, but I think the House should take an opportunity, as the Tasmanian Parliament did, to protect against the findings of the Commission. I am sure they did not base their conclusions on the evidence submitted. I read the case presented

by the local committee, and it seemed to be unanswerable.

The Minister for Employment: The Chairman had given his decision beforehand.

Mr. LATHAM: He had already prejudged the case. An article had appeared in the "Daily News," and Professor Giblin's article appeared after he was appointed. I do not know that we can do anything beyond protesting against the treatment meted out to Western Australia by the Commission. There is no doubt that commissions get us into trouble. I do not intend to deal with the report of a commission that must be causing the Government considerable trouble. I know that it is causing members on this side of the House much concern. I refer to the report of the Royal Commission on the Agricultural Bank. I was glad to receive from the Premier this afternoon an assurance that he will give members an opportunity to discuss the report. I am afraid the far-reaching effects of that report will be experienced for a long time. I can imagine that when the printed report is circulated amongst the heads of the Associated Banks in Sydney—those who have second mortgages on properties here—and amongst the heads of mercantile institutions who have only agencies in this State and who have given considerable credit, it must cause them great concern. In addition, the report must have considerable effect in London. I hope the fullest opportunity will be afforded to discuss the report and recommendations of the Commission. It is a matter that we cannot consider without having the full text of the report before us. Probably quite a lot of important matter has been omitted from a newspaper report, owing to the exigencies of space, but I hope the Premier will facilitate a thorough discussion of the matter and see that no injustice is meted out. I also hope that the Premier will not give effect to any part of the report until Parliament has discussed it.

Mr. Lambert: A lot of the report was couched in very extravagant language.

The Premier: Anyhow, it will take some time to prepare legislation to deal with the matter.

Mr. LATHAM: Yes, if effect is to be given to it. I am not sure that action would not have been taken regarding the Auditor-General, unless a reasonably good reply is made by him to the charges levelled against

him by the Commission. That would appear to be your responsibility, Mr. Speaker, because the Auditor-General is an officer of Parliament and not of the Government. A very serious charge has been made against him. The Auditor-General is appointed to protect the finances of the State, and to report to members of this House. Probably, however, he will be able to reply to the charges. I have not dealt with the financial position of the State, because I consider that a more suitable time for discussing finance is when the Estimates are being considered. I have also left quite a lot of other matters for my friends on the back benches, and no doubt they will deal effectively with them.

On motion by Mr. North, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 7.52 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 8th August, 1934.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION—LOTTERIES COMMISSION.

Hon. H. SEDDON asked the Chief Secretary: 1, What amount has been distributed for charitable and other purposes from the proceeds of lotteries conducted by the Lotteries Commission to the end of July, 1934? 2, What amount is now held for the above purposes and undistributed to the same date?