

If the employee is earning money outside, the employer is not responsible. The employee might have a private income outside his wages or salary, of which the employer has no knowledge, and so the employer is not held responsible for any tax on that. It was held that this was already covered, but the amendment has been accepted to make sure of it. The other point was that if one happened to earn a big salary for a week or two or a month or two, he would have to pay the higher rate in the graduated scale, but spread over the year the amount would average out each week at a lower rate than that on which he paid tax at the time. He would then be entitled to a refund. That has been put in. Those are the only points of alteration. There are two important points of alteration in the Bill itself: There is just the alteration of the £2 exemption reduced to 30s. for single men and the provision that not more than 4d. be charged. The other is the date of commencement. Apart from those, we can say the Bill is as it left here.

Question put and passed, and a message accordingly transmitted to the Council.

*House adjourned at 3.27 a.m. (Friday).*

## Legislative Council,

*Tuesday, 10th October, 1933.*

	PAGE
Leave of absence ... ..	1250
Motion, urgency: Wheat-growers' and Commonwealth Government ... ..	1250
Railways, capital cost, to inquire by Select Committee ... ..	1266
Bills: Tenants, Purchasers, and Mortgagees' Relief Act Amendment, 3R. ... ..	1262
Mine Workers' Relief Act Amendment, Com. ... ..	1262
Plant Diseases Act Amendment, 1R. ... ..	1266
Feeding Stuffs Act Amendment, 1R. ... ..	1266
Financial Emergency Tax, Assembly's message, 3R., passed ... ..	1268
Adjournment: Royal Show ... ..	1272

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

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. G. W. Miles, leave of absence for six consecutive sittings granted to Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom (North) on the ground of urgent private business.

## MOTION—URGENCY.

*Wheat-growers and Commonwealth Government.*

The PRESIDENT: I have received notice from Mr. Thomson that he desires to move to-day, under Standing Order No. 59, the adjournment of the House in order to discuss a matter of urgency, namely, the parlous condition of the wheat industry due to restricted markets and consequent low price for the coming season, and to urge the State Government to negotiate with the Commonwealth Government for a guaranteed price sufficient to bring the average price at sidings to 3s. per bushel net. It is necessary that four members should, by rising in their places, indicate approval of the motion.

Four members having risen,

HON. A. THOMSON (South-East) [4.36]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, the 17th October, 1933, at 2.30 p.m.

I take this action because the feeling among wheat-growers is that the position facing the State is most serious. With the permission of hon. members I desire to read portion of a letter which I have received—

We view the outlook with grave misgivings not only for Western Australian wheat shippers, but for all Australia. Exports to China which have been so large during the past three years, will be considerably reduced during the coming year, owing to larger native crops of wheat and rice and the influx of some 12,000,000 bushels of American 'loan' wheat. Australia must, therefore, find a market for her exportable surplus in the United Kingdom, the Continent, or Japan. During the two years from July, 1930, to June, 1932, Japan imported nearly 40,000,000 bushels of Australian wheat. A smaller quantity was taken last year owing to a larger crop, but now it is reported in the Press that Japan is considering a boycott of Australian wheat and wool owing to the excessive import duties on Japanese manufactured goods, and talk of imposing dumping duties. Turning to Europe, we find that the duty on wheat imported into France, already high, is doubled for Australian wheat (owing to Australian duties on French goods), which

makes it quite prohibitive. Germany and Italy, once good customers for our wheat, are buying Hungarian wheat. This virtually leaves only the United Kingdom as an outlet for our wheat surplus, and the large surpluses of Canada, Argentina and Russia. Great Britain grants our wheat some protection, by an import duty of 2s. per quarter on non-Empire wheat, but it is certain that the fierce competition for the smaller import needs of Great Britain this season will result in price-cutting by Argentina and Russia.

The Federal Government entered into the agreement to restrict the sale of wheat, without consulting the State authorities. I commend my motion to the serious consideration of the House. The value of wheat exported last year was £5,323,739, and that of flour similarly exported £580,729, representing a total export of £5,903,468. The Railway Department benefited by carrying 1,041,011 tons of wheat, collecting thereon freight to the extent of £662,754. The department carried 216,825 tons of super, representing a total freight of £62,125. Of special grain the department carried 146,126 tons, representing a freight of £80,999. Thus the wheat industry meant to the department last year a total of £805,878. It is estimated that in Western Australia there are approximately 10,000 farmers producing wheat; and the question which this country has to decide is whether it can afford to allow the wheat industry to languish or go out of existence. The result to all the country districts would be disastrous, and must of necessity be reflected on the city. Seeing that last year Western Australia, out of its total production of some 40 million bushels of wheat, used for local consumption and stock and farmers' requirements only 2,000,000 bushels, one can realise that Western Australia in particular is facing a serious position as regards the wheat industry. It is not strange that the primary producer in general, and the wheat grower in particular, have to pay such high prices for all the articles they purchase while the price paid for wheat to-day in Australia is based on London parity? The London parity of wheat is 24s. 6d. per quarter, equal to approximately 3s. 0 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per bushel; and this, after deduction of handling charges and freight to the Old Country, means 1s. 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per bushel, which amount the exchange of 9d. raises to 2s. 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. If consumers of wheat were called upon to pay an Australian price for the commodity, then, taking London parity at

3s. 0 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. plus freight and handling charges of 1s. 7d. and plus exchange of 9d., the Australian grower would receive for his wheat sold for local consumption a price of 5s. 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per bushel. The devising of means for finding the money is the responsibility of the Federal Government, and I shall not touch on the matter at this stage. It is to be deeply regretted that the Prime Minister, when presenting his Budget to the Commonwealth Parliament, made no mention of what steps were considered necessary to stabilise the wheat industry. Let us consider the other industries of Australia. Take the sugar industry, for example. That is an industry which is protected and indeed bolstered up, and the Australian price of sugar is 4d. per lb. In New Zealand the same sugar, manufactured by the same company in the same refineries, can be bought for 2d. per lb. If it is to the interests of Australia that the sugar industry should be protected and that an Australian price should be fixed for the commodity, surely we can justly appeal to the Commonwealth Government to take some similar steps to ensure that the wheat industry shall not sink into insolvency. During the past three years those who have been producing wheat have been producing it at a loss; and while some measure of relief has been granted during the past two years by the Federal Government, the effect of the restrictions imposed, and the loss of markets occasioned by high tariffs against countries which previously took a considerable proportion of our wheat, must have a disastrous effect. Italy used to take about 15 million bushels of our wheat annually. To-day it takes none. France used to take a considerable amount of wheat from us.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Has this anything to do with the motion as to the price of wheat? You are entering into tariff questions.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I am only seeking to show that we can with justice appeal to the Federal Government, in view of the high duties imposed by the Federal Government, and the conditions now laid down, depriving us of markets for our wheat.

Hon. H. Seddon: Are you considering the reduction to be made in the tariff?

Hon. A. THOMSON: Whatever reductions may be made in the tariff just now, they will not save 10,000 farmers in Western Australia from practically facing insol-

veney; there will be no possible chance of the proposed alterations assisting us. Belgium used to buy a considerable quantity of wheat from us, but we have placed an embargo on their glass.

Hon. C. B. Williams: On a point of order. I contend the speaker is out of order in going into these irrelevant matters; he is not discussing his motion.

The PRESIDENT: Mr. Thomson's motion is for the discussion of a matter of urgency, namely the parlous condition of the wheat industry due to restricted markets and consequent low prices for the coming season, and to urge the State Government to negotiate with the Commonwealth Government for a guaranteed price sufficient to bring the average price at sidings to 3s. per bushel net. I think the hon. member's references to the tariff have a bearing on the wheat industry.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I was endeavouring briefly to indicate to the House the reason why the markets have become restricted; by drawing attention to these things I hope we shall induce the Government to take action. Recently there was an outcry against so much of Japanese manufacture coming into Australia. That has had the unfortunate effect of making Japan feel that she is not getting a fair deal in view of the fact that she has been purchasing considerably more goods from us than we have been purchasing from her. So it seems to me we are pursuing a suicidal policy in regard to Japan. That is one reason why the markets have become restricted. I propose to make two quotations from the agreement entered into by the Commonwealth without consulting the States. Article 1 of that agreement reads as follows—

The Governments of Argentina, Australia, Canada and the United States of America agree that the exports of wheat from their several countries during the crop year August 1, 1933, to July 31, 1934, shall be adjusted, taking into consideration the exports of other countries by the acceptance of export maxima fixed on the assumption that world import demand for wheat will amount during this period to 560,000,000 bushels.

Article No. 2 reads as follows—

They further agree to limit their exports of wheat during the crop year August 1, 1934, to July 31, 1935, to maximum figures 15 per cent. less in the case of each country than the average out-turn on the average acreage sown during this period 1931-33, inclusive, after deducting normal domestic requirements. The

difference between the effective world demand for wheat in the crop year 1934-35 and the quantity of new wheat from the 1934 crop available for export will be shared between Canada and the United States of America as a supplementary export allocation with a view to the proportionate reduction of their respective carry-overs.

Article 6 reads as follows—

The Governments of the wheat-importing countries in signing this instrument:—(1) Agree henceforth not to encourage any extension of the area sown to wheat and not to take any Governmental measures the effect of which would be to increase the domestic production of wheat.

They also say—

It is recognised that measures affecting the area of wheat grown and the degree of protection adopted are primarily dependent upon domestic conditions within each country, and that any change in these measures must often require the sanction of the Legislature.

The agreement has been entered into, and when in the Federal House an indication was given to the Federal Government that it was proposed to deal with the question, the move was forestalled by the Government bringing down the agreement. If in Western Australia we are not to be in a position to export the whole of the wheat produced, we shall be faced with a very serious position.

Hon. J. Cornell: Shall we not have a smaller surplus this year?

Hon. A. THOMSON: If one may judge by the report appearing in to-day's paper, we are going to have very much more wheat than was anticipated. But the most important thing is that we have to find markets. There has been a great restriction in those markets. It is estimated that we shall have a crop of 35,000,000 bushels this year, and as we require only 2,000,000 bushels for domestic consumption, we shall have 33,000,000 bushels for export. Where are we going to market it? China does not want it, for she is getting her wheat from America, and getting it on loan. I understand it is impossible for China to raise a loan externally, and that in raising a loan within her own borders she has to pay a discount of 40 per cent. The exchange from America is only 30 per cent. So China is not going to raise money at 40 per cent. in order to buy wheat in Australia when she can get it on loan from America at a cost of 30 per cent. I do not propose to labour the question. Still, it is of vital importance

to the country districts. If the farming community cannot pay its way, it means stagnation and ruin for those in business in the agricultural areas, and that must quickly be reflected in the city, for the city merchants are carrying country storekeepers and the farmers as well. I am moving my motion in order to draw attention to the parlous condition of the wheat industry. A similar motion is being moved in another place. If the motion be approved of, it must of necessity strengthen the negotiations the Government have entered into and which I hope will ultimately be successful.

**HON. T. MOORE** (Central) [4.54]: I have pleasure in seconding the motion, for it is absolutely necessary that something should be done. One has only to go out and move amongst the farming community to realise the position, and its effect upon the State. It is true our markets are very much restricted, in consequence of which so many sellers have been chasing the markets overseas. It stands to reason that Britain cannot absorb the whole of our wheat. I am satisfied the State Government have no money with which to assist the wheat industry, but on the other hand the Federal Government have. As Mr. Thomson has pointed out, the tariff has brought a lot of money into the Federal Treasury, and since the farmers have already paid so much through that tariff it is only right, now that times are bad, that the Federal Government should release some of that money. A bounty is absolutely necessary to the successful production of wheat in this State. Unless some conditions are set up by the Federal Government, in connection with the restriction of export, we may find that those in a position to make sales will make them for a given period, after which the rest of the wheat for export will be on the hands of either the farmers or the merchants. If we are to have restriction without conditions, chaos must result if, as I believe, we shall have a pretty large exportable surplus. Unless conditions are laid down, the wheat which is exported early will be allowed to be exported, but the balance will be left on the hands of the merchants or the farmers. This may have the effect of stampeding those farmers who have wheat to sell now. At the existing price it is not possible profitably to grow wheat. The outlook of the farmers is very bad indeed. Mr. Thomson touched upon Japan and China

as markets for wheat. But those nations buy only cheap wheat. China comes on the market when wheat is very cheap indeed, and so she is of no use to us if we are to grow wheat successfully. We have to undersell the Chinaman's rice before he will buy our wheat, and that is practically impossible if we are to produce wheat at a profit. I do not know that Japan has ever been a buyer of Australian wheat, except at a very low price, although she would be in a position to pay more than China could pay. Rather than ask the State Government to approach the Commonwealth Government, I would prefer that we send a delegation from this Parliament to place before the Federal Government the position as we find it. I believe we might get results in that way. A conference of wheat-growers' organisations is to be held in Canberra about the end of the month. Those organisations will put up the best possible case they can to the Federal Government, but I believe they would have a better chance if they had with them members of this Parliament as a delegation to point out how bad the position really is. I do not believe the Federal Government would refuse to come to the assistance of the wheat-grower if they could be shown how parlous the condition of the wheat-growers in this State really is. What will take place is this: Under these restrictions it will mean that many will have to go out of wheat production in this State; it will be a kind of freeze-out. Those who are in a position to produce good crops on good land will be able to hold through, but unfortunately there are thousands who are not in the position of being able to hold through. We know that many farmers have been carried on by banks and other creditors for the past three years. This cannot go on, and unless the Federal Government do something to enable the farmers to receive 3s. a bushel, we are in for a very bad time. Three years ago we received a bounty when the price of wheat was much higher than it is to-day, and when the outlook was brighter. Last year we got a bounty, when the position was much better than it is to-day.

Hon. G. W. Miles: They do not call it a bounty.

Hon. T. MOORE: I do not care what it is called; I am only aware that assistance was given to the industry. The statement published in to-day's paper sets out that

there is to be no bounty, and we take it that that statement has some foundation. The Federal Government will not be consistent if they do not come to the aid of the industry again. I urge that a delegation from this Parliament should go to Canberra to assist the conference that is likely to meet there, and place the position clearly before the Federal Government.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Could not the State Government act as a delegation?

Hon. T. MOORE: The Federal Government must take notice of the Parliament of this State, if we send a delegation from here. I do not mean that that delegation should be paid; I am certain that there are many members in this House and in another place who would be only too willing in the interests of the State to proceed to Canberra to place the position before the Federal Government. It should not be left entirely to the State Government who already have made representations to Canberra. From what we have read, we can only assume that little or no notice will be taken of what has already been done. I hope the motion will be unanimously supported.

HON. J. CORNELL (South) [5.5]: This is the third time within eight days on which I have had occasion to support a motion of this nature. Yesterday week, at the returned soldiers' conference, I supported a motion that was carried by the wheat section of the Returned Soldiers' League, and on Friday last I again had occasion to support a request that was made to the Minister for Lands by a deputation which was informed by the Minister that he had already acted. Mr. Troy told the deputation that for some time past not only the Government of Western Australia, but the Governments of the wheat-growing States of Australia were in active co-operation in an endeavour to awaken the Federal authorities to the necessity for doing something to raise the price of wheat to the vicinity of 3s. a bushel. I am not a Jeremiah, but I said at the Returned Soldiers' conference, and I repeat the warning here to city men, that personally I do not like the psychological outlook of the man on the land to-day, and unless something is done to give him stability and semblance of hope for the future, I fear the attitude that that man is going to adopt. In my movements around the wheat-growing

parts of the South Province, I came across families that were absolutely Bolshevik in their outlook. Those families have worn out all they have, clothes and everything, and they have lost hope because we have tinkered with this question for the past three years. Personally I do not think Mr. Thomson in submitting the motion went far enough. We are bound to consider the coming harvest, but we should also give some attention to the harvest that is to follow, so as to give heart to the man who is trying to grow wheat in this State. There is no gainsaying the fact that out of the 10,000 wheat farmers in Western Australia to-day there are 9,000 who have worn-out plan and machinery and everything else. All those things must be replaced if the industry is to be carried on. Go to the Agricultural Bank and the trustees will tell you that 1½ millions of new money is now required to place the Bank in a position to be able to cope on proper lines with ploughing and seeding. We need a bounty of 3s per bushel for this year's wheat, but we want further to give consideration to the harvest of 1934-35, so that the farmers who are diligent and—using a vulgarism—who will get down to tin-tacks, may be satisfied, given reasonable seasons, with their prospects of being able to make wheat growing pay a 3s. a bushel. For less than that figure anything like success cannot possibly be attained. I submit that the Federal Government lack vision as well as a knowledge of the agricultural industry.

Hon. A. Thomson: That is so indeed.

Hon. J. CORNELL: In the first place, a bounty was given by the Scullin Government on wheat produced. When the Lyons Government came along they said to the State Government that they would give a bounty from revenue on one condition, that the bounty would not be distributed on the production rate. What has been the result of the distribution of the last bounty? Scores of farmers in this State who scratched the crop in anyhow, and produced 4 bushels or 5 bushels to the acre, received so much an acre for doing that, whereas the man who applied himself diligently to his task, and got perhaps 20 bushels, received no more. The Federal Government, I repeat, have lacked vision, and have neglected the man who is going to keep the industry going. He is the man who should be put on a basis of permanency—the man who applies himself

to farming properly, not the fellow who grows a mustard crop.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: The way the Federal Government did it was the correct way.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The hon. member and I differ on that point. I know of numerous instances where men got about 1,000 bags of wheat from 500 acres, and received a bonus on the basis of the 500 acres sown. The man adjoining who also had 500 acres of crop from which he got 3,000 bags received no more consideration than his neighbour who grew a mustard crop. The man who obtained the 3,000 bags of wheat did not become a necessitous farmer like the man who merely grew mustard, and who received consideration as a necessitous farmer. That is one of the grievances I have against the Federal Government for endeavouring to put a square peg into a round hole. I support the motion and I hope that any representations made will go beyond next harvest, so that the farmers may be assured of some help for 1934-35.

HON C. F. BAXTER (East) [5.13]: I am pleased to have the opportunity of supporting the motion which is very vital. I regret that it becomes necessary to submit it. We cannot alter the prices which are controlled by the world's markets, but we can at least expect some consideration from the Federal Government who are in a position to give that assistance. The State Government, unfortunately, cannot do anything; they are tied hand and foot by the Loan Council, and there is no chance of the State raising money to assist the industry which is so vital, not only to the State itself, but to the Commonwealth. I cannot understand the vision of the Federal Government. They assist practically everything else except the one industry of wheat-growing which is so very important to the Commonwealth, and which in the past has returned tremendous revenue through the iniquitous taxation indirectly imposed. We have only to go back a few years to realise what was happening in regard to the two public services, Federal and State. Prominent officers were taken from the State service by the Federal Government and given increases in salary ranging from £100 to £600 per annum over and above what the States were paying. This happened not only in Western Australia but in all the other States. The officers who were transferred are even now,

in these depressed times, on a much better footing than the higher-paid officers in the State service. Now we find that some of the reductions that were made a couple of years back are to be restored. As a matter of fact, nearly every section of the community excepting the farming section is to receive some advantage. I agree with Mr. Cornell's statement that we received reasonable consideration from the Scullin Government, who were followed by the Lyons Government, who set aside a certain amount for the assistance of wheat-growers of the Commonwealth. The Lyons Government provided that assistance, but laid it down hard and fast at the commencement that the amounts allocated to each wheat-growing State were to be set aside only for the aid of necessitous farmers. How on earth could such payments be distributed? Who was to say who was a necessitous farmer and who was not one who came within that category? There are men the Agricultural Bank has assisted from time to time, and they are in a parlous condition. Who should receive that money?

Hon. J. Cornell: In some instances, men not in need have been getting it.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Who could define what was meant by the term "necessitous farmer"? If the whole amount were distributed in the way the Commonwealth Government desired, what cash would each farmer receive? If it had been distributed on the basis suggested by the Federal authorities, it would have taken an extremely long time, and it would have been useless in many instances. The time when it would be of assistance had long passed. In view of all the difficulties, the State Government refused point blank to distribute it on the basis suggested, and left it to the Commonwealth Government to find a more equitable basis.

Hon. J. Cornell: It is a certainty that the ex-Premier caused the basis to be changed.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Yes, and he had to do it. It was a most difficult position. We had to realise that we were dependent on the Federal Government for a grant to enable the farmers to be assisted, and it was necessary to make the best possible arrangement with a view to relieving the wheat-growers. I can assure the House that the position of the wheat-growing industry today is more than serious. It is hard to say

how many of our wheat-growers are producing wheat alone and have no side-lines to assist them through their difficulties. There are a number of farmers who are solely dependent upon wheat production, because their holdings are on the outer edge of the wheat belt. They have not had time to develop their holdings to an extent that will enable them to go in for sheep or any other stock. If no assistance is rendered promptly, I venture to assert that at least 1,000 wheat-growers will be out of the industry altogether during the coming year. There will be no hope for them. We cannot expect our financial institutions to carry impossible propositions any longer. They have done yeoman service in that direction for a long time.

Hon. J. T. Franklin: What will happen to those farmers?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: They will go out of the industry altogether.

Hon. J. Cornell: They will come to town and go on the dole.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Their farms will be idle and will revert to nature; they will become a breeding ground for rabbits. I am convinced that even some of the good farmers will have no hope but to go through the Bankruptcy Court unless something is done to assist them very speedily. They may scrape through with wheat at 3s. a bushel. At that price, wheat may represent to them a small profit, provided they have side-lines to assist in meeting expenses. One difficulty is that a large percentage of the farmers have operated their plant year after year, and have patched the machinery up from time to time when necessary. The result was inevitable, and this year many of the farmers will experience great difficulty in seeding their holdings. The plant has reached a stage at which it cannot be expected to stand up to the work any longer. If immediate assistance is not available, a small acreage will be sown under conditions that cannot be regarded as satisfactory. In that event, the Federal Government will suffer, but the State Government will suffer still more. I wonder whether anything can be done to awaken the Federal Government to a sense of their responsibility.

Hon. E. H. Harris: This is a striking indictment against the construction of any new agricultural railway.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Mr. Harris has not heard me favouring the construction of any

new railway at the present juncture. In any event, we are not discussing a railway matter at the present moment, but are reviewing the conditions of men who have spent their lives, in some instances, in connection with the wheat-growing industry in this State. The industry has never before been in such a parlous condition. If the Federal Government are not prepared to do something for the industry, there will be such a revolt in this and other States that a terrible situation will be created in Australia. It is not a matter of merely three years. There are men who have spent the whole of their lives on wheat-growing properties, and they are in danger of losing everything they possess owing to the conditions obtaining at present. Is it any wonder, seeing that these men have the spectacle of their life's work slipping from them, that some may appear to be somewhat irrational? What else could we expect when men find all they cherish after years of labour being taken away from them? That is what is going on. Many of the farmers are past the prime of life, and now, after spending years on the land, are, practically speaking, faced with starvation. While that is going on, the Federal Government are proceeding happily along at Canberra, blind to the interests of the wheat-growers and refusing to give the slightest consideration to a body of men who pioneered the country and built up Australia. Many of these men have turned barren wastes into wealth-producing properties. Now, after all these years of labour, they find that their work has not been of advantage to themselves but to the Federal and State Governments—primarily the Federal Government, although taxation is supplemented by the State Government as well—as a means of deriving taxation. Unless the present Federal Government wake up to a sense of their responsibilities and extend adequate consideration to the wheat-growing industry, a reflection will be cast upon them unequalled by any in previous history. I do not know of any former period in the history of Australia when any section of the community has cried out for assistance and the appeal has not been recognised by a Government. I hope that the debate on the motion, together with action taken in other wheat-producing States, will result in the Federal Government realising the seriousness of the position, and extending assistance to an industry fifty per cent. of those

engaged in which will go off their holdings during the coming season unless aid is forthcoming.

**HON. H. V. PIESSE** (South-East) [5.22]: There is no doubt that the State is faced with a serious position regarding the disposal of the wheat harvest. Those who were members of the joint select committee that dealt, last year, with the bulk handling of wheat, will recollect the figures that were submitted showing definitely that if it had not been for the trade with the Orient, Australia would have been confronted with a very difficult task in the disposal of her wheat. To-day we have been informed by one of the leading authorities in connection with wheat handling, that the market will be further curtailed, and that America has advanced money to China on loan, and in return is supplying that country with wheat. That will be most serious for Western Australia and for Australia in general. Unless we can find a market for our wheat, the industry will go to the wall. The first thing we have to consider is the financing of the industry. The Federal Government must render the assistance to which we are entitled, either by way of a bonus or by means of a greater allowance to the State. If members travel round the country as I do, they must realise the parlous condition of the wheat-growing industry. To-day we have the Royal Agricultural Show in progress, demonstrating the production of the State; yet a few farmers only can afford to make the visit to Perth to see what progress industry is making. By far the larger proportion of the farmers are in the country listening to the wireless and reading news conveying to them the information that the Federal Government have deserted the agricultural industry throughout Australia.

**Hon. R. G. Moore**: What has it cost the Federal Government?

**Hon. H. V. PIESSE**: It does not matter what it has cost. The Federal Government to not give the industry adequate assistance.

**Hon. A. Thomson**: The Country Party members in the Federal House are asking for £2,000,000.

**Hon. H. V. PIESSE**: I was glad to hear Mr. T. Moore speak so forcibly in favour of sending a delegation from the State Parliament to the Federal Parliament. We have some good men in the Eastern States who have taken up the cudgels on be-

half of the industry, but it has to be realised that Western Australia depends upon the continuance of the agricultural industry, and unless we can adopt strong measures to force the Federal Government to realise the necessity for effective action, the position will be most serious for this State. I was speaking to a well-known farmer in Perth to-day. He said, "I am expecting to take off 6,000 bags of wheat this season." He is a good farmer, one of the best I know in the Great Southern district. He hails from Kukerin, which district was condemned for so many years. Two years ago he was liberated from his interests in the firm that I represent, and since then he has been able to pay his interest at 5 per cent. on the capital cost involved in the purchase of his farm. He told me that he was about to again produce his average of 26 bushels to the acre. That is one of the finest averages recorded by any of the farmers who are operating on a large scale. He said, "If it were not for the fact that I select the very best land on the farm for cropping each year, I could not produce that large quantity of wheat." That is one of the difficulties confronting many of those who have smaller farms. They have poor holdings and cannot select the best quality land for their crops, and therefore their returns are much less. Considering the State average of 12 bushels to the acre, it will be realised that a large percentage of the farmers secure returns of four and five bushels to the acre. That brings down the average of those who secure 20 odd bushels to the acre. Such farmers with poor holdings have no possible hope of carrying on under existing conditions and, in addition, their machinery is in a deplorable condition. It would be much better for many of the farmers if they cut their acreages down and placed only their best land under crop. If they did that it would represent their only chance of salvation. I support the motion, and hope that something will be done to relieve the serious position that the wheat-growers are confronted with throughout the Commonwealth.

**HON C. B. WILLIAMS** (South) [5.28]: It may be wondered why I, as a representative of a mining province, should support the motion. I support it because, as I have stated on previous occasions, I think the farmer is the most harshly treated individual in Western Australia, even including those



who are unemployed, because the Government have to look after the latter and at least provide them with sustenance. The most the farmer can get in the way of sustenance is merely an advance on the work he is doing, and then he is charged about 6 per cent. on whatever that represents. If there is one section of primary production in Australia that should be safeguarded by Governments, it is that in which the wheat farmers are engaged. Australia requires the wheat, and there is no reason why the farmers should be asked to produce that commodity at a loss. Is there any other section of industry or individuals who would consider themselves justified in producing or working at a loss? The storekeeper does not sell his goods at a loss, and why should a farmer produce wheat at a loss? What the farmers need to do is to become good trade unionists and fight for a fair thing, instead of depending upon a few members of Parliament who spasmodically rise in their places and make speeches in favour of assistance. If the farmers organised effectively, they could get something out of the different Governments. I listened with interest to the speech of Mr. Baxter, and I direct attention to the fact that representatives of the farmers have been in power in this State for three years, and still their disabilities remain. Mr. Baxter was the representative of the Government in this House, and it appears to me to be so much hypocrisy that members who directly represent the farmers should be here to-day saying what ought to be done and what has not been done, notwithstanding that they have so recently retired from office. I believe that politics is so much hypocrisy.

[Resolved: That consideration of motions be continued.]

Hon. J. Cornell: It is a science.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: Quite so, I propose to take a course in political science or political hypocrisy.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: You are just beginning to notice it.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I am beginning to notice it. Previous to the present Federal administration, the party led by Mr. Scullin were in power and previous to that again there was a coalition Government consisting of Nationalist and Country Party members. Why were not the farmers' wants attended to by the Federal Governments past and present? A week or two ago a combin-

ation of Labour and Country Party members could have turned the Federal Government out of office on this issue, but they would not do so. Rather would members move pious resolutions, such as the one moved here and in another place to-day, so that the farmer becomes the football for all sections of political thought. When they want the farmer to kick up, he does so. When they want him to go quietly, he goes quietly.

Hon. A. Thomson interjected.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: The farmers in the hon. member's province are well broken in.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Is this one of the "kick-ups"?

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: Everyone knew that there was no hope of the price of wheat rising. While the world is so poverty stricken, the people have to buy whatever is cheapest to satisfy their needs. If China ever gets down to tin-tacks and undertakes the development of its country as Australia is being developed, that country will be able to export wheat. Why, then, should members talk about our selling wheat to China? As Mr. T. Moore mentioned, it is only when prices are at their lowest that the Chinese can buy our wheat. It is useless for representatives of the farmers to complain. I agree that 3s. a bushel is little enough for any farmer to receive. He has had the task of developing his holding, and he has a load of probably £2,000 or £3,000 hanging around his neck, and no chance of ever getting square in his lifetime. Yet his representatives ask for only 3s. a bushel. We want more than that for the farmers in my electorate. We want their blocks revalued; we want the rate of interest cut to an absolute minimum, and then the farmers must be given a chance to compete, because they have to compete at the world's parity. Some thing should be done for the farmers, and done quickly. We should not wait until the crop is about to be harvested and then introduce more pious resolutions to keep the farmers quiet for another few months. The farmers will probably live in hopes that the pious wish of this State's 80 members of Parliament that the taxpayers of Australia should make up the difference between the price he gets and 3s. a bushel will be realised. I object to all this hypocrisy. If I ever have an opportunity to travel this State electioneering, I will make no bones of what

I tell the farmers. I will tell them what they ought to do. The farmer should be the most militant trade unionist in the State. If he was a decently militant unionist, like the lumpers, the coal miners, the gold miners, or some of the railway men, there would be no need for introducing motions expressing the pious hope that he should be paid 3s. a bushel. My observation leads me to believe that the only progress that can be made is commensurate with the power of one's Parliamentary representatives.

Hon. R. G. Moore interjected.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: The union is a combine. There are about three combines represented in this House.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: Which are they?

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: The hon. member, like myself, belongs to the Labour combine.

Hon. J. Cornell: And the racing combine?

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: We know the object of those combines. Certain persons combine to ensure that the rights and privileges that they consider should belong to the class they represent are not disturbed. The farmers should combine to ensure that their rights as producers of essential wealth are preserved.

Hon. J. Cornell: The farmer has a combine.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: Country Party members in this House and in another place do not fight as they should for the people they represent. Notwithstanding all the hypocrisy, I believe that the farmer will get 3s. a bushel for his wheat, provided he sets to work in the right way in order to get it.

**HON. V. HAMERSLEY** (East) [5.39]: I appeal to members to support Mr. Thomson, who has brought the subject forward in an earnest manner and at an opportune time. For the last three years the farmers have been doing exceptionally fine service for the country in producing the cheapest wheat probably that we have ever had. It is noteworthy that, although the farmers have produced wheat at such a low price, a corresponding advantage has not been passed on to the community, but by-products of wheat have been sold to the public at about the same price as when wheat was bringing twice as much as at present. Thus the whole community have not benefited to the extent that might reasonably have been ex-

pected, and the farmer has not received a price sufficient to give him a reasonable living. But for the generosity of Governments in granting bonuses during the last two years, a considerable area of land would have gone out of occupation and a considerable volume of trade would have been lost to the people. The railways would have lost considerable traffic and the ports would have lost considerable business. Unless something is done speedily, many of the farmers will lose heart. Quite a large number of them cannot possibly carry on under existing conditions. They are waiting to get some answer to the riddle—Are they to take off their crops? Are they to purchase bags? If there are no markets available, it will be useless to garner the wheat. They will not need corn-sacks, but they will have to make provision for storing the wheat on the farms. Many people are under the impression that they are always being called upon to go to the rescue of the farmer, but I would point out that the farmer has to go cap in hand to the Government whenever he needs assistance, and has no guarantee of any continuance of the assistance. During each of the years in which conditions have been so bad, help has been forthcoming for that particular year only. Gold producers were given a guarantee for 10 years, and the industry was stabilised. If the price of gold fell below a certain level, the Government guarantee would automatically operate. The farmer, however, has no such guarantee. Were he given an assurance of 3s. a bushel for several years, he would be able to plan ahead on that basis. Without such guarantee he has to work from hand to mouth each year and consequently is losing heart. Many farmers will probably conclude that it is wiser to cut the crop for hay and feed it to stock, rather than strip it for grain. If that is so, there will be less traffic for the railways and the ports, and there will be less grain for others who handle the commodity. The farmer ought to be informed what the Government propose to do to help him out of his difficulty, and the sooner he is informed the better, so that he may make preparations for the coming season.

**THE HONORARY MINISTER** (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [5.45]: I agree with most of what has been said by members. It would be very hard to exaggerate the seriousness of the position, not only from the

Commonwealth point of view, but also that of the State. I believe Western Australia will be more affected than any other of the States unless the price of wheat materially improves before the current harvest in garnered. I say this having in mind the importance of the wheat-growing industry to the development of Western Australia during the last quarter of a century. Since the decline of our gold production the progress and development of the State have been brought about by the expansion of the wheat-growing industry. In 1904 Western Australia did not export any wheat, and yet last year we produced approximately 50 million bushels. These figures show the importance of the industry to this State. We must not forget that the stability of our financial position is to a large extent dependent on the prosperity of that industry. That statement cannot be denied. The major portion of the capital of the Agricultural Bank is locked up in the industry. That, too, is of great importance. The Associated Banks and financial institutions and merchants generally are also heavily involved. Anything that will seriously affect our wheat-growers, as it appears they are likely to be affected in the near future, will have a much wider application than to just the farmers themselves. Our railways and many of our industrial enterprises are largely dependent upon the industry. Indeed, the prosperity of Western Australia generally is bound up almost inseparably with it. The production of wheat in this State represents almost entirely an exportable output, in that comparatively only a small percentage is required for home consumption. That being so, the welfare of the grower depends upon the price he receives from the world's markets. The export price is an international matter, and affects Australia as a whole. Anything that can be done to improve the price of wheat must necessarily be reflected in every State of the Commonwealth. These facts are well known, and have been recognised by various Governments, both State and Commonwealth. Because of the seriousness of the world wheat position a conference was called a little while ago, and certain decisions arrived at. The object was to endeavour to improve the world price of wheat, and it was thought that a policy of restriction would bring that about. We in Australia do not believe in a policy of restriction. It is well, perhaps, we should have a proper

perspective of the circumstances which led up to that policy of restriction, to which the Commonwealth Government have agreed. I would, therefore, like to state briefly a few of the facts. We in Western Australia must necessarily be opposed to restriction, and that also is the policy of the Commonwealth Government. The Federal authorities opposed the policy as long as possible, but circumstances have compelled them to agree to a restriction of exports, which, however, it is hoped will not seriously affect either Australia as a whole or this State. The restrictions provide for a maximum export of 105 million bushels from the current harvest, and 150 millions bushels from the next harvest. The estimated Australian crop for the current season, which was 155 million bushels when the agreement was entered into, has now increased to 163 million bushels. With normal local requirements of 50 million bushels, this means a surplus of 8 million bushels to be carried forward for export during next season. With a permissible export under the agreement of 150 million bushels during that year it would be necessary for Australia to produce over 192 million bushels to bring about any inconvenience. Seeing that the economic position is causing a natural decline in production, such inconvenience is most unlikely. There is therefore nothing to fear from the agreement that has been entered into. Low prices are caused by factors outside the control of Australia. The conditions are due to restrictive measures which created a surplus in Canada and the United States of America of something like 400 million bushels. This forced the wheat importing countries to protect themselves against what was regarded as an attempt to force the price above a natural value. In consequence of this, the importing countries have been stimulating production within their own borders until at the present time the production of the exporting countries is 181 million bushels less than in 1927-28, while the production of the importing countries is 323 million bushels greater than in that year. It is just as well we should be aware of these facts.

Hon. T. Moore: There is no provision to indicate who will take on the carry-over.

The HONORARY MINISTER: There will be no carry-over here.

Hon. T. Moore: There will be 8 or 10 million bushels; who will carry that?

The HONORARY MINISTER: According to the facts I have stated the 8 million bushels will be exported during the next season.

Hon. T. Moore: But carried over from this season.

The HONORARY MINISTER: If in the normal course of events we produce next year as much wheat as we hope to produce this year, we shall still be below our quota, and there will be no carry-over. This does not overcome the difficulty of price, which is the determining factor when we are dealing with the prosperity of an industry. I agree with almost everything that has been said, and I think this Government should do all they can to support our wheatgrowers in their endeavour to secure the assistance suggested in the motion. I do not wish it to be understood that the Government have not recognised the position until now. We have already taken action, and have been in communication with the other wheat-producing States of the Commonwealth. I regret that Mr. Thomson did not give more notice of his intention to move this motion, so that it would have been possible for me to secure accurate information of what has been done by the Government. Representations have already been made to the Government by various interested parties, who have been apprised by the State Cabinet that we are watching the position closely, are endeavouring to work in with the other wheat-producing States, and are prepared to do all we can to assist the growers in the direction indicated. There is no necessity to urge upon the Government to do these things, because we shall be only too pleased to do whatever is possible in the circumstances.

HON. A. THOMSON (South-East—in reply) [5.58]: It is customary when a motion of this character has been debated for the mover to withdraw it, in accordance with the Standing Orders. In view of the support which the motion has received, I take it that if put to the vote it would be carried unanimously. I appreciate very much the suggestions advanced by Mr. T. Moore. The position is so desperate that at a later stage I hope an opportunity will be given to the House to debate the sending of a deputation of representatives of the State Parliament to Canberra to place our views before the Federal Government. The statement of the

Honorary Minister is an interesting one. I am sorry more notice was not given of this motion, but in view of the extreme urgency of the matter, and the fact that the Federal Government in their Budget made no reference whatever to the wheat-growing industry, I hope the Honorary Minister will understand that there could be no delay in placing the matter before both Houses. It was intended that this motion should be moved last week, but owing to the illness of the Premier and the necessity for dealing with the taxation Bills, that could not be done. The Honorary Minister referred to a carry-over of 8 million bushels of wheat, which will have to be disposed of next season. It is assumed by the Federal Government that we will then be able to export the whole of our quota. That is likely to be the case because the farmers cannot afford to grow wheat under present conditions. It is essential that we should receive a stabilised price or some form of guarantee. Mr. Hamersley pointed out that through an agitation which arose in this State the gold mining industry was given a guaranteed price. Although that guarantee lasted only for a period, if the price of gold reverts to the normal price which appertained prior to the date when the guarantee was given, the Federal Government must honour the bond they have entered into and pay that bonus for the gold that is produced.

Hon. T. Moore: For ten years.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes. If the wheat industry of Western Australia is to be starved out of existence, then God help Western Australia, and God help the Government as well! I hope that at a later stage a motion will be submitted for a delegation of Parliamentarians to go from this State to the Federal Government for the purpose of submitting an appeal for financial assistance to the wheat industry. I think the moving of the present motion has had its effect. I am pleased to have the Honorary Minister's assurance that the Government are doing all they can on behalf of the wheat industry. I believe that the present motion, with the one being moved in another place, will strengthen the efforts put forward on behalf of the wheat-growers of Western Australia. I ask leave to withdraw my motion.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

# **BILL—TENANTS, PURCHASERS, AND MORTGAGORS' RELIEF ACT AMENDMENT.**

Read a third time, and returned to the Assembly with amendments.

# **BILL—MINE WORKERS' RELIEF ACT AMENDMENT.**

*In Committee.*

Hon. V. Hamersley in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Amendment of Section 13:

On motion by the Honorary Minister, the words "a subsection" struck out, and "subsections" inserted in lieu.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I move an amendment—

That the following be inserted to stand as Subsection (2A):—(2A) Subsection (1) of this section shall apply to any person who, whilst a mine worker within the meaning of the Act, is medically examined under the Act and found to be suffering from silicosis with tuberculosis or tuberculosis without silicosis, but who dies before notice of prohibition under subsection (1) of this section has been served upon him; and in such case such notice of prohibition may be issued by the Minister, notwithstanding that such mine worker shall have previously died, and when issued, shall be published in the "Government Gazette," and when so published shall be deemed to have been served upon both the deceased mine worker and his employer at the time of his medical examination aforesaid if the deceased person was then employed as a mine worker. Upon notice of prohibition being published as aforesaid, the dependants of the deceased mine worker shall be entitled to all the benefits under this Act and the Workers' Compensation Act, 1912-1924, to which they would have been entitled as such dependants if the deceased mine worker had not died until after notice of prohibition under subsection (1) of this section had been served upon him personally.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The extraordinary flight of words in the mind of the draftsman must strike hon. members. Right through the Bill it is the same. This desirable amendment could have been expressed in about half the words used.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: Under the Workers' Compensation Act the compensation would be £600, as against £750 under this measure. Owing to departmental delays, a man may be examined in October and

may not receive his notice of prohibition from work until January next year. In the interim he may die. If men were debarred from work immediately they had been examined at the laboratory, they would be entitled to £750; on the other hand, should they die before the debarring notice is served on them, the amount is only £600.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The amendment provides that the dependants of the deceased miner shall be entitled to the compensation that the miner himself would have been entitled to had he lived, instead of dying prior to the prohibition notice being served. Thus the dependants of the deceased miner will not lose anything by this method.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: They are not affected, whether he is dead or alive.

The HONORARY MINISTER: That is so. There has not yet been a case where this amendment would apply, but experience shows the possibility of such a position arising.

Hon. J. CORNELL: That was so in the case of a mining inspector. He was not provided for, but compensation was granted in his case.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Yes.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 4 to 6—agreed to.

Clause 7—Amendment of Section 48:

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I move an amendment—

That beginning in line 15 of paragraph (b) the words "may if it is of the opinion that such mine worker's case is one which brings hardship" be struck out, and "shall" inserted in lieu.

The amendment means that the board shall pay from the Mine Workers' Relief Fund the difference between £3 10s. and £3 17s. 6d. Under the clause, the board have the right to say whether or not they shall pay the greater amount in cases of extreme hardship.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: What would you define as a case of extreme hardship?

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I know of the case of a man named Coney, who has a young family under 16 years of age. The amendment would allow him to get the difference between £3 10s. and £3 17s. 6d. For

six months he has been trying to get his case dealt with, but he cannot induce the board to agree that he should have the difference between £3 10s. and £3 17s. 6d. This man, like so many others, has been paying 9s. per month to insure himself. Under my amendment, the difference will come from the relief fund, which costs the workers 9s. per month each, or £5 8s. per annum. The question as to whether the increased amount should be paid ought not to be at the discretion of the board. During last session this point was raised several times in another place, but nothing was actually done.

The HONORARY MINISTER. I am sorry I cannot accept the amendment. I do not wish it to be thought I am not sympathetic with these men, for I am. Under the Workers' Compensation Act the men are entitled to half wages plus 7s. 6d. for each dependent child up to a maximum of £3 10s., but it is recognised that, owing perhaps to the number of his dependants, hardship may be created if a man be limited indefinitely to £3 10s. a week. Consequently the Mine Workers' Relief Act provides that in cases where the board is satisfied that hardship is being inflicted, the board may increase the amount to £3 17s. 6d. At present, it is for the board to decide whether hardship is inflicted; if it is, the miner drawing £3 10s. under the Workers' Compensation Act is paid the balance of 8s.—not 7s. 6d.—drawn from the Mine Workers' Relief Fund. It is not correct for Mr. Williams to say these men are paying for this; they are certainly contributing to the relief fund while working in the mines, but in ordinary circumstances they are entitled to come on the relief fund only after they have exhausted the compensation to which they are entitled under the Workers' Compensation Act.

Hon. R. G. MOORE: I should like to see the board given power to grant relief in cases of hardship, irrespective of the size of the family or even of whether or not the man has a family at all. I have in mind the case of a man who has been contributing to the relief fund for 20 years. He is well up in years, and with tuberculosis in an advanced stage it would take him six years to cut out his compensation under the Workers' Compensation Act before he could get on to the relief fund. He is receiving £2 5s. a week, and when he dies his wife will receive £2 per week, only 5s. less than

is now being paid to her husband. The amount of £3 10s. per week has been mentioned again and again, but in most cases the worker has no chance whatever of getting so much. When a person is prohibited, that person is not a young man with a young family. He is generally middle aged or approaching middle age, and his family would be approaching 16 years. Thus in the majority of cases there is no chance of the person getting anything like the £3 10s. And again there is no chance of his getting benefits from the fund to which he may have contributed for many years. I should like to see it in the power of the board to grant some measure of relief in cases of that description. Under the old Miners' Phtthisis Act, the individual would get £1 for his wife on top of half wages. That has been cut out altogether.

The HONORARY MINISTER: These questions must be determined by the possibility of paying these amounts from the particular fund. I believe this legislation was first agreed to at a conference of interested parties.

Hon. J. Cornell: The interested parties were just heard; nothing was agreed to. The Minister merely called them together. I was there.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Which conference is the Minister referring to; there was one held on the goldfields and one in the Mines Department.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I understand that a conference of all interested parties was called together, and the proposed legislation was submitted to them and no objections were raised.

Hon. J. Cornell: Who told you that?

The HONORARY MINISTER: These questions were gone into at that time. Now everything depends upon the ability of the fund to stand a strain of this kind. Mr. Moore mentioned the case of a married man without children who would be entitled to only £2 5s. That means that his wages would have been £4 10s. Very few miners are drawing as low as £4 10s.

Hon. R. G. Moore: Four pounds six shillings.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Four pounds nine shillings. That is in Kalgoorlie alone.

The HONORARY MINISTER: It has been recognised that there may be cases of hardship arising principally from the fact

that there may be a young family. Had it been possible to do more than is proposed, it would have been done. We must have regard for the ability of a fund of this kind to pay. Goldfields members would probably be able to quote a number of cases which in their opinion would come within the category of hardship. But there are many things to be considered, and I suggest that the board are in the position to inquire into those cases and decide whether there is a hardship that could be said to come within the scope of the Bill. I am sorry I cannot accept the amendment.

Hon. J. CORNELL: There were two conferences held and the then Chief Secretary (Mr. Baxter) introduced the Bill to this House. That Bill was never referred to the conference. So long as there are two scales of compensation there is going to be trouble. Section 45 of the Act says that if a mine worker has tuberculosis, or tuberculosis plus silicosis, or advanced silicosis, he is entitled to draw compensation according to the Workers' Compensation Act, that is, according to the scale laid down under the Act. The proviso which the Bill strikes out does not refer to extreme hardship. I sympathise with the Minister because he is handling a question that requires years of experience to understand. All I am concerned about is whether the Bill takes away anything from the miner that the parent Act gave him.

Hon. C. B. Williams: It does.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The Minister says it does not. My reasoning is that consideration cannot be given where there is no extreme hardship. Why water the Bill down? If the fund is likely to be exhausted, I am sure that the mine owners, the miners and the community will be prepared to pay something extra. As the amendment has been sprung upon the Honorary Minister, I suggest that he report progress so as to ascertain the departmental view.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Mr. Cornell is quite correct in his contention. When the legislation was introduced, I understand it was intended that, in addition to the £3 10s. available under the Workers' Compensation Act, it would be possible, in cases of hardship, to grant further assistance from the relief fund to bring the payment up to the basic rate of wages ruling in the district. That is what was intended, but the Crown Solicitor advises that that is

not what the legislation stated. On the other hand, the effect of the legislation is that if a worker had been earning £15 or £16 a week, the payment to him could be made up by the difference between £3 10s. a week and the amount he had been earning. The amendment is intended to make the Act read as it was intended and will enable the payment, in cases of hardship, to be made up to the amount of the basic wage. We want to be sympathetic, but I do not think that even the miners themselves would contend it was a fair thing to enable the payment to be made under conditions that the Crown Solicitor says is possible.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I do not suggest that the Honorary Minister has wilfully misled the Committee, but, under the Workers' Compensation Act, a man in receipt of over £400 is not a worker within the meaning of the Act. In those circumstances his argument about a salary of £15 a week goes by the board. All I desire is that what the Government themselves urged, shall be applied and that the payments to a man may be made up to the amount of the basic wage in the district. I want the position restored to what it was before the legislation was interfered with. It seems to be the thrifty man who is always getting hit. The man who has a wife and family and has been able to save a few pounds, has no chance of securing any extra payments from the relief fund, although he may have contributed to it for 20 years. He cannot get any payment because he cannot prove extreme hardship. What I suggest will not involve any extra burden upon the Government, but will mean a contribution from the fund to which the worker himself has contributed. It is not right that such people should be poverty-stricken before they can secure any assistance from the relief fund. As it is, they have to answer 53 questions before they can get anything. That indicates what sort of a charitable institution the Workers' Relief Fund Board represents.

Hon. E. H. Harris: The questionnaire is practically a copy of that required for the old-age pension.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: Yes, with probably a few additions. The Government introduced certain provisions and all I ask is that they shall be restored to the Act. As it is at present, the mining companies and the men are taxed to the extent of £27 10s. per man per annum, or 13s. per week per

man. Yet the Honorary Minister says he does not know where the money is coming from. According to the latest report, 4,500 men went through the Commonwealth laboratory last year. I think the number of wages men in the industry would be nearer 6,000, but if we take it that 4,500 men paid their insurance, it will be remembered that each of them paid at the rate of £27 10s. per annum. That applies to their benefits under the three headings. All I want is to enable the difference between the £3 10s. and the basic wage to be made up out of the relief fund.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Compare the men in the mining industry with those in any other industry in Australasia. Is not their position unique?

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: It is. The average life of a miner is about 50 years; he has to work under the vilest health conditions conceivable for a white man; I do not know of any other worker who pays £27 10s. per annum to insure himself.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The Honorary Minister suggested that the legislation would work out so that the man's wage could be made up even to £15 a week. That was never my intention. All I had in mind was to achieve what Mr. Williams has indicated, namely, to enable the payment to a miner to be brought to the rate of the basic wage for the district. I cannot agree to give away a privilege which has been conferred and which was a condition of transfer from the Miners' Phthisis Act. I suggest that the Minister report progress and consider the matter.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The matter is involved because it has reference to the Miners' Phthisis Act, the Mine Workers' Relief Act and the Workers' Compensation Act. The Crown Solicitor has ruled that where a mine worker is receiving compensation of £3 10s. a week under the Workers' Compensation Act, he is entitled, under the existing law, to draw the difference between that and the wages he was receiving—not the basic wage—and that that amount has to come from the Mine Workers' Relief Fund.

Hon. J. Cornell: That was never intended.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Quite so, and for that reason we have to amend the Act. Under the amendment the maximum that a mine worker may draw is the basic wage in the district.

Hon. J. Cornell: That is all we want.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I am prepared to postpone the clause in order to get a departmental reply to the arguments advanced. At the same time I want members to understand the reason for the amendment. It is desired to rectify a provision that was never intended. I move—

That further consideration of the clause be postponed.

Hon. J. Nicholson: And that progress be reported?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I should like to proceed with the remaining clauses.

Hon. J. Cornell: It would be necessary to postpone Clause 8 also.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I and my colleagues have some queries bearing on the interpretation and the reasons for the amendment, but they have not yet been touched upon owing to the moving of the amendment by Mr. Williams. If the Minister could arrange for goldfields members to discuss the matter with him and with the Minister for Mines, much time might be saved. I have read the report of the debate in another place and have found no reference to the measure going to the lengths suggested here. There is no definition of "extreme hardship." It has been suggested that that would have regard to the number of children, and that it would cover other things. Mr. Williams said that the man who had been a spendthrift would seek relief under that provision. I have a copy of the form of personal declaration which has to be made to the Mine Workers' Relief Fund and which contains questions to the following effect—

Does any person owe you any money? Give full particulars.

Have you any money in any bank, building society or other institution or any cash in hand? Give details.

Have you any property, money or investments not otherwise disclosed?

Have any of your children under 14 years of age a banking account? Give particulars.

All this information is asked of a man who has contributed to the fund. If he had been a thrifty man, he would be told that, having money, he was not entitled to relief. I believe a conference such as I have suggested would be the means of saving much time.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Goldfields members who have made a study of the Bill appear to



be in conflict and I do not wish to express an opinion on the Bill. What I am concerned about is that the State is paying into the fund one-third of the total amount. If some members get all they want I can see the possibility of the State having to carry the whole liability, instead of only one-third. It should be a charge upon the mining industry and not upon the State. On previous occasions this Chamber has agreed that the State should be responsible for one-third. If we are not careful, I foresee the possibility of the Miners' Relief Fund disappearing, and the miners themselves becoming a charge upon the taxpayer.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I have no objection to the suggestions offered by Mr. Harris. Indeed, they may provide a solution for some of our difficulties. All we want is a fair thing.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: We look to you to protect the fund.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I assume the Minister for Mines will be prepared to accept the suggestion, but I will discuss the matter with him and, in the meantime, will agree to progress being reported.

Progress reported.

#### **BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.**

1, Plant Diseases Act Amendment.

2, Feeding Stuffs Act Amendment.

Received from the Assembly.

#### **MOTION—RAILWAYS, CAPITAL COST.**

*To Inquire by Select Committee.*

Debate resumed from 13th September on the following motion by Hon. A. Thomson—

That a select committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon the capital cost of the Western Australian Government Railways, with a view to reducing the amount upon which the Commissioner of Railways is expected to find interest and running costs, and to make such recommendations as the committee may deem desirable to co-ordinate the different transport services and enable the railways to meet the competition from motor and other transport.

HON. G. FRASER (West) [8.35]: I cannot support the motion because I consider that the first portion of it would not advantage the State in any way. It does not appear to me to be right that the burden proposed to be lifted from the railways should

then be placed upon the general taxpayer. A certain amount of relief would be given to the system, but in the final analysis there would be no benefit to the people. For that reason I cannot support the motion. The second portion of the motion allows for quite a big discussion, and, no doubt if a select committee were appointed, a good deal of evidence would be collected. I doubt very much, however, if that would be sufficient to justify the appointment of a select committee. The railway officials must know the various means by which an improvement could be effected in the service, so that it would be more attractive to the public, and although many suggestions could be advanced, I do not think any of them would warrant the appointment of a select committee. No doubt members could make suggestions for an improvement in the running of the system, but most of those improvements would probably be regarded by the Department as of minor importance. I have one or two suggestions to offer, and I feel that if they were carried out a great improvement would be effected from the point of view of those who use the railways, and others who would be induced to use them. When one hears grumbling about the catering arrangements, it refers generally to the main country lines. On other than the main country lines it is not a question of grumbling about the condition of the catering arrangements, but of grumbling because there are no catering arrangements. Probably the complaints that are made by travellers on the South-West line are fully justified. Between Perth and Pemberton there are several refreshment stations, but although a person may leave Perth at 7.30 in the morning and not reach his destination until 10 o'clock at night, all he can get along the line is a snack. More consideration should be given to the travelling public. This could be done without much inconvenience or expense. I have often wondered why a refreshment room has not been provided at Brunswick Junction where a person on a long journey could obtain a meal. That could be done without any cost to the Government and would greatly add to the comfort of passengers. On other country lines there is an entire lack of arrangement for refreshments. I do not agree with the member who says that the railway pass should be used only between one's home and Parliament House. I consider the pass should

take a member all over the country so that he may get a better grip of the requirements of the various parts of the State. That is the policy I have adopted ever since I became a member of this Chamber. Whenever the opportunity has offered, I have made a trip over some country lines. The subjects I have referred to have struck me forcibly during those journeys. No matter how small a country siding is, the train waits for a quarter of an hour or 20 minutes. Over a journey of 150 miles a considerable amount of time could be saved by obviating some of those lengthy stops. There does not seem to be any necessity for trains remaining all that time at many of the sidings. If the waiting time were clipped off, it should shorten the journey and make it more attractive to the public. I am forced to the belief, after making several of these trips myself, that numbers of people only use the railway when they are compelled to do so. One does not want to see people driven to use motor transport instead of the railways when steps could be taken to render the railways far more popular. On many of the lines there is an absolute lack of catering arrangements for the travelling public. From Wyalcatchem to Merredin the travelling time is from 5 o'clock in the afternoon until 12.30 the following morning. From the time one leaves Wyalcatchem until one's arrival at Merredin, it is impossible to obtain even a cup of tea along the line, although the journey occupies 7½ hours. A worse instance than that is on the journey from Merredin to York. One leaves the former station at 1.30 a.m., and not until 12.40 in the afternoon, does the train reach Greenhills where it is possible to get a cup of tea for the first time.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Surely it does not take all that time to make the journey?

Hon. G. FRASER: It did when I made it. Not until we got to Greenhills could we get a cup of tea. At one stage I noticed a sign on the station that the train would wait 15 minutes for refreshments. It happened to be at 6 a.m. then, and the only refreshment place was the hotel which one could not enter. That sort of thing discourages people from travelling by rail. The same thing could be said about the run from Wyalcatchem to Southern Cross. One leaves the former place at 5 a.m. or 6 a.m., and between 8 and 9 a.m. a cup of tea can be obtained at Koorda but nothing else is pro-

curable until Southern Cross is reached between 8 and 9 o'clock at night. Numerous other lines could be quoted showing the same position. If the Railway Department intend to make an effort to recover the traffic which they have lost, they should give attention to items of this description, bearing on the comfort of passengers. People should not be called upon to regard a railway journey as a hardship. An hour and a half could be cut off many railway journeys by eliminating unnecessary stops. Attention should also be given to the catering aspect. Another point I desire to mention is a comparison between the rates for the carriage of wheat and fertiliser in various States. The figures arrived a little too late to be given by the Honorary Minister. The rates for the carriage of wheat over 151 miles in the various States are as follows:—South Australia 15s. 1d., New South Wales 14s. 4d., Victoria 12s. 2d., Western Australia 12s. 6d.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: What are the quantities?

Hon. G. FRASER: Those are the rates in various States for the average distance. The quantities would be the same in each case. The only State cheaper than Western Australia for carriage of wheat is Victoria. As regards fertilisers, the rates in various States for 147 miles are:—South Australia 10s. 8d., New South Wales 7s. 9d., Victoria 6s. 10d., Western Australia 5s. 1d. The comparison is highly favourable to Western Australia. These are interesting figures. For the reasons I have already stated, I oppose the motion.

HON. H. V. PIESSE (South-East) [8.49]: I support the motion moved by Mr. Thomson. Although Sir Charles Nathan says that perhaps we here are not sufficiently experienced to take evidence on such a subject, I am of opinion that at all events no harm could result from the appointment of a committee as proposed. We as business men are all taking stock of our possessions, and in many instances we are writing down our own capital values. One and all of us have taken the matter in hand seriously. It has been forced upon us. The Railway Department, with their old locomotives and machinery charged up at the original capital cost, should do some writing down.

Hon. H. Seddon: Who will pay the difference?

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: The whole community will have to pay it. I have heard it

suggested that if the capital of the Railway Department was written down, a profit might be made by the Commissioner, whereupon the railway employees would at once clamour for higher wages. However, there is an Arbitration Court to adjust such matters; and if we have prosperity throughout the country, why should we not pay good wages?

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Would not the producers be entitled to some consideration in the way of reduced freights?

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I shall come to that aspect in a few minutes. Unless railway freights are reduced, the primary producer cannot possibly carry on. When I was at Denmark recently, three bags of wheat arrived there from Katanning, the cost being 5s. per bag, and potatoes were to be sent in exchange. The consignee was able to return half a bag of potatoes in exchange, the Railway Department having received the greater portion of the value of the wheat from Katanning. A man from Esperance was recently in my town and ordered a bag of New Zealand black barley for experimental purposes. I sent the barley to him. The freight was 1s. 6d. per bushel, because this particular sort of barley did not come under the seed wheat section of the railway rate book. In railway freights there are many matters calling for investigation. I dare say that to-day 60 per cent. of the wool produced in Western Australia comes to Perth by road. I travelled to Perth last year by road, and was struck by the fact that along the road there was a procession of transport carrying wool. Unless something is done to write down the capital of the Railway Department, or to reduce railway freights, our producers will not be able to carry on successfully. I congratulate Mr. Thomson on his tenacity of purpose in bringing this matter forward. Many hon. members regard it as one of his pet subjects, but I feel sure that the primary producers, in particular, are with the hon. member. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

On motion by Hon. H. Seddon, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY TAX.**

### *Assembly's Message.*

Message from the Assembly received and read, notifying that it declined to make the amendments requested by the Council, and that it had made certain amendments by

way of modifications, in which it requested the concurrence of the Council.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move—

That leave be granted for the taking of the Assembly's message into consideration forthwith.

Question put.

The PRESIDENT: There being no dissenting voice, leave is granted.

### *In Committee.*

Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 1, Subclause (1).—Add the words "and shall come into operation on a date to be fixed by proclamation."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Assembly proposed that the measure should operate from the date of assent, but that tax on salaries and wages should run as from the 1st October. I move—

That the Assembly's modification be agreed to.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I thought the Minister said that another amendment had been suggested.

The Chief Secretary: The necessary provision is made elsewhere in the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: For the sake of order, we ought to deal with the Assembly's modifications of the Council's requests in their proper sequence. If the modification is at the end of the Assembly's message, it ought to be lifted up to the point where it properly occurs.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It means that the words inserted by the Council, "shall come into operation on a date to be fixed by proclamation" are to come out.

The CHAIRMAN: Then the Minister should move that the Council's request be not pressed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Very well. I move—

That the Council's request be not pressed.

Question put and passed; the Council's request not pressed.

No. 2. Clause 2—Strike out the word "year" in the first and third lines of the clause and substitute the word "period."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Crown Solicitor advises that the word "year" is necessary as a matter of drafting and ad-

ministration, and that "period" is misleading. The next amendment also has to do with this. I move—

That the Council's request be not pressed.

Question put and passed; the Council's request not pressed.

No. 3. Clause 2—Strike out the word "December" in the fourth line of the clause, and substitute the word "October."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: In this instance, also, the Assembly declines to make the Council's requested amendment, but the Assembly has submitted a modification. To keep it in its proper order, I will deal first with the Council's requested amendment, and move—

That the Council's request be not pressed.

Question put and passed; the Council's request not pressed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Assembly's modification is that after "1934" in line 15 there be inserted the words, "unless Parliament otherwise determines." I move—

That the Assembly's modification be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Assembly's modification agreed to.

Nos. 4 to 17, inclusive. Clause 2, paragraphs (a) and (b):

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move—

That the Council's requests be not pressed.

Question put and passed; the Council's requests not pressed.

The CHAIRMAN: The Assembly's modifications are—

Clause 2. Delete paragraph (a) (i) and insert: "Fourpence in the pound where the income is £78 per annum and is less than £182 per annum; provided that where the income is less than £104 per annum the amount of tax payable shall not exceed fourpence."

Clause 2. Delete paragraph (b) (i) and insert: "Fourpence in the pound where the amount of the salary or wages is 30s. per week or more and is less than £3 10s. per week; provided that where the salary or wages received is less than £3 per week the amount of the tax payable shall not exceed fourpence."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move—

That the Assembly's modifications be agreed to.

The CHAIRMAN: It appears that the Assembly took amendments Nos. 4 to 17 inclusive as consequential. Then the Assembly asks for a modification to bring the original impost on salaries of £104 down to salaries of £78 per annum. That is the starting point. It means that the tax will start at 4d. on a salary of £78 where there are no dependants. All other amendments relating to the suggested reduction of the tax the Assembly have declined to make.

The Chief Secretary: That is so.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I think that amendment will come subsequent to amendment No. 4, because that is really an amendment of paragraph (a) (i) of Clause 2.

The CHAIRMAN: I understand that what the Assembly's modification endeavours to overcome is the fact that the assessment Bill cannot be separated from the tax Bill.

Hon. H. SEDDON: That is so.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the amendment the Chief Secretary desires to make is that paragraph (a) (i) and paragraph (b) (i) shall both read "4d. in the pound where the income is £78 per annum or more, and less than £182, provided that where the income is less than £104 per annum the tax shall not exceed 4d." The position is that the Assembly desires to make the starting point of the tax at £78, the rate to be 4d. Then the Assembly decline to make all the other amendments.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Do I understand that the position before the Committee now is that it is the intention of the Assembly to make the commencing tax 4d. and the starting point £78? In effect, this Chamber requested a reduction of 1d. in the pound on each tax figure. The Assembly then refused to accept those reductions with the exception of making the 4d. tax start at £78.

The CHAIRMAN: That is the position. The simplest way now is to agree to the Assembly's modifications.

Hon. G. FRASER: There seems to be a misunderstanding over the 4d. and 8d. rates. Anything above 10s. will bring in the extra 4d. and if a man is drawing 31s. he will pay 8d.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: What reason has been advanced by the Government for not acceding to the requests put up by this House?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have been waiting for an opportunity to ask the Committee to agree to all the modifications made by the Assembly on the Council's amendments. Already the Government have lost about £100,000 through the time taken to examine the Bill carefully in both Houses. A loss of £100,000 is a big setback. It must be remembered also that even with this tax we shall be the least heavily taxed of all the States except Tasmania. We have grave obligations ahead and we must honour our pledges to the Loan Council, and, taking into account unavoidable expenditure, it will require the exercise of the strictest economy to enable us to do so. It has been said in the course of former discussions that the Bill will bring in more than the amount estimated. The estimate has been made by the Commissioner of Taxation and is only approximate. He has done his best with the information available. The Bill may bring in more than he estimates, or it may bring in less. If it brings in more, and if the finances by some means not now discernible improve so that we may be able to meet our obligations, and have some money over, there is still the approved deficit of £750,000. This in itself is a deficit and it would be a good thing for the credit of the State if we could reduce it. In this connection there is the unfunded deficit which we must bear in mind. We should try to keep it as low as possible so as to lessen the amount which we shall have to contribute in sinking fund when it is funded, as it must be, in due course. It has been said in the course of former discussions that the Bill will bring in more than the amount estimated. I have here estimates made by the Commissioner of Taxation. They are merely approximate, as members will recognise. If the Council's amendments to reduce the rate in each grade by 1d. were agreed to, the Commissioner estimates the loss of revenue would be as follows:—

	£
From 4d. to 3d. on £600,000 ..	2,500
From 5d. to 4d. on £2,100,000 ..	8,700
From 6d. to 5d. on £2,000,000 ..	8,333
From 8d. to 7d. on £700,000 ..	2,900
From 9d. to 8d. on £2,000,000 ..	8,333
	<hr/>
	£30,766
Concessions .. ..	£8,500
	<hr/>
	£22,266
	<hr/>

I think the information that I have supplied to members will justify them in agreeing to the wishes of the Legislative Assembly.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The Chief Secretary has submitted a plea for getting back to the old rates. I hope the Committee will not agree with his view. The present Government are in a remarkably satisfactory position compared with that of the preceding Administration. Not only have they a much larger amount of Loan funds at their disposal, but there is the additional sum made available by the Federal Government towards the reduction of the deficit. On top of that, the Chief Secretary admitted that there is £20,000 accrued from last year's emergency assessment tax, although I consider the amount not paid during the last financial year, and therefore available to the Government this year, is considerably more than £20,000. In addition, there are something like 3,000 people who have been absorbed by private enterprise in employment and for whom the Government will not be required to find sustenance. Many of those people will become taxpayers themselves under the emergency legislation. The Government's position is further improved by the increased price of wool.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That will not affect this tax.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It will affect the position, because the increased returns will mean more money in circulation, and that will be subject to taxation. The one drawback is the position regarding wheat, but we need not altogether give up hope, even under that heading. Generally speaking, the Government are in a most fortunate position compared with their predecessors. The Chief Secretary said it would be a good thing if the State could reduce the deficit by £100,000. What does that mean? It simply means that the Government desire to add to the taxation of the people by taking the £100,000 and handing it over for Governmental purposes. Surely it is much better in these times to leave as much money as possible in the hands of private enterprise. We delay the day of recovery by every pound we take out of private enterprise and place in the hands of Governments.

The CHAIRMAN: I will state the motion as the Chief Secretary has moved it, namely, that Amendments 4 to 17 inclusive be not pressed and that the Assembly's modifications be agreed to. In order to start the tax

at £78, the Assembly's modification must be agreed to, and if any hon. member wishes to secure any reduction in the tax with respect to taxpayers without dependants, I will place the onus upon him to frame an amendment that will overcome the difficulty.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I hope the Committee will accept the Chief Secretary's view and indorse what the Assembly has suggested. The Government have budgeted for a certain amount of money and the Chief Secretary has assured the Committee that in the event of the tax producing more than the Commissioner of Taxation considers likely, the surplus will be used in reduction of the deficit. That will be a good thing. The Premier entered into an undertaking with the Loan Council to introduce this taxation, and I think the Council have done all that was necessary regarding the amendment of the assessment Bill, and, that being so, we should agree to the motion before the Committee.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: While I appreciate the remarks of Mr. Baxter, I suggest that he has adopted a somewhat optimistic view with regard to the prospective surplus taxation under the Bill. We must realise the delay that has taken place in the passage of the legislation.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: The Bill will be in operation for two months longer than was the measure of last year.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: But it will not affect the result to the 30th June. Even if there should be a huge surplus, it will be dealt with as the Chief Secretary has suggested. The Bill contains the words, "or until otherwise provided," and if there should be a huge surplus, we can then "otherwise provide." We must render the Government ready assistance in matters so vital as that under consideration. If there was any reasonable doubt about the estimates of the anticipated taxation receipts under the Bill, it would be different.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: But the estimates are guesswork.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: But they are likely to be as accurate as possible. Should there be any huge surplus, I trust it will be used as the Minister suggested.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: You are optimistic.

Hon. G. W. Miles: We must trust the Government.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I pin my faith to the Government. If they do not do as the

Chief Secretary has suggested, that will be an incentive for this House to see that the right thing is done next year.

The CHAIRMAN: Before the discussion proceeds any further, I draw member's attention to Standing Order 240. Members are speaking against the Chief Secretary's motion without submitting an alternative. Any member who disagrees with the Minister is under an obligation to submit a modification so that it can be discussed. At present the discussion is leading nowhere.

Question put and passed; the Assembly's modifications agreed to.

Council's amendments:—No. 18. Clause 3.—Insert the word "income" before the word "salary" in the third and sixth lines of the clause.

No. 19. Clause 3.—Strike out the word "year," in the third line, and substitute the word "period."

No. 20. Clause 3.—Strike out the words "thirtieth day of June," in the third and fourth lines, and substitute the words "thirty-first day of October."

No. 21. Clause 3.—Strike out all the words after the word "the," in the sixth line, and substitute the words "commencement of this Act."

Assembly's modifications: Clause 3, line 37, substitute for "August" the word "October," and add a new subclause as follows—

(2) Insofar as section two of this Act requires the financial emergency tax to be charged, levied, collected and paid in respect of income for the year ending 30th June, 1934, such tax shall be charged, levied, collected and paid upon that portion of the income earned during the year ending the 30th day of June, 1933, which bears to the whole year of such income the same ratio as the portion of the year commencing on the day of the commencement of this Act, and ending on the 30th day of June, 1934, bears to the whole of the year ending on the said last-mentioned date.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move—

That the Assembly's modifications be agreed to.

By its amendments the Council proposed to make the tax operate on income as well as on salary and wages from a date to be fixed by proclamation, and to limit the duration to the 31st October, 1934. The modifications by the Assembly propose to date the tax on salary and wages from the 1st October,

1933, limit the duration to the 31st December, 1934, and make the tax on income cover a corresponding period.

Hon. A. Thomson: That is, salaries and income will be treated on the same basis.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes. As it is necessary to make special provision for the assessment of tax on income, the Assembly has added a new subclause. The effect will be to tax income on nine-twelfths of the full year in conformity with the tax on salaries and wages, which dates from the 1st October.

Hon. H. SEDDON: The Chief Secretary quoted certain figures that would result from the adoption of the Assembly's modifications. By the modifications the Assembly has brought the operation of the tax to date from the 1st October, not only for salaries and wages, but also for income, and I think it only fair to mention that another place has made financial concession to that extent.

Question put and passed; the Assembly's modifications agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

### *Standing Orders Suspension.*

On motion by the Chief Secretary, Standing Orders suspended to enable the Bill to pass the remaining stage at the present sitting.

### *Third Reading.*

Bill read a third time and *passed*.

## ADJOURNMENT—ROYAL SHOW.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [9.57]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday, 17th October.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 9.58 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Tuesday, 10th October, 1933.*

	PAGE
Motion, urgency: Wheat-growers and Commonwealth Government ... ..	1272
Questions: Sewage farm, metropolitan area ... ..	1292
Railways, steel truck earnings ... ..	1292
Electricity Supply, East Perth power house ... ..	1293
Bills: Feeding Stuffs Act Amendment, 3A. ... ..	1293
Plant Diseases Act Amendment, 3A. ... ..	1293
Financial Emergency Tax, Council's requested amendments ... ..	1293
Land, Com. ... ..	1296
Financial Emergency Tax, Council's message ... ..	1304
Annual Estimates, Com. of Supply ... ..	1296
Adjournment: Royal Show ... ..	1304

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

## MOTION—URGENCY.

### *Wheatgrowers and Commonwealth Government.*

Mr. SPEAKER: I have received the following letter from the Leader of the Opposition:—

I desire to inform you that it is my intention at the sitting of the House to-day to move, under Standing Order 47a: "That this House do now adjourn to draw attention to the parlous condition of the wheat industry, due to restricted markets and consequent low prices for the coming season, and urges the State Government to negotiate with the Commonwealth Government for a guaranteed price, sufficient to bring the average price at sidings to 3s. per bushel net."

It will be necessary for at least seven members to rise in their places before the member for York (Mr. Latham) may submit the question.

Seven members having risen,

MR. LATHAM (York) [4.33]: I move—

That this House do now adjourn to draw attention to the parlous condition of the wheat industry, due to restricted markets and consequent low prices for the coming season, and urge the State Government to negotiate with the Commonwealth Government for a guaranteed price, sufficient to bring the average price at sidings to 3s. per bushel net.

In moving the motion, I desire to draw attention to the parlous condition of the wheatgrowers of Western Australia, due principally to the restricted markets that they are confronted with to-day, and also to the lack of sympathy shown to the wheat-