

*Printing Committee*—Mr. Speaker, Mr. J. MacCallum Smith, and Mr. Withers.

*House adjourned at 4.38 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Thursday, 18th January, 1934.*

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

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

#### *Presentation.*

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I desire to announce that to-day I waited on His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor and presented to him the Address-in-reply, to which His Excellency has been pleased to make the following answer:—

Mr. President and hon. members of the Legislative Council, I thank you for your expressions of loyalty to His Most Gracious Majesty the King, and for your Address-in-reply to the Speech with which I opened Parliament. (Sgd.) James Mitchell, Lieut.-Governor.

### QUESTION—WHEAT BONUS, DISTRIBUTION.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Is there any agreement between the Federal and State Governments regarding the distribution of the wheat bonus? 2, If so, on what terms will the bonus be distributed? 3, When will the distribution take place?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, There is no agreement, but the manner of the distribution of the bonus is prescribed in the Wheat Growers' Relief Act, 1933. 2, Answered by No. 1. 3, The Federal Government have notified that regulations are being framed and necessary forms printed, but these have not yet come to hand.

### QUESTION—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY BILL.

#### *Government Employees Benefited.*

Hon. E. H. HARRIS asked the Chief Secretary: 1, How is the figure of £429, quoted as the highest rate of pay of any police official who will gain relief under the Financial Emergency Bill, arrived at? 2, (a) Is the rate of £324 per annum on the goldfields and £303 per annum elsewhere, quoted as the highest rate of pay of wages men in the Railway Department, the full remuneration of an employee known as a "first-class driver in charge"? (b) If not, what is the full remuneration paid to a "first-class driver in charge"? 3, Will a "first-class driver in charge" gain any relief under the Financial Emergency Bill?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, Rate per annum as per award No. 1 of 1927 (see *W.A. Industrial Gazette* of 27-3-1929, Vol. VIII., No. 4, page 345), £531; plus increase in basic wage, £5; rate as on 30-6-1930, £536; less 20 per cent. under Financial Emergency Act, £107; £429. 2, (a) The rate of £324, or £303 for a driver in charge, is supplemented by a district allowance of £6 where such applies; but the district allowance is specifically excluded from "salary" for the purposes of the Financial Emergency Act. If Sunday-time or overtime is worked, the remuneration would be increased accordingly. (b) See (a). 3, Yes.

### BILL—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY.

#### *Personal Explanation.*

HON. J. M. MACFARLANE (Metropolitan-Suburban) [4.35]: On a point of personal explanation, I wish to state that yesterday the Honorary Minister challenged a statement I made in speaking on the second reading of the Financial Emergency Bill. I desire now to quote an extract from the "West Australian" of the 3rd March, 1933, reporting Mr. Collier's speech at the Perth Town Hall—

We would change the system of sustenance work, giving each man a period, say two or three months, at work on the basic wage; and the moment that period of work was over, the men would go back on sustenance.

Is that in any way different from what the Honorary Minister had in his mind?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! There must be no debate, under Standing Order 325.

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**HON. E. H. H. HALL** (Central) [4.36]: While I consider the Bill in its present form to be inequitable, yet I propose to vote for the second reading, holding that only in most exceptional circumstances should a measure be passed out on the second reading. Even at this stage I am hopeful that in Committee something will be achieved which will be favourably viewed by the Government as enabling the State to carry on and meet its obligations to all sections of the people. Yesterday and on the previous day I listened most attentively to the speeches delivered. I was especially struck with a remark made by Mr. Richard Moore. Certainly Mr. Moore is quite competent to declare his opinions, but I cannot possibly subscribe to his statement that the Government are free to do just as they like with regard to Government employees. Public servants are frequently referred to as Government officials, but they are not Government officials. They are public officials, or public servants. For many years the policy throughout Australia has been to use every possible precaution to remove public servants from the political atmosphere. For that very purpose Arbitration Courts and Public Service Commissioners have been set up. It should not be left to the whim of any Government to do as they please with regard to public servants.

Hon. R. G. Moore: Why did the Government bring down the Bill in the first place?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: A highly important issue is at stake in the sentiment expressed by the hon. member. That issue deserves to have special attention drawn to it. If public servants, whether salaried or on wages, are to be influenced by promises made during general elections by the various political parties, then, though I have had no personal experience of the state of affairs existing in the United States of America, I say we are in danger of creating a similarly unenviable position here. I do not believe that the majority of the people of Western Australia desire that

such a condition of affairs should obtain. There is a point I have not heard mentioned during this debate, namely, that the Government are faced with the responsibility of governing the State in the interests of all sections of the community. I hope they will see fit, even at this late hour, to place their duty to all sections of the community before any party political object. They should remember that if the Bill goes by the board—and I ask to be excused for drawing their attention to something that I know they are much better acquainted with than I am—a large oppressed section of our people, who I am sure have the sympathy of the Government just as much as that of any other political section, namely the primary producers, will be subjected to the payment of full interest charges on their mortgages. If no other portion of the Bill is continued, the portion relating to interest on mortgages should be. I shall vote for the second reading of the Bill, holding myself free to support amendments in Committee.

**HON. W. J. MANN** (South-West) [4.43]: In the great range of speeches which have been delivered on the present Bill, most aspects have been touched upon, many of them repeatedly; and there is no need for me to traverse again much that has been already said. There are, however, a few observations I should like to make, because I recognise that this measure has created more public interest than any Bill that has been before Parliament for a considerable period. Before dealing with the Bill, I desire to refer briefly to some impressions I have gained since the Christmas holidays. Hon. members are aware that in the South-Western Province an election campaign is being waged. Since Christmas I have been engaged in assisting two candidates in various parts of the province. I am satisfied that prior to Christmas the great bulk of the people in the country districts—and I think this applies to the city people as well—did not fully realise the great importance of this measure and of the defeated Bill. The latter was brought down very late in the session, and an endeavour was made to hurry it through this Chamber. Many people had a hazy idea of what that Bill meant, but few fully realised its scope. After two or three weeks of movement around my province, I can in all truthfulness say that I have met very few

people indeed who do not support the Legislative Council in the action we took at the close of last session. Very few people indeed, no matter in which direction I looked, were found to be satisfied with last session's Bill. I met a great many who were disappointed. Many Government supporters, rightly or wrongly, anticipated much greater relief than that Bill promised. I found another section of people who were incensed because they felt they were getting nothing. There was a third section of people who were still further incensed from the fact that whilst they were getting nothing, they believed, as one of them said, that the Government had double-crossed them because they had increased the emergency tax. I put forward these views as an indication that, so far as I have been able to judge from the people I represent, they are convinced that the Government have made a mistake, and that the Legislative Council took the right stand in dealing as it did with the Bill when it first came down. We are asked to accept this second Bill, which, to all intents and purposes, is on all fours with the previous measure, and, with very little additional reason or explanation, to permit it to become law. I should have thought that the Honorary Minister, when he brought down this Bill, would have gone to considerable trouble in an endeavour to persuade this House that it had adopted a wrong attitude, and to have advanced every possible argument as to why it should be invited to change its mind. Instead of that he introduced the Bill in a comparatively few sentences, and evidently expected members to make speeches explaining to each other and to his good self, reasons why we were going to change our minds. That is not the right way to set about a matter of this kind. In fairness to the Honorary Minister, however, I recall that he indicated that later on he would be prepared to give further information if it was required. In my view he lost his best opportunity when he refrained from putting up the whole of his case in the first instance.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Do you think that would have made any difference.

Hon. W. J. MANN: When the last Bill was before us this House took up a certain attitude. Are we called together merely to say that we have made a mistake, and that we desire to reverse our decision? That is not paying much of a compliment to the

intelligence of the members of this Chamber.

The Honorary Minister: Perhaps the hon. member did not hear me introduce the Bill.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I heard every word the Honorary Minister said, and made notes of his speech, if that is any satisfaction to him. I was disappointed in his remarks. I thought he would have put up a very much stronger case.

Hon. G. W. Miles: He had no case to put up.

Hon. W. J. MANN: We are asked to go back upon our previous decision. What has been advanced from the Government side? Only one member, Mr. Williams, on that side has so far supported the Honorary Minister.

Hon. C. B. Williams: I liked doing it very much.

Hon. W. J. MANN: We enjoyed the hon. member's speech. Without being offensive, I should like to refer to him as the buck-jumper of the Labour Party. No flank rope is needed to induce him to buck. He digs his heels in whether it is a case of his own party or any other party, without any fear or favour. The hon. member himself was not wildly enthusiastic about the Bill, and I do not think he would lose any sleep if it went out.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Not a bit.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I do not want to put the hon. member in the position of answering questions of this description, but that is what one may be led to believe from his remarks.

Hon. C. B. Williams: I should like to see a fight between the Government and the Legislative Council.

Hon. W. J. MANN: It is on.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You will get it.

Hon. W. J. MANN: It has been said by the Honorary Minister that the Government felt they were justified in endeavouring to give some amelioration to a certain section of the employees of the State. The Government lost a very good opportunity to enhance their claims as champions of all the people when they came to that decision. I do not contend that the time is opportune for the expenditure of the £100,000 that is to be devoted to this cause. I believe there are many other and more deserving directions in which the money could be spent. Members know that for a long time all aspects of primary production have suffered very severely. We have the

spectacle of the wheat belt people suffering most dire distress. Until recently the pastoralists were passing through a very lean time. To-day those who are engaged in dairying are suffering even greater disabilities than either of the other two sections have experienced or are experiencing. One of the reasons for this is that many of the dairy farmers have been placed on virgin country without resources. Under the very best conditions they might reasonably be expected to make good, but not under present conditions. At one time the prices of the commodities they produce were high, and later on dropped to only a moderate figure, but to-day prices have fallen in all directions. For butter fat the price level is so low that it is practically impossible for any settler, I do not care how effective his plant may be, to make a reasonable living out of it.

Hon. J. Nicholson: They are having a very bad time.

Hon. W. J. MANN: They are suffering a cut of at least 50 per cent. in what was expected to be the lowest point to which butter fat could fall. I believe the price of butter fat to-day is in the region of 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. a lb. If that price remains, it will not be long before the great majority of these people, to whom we are looking to build up the dairying industry, will be forced willy-nilly off their holdings, and be obliged to go on the dole or be supported by the Government in some other way. If the Government have £100,000 to play with, I suggest that the money might be handed to the Agricultural Bank, with the instruction that the institution should endeavour to save its assets. If the dairy farmers leave their blocks, the assets of the bank will become worthless in a short time. In other directions, too, primary producers are in a parlous position. I cannot see any justice in the decision that proposes to give increases to a section of men, worthy no doubt, who are in constant employment, who are in every case receiving more than double that which the man on a small farm to-day is receiving, and who are getting their money regularly and working very much shorter hours. I do not contend that the Government are right in spending this money in the way proposed. Let us admit, however, for the sake of argument, that they are right in doing so. If we admit that, I maintain they are showing a deliberate bias in one direction. It has been

said during the debate that the emergency cuts were general. In that event I consider that any return that is made should also be general. Had the Government so desired, they could very fairly and reasonably have spread that money over all the people who suffered emergency cuts.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Including us.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: Leave members out.

Hon. W. J. MANN: There we have it both ways. If I interpret the fundamental principles of the teachings of the Labour Party, I cannot believe that this is in conformity with their general practice. Usually they have declared in favour of all things being equal as far as possible, and of equity all round, and so it has been for a number of years. In this case, however, one special section of the community has been singled out. If that section had been able to show that it was suffering dire distress as a result of the cuts in income, suffering to a greater extent than the other section, we could have supported the Government; but as a fact this is a case of men who are in regular work, who are getting what in these days is a reasonable if not a big salary, and who are receiving a remuneration which thousands of men on the land would be glad to accept. If there were 1,000 positions offered to-morrow at £250 per annum, to do work similar to that which these people are doing, then there would be tens of thousands of applicants for them at once. There can be no doubt about that. There is only one other phase of the matter to which I desire to refer, and that is the claim made by the Government and their supporters that this Bill is the result of a mandate from the people. The Honorary Minister, in introducing the Bill, particularly kept clear of that word, but Mr. Williams flogged it quite a lot. The Government have not got a mandate.

Hon. C. B. Williams: They defeated the other Government.

Hon. W. J. MANN: All right. You still contend they have a mandate. What is a mandate? Various meanings can be given of that word. I looked up the Century Dictionary half an hour ago to make sure of its meaning. I found that mandate was there defined as a charge, an order, a commission or command, interpreted as an official command addressed by a superior officer to an inferior to control his conduct in a special manner. I claim the electors are the superior officers.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: No. The Trades Hall are the superior officers.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I stand corrected. I had forgotten the Trades Hall. If the Government have a mandate, then they are falling down on their job. If, as was stated by my friend in the corner, a mandate is such a sacred thing, if it is of such enormous importance, if it is something that cannot be denied but must be obeyed, then the Government are falling down hopelessly on their job by not restoring the cuts in income to everybody.

Hon. C. B. Williams: That would be the best thing to do, too.

Hon. W. J. MANN: The answer to that would probably be that the Government could not do it because they have not got the money. There would be a big element of truth in that answer, but it does not alter my argument, which is that, instead of restoring the cut to a section of the people, the Government should, obediently to the voice of the people who elected them, restore the whole lot and let the world go hang.

Hon. C. B. Williams: The people would think the world of the Government if they did that.

Hon. W. J. MANN: That is the point I make and it has been laboured very considerably in this House. I do not know whether the Honorary Minister did so by accident or design, but he certainly fought shy of the word "mandate." His supporters in this Chamber and out of it, and I believe in another place, however, waved that mandate banner as high as they could. The Honorary Minister is very fair as a rule and he probably recognised that there would be a reckoning if he used that term.

The Honorary Minister: The hon. member cannot have been listening to me all the time.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I have been listening and I made personal notes of your speech. If you used that word "mandate," then I will be a very surprised person indeed. I would ask you to look up "Hausard" and if you can find it there, I will buy you a drink.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! The hon. member must not hold out bribes.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Not on a day like this?

Hon. W. J. MANN: That is not a bribe. Sir, it is a challenge. I bring this phase of

the matter up to show that the Government, while they are making a big song about carrying out the wishes of the electors who returned them, are not doing anything of the sort. They are definitely and deliberately marking out one section for preferment, while letting the other sections take their chance of getting anything they can scramble for, perhaps next year or the year after. That is very cold comfort for them. It is not fair, when all is said and done. With regard to the Government's action in not including Part V. of the previous Bill in the present Bill, I think they must be extremely optimistic if they think this House will countenance an omission of that description. Here we have the Government desirous of making a return to a comparatively small number of its employees, while insisting that private employers shall return to their employees cuts ranging from 18 per cent. to 22½ per cent.

Hon. C. B. Williams: That is the part that hurts.

Hon. W. J. MANN: It does hurt. It will hurt quite a lot of people.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Including the Government.

Hon. W. J. MANN: The Government are better off than their predecessors. They have doubled taxation in some respects, and they have had better treatment from the Federal authorities. In passing, I wonder how the Government will justify their proposed action in giving away this money in view of the mendicant approach they are about to make to the Federal Government.

Hon. T. Moore: They are not mendicants. They have every right to do it.

Hon. W. J. MANN: They are going cap in hand.

Hon. T. Moore: Nothing of the kind.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I am not going to cross swords with my friend.

Hon. T. Moore: How ridiculous you would look if you did.

Hon. W. J. MANN: No. The Government are going there begging. They will have to put up a case. They have a commission working here to make out a case.

Hon. T. Moore: To assert our rights, and not as mendicants.

Hon. W. J. MANN: To beg for what belongs to us. You cannot have it any other way. How do you propose to get it? By a machine gun?

Hon. C. B. Williams: That is a good idea.

Hon. W. J. MANN: The Government were forced to appoint a commission to draw up reasons to persuade the Federal authorities to give us what rightly belongs to us.

Hon. T. Moore: That is right.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Are you satisfied now?

Hon. T. Moore: Yes.

Hon. W. J. MANN: That is what I mean. Perhaps I neglected to express myself clearly. The position, however, is just the same. I want to hear from the Honorary Minister, when he replies, how he proposes to justify that action. I shall not take up any more time of the House. Figures have been quoted at length and practically every phase of this question has been fully debated. I shall support the second reading of the Bill.

Hon. T. Moore: Hear, hear!

Hon. W. J. MANN: I hope that a real spirit of compromise will be shown both by the Government and this House. I am quite prepared to meet the position in a spirit of reasonable compromise, but I do not want a repetition of what happened at the close of last session, when both sides were equally to blame.

Hon. C. B. Williams: It looks as if you will have a repetition of it.

**HON. H. SEDDON** (North-East) [5.11]: The ground in connection with the Bill has been so thoroughly covered by previous speakers, that anything I may say will probably be largely in the nature of repetition. There are, however, one or two aspects of the matter to which I would like to draw attention. There are also one or two circumstances which have arisen since the amending Bill failed to obtain the approval of the conference of last year that I think should be looked into. There is also the necessity for obtaining information from the Minister which, up to the present, has not been vouchsafed either to this House or to another place. While on that point, I would ask the Minister now one question, in the hope that his reply will be among the first of his answers. The Bill, which I understand is supposed to take the place of the 1931 Act, is intended to be retrospective, so that there shall be no break in the continuity of the legislation between the 31st December, 1933, and the 1st January, 1934. If the Bill is to be made retrospective, I take it that if any relief is given by the

Bill so far as the position associated with the 1931 Act is concerned, then that relief ought to be given as from the 1st January. For instance, is it proposed that all the employees of the Government who are covered by Arbitration Court awards are to be free from the operation of the 1931 Act? Are we to understand that, because the Bill is retrospective, therefore on the next pay-day those men will receive their full pay or, on the other hand, is it the intention of the Government to continue to pay those men the rates which obtained when the 1931 Act was passed?

Hon. W. J. Mann: They cannot get that under this Bill. It has not yet been passed.

Hon. H. SEDDON: But the Bill is to be retrospective. I would like an answer to that question. I understand there is a Government pay-day to-morrow and that the employees will receive a full envelope.

Hon. E. H. Harris: They will look in vain.

Hon. H. SEDDON: That is what I want to find out. The Government can give us that information. If the Bill is to be retrospective, why not apply its provisions at once, so that we can see exactly what the effect of this legislation will be? Let to-morrow's pay be made up in accordance with the provisions of this Bill, and then perhaps we shall have a better idea of where we stand than we have had up to the present time.

Hon. E. H. Harris: You will have a very good idea after tomorrow.

Hon. H. SEDDON: We must recognise that the measure before us is an entirely new Bill. Although it is contended that it merely continues the operations of the original Financial Emergency Act, the fact remains that a departure from it has been made by the Government, which represents a variation from the Premiers' Plan proposed as the basis of the 1931 Act. The departure is embodied in the fact that the Government seek to give sectional relief instead of continuing the provisions of the Premiers' Plan in toto. I do not know of any other State Government who have adopted that course. Up to the present, the Western Australian Government only have taken upon themselves to set aside the Premiers' Plan and to vary the provisions laid down for the guidance of Governments at the 1931 conference.

The Honorary Minister: There have been other Governments.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I shall be pleased to hear from the Honorary Minister what Governments have departed from the Premiers' Plan, apart, of course, from the Federal Government.

Hon. T. Moore: Yes, apart from the "boss" Government.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Did not the Queensland Government depart from the Plan?

Hon. H. SEDDON: Perhaps they did, and if so, then we should have the information. The more information we get, the better shall we be prepared to arrive at a proper decision.

The Honorary Minister: But that will not affect the position in this State.

Hon. H. SEDDON: It does affect the position here to this extent, that either we have recovered in Australia to such a degree that we are able to afford relief, or we have not reached that fortunate position. I intend shortly to show just how far, in my opinion, we are justified in granting relief. It appears to me that if the Government are to grant relief before they are out of the wood, they may land the State in a more parlous condition than ever.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Where is the recovery to be seen?

Hon. H. SEDDON: That is the point. Government supporters have made a great feature of the financial emergency legislation, and have denounced it vigorously. They even went so far as to lose the 1931 Act at the end of last session, rather than continue the conditions under which the Act was then operating. We now find the Government admitting they cannot do without the financial emergency legislation, although they were prepared to denounce their predecessors in office for having introduced legislation of such a description. The fact is that the Mitchell Government were in a most unenviable position in having to introduce it. Those people who denounced the legislation so vigorously when sitting in Opposition, now, when they occupy the Treasury bench, find they cannot carry on the operations of the State without at least re-enacting certain portions of the Financial Emergency Act and other measures. From the standpoint of Government finance, they are quite plain in their assertions. They say they cannot carry on without the re-enactment of the Financial Emergency Act of 1931, with certain variations that are embodied in the Bill. We have heard a lot of talk about in-

creased purchasing power, the idea being that increased wages implied an increased purchasing power on the part of the community. When speaking on the amending Bill in December last, I raised the point that employment and wage reduction were inter-connected. There is undoubtedly evidence to show that the effect of varying one may result in varying the other. We have heard of the old iron law of wages, and although that law has been disputed at times, the fact remains that it does operate within certain limits. If, for instance, we have a certain national income, and its distribution is varied, to the extent that it is varied it produces effects in other directions. If, for example, we increase wages, we also introduce unemployment, because the amount of money available for distribution can be varied only by increasing production. Therefore, the variation regarding increases in wages can be reflected only in increased unemployment. When we consider the problem of unemployment, it must be recognised that the Government have a serious position to face at present. I ask Ministers if they have taken into consideration what the results will be of their policy of altered wages? When the amending Bill was introduced in December last, I supported the Government quite frankly in the belief that it would be a splendid idea to bring home to the wage-earners of the community the fact—unfortunately they will not acknowledge conviction except by experience—that wages and unemployment are inter-connected, and that therefore they should be prepared, if they support such a policy, to take the consequences. I also supported the Bill because I thought the Government would be quite prepared to carry on and support their theory to the fullest extent. I believed that if they accepted the theory that increased purchasing power would be created by increased wages, it was a splendid opportunity to put their theory into practice to the fullest extent. On the other hand, we find that the Government have been prepared to give effect to their belief to a limited extent only in the amending Bill of last session, and also in the Bill before the House now. I thought that they might test it out to the fullest extent, because, if the principle be correct, obviously the farther the Government went in increasing wages, the greater the purchasing power of the people

would be. Surely that is the logical conclusion to such a theory. Personally it seems to me that that doctrine has serious objectionable features. The Government have not endeavoured to put their policy into operation, and we find that what was regarded first as electioneering propaganda has proved to be very bad administration, and entirely impracticable when applied to the finances. That being so, it materially alters the point of view one is inclined to take. If the Government have no faith in their own propaganda and specifics, how can they expect other people to support them in putting their policy into practice? Another point regarding the Bill is that the Title is practically the same as that of the 1931 Act, and the Preamble has also been largely copied from the 1931 legislation, but I consider the provisions of the Bill have departed seriously from the principles laid down in the 1931 Act. In the Preamble to both Bills we find that "a Plan was agreed upon for re-establishing the financial stability of the Commonwealth and States, and restoring industrial and general prosperity by means involving a common sacrifice, including, amongst other things, certain reductions in the expenditure of the Commonwealth and State Governments . . . ." The Bill before us very materially departs from the principle of a common sacrifice. It proposes to exempt those unions or Government workers who are operating under Arbitration Court awards from the operations of the financial emergency legislation.

Hon. T. Moore: That is, hands off arbitration! You have got the point at last.

Hon. H. SEDDON: If that be so, the principle of common sacrifice is not to be maintained, and to that extent the Preamble of the original Act has been departed from, and the Government now propose to introduce what I can only describe as sectional legislation giving relief in certain directions and maintaining the burden in others. That is entirely contrary to the principle of a common sacrifice. If there is to be common sacrifice, and, after all, that was the ground of the appeal on which the Premiers' Plan was put before the people of Australia, then it should be maintained right through the community.

Hon. E. H. Gray: That was not done in the Eastern States.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Does Mr. Gray propose that we shall follow the Eastern States slavishly regarding any legislation that they may introduce?

Hon. W. J. Mann: Mr. Gray wants us to follow New South Wales.

Hon. H. SEDDON: We would find ourselves landed in a pretty pickle before we finished, if we were to adopt that course. If we are to maintain the principle of a common sacrifice, as laid down in the Preamble to the Bill, then, if the Government are prepared to extend relief, it should be afforded in the same way as the imposition of the sacrifice was made in the first instance. It should be made available to all sections of the community. That is the only fair way by which relief of this description can be made available to the people. It will be noted, in dealing with this legislation, that there are certain sections of the community who are exempt from the provisions of the financial emergency legislation because of the reduction in the basic wage. On the other hand, the relief proposed to be given under the Bill will be available to persons whose rates of pay are 9s. a week above the basic wage. In December last I said the Government could not escape the charge that by this type of legislation they were deliberately **discriminating** against certain sections of the employees. I reiterate that charge now. We are anxious to gain specific information regarding the effects of the legislation, and my colleague, Mr. Harris, asked a series of questions with a view to ascertaining to what extent there was discrimination proposed between certain sections of the Government employees. I could not understand the answers to one or two of the questions, in view of the provisions of the Bill. Mr. Harris asked the following question:—

What is the highest rate of pay per annum of any other Government employee, and in what departments, who will be exempted because his pay is governed by an Arbitration Court award?

An earlier question had reference to the Police Department, and the question I have quoted was general in its application. The only answer given to that question was a reference to certain rates of pay to railway employees on the goldfields, and also to the pay of railway employees in other centres. The Honorary Minister knows that among the many employees who are to be relieved as a result of this legislation are engine-



driver, engineers in charge of pumping stations, employees of the Water Supply Department and, in fact, all Government employees who are governed by Arbitration Court awards. If that is the kind of information that is to be placed before the House, all I can say is that either the Minister has been seriously misinformed, or else the position is not being placed adequately before him. The Honorary Minister should clear the matter up and let us have some more information showing how the Bill will operate in all grades, and respecting the various unions. We should have information indicating clearly how officers are to benefit. Last December, the Honorary Minister placed before members certain schedules, the object of which was to show the effect on salaries, and the figures disclosed increases varying from £1 to as much as £24. In my opinion, the details did not convey the whole position because we find that a first-class engine driver who, under the 1930 rate, received £378 per annum and was reduced under the original Act to £303 per annum will be paid, under the present Bill, should it be agreed to, a salary of nearly £330 per annum. I could give further illustrations if necessary to show that the whole financial position has not been clearly placed before us in dealing with the various unions. I cannot see why it should be necessary to discriminate in favour of men working under arbitration awards and leaving out those who are employed as civil servants, as teachers and as railway officers who are above the £293 rate. It appears to me that a by far fairer method would have been to introduce an all round percentage relief, of course if the finances of the State would permit it. That brings me to the question of finance, but before I touch on that subject I should like to deal with the threadbare question of mandates. This has been used freely in discussing emergency legislation. There were other phases dealt with at the last general election. For example there was the financial emergency tax, and I have a distinct recollection of the wonderful promises that were made with respect to that tax. This was seriously denounced and promises were made that it would be cut out. We find, however, that legislation was introduced, not to cut it out, but to increase it. Another question which was introduced and which seriously overshadowed all others was the question of secession. There again I congratulate the Government on the attitude

they adopted when fighting the election because, very astutely, the question of unification, which is certainly a plank of their Federal platform, was kept entirely in the background, and the question of secession was allowed to come to the front. Thus the people were led to believe that the Government now in power held an open mind regarding the advantages to be gained by secession. There is one mandate to which there has been practically no reference, a mandate which has not been carried out, and that is the mandate with regard to sound government. That mandate should have overshadowed every other because it is the only way by which administration can successfully be carried out. I should like to ask the Honorary Minister, if the Government are unable to pay the increased cost which will be imposed upon them by the financial emergency legislation, how does he expect the private employer to meet the increased charges imposed upon him if we omit Part V. from the legislation we are now discussing. The answer to this question will decide whether this legislation can be described as sound government or otherwise. If the Government are unable to meet the increased costs to which I have referred, how can they expect private employers to do so. I would go further. The figure of £350,000 has been mentioned as the cost to the Government of the abandonment of the financial emergency legislation. Some time ago I had occasion to ask a question, and received from the Public Service Commissioner the answer that 20 per cent. of the wage earners of Western Australia were employed by the Government. Therefore I think it is quite feasible to assert that 75 per cent. of the wage earners of the State are engaged in private employment. If it is going to cost the Government £350,000 if the Financial Emergency Act of 1931 is not carried on, what will be the amount it will cost private employers if they are not given relief as was given them by the 1931 Act. I cannot contemplate any Government submitting legislation of this description without having full inquiry made. Therefore, I shall be pleased to hear from the Minister on the question. Again I am looking for information, and I say one is entitled to ask where the money is to come from.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The usual source, the Minister says.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I have been trying to find out where it is coming from. In an-

other place the Minister for Works told off the Opposition when they ventured to ask where the money was coming from. The Council is justified in not accepting that attitude. We should not be refused the information. We have had placed before us certain financial information, and I confess I cannot see, by comparing those figures with the figures of the previous year, exactly how the difference is being allowed for. It is due to the Minister to place before us the information that we require. It is a question that concerns every member.

The Honorary Minister: The hon. member knows that £115,000 is not involved.

Hon. H. SEDDON: The figure £115,000, was mentioned in connection with the Bill introduced in December last, and of that £115,000, if I remember rightly, there was some £20,000 involved in giving relief to certain goldfields employees under an Executive Council minute of the 3rd November, 1933. There was also a sum of £18,000 involved which was intended to make adjustments in regard to pensions and anomalies arising from the operation of this legislation; there was also a figure of £75,000 supposed to be involved in relief to be given under other provisions of the Bill.

The Honorary Minister: Not this year.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Let us just see exactly what is involved for this year.

The Honorary Minister: It has been put before you.

Hon. H. SEDDON: And let us know where the money is coming from. The figures for December seem to bear out what I am contending because there is a bigger return for that month than there was from the previous January when the emergency tax was not in operation.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Is the money coming from the unemployment tax?

Hon. H. SEDDON: We should know, because there are other sources from which the Government can take it, and from which we are justified in assuming that the money is to come. It appeared to me that the money was coming from the extra £100,000 the Government were getting from the Commonwealth, but it may be coming, as an hon. member said, from the emergency tax. If that be so, why are we led to believe that the Government would be seriously embarrassed by the loss of £90,000 because the financial emergency tax came into operation in October, instead of the date pro-

vided for? There is also another source from which the Government could obtain the money. Hon. members may have seen a reference in the Press recently to the effect that there was a surplus in a sinking fund in London amounting to over £100,000.

Hon. J. Nicholson: £180,000.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: No, £118,000.

Hon. H. SEDDON: This amount has accumulated in a sinking fund as the result of provision made to meet a loan that was floated 40 years ago. It is due to the House to know what is going to be done with that money. Is it going to be taken into revenue as was done on a previous occasion to enable the Government to provide this relief? I have quoted three sources from which the money can come, and it might not be any of those three. At any rate, we are entitled to know whether it is to come from. If it is to come from the sinking fund I take exception to it from the point of sound finance. If the State has been careful to lay aside money year after year for the purpose of meeting a loan on maturity, we are not justified in taking into revenue any surplus there might be.

The Honorary Minister: It comes out of revenue.

Hon. H. SEDDON: If we paid off debts with it, it would relieve us from loan enslavement which the people are suffering from. The causes of our enslavement are quite different from those existing in other parts of the world. The Commissioner of Taxation placed before us certain figures relating to the emergency tax. He laid down an amount of £16,000,000 as representing the national income for the current year. That amount of £16,000,000 is very considerably below the national income received in previous years; and if the national income is so reduced, how can the Government justify the granting of this relief? These are pertinent questions to be answered before we commit ourselves to a course of action which may rebound financially, which may land us in the position of being criticised as having taken steps we were not justified in taking. While the deficit is at the rate of three-quarters of a million per year, I would like to know how any Government can justify the giving of relief in any direction. The figures for the last half year do not indicate that there has been any material improvement on last year as to the amount of the deficit. The difference of £73,000 is

accounted for by the Commonwealth grant of £50,000 and the emergency tax receipts. Comparing this year with last year, I do not see how the Government can say that the country is in any way materially better off from the aspect of receipts of revenue as compared with last year. In conclusion let me say quite candidly that I do not feel justified in supporting the Bill in its present form, unless we can have far more information on which to base our judgment than we have received up to the present. I shall await with great interest the Honorary Minister's reply before committing myself to the support of the Bill in its present form. I may support it with a view to its amendment in Committee. At present it seems to me that the whole of the evidence is against the policy of relief. If we find it possible to give relief, that relief should be given on the same basis as the legislation which imposed the taxation. The relief should be given on the basis of a percentage spread over the whole community.

**HON. T. MOORE** (Central) [5.48]: It is with diffidence I rise to speak on the Bill, owing to the fact that there has been so much heat engendered by those opposed to the measure. It is remarkable that so much heat should be shown in a non-party House, where we are supposed to be all calm, cool and collected. From the amount of gas that has emanated here during the last day or two, it seems that we were far from being calm and cool. Had the windows been open, some hon. members could have been heard in Hay-street. It is the members who represent open spaces and very few people who have made most noise in this Chamber about the Bill. There has been talk about the right of this Chamber to deal with the finances of the country. Mr. Holmes says that for 15 years he has taken the same stand, and that he has always tried to go on the road of sound finance. Let me remind the hon. member that for 15 years he has been consistently against the Government. He made very little headway, because the only times this country had sound finance or balanced Budgets were when this same party were in power.

**Hon. G. W. Miles:** You took some of the sinking fund to do it.

**Hon. T. MOORE:** No matter what is put up, the hon. member will have something to say. The point is that we paid our way.

**Hon. J. M. Macfarlane:** Thanks to the Commonwealth disabilities grant.

**Hon. T. MOORE:** From the point of view of sound finance it is not necessary to criticise the present Government. If Mr. Holmes had criticised the Government of which he was a supporter—

**Hon. J. J. Holmes:** No.

**Hon. T. MOORE:** Or the party to which he belonged—

**Hon. J. J. Holmes:** No party.

**Hon. T. MOORE:** Mr. Holmes has been a Minister himself.

**Hon. G. W. Miles:** There were no deficits when he was a Minister.

**Hon. T. MOORE:** At all events, the country then thought that it could be carried on by other men, despite his being such a wonderful financier. He was not allowed to remain too long in the Ministry. I do not wish to speak harshly, but the career of the hon. member who sets himself up as an authority on finance should be looked into. For 15 years he has been bombarding Governments—

**Hon. J. J. Holmes:** For 15 years the country has been drifting into hopeless insolvency.

**Hon. T. MOORE:** The only time the country was in a solvent condition, or had balanced Budgets, was when it was administered by Governments such as that against which this Chamber is taking what is called a stand.

**Hon. G. W. Miles:** Those Governments collared the sinking fund which previous Governments had provided.

**Hon. T. MOORE:** I thought the gas had evaporated, but evidently there is still some about.

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT:** I think the hon. member is inviting a lot of the fire himself.

**Hon. T. MOORE:** There are in this Chamber 23 anti-Labour members as compared with seven Labour supporters, and we have been asked by the twenty-stoners where are the supporters of the Bill. Now that a supporter of the Bill rises to speak, the twenty-stoners get busy again and will not let him have a hearing. The position is too serious for discussion to be hurked.

**Hon. G. W. Miles:** Do not be so personal.

**Hon. T. MOORE:** I do not wish to be personal, nor do I wish to hurt anybody's feelings; but that is my plain way of putting things. I want hon. members criticising the Government to understand that they

have no reason to say, as Mr. Holmes did, that certain members of the Ministry are all right. The present Government are practically the same as previous Labour Governments, which were some of the best and soundest Governments Western Australia ever had, in the opinion of the Australian people from here to Queensland. They were held up as something near what a Government should be.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Who held them up?

Hon. T. MOORE: Even the capitalistic Press of the Eastern States held them up in that way. At the very outset of the present Government putting into practice their financial policy, hon. members have no right to say that this Chamber, which after all represents very few people, has a right to prevent them. We are told that this House represents the people who matter in Western Australia. In my opinion, the only people who matter in Western Australia are the heads of households. I would like to recall to hon. members what is published in this morning's "West Australian" as the pronouncement of an eminent statesman whose name is written large over British history—Mr. Winston Churchill. The political situation is very similar in the Old Country, except that this Chamber so far has had more power than the House of Lords. No hon. member will contradict that. Mr. Churchill makes a statement as to the rights and privileges of the House of Lords, and what stand the House of Lords should take, and where that House should be placed. For the information of hon. member I will read a passage from the pronouncement of that Conservative statesman—

All talk of melting down the Imperial inheritance into a sludgy international amalgam, and all crazy disarmament appeals will lead only to the starvation and misery of the working masses and terminate Britain's splendour.

The report continues—

He (Mr. Churchill) went on to advocate a reformed House of Lords and a stronger House of Commons, which, he said, had lost some of the people's respect.

That refers to the National Government in the Old Country.

Hon. E. H. Harris: There is nothing unusual about that with any Government.

Hon. T. MOORE: The report goes on—

Extra votes should be given to millions of men and women who were the heads of households, and to the fathers of families—

That is the point. That is what we have always maintained.

Hon. G. W. Miles: But the vote should not be given to every Tom, Dick and Harry when he is 21.

Hon. T. MOORE: We have put up such a proposal here, and this House has rejected it. If my memory serves me rightly, the proposal has been rejected twice during my time here. And yet we set ourselves up as representing the people. We represent a mere handful of people. What I have quoted comes not from a Labour man, but from Mr. Winston Churchill, who has some considerable standing.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Is he not one of the hereditary members?

Hon. T. MOORE: He has for many years been a leader in the British House of Commons. I will complete the quotation—

Extra votes should be given to millions of men and women who were the heads of households, and to the fathers of families, thus avoiding violent plunges into Toryism and Socialism and finally into Fascism.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Socialism is there too, don't forget!

Hon. T. MOORE: One word suits the hon. member interjecting, and he lets the other two go. That is his sense of fairness.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Not at all.

Hon. T. MOORE: In point of fact, Mr. Churchill is stating a corollary. Those things, he maintains, will happen as a sequence of events if the British people are not given more power over the House of Lords. Anyone who goes through our last "Hansard" will, I think, find that I said practically the same thing here.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Two great minds think together.

Hon. T. MOORE: That is all right as sarcasm from the hon. member. When he can find no other reply, he utters something sarcastic. I do not claim to have a great mind, but I have as great a mind as the hon. member has, to judge by some of the stuff he puts over.

Hon. J. Nicholson: What about the constitution of the House of Lords?

Hon. T. MOORE: It is not necessary to trace that aspect. Does the hon. member disagree with me when I say that all heads of households have not a vote for this Chamber?

Hon. G. W. Miles: They have votes for this Chamber.

Hon. T. MOORE: When we suggested a household franchise, this House defeated the proposal.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You put up one man one vote.

Hon. T. MOORE: Nothing of the kind. We would do a lot more business if we did not put one set of men into Parliament to do certain things and elect another set to prevent those things being done. It is no wonder that we get nowhere.

Hon. G. W. Miles: This House prevents mob rule. What about Queensland?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! Mr. Thomas Moore has the Chair.

Hon. T. MOORE: Queensland got rid of its Legislative Council. Has Queensland gone back?

Hon. E. H. Harris: Queensland decided by referendum to retain it.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Queensland obeyed the people's mandate, did it not?

Hon. T. MOORE: Mr. Deputy President. I sometimes wonder who has the floor.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I am wondering as to that now.

Hon. C. B. Williams: The Nationalist party did not reinstate the Legislative Council in Queensland.

Hon. T. MOORE: I was about to remark that there had been another party in power in Queensland since the Legislative Council there was abolished, and they did not reinstate it. They found that they were able to get along very well without it.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: They did not keep their promise made at the elections.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: What has that to do with the Bill?

Hon. T. MOORE: I maintain that this House, by its attitude to the Bill, is exceeding its rights, and many of the people in the country are of the same opinion. Mr. Miles sets himself up as an authority. He claims to be here to represent the people. In answer to an interjection which he courted, he stated that if anyone went up North to oppose him, that person would be annihilated. When the hon. member a few years ago was opposed, he was returned by 333 electors.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Is that all?

Hon. T. MOORE: That is all the hon. member represents in this House. As there are three members representing those 333 elec-

tors, we may say that each represents 111. Can Mr. Miles claim to have any mandate when he represents only a handful of people? There was also an intelligent minority in the North—285 electors who voted for the opposite side.

Hon. H. V. Piessé: How many of his electors live in the city?

Hon. T. MOORE: One-half of them do not live in the North. The hon. member represents people of St. George's-terrace; at any rate a great many of them have interests in Perth. If they had interests in the country, it would be a much better country. If the country people had representation in this House, it would be a better House. When members say that the Government have no mandate, I ask who gave them a mandate to hold up the business?

Hon. E. H. Harris: Is it being held up?

Hon. T. MOORE: Let me tell members what I believe may happen if they persist in their attitude. We are living in difficult times. The other day Major Douglas was asked where he thought trouble might start, and he replied that there were so many open kegs of gunpowder about that he could not say on which the spark might fall. I believe that trouble can be caused by this House dictating to the Government. The Government refuse to be dictated to—they have a right to object—and in that way trouble may be precipitated. If we once start the ball rolling, nobody can say where it will stop, and those members who claim to represent the people of the country may be doing them a great dis-service by persisting in their present attitude. One of our main features of the Bill is that it stipulates hands off the Arbitration Court. I can quite understand any anti-Labour member being dissatisfied with that provision, but what right had Parliament to interfere with the Arbitration Court?

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Who interfered with it?

Hon. T. MOORE: The Council.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: That is imagination on your part.

Hon. T. MOORE: It is ridiculous of the hon. member to make that assertion.

Hon. J. Nicholson: This provision did not interfere with the Arbitration Court.

Hon. T. MOORE: The object of the Bill is to give workers who go to the court the rights they enjoyed before the Financial Emergency Act was passed.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: They have the right to approach the court now.

Hon. T. MOORE: There has been much talk about equality of sacrifice, and members have stated that industry would be injuriously affected if the Bill became law. No one has shown what particular industry would be affected.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: There is not one that would not be affected.

Hon. T. MOORE: I question that statement. Mr. Macfarlane, in his speech, took us through the potato and butter producing country and to other places where he said commodity prices were so low that the position of the producers had become hopeless. The hon. member knows the reason for that.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Yes, and still the Government propose to give £115,000 to men who are already in employment.

Hon. T. MOORE: The reason why those producers cannot sell their potatoes or dairy products is because people have not the purchasing power. That is where the trouble lies. There are many people in this State who used to be in a position to buy those commodities. Why cannot they now use all the butter that is produced and buy it at a price? Mr. Macfarlane should ask himself that question. The answer is that the purchasing power of the people has fallen too low, and we cannot expect conditions to improve while the workers are kept on low wages. No country has ever prospered on low wages. If everything is wrong, as members have said, there is one cure and that is to increase the purchasing power of the people. Members, however, assert that the wages men must be cut down. They pretend to have great sympathy for the wages men who are the lowest paid workers in the country.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: What about the farmers?

Hon. T. MOORE: I admit that the farmer is a slave. He is in a position similar to that of the other producers. He grows commodities, and people have no money with which to purchase them, and so low prices rule throughout the world. The difficulty is world-wide. While people in the Old Country follow along lines that members here would pursue, that is, advocating low wages, we shall not get payable prices for our wheat and other exportable commodities. Our desire is that the people of Europe should be able to get back to work and earn wages so that they may purchase our meat

and wheat and wool at payable prices. In the improvement of their conditions lies our only hope. Why talk of people producing vegetables, butter and milk at a loss when there is only one cure, namely to give the people purchasing power so that they can buy those commodities at reasonable prices?

Hon. J. Nicholson: We suggest that the £115,000 might be used to benefit the primary producers.

Hon. T. MOORE: We want to restore to the people their purchasing power, and then our troubles will begin to diminish.

Hon. J. Nicholson: But you do not propose to restore it to them.

Hon. T. MOORE: Mr. Holmes and Mr. Miles are out of their places at the moment, but I would point out that Mr. Holmes has never been in favour of arbitration. He believes in the old law of supply and demand.

Hon. V. Hamersley: A good one too.

Hon. T. MOORE: An excellent one until the hon. member has goods to sell and people have not the money with which to buy them. The outlook has improved for a section of the community—the pastoralists. I wonder what Mr. Holmes and Mr. Miles would say if I suggested that the honourable understanding recently made with the shearers and other employees in the industry should be reviewed by Act of Parliament and a certain percentage restored to the employees.

Hon. E. H. Gray: That is a good argument on their reasoning.

Hon. T. MOORE: I think it is a fair argument.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: They could afford it now!

Hon. T. MOORE: Would those members support a Bill to that effect?

Hon. H. V. Piesse: Those employees can go to the Arbitration Court.

Hon. T. MOORE: Not until their award has run the full time. Everything is satisfactory to those two members so long as it cuts their way and makes deeper inroads into the earnings of the workers, but when it cuts the other way, their vote is in the opposite direction.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Retain the old Act and those employees could go to the court.

Hon. T. MOORE: You admit that the original Act was the means of bringing down wages.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Would you be in favour of giving the £115,000 to the unemployed?

Hon. T. MOORE: I am not here to be questioned by the hon. member. He has already occupied one and a half hours in dictating his terms. What happened in connection with the Bill of last session? A strong stand was taken by members of this House. They were emphatic that they would not give way on this, that and the other principle. On one of the important clauses to which they disagreed, there was even voting, ten votes for and ten against, and yet an emphatic stand was taken. Whom did the managers represent? What right had they to take such a strong stand that the measure was eventually defeated?

Hon. E. H. Harris: To what clause are you referring?

Hon. T. MOORE: The hon. member knows.

Hon. E. H. Harris: You cannot tell me.

Hon. T. MOORE: There is no need to tell the hon. member much. Let him ask me outside and I will tell him, but I will not waste time on him here. On the other contentious clauses, the voting was 10 for and 12 against, a majority of two against, and on that narrow majority the emphatic stand was taken.

Hon. E. H. Harris: That is a correct statement; the majority was two.

Hon. T. MOORE: And my statement that the voting on one clause was ten for and ten against was also correct. On the other clauses, in spite of such close voting, members of this House, elected on a limited franchise, have held up the business of the Government.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Do you believe in majority rule?

Hon. T. MOORE: There was no majority on one clause.

Hon. E. H. Harris: There was a majority on all the other clauses.

Hon. C. B. Williams: A majority of two.

Hon. T. MOORE: What a majority in a House of review! In the lower House, where the measure was initiated, there was a large majority in favour of the Bill. There is one Government in the world that at least is attempting to do something along right lines and that is the Government of the United States. I have been asked whether I believe in the American plan. I consider it is time someone tried to do something for the great mass of the people who are down and out. We have no right to continue in the old rut while so many

people are down and out, and that applies the world over.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Then I take it you would be in favour of giving the £115,000 to the unemployed.

Hon. T. MOORE: It is ridiculous to suggest that we can continue as in the past with a section of the people in snug positions shutting our eyes to the desperate condition of the workers. We should take off our hats to Mr. Roosevelt and his Government. I believe that the British Government sincerely hope that the American plan will be successful. If Roosevelt carries it to a successful conclusion, I have no doubt that other countries will follow suit. The rest of the world is merely drifting back to the position it occupied before the war. In the older countries of the world, a large proportion of the population were down and out in pre-war days. I believe that millions in the city of London, the heart of the Empire, were down and out before the war. It is rather strange that during the war, when money was available for any and every purpose, money to kill and destroy and tear down, everything was right and everyone was prosperous. Now, in these times of peace, people are in want and there is no money with which to build up. If another war broke out to-morrow, there would be plenty of money available with which to prosecute it, and destitution and want would disappear until the war was over.

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

Hon. T. MOORE: Before tea I was talking about what would happen in the event of a war in this country, or in the event of this country being called upon to carry on another conflict. There would be no difficulty in finding money, any more than there was in the days gone by. On the occasion of the last war there were those who talked about setting up good government. Thousands of men were being sent away, and the interest bill was creeping up day by day at the rate of hundreds of thousands. Even then people were not satisfied with what was being done. Members of this House said, "Send still more men; we will find the money. It does not matter where it comes from, everything is all right now." They talked about sane government. They were quite ready to borrow money then, but they do not say now, "Let us borrow." If they had

attempted to meet some of the obligations of the country then, it would have been better for us all now, instead of which they spent money as if it grew on trees. Overseas we have heaped up for ourselves a tremendous interest bill, which we have had to pay ever since, and will continue to pay for many years. We do not hear anything from them as to having that interest bill reduced. There is no talk of asking people who overseas are doing well out of our money, to reduce the interest bill.

Hon. G. W. Miles: They let us off the war loan for two years.

Hon. T. MOORE: We have it still ahead of us, together with the other loans, and the interest bill is still heaped upon us. It is understood that half our revenue goes to pay the interest, and that half our taxation goes overseas. There is no mention about people overseas making an equality of sacrifice, although they are receiving a great deal from this comparatively poor country. In my opinion, the interest bill should be reduced.

Hon. J. Nicholson: That is wrong.

Hon. T. MOORE: We are told it is wrong to repudiate, but I am not suggesting that. I think a little talk between the nations would bring relief. The position should be placed before the people overseas. They are told that we are in a solvent and a prosperous condition. That is not so, because our industries are not solvent. By the unfortunate methods of marketing that we adopt, our wheat to-day is being dumped at any price that the buyers in the older lands are prepared to give. That is one of the reasons why our finances are in a bad way. Has it ever struck members that we are the greatest dumpers of wheat in the world? We talk about the position of the farmer. He has no say in the disposal of his wheat. The merchants who handle it say when it shall be sold and at how much. Let me instance the last four years to show what we have been doing in the way of dumping. Four years ago wheat was standing at 2s. 4d. a bushel. When the Australian wheat was put on the market, within a fortnight the price dropped to 2s. 3d. and kept falling until it reached 1s. 8½d. That fall was going on whilst our wheat was on the market. That happened because we were dumping. People in other parts of the world were holding back in the hope of getting a decent price for their wheat. They have their own

methods of marketing, whereas we have none. Certain firms and institutions had loaned money to the farmers of this country, and held liens over the wheat. All they wanted was to get their money back, with the result that they dumped the wheat on the market. In the following year, the price opened at 3s. 4d. Again we began dumping, and within a fortnight the price fell to 3s. 3d., and gradually eased to 2s. 8½d. The price stood at that figure until we came on the market again in the following year, when the opening price was 2s. 7d. Immediately our wheat was offered overseas the price dropped to 2s. 6d., and finally fell to 2s. 2d. whilst we had wheat to sell. This year the same thing has occurred. The market opened at 2s. 4d. Under our system, the dumping of wheat went on. We have people here who are selling on commission, and who do not care what the farmer gets so long as they receive their reward. As a result of this method, the price fell immediately, and dropped to 2s. and even below that. Just now I believe there is an endeavour to hold wheat in the hope of getting a better price for it.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: There is no evidence of that. Wheat is being shipped as fast as possible.

Hon. T. MOORE: I am advised that not so much wheat is going away now.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: What has happened to the nations who held up wheat?

Hon. T. MOORE: We crashed in on the nations who attempted to hold up wheat, and to market it in an orderly manner. We settled their markets by our dumping methods. During these four years, as soon as we went on the market, the price fell back, and so it is that our finances are in a bad way.

Hon. J. Nicholson: We are not large producers of wheat.

Hon. T. MOORE: Not in the eyes of the world. It is difficult to make the hon. member understand the position. He would understand it much better if he were out in the country, instead of living in the city which exists to a large extent by reason of the work that has been done in the country. The country is in a shocking condition because we have no proper marketing methods.

Hon. J. Nicholson: That is why the suggestion has been made that we should help these people.



Hon. T. MOORE: I should like to say a little more about equality of sacrifice. It is a very nice principle, but how has it operated? Has it operated with all the people? Have the wealthy felt the pressure of want? We know that such is not the case. Those who were wealthy may not be so well off to-day, but they are still living in affluence. People on the bottom rung of the ladder know that. When wages were cut by Act of Parliament, bank rates of interest were not reduced. The banking institutions were left alone. When the Act was before Parliament why did not those members who are forever pleading the cause of the farmer see to it that his bank rates of interest were reduced? That was the time when everyone else was having his load lightened. Why was not bank interest reduced on a pro rata basis? Why was he called upon to pay huge interest bills on top of an already high overdraft? When the crash came, the relief should have been applied all round.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Everyone has been in it.

Hon. T. MOORE: The shareholders of the banks have always been able to show a profit, while 70 per cent. of the farmers have shown a loss. The case put up by the banks was that they had a fixed rate of interest to pay to certain people who had loaned them money. The Act could have applied equitably in that regard. It could have provided for a levelling up all along the line, to ensure equality of sacrifice. It could have provided that the interest of those who had money on fixed deposit should be reduced, and that in the case of other people who had had advances from the banks, the rates of interest should also be brought down. The one thing that is killing the farmer is his large overdraft and interest bill. These small bonuses that are being paid will not save the farming industry. They do not even pay the interest bill, which is ever growing, with the result that the farmer is in many cases losing heart. Members should know that such is the case. People are leaving their farms. The interest bill has been built up to such an extraordinary extent that they cannot carry on. I wish to give another illustration to show that there has not been equality of sacrifice. I would refer to one particular industry, namely, that dealing with the manufacture of superphosphate. I understand that the superphosphate people

only took advantage of the Act to a certain extent, and not in the case of all their employees. In the case of certain employees, however, they did make a cut in wages. If it comes to a question of equality of sacrifice, why did not these people bring down their preference shareholders as well? Had they done so, it would have shown that they believed in equality of sacrifice. We have in this State a company named the Cumming Smith Mt. Lyell Farmers Fertiliser, Ltd., which is something of a co-operative concern. I am a small shareholder in it, and have here the last balance sheet. I believed that we as farmers should take an interest in this sort of thing and help to build up the company. I ought to have known better. I saw a similar scheme worked on the dairy farmers in Victoria in connection with the Fresh Food and Frozen Store Company.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: I thought you did not believe in combines.

Hon. T. MOORE: We were advised to support that concern, as it was said to be established on a co-operative basis. I want members to understand we were soon frozen out of it. That is exactly what is happening in the superphosphate companies in this State to-day. The superphosphate companies worked a great stunt, and induced the farmer to believe that he was a shareholder in their concerns, and that in time he might own the companies. Of course, he will not do anything of the kind. I will point out what happened so far as the ordinary shareholder is concerned. Profits are lower than they were, I admit; but the preference shareholder never at any time received less than the 8 per cent. to which he was entitled. He is still drawing the 8 per cent. There is yet another company in this State the name of which I will not mention.

Hon. G. W. Miles: He is a lucky man to be getting a dividend of 8 per cent.

Hon. T. MOORE: In the other company there are debenture holders—they are not called preference shareholders—who are receiving 8 per cent. dividends. Members know what company that is, too. Is it a fair proposition that the wages of the employees of those companies should be reduced under the Act, but that these preference shareholders and debenture holders should still be receiving 8 per cent.? Will those members who are so anxious to look after the interests of the private employer

answer that question? I will read a paragraph or two from a report which I have.

Hon. J. Nicholson: What about the various taxes that the preference shareholder has to pay?

Hon. T. MOORE: The report reads:—

To save the cost of sending you this small amount the directors have decided that it shall be credited to your share account unless you desire payment, in which case it will be necessary for you to make application, when your wishes will receive prompt attention. While the dividend on preference shares remains the same as last year that on ordinary shares is slightly lower. The upward tendency of wool prices is encouraging and it is hoped that we shall see better times generally which would enable higher dividends to be paid, and the resumption of bonus distributions.

The bonus is granted, I want members to understand, after the 8 per cent. is paid to the preference shareholders. When the Act was passed, did this House anticipate anything like that happening? There are members of this House who say they stand for equality of sacrifice. Here are cases in point. If one were to go into the ramifications of business in this State, one would find that some employers are evading the Act so far as it concerns them in every way they possibly can, while at the same time taking advantage of the Act to reduce the wages of their employees. In one of the cases that I mentioned, the company reduced the wages of a few of their employees, but they did not reduce the dividend paid to their preference shareholders. No company that has the word "co-operative" in its title should let it be known that there are people drawing a dividend from the company of 8 per cent., while at the same time the persons who are using superphosphate to carry on their industry are in such a parlous position as they are to-day. There is no equality of sacrifice at all to-day. We only hear of it. Hon. members who are fighting in the interests of private enterprise should look at their friends and see how they are carrying on. With regard to the mortgagors' rights under the Bill, they are not worth the paper they are written on.

Member: Are they not?

Hon. T. MOORE: I will tell my friend that a man he knows well tried to evade the Act. When an unfortunate victim falls into the hands of a private money lender do not forget he is in for a bad time. I can tell the hon. member that one of his friends who held a mortgage made out a new one

and asked the victim to sign it. The new mortgage provided for the same rate of interest as the old one.

Hon. J. Nicholson: He could not do that.

Hon. T. MOORE: He did it. The victim did not sign the mortgage.

Member: He could not do it legally.

Hon. T. MOORE: The trouble is that it is done. The unfortunate victim is not in a position to fight for himself. Private enterprise should face the Arbitration Court in the usual way. I believe in arbitration. I have been in strikes in this country before to-day. I will mention one before I conclude. Many years ago I worked in the timber industry and at that time we decided, because we were of opinion we were not receiving what we thought we should get, to go on strike. We did so, and were told by the manager of the company that in three weeks we would come back and in the meantime we would eat grass. That is a positive fact; those were the words used by the manager of the company. When we went back to work we got 8s. instead of 7s. 3d. Yet the company carried on. Had we not gone on strike, a certain amount of additional money would have been sent out of the country, because the capital of the company was subscribed outside Australia. The company carried on and became fabulously rich. Had we not gone on strike, our standard would have remained low. As a matter of fact, that was only the beginning. We afterwards got higher wages, and still the company did not fail. I stand for the Arbitration Court, because I believe arbitration is the best method of settling disputes. I do not want strikes, because I know that there is tremendous suffering on the part of the people who go on strike.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: The Arbitration Court has not checked strikes.

Hon. T. MOORE: How many strikes have there been in Western Australia since the Arbitration Court has functioned?

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Ten times too many.

Hon. T. MOORE: We have not had strikes or trouble in this State since industrial arbitration was put on a proper basis. We want to leave the Arbitration Court untrammelled. It should be the deciding factor in all industrial matters. That is the principle at stake. There is no other principle at stake under this Bill, except as regards mortgagors' rights, and they mean nothing, as I showed Mr. Bolton.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: I was not convinced about that.

Hon. T. MOORE: You would not be. As I say, the only principle at stake is arbitration. This House, along with another place, was responsible for placing the Industrial Arbitration Act on the statute-book, and are we going to repudiate what we ourselves have done? Mr. Holmes happened to be one of the managers when the Industrial Arbitration Act was before Parliament, and I believe he is proud of the part he took in that legislation. If he votes as he says he will on this Bill, then he will be undoing the good work he did then. I ask him to review the position as it is to-day. I wonder what he would say if Parliament decided, when an industry became prosperous and was in the position to pay higher wages, to interfere with the Arbitration Court and say to the employers concerned in the industry, "You shall pay more than the Court has awarded." How quickly Mr. Holmes would be on his heels! I do not intend to delay the House longer. I warn members that if this House asserts itself to the degree of putting the country into a state of chaos, members are likely to start a snowball that will grow to huge dimensions. I do not want to see trouble started here. I stand for fair and equitable means of settling our troubles because I realise that otherwise serious trouble will ensue. I support the Bill.

**HON. G. FRASER** (West) [7.56]: I did not intend to address myself to this measure, but for one or two statements that have been made during the course of the debate. My reason for not proposing to speak was because the matter has, during the past few months, been stewed, boiled, roasted and cooked in every possible way.

Member: During the past few months!

Hon. G. FRASER: Not only was there discussion upon the introduction of the Bill last session—

Hon. J. Nicholson: Do you remember when that Bill came to this House?

Hon. G. FRASER: I do.

Hon. J. Nicholson: How many months have elapsed since then?

Hon. G. FRASER: The Bill was introduced here in December, but had the hon. member waited a moment, I would have told him that prior to the introduction of that Bill we had a somewhat similar debate on the financial emergency tax and on various

other measures during the session. I say that to make speeches on a measure that has been hashed up for the last six months is only delaying the House. Another point is that one knows that every member of this Chamber had his mind fully made up on the measure before the debate commenced, and knew what his attitude on the measure would be. It is useless endeavouring to convince those members that their attitude is wrong. I have been much taken during the course of the debate by the attitude of various members in trying to place the blame for the introduction of this Bill. We are told by some that the whole blame must be laid at the door of the Government, but this House must go scot-free. If the position be examined, however, it must be seen that this House has to take part of the blame. We know very well that that is so in view of the statements made in this Chamber. I am not saying that those members were wrong in the statements they made. I take it they were honest in their views, and they are entitled to hold them; but I attach a certain amount of blame to them because, while holding those views, they were prepared to sit on a conference. A conference is supposed to be something at which it is possible to arrive at a compromise; and it was impossible for those members, while holding the definite views they did, to effect a compromise.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: What are the views of the Government on the Bill before this House?

Hon. G. FRASER: I will deal with them in a moment. There is a certain amount of blame to be attached to those members for accepting the position they did. I will also place a certain amount of blame on the members of this Chamber because, after hearing the views of those members, they appointed them managers of that conference. I suppose one must also place a certain amount of blame on the Government, because it appears to me that no member went to that conference prepared to compromise.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. G. FRASER: It was a case of Greek meeting Greek.

Hon. E. H. Harris: What share of the blame are you accepting?

Hon. G. FRASER: I am not accepting any share, because I was not one of those who voted for the appointment of those particular persons as managers.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Was it not a secret ballot?

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes, but I am quite willing to let the Chamber know how I voted on that particular occasion.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Go on.

Hon. G. FRASER: The reason I have arrived at the conclusion that this House must accept a share of the blame, if not the whole blame, for the position we have arrived at, is because the members of this Chamber are elected by only one-third of the electors of this State. Fresh from an election, the Government took office with a mandate to do what they are attempting now. That claim has been repeatedly disputed in this Chamber and I will deal with it later on. The Government were returned to office on the vote of every adult person in Western Australia. Yet we have in the Legislative Council some members who have not been before the electors for six years.

Hon. E. H. Harris: And you are one of them.

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes, and I will go before them in due course. The fact remains that some members of this Chamber have not been before the electors for six years. A third of our number have not been before them for four years, while the remaining third were before the electors two years ago.

Hon. E. H. Harris: That is not so.

Hon. G. FRASER: Well, there may have been one or two returned at by-elections, but I was speaking generally.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Why did you not test the position in the South-West Province, where an election is in progress now?

Hon. G. FRASER: I am not an elector in the South-West Province and do not know what conditions obtain there. I can assure the hon. member that the various provinces will be contested in due course, even though the contest will be on a restricted franchise and with but one-third of the people having the right to record their votes.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: But they have an interest in the country.

Hon. G. FRASER: Have not the rest of the community an interest in the country? Merely because a man may own a sand patch worth a certain figure, why should he have the right to cast a vote to the exclusion of others not in that position? Why should some individuals have ten times the voting strength of others? It is possible for one

individual to record 10 votes in electing members to this Chamber.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: But in ten different provinces.

Hon. G. FRASER: That is so. The fact remains that one individual can vote in electing 10 different members to this Chamber. A House elected on such a franchise is placed in the position of being able to challenge something that may be done by a Government elected to office by every individual in the State over 21 years of age. Notwithstanding that fact, members of this Chamber are attempting to place the blame on the Legislative Assembly because the members of that House would not accede to the demands of the Council. From time to time we hear this Chamber referred to as a House of review. In these days, instead of being a House of review, it has become a House of command. No better example of that can be quoted than the circumstances surrounding the conference on the Financial Emergency Act Amendment Bill last session. We have heard members say, "If the Government will compromise." The only compromise the managers representing the Council would have been prepared to accept was compliance with their demand that Part V. of the original Act should be inserted in the Bill.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: What will the Government accept in regard to the present Bill?

Hon. G. FRASER: They will accept nothing; they will not accept any compromise.

Hon. G. W. Miles: How do you know? You are not the Government.

Hon. G. FRASER: I am giving the House my impression, and I will be sorry indeed if the Government act other than as I suggest.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: You will be sorry if that is the position.

Hon. G. FRASER: No, it is time the Government asserted themselves. For far too long have they been inclined to accept lying down the dictation of this Chamber.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! I would remind the hon. member that this Chamber has its own rights and is the custodian of its own rights. The hon. member is going perilously near to infringing Standing Order 394, which provides—

No member shall use offensive words against either House of Parliament or any member of such House, or against any statute, unless

for the purpose of moving for its repeal, and all imputations of improper motives and all personal reflections on members shall be considered highly disorderly. I think the hon. member is sailing close to the wind.

Hon. G. FRASER: So long as I do not sail right into the wind, I presume I shall be all right. I do not think that the Standing Order has been infringed at all, for I am not casting any reflection upon the Chamber.

Hon. G. W. Miles: No, you have been paying the Chamber a compliment.

Hon. G. FRASER: I was demonstrating how there are in this Chamber great, strong men prepared to stand up for their rights.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Are you one of the strong men?

Hon. L. B. Bolton: No, he is one of the great ones.

Hon. G. FRASER: I am one who is prepared to assist the Government of the day to place their legislation on the statute-book, when I believe that legislation to be fair and equitable.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Notwithstanding that it may cause unemployment.

Hon. G. FRASER: Irrespective of whether the Government be Nationalist or Labour, my support has been extended to the Government of the day upon many occasions.

Hon. J. Nicholson: And you are prepared to extend that support, notwithstanding that it may result in unemployment and destitution.

Hon. G. FRASER: That is impossible. However, I was pointing out that the Legislative Council have gone beyond the stage of review, and I hope, although I have commended members of this Chamber for their courageous attitude on occasions in the past, they will see that in this instance they have gone too far. I trust they will realise that the Government of the day should be given an opportunity to put their policy into operation. Having said that, I will leave that phase of the question. I was struck by the attitude of some members during the course of the debate, and by none more forcibly than by Mr. Miles. One would have thought he was one of those seeking re-election within the next few months.

Hon. G. W. Miles: I was out for the unemployed.

Hon. G. FRASER: Mr. Miles made a great hero of himself on one or two occa-

sions, and I must compliment him on having delivered the greatest soap-box speech I have heard for many years past. I could almost imagine that Mr. Miles was on a soap box.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You seem to be an authority on soap-box speeches.

Hon. G. FRASER: I have had a bit of experience, and know a little about them. I do not deny the accusation.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Are you on the soap box now?

Hon. G. FRASER: No, but we will be there very shortly. I want to make one comment on the speech delivered by Mr. Miles. In that forceful manner of his, he made his great declaration; we have heard it on occasions before.

Hon. G. W. Miles: But with a smile.

Hon. G. FRASER: He urged that a percentage of the relief should be given to all, excluding parliamentarians. That sort of talk is his hobby.

Hon. G. W. Miles: It is, and I hope effect will be given to my suggestion.

Hon. G. FRASER: Mr. Miles talked about equality of sacrifice. Where was his consistency?

Hon. G. W. Miles: I believe members of Parliament are over-paid.

Hon. G. FRASER: He is prepared to extend relief to civil servants in receipt of as much as members of Parliament, and yet he desires to exclude parliamentarians. Why is he so antagonistic to members of Parliament?

Hon. G. W. Miles: Because they are over-paid, and Parliament is over-manned.

Hon. G. FRASER: That is not the fault of parliamentarians. While I am a member of this Chamber, I believe in the old saying that a labourer is worthy of his hire. If Mr. Miles did his duty to the electors as well as some other members I have in mind, he would be able to say that he had earned his salary.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Not too many can say that.

Hon. G. FRASER: The hon. member can speak for himself.

Hon. G. W. Miles: What was that deputa-tion from the West Province at tea time?

Hon. G. FRASER: The object was to show the force behind the members for the West Province. I will not refer to Mr. Miles's attitude further, because I know we shall hear something similar from him next year.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Then you are satisfied he will be returned?

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Now would you mind saying something about the Bill.

Hon. G. FRASER: Every time Mr. Harris attempts to speak upon a Bill he goes round the world before he gets to the point. Members, during the course of the debate, referred to the Premier's Conference and the financial emergency legislation generally. During the past two years we have taken every opportunity to refuse the statement that Part V. of the Financial Emergency Act was portion of the Premiers' Plan. I had hoped that members would have been convinced long before this that that was the position.

Hon. E. H. Harris: It was embodied in the original Act.

Hon. G. FRASER: But that does not justify the statement that it was part of the Premiers' Plan.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Nor was rent reduction part of the Premiers' Plan.

Hon. G. FRASER: That is so, but the hon. member argued the case from his point of view as I am doing from my standpoint.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: I do not think you will convince anyone.

Hon. G. FRASER: The hon. member is not prepared to be convinced.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Can you prove that Part V. of the Act was not portion of the Premiers' Plan?

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes, and I read the evidence to members two years ago.

Hon. E. H. Harris: You do not produce the evidence.

Hon. G. FRASER: The evidence is in "Hansard" and can be read by members. I placed before them extracts from the conference debates to show that the matter was introduced by a representative of Western Australia. I also showed that the then Premier, Sir James Mitchell, refused to second the motion that would have made Part V. of the Act portion of the Premiers' Plan. Notwithstanding that the conference made it clear that the wages of private employees represented no concern of theirs as they were dealing with Government finance only, the Government of this State introduced Part V. into the original Act and we have had a repetition of the statement that we should adhere to that part of the Act because it represented a phase of the Premiers' Plan.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: And what about rent reduction and other matters that have been dealt with?

Hon. G. FRASER: I do not know whether they were included.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: What does it matter whether they represented part of the Premiers' Plan? Is it not the benefit that will accrue to the State that is important.

Hon. G. FRASER: That may be the hon. member's point of view. I am attempting to show that the attitude of some members has not been quite correct.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: I have listened to most of the debate and I have not heard anything said that was incorrect.

Hon. G. FRASER: I will direct the hon. member's attention to Mr. Hamersley's statement to the effect that Part V. of the Act represented portion of the Premiers' Plan. I thought Mr. Hamersley would have known by now that that is not so.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The Premiers' Plan was equality of sacrifice.

Hon. G. FRASER: The Premiers' Plan was something arrived at to assist Australia to finance. The expression "equality of sacrifice" was not used.

Hon. J. Nicholson: "Common sacrifice" was used. It appears in the preamble.

Hon. G. FRASER: The representative of this State was told definitely at the conference that the only object of the conference was to deal with Government finance. No statements made in this Chamber can show Part V. of the Act to be part of the Premiers' Plan.

Hon. J. Nicholson: The Plan was introduced to restore industrial prosperity.

Hon. G. FRASER: Various members have said, "Let the Arbitration Court deal with Part V." The Arbitration Court did deal with that part. Part V. permitted an employer who found his business in a parlous condition, and therefore requiring relief, to approach the Arbitration Court. The hon. member is correct up to that stage. But how many employers in this State have up to date been given relief under Part V. without ever going near the Arbitration Court? I tried to obtain information on that point. I wanted to ascertain how many employers would be benefited if Part V. were restored.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Have you read Section 15 of the old Act?

Hon. G. FRASER: I am dealing with Part V. It is impossible to obtain the information I desire.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Could the Honorary Minister tell us?

Hon. G. FRASER: No one in the State could. If the position were as some hon. members have asserted, it would be possible to ascertain how many employers obtained orders under Part V., and the number of employees affected. However, that is impossible. If the hon. member interjecting had watched Arbitration Court proceedings, he would know that hundreds of applications were made under the Act. Shortly afterwards the Full Court of this State gave an interpretation to the effect that no order under Part V. could be made a common rule. As a result, hundreds of applications under Part V. were withdrawn. Under that part a single employer in an industry could obtain relief, and if he obtained it every other employer in the industry could obtain similar relief.

Hon. J. Nicholson: You know that any union could apply to the court to have any order made.

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes, and how many unions are likely to be successful after the employer has been to the court?

Hon. W. J. Mann: It is an honourable court.

Hon. G. FRASER: At the best of times the worker is under considerable disadvantage in approaching the court.

Hon. E. H. Harris: That is a reflection on the court.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Your party appointed the president.

Hon. G. FRASER: I am not reflecting on the court in any way. Let us take the constitution of the court. There is a Supreme Court judge, and a representative of the employers and a representative of the employees. That makes one representative of each party, with an independent president. But is a Supreme Court judge in a position to know the exact conditions of the workers? I am not blaming the president of the court, who gives decisions in conformity with what he believes to be right. Still, the president has not worked under the conditions applying to the worker.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Why did you not appoint a man who had worked under such conditions?

Hon. G. FRASER: That could not be done.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Then why grizzle about something that cannot be done?

Hon. G. FRASER: I am not grizzling.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: What is your trouble?

Hon. G. FRASER: I want to show hon. members the incorrectness of their argument that the court will deal with these applications. The court has not the opportunity. I may be stretching the matter a little far, but it is possible for any suburban storekeeper with one employee, finding his business decreasing to such an extent that he cannot carry on with the wages he is paying, to approach the court.

Hon. J. Nicholson: That is stretching it very far indeed.

Hon. G. FRASER: Let me give an instance. Mr. Nicholson always says, "It is not what is likely to happen, but what could happen."

Hon. C. F. Baxter: There is no question about the second reading of the Bill, is there?

Hon. G. FRASER: It is possible for a small suburban storekeeper, with one employee, to approach the court. If he can show that his business is so bad as to require the operation of the Financial Emergency Act, his application will be granted.

Hon. J. Nicholson: You are placing the judgment of the court at a very low rate.

Hon. G. FRASER: Nothing of the kind. I am dealing with possibilities under the old Act.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: You are stretching it to the ridiculous.

Hon. G. FRASER: Mr. Nicholson knows that the case I state is quite possible. When that employer gets redress, every other employer in the same industry within the metropolitan area can, without approaching the Arbitration Court, reduce the wages of his employees. That cannot be disputed.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It would need to be an association of employers as well as an association of employees to over-ride the Arbitration Act. You will find that that is so. Your illustration is absolutely preposterous.

Hon. G. FRASER: The Arbitration Court stated that that was the position, but the High Court said the opposite. The High Court said that when a decision had been given, it should operate as a common rule. Hon. members know that that is so. It has been stated here before. When I mentioned that I was stretching the thing a little bit—

Hon. J. Nicholson: I say you are stretching it.

Hon. G. FRASER: The case has already been quoted many times in this Chamber.

Hon. J. Nicholson: A common rule was applied, I quite admit, in regard to that case; but it would never be applied in such a case as you instance.

Hon. G. FRASER: I want to point out the defects of the old Act. When hon. members say in this Chamber that the Arbitration Court should be left to deal with the position, we reply that that is quite right, and that that is the reason why we want Part V. excluded from the Bill. Mr. Harris dealt with several aspects last night.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Only one question was dealt with last night. I never mentioned Part V.

Hon. G. FRASER: I am not dealing with Part V. I have finished with Part V. I intend now to deal with two or three remarks made by the hon. member interjecting.

Hon. E. H. Harris: About brass hats?

Hon. G. FRASER: The hon. member made certain remarks about brass hats. However, the brass hats can answer him, if there are brass hats in the Labour movement. Certainly the hon. member knows more about the Labour movement than I do—

Hon. E. H. Harris: Quite likely.

Hon. G. FRASER: —if the information he put up last night is correct. He spoke about the brass hats meeting, and everybody having to knuckle under to them. If such a meeting did occur, I at any rate was not there, nor do I know what happened there.

Hon. E. H. Harris: You are not one of the heads.

Hon. G. FRASER: Various other members of this Chamber were not at the meeting either. Mr. Harris has information which I do not possess, and which therefore cannot have any effect upon me in connection with the Bill.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: It would not do to let you young fellows know everything.

Hon. G. FRASER: Mr. Harris dealt with the Government's claims to represent the majority of the people of this State. The hon. member produced a table showing the number of votes recorded at the last general election for Labour and the numbers of votes recorded for other political parties, with the exception of the Communists. He showed by various addings from the votes of this party and that party, and by claiming the votes of Independents, that the Govern-

ment, instead of representing a majority of the people of this State, represent only a minority. In compiling the number who voted for any other party than Labour and the Communists, the hon. member took all of them as Country or Nationalist votes. He certainly allowed Labour a number of votes in respect of uncontested seats.

Hon. E. H. Harris: All the votes. Not a certain number, but 100 per cent.

Hon. G. FRASER: As regards the seats where there were no Labour candidates at all, the hon. member gave the whole of the votes to the Country and Nationalist parties.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Yes.

Hon. G. FRASER: No doubt that was correct. There are no Labour votes in connection with any of the other seats.

Hon. E. H. Harris: I gave Labour credit for six seats, full credit.

Hon. G. FRASER: The hon. member counted everybody who voted in elections where there was no Labour candidate as either Country Party or Nationalist.

Hon. E. H. Harris: That was all those people voted for.

Hon. G. FRASER: That was all they could vote for. The hon. member's argument is ridiculous. Even in a Conservative seat like Claremont we have recorded the best part of a couple of thousand votes, yet everyone who voted in the Claremont election was classed by the hon. member as either Nationalist or Country Party. According to the hon. member, in Murray-Wellington, where we once came within 30 votes of winning the seat, there was not a Labour voter at the last general election.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Very few, at any rate.

Hon. G. FRASER: Everybody who voted there, according to the hon. member, was either a Nationalist or a Country Party voter. Thus the hon. member arrives at the conclusion that the Labour Government represents only a minority. What a fallacy! I hope that the hon. member, when producing figures and arguments on other occasions, will put up a sounder case. I want to see some progress made with the Bill, and I will conclude by saying that I greatly regret Mr. Yelland's statement of last evening with regard to the Public Service. He mentioned something about drones in the civil service—I forget the actual words. I have the highest opinion of the civil service of this State.



Hon. H. V. Piesse: So have all of us.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Including Mr. Yelland.

Hon. G. FRASER: I am very sorry that Mr. Yelland made the remarks.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I do not think he made those remarks. I think you misunderstood him. He has the highest regard for the civil service.

Hon. G. FRASER: I forget the actual words he used, but he certainly mentioned the word "drones."

Hon. J. Nicholson: No, I think you misunderstood him.

Hon. G. FRASER: If the hon. member looks at the "Hansard" report, I think he will find that the word "drones" was used. If Mr. Yelland did not use the word, I will be ready to apologise.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I listened intently to him, and I do not think he used the word.

Hon. G. FRASER: I think the hon. member is under a misapprehension. The word was used: I am very definite on that, and I am sorry it was used. I have the highest regard for the civil service. I have received nothing but the greatest courtesy and assistance from every department, and I have taken particular notice of the manner in which public affairs have been attended to.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Do you say there are no drones in the civil service? You are electioneering.

Hon. G. FRASER: I am not making an electioneering speech. The number of civil servants in my province is small. I was a civil servant before I entered this Chamber—

Hon. G. W. Miles: You are chasing their votes.

Hon. G. FRASER: —and I know something of what they have to put up with. The number of civil service votes in my electorate is not worth a snap of the fingers.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Mr. Yelland spoke of those living on the good servants. There are drones in each department.

Hon. G. FRASER: Did Mr. Miles say there were drones?

Hon. G. W. Miles: I did, and I will stand to my guns.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Mr. Fraser should now withdraw his remark about Mr. Yelland.

Hon. G. FRASER: I think Mr. Nicholson will find I was correct in saying that Mr. Yelland also used the word "drones." I am very definite on that.

Hon. G. W. Miles: If he did, he also said there was a number of good men in the service, and so say I, but there are some drones and they ought to be weeded out.

Hon. G. FRASER: The vast majority of civil servants are good loyal servants.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Certainly, but there are some drones.

Hon. G. FRASER: When statements are made about there being drones in the service—

Hon. G. W. Miles: You are putting up something in order to knock it down again. You can accuse me of having used the word.

Hon. G. FRASER: I did not hear the hon. member use it.

Hon. C. B. Williams: He was very definite on it, too.

Hon. G. FRASER: I am sorry it was introduced into the debate.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That is one of the causes of the trouble. If the drones were weeded out, there would not be so much talk about cuts. There would be no need for cuts.

Hon. G. FRASER: We have much for which to thank the civil servants.

Hon. G. W. Miles: A certain number of them.

Hon. G. FRASER: I hope that no further remarks will be passed about those loyal servants.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You have to buy their votes.

Hon. G. FRASER: I have pointed out that there are very few civil servants in my province.

Hon. G. W. Miles: I am speaking of your party.

Hon. G. FRASER: I hope members on this occasion will not only pass the second reading, but will agree to the Bill in Committee, and will not accept the amendments of which notice has been given. I wish to see the business of the country carried on in a proper manner and the Government of the day given an opportunity to put their policy into operation.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Hear, hear!

Hon. W. J. Mann interjected.

Hon. G. FRASER: If Mr. Mann refers to "Hansard," or to the Leader of the House under the previous Government, he will find that members of the party with which I am associated gave him considerable assistance.

Hon. W. J. Mann: And a lot of the other thing, too.

Hon. G. FRASER: Most of the measures submitted for our consideration received the support of members of the Labour Party.

Hon. W. J. Mann: We do the same for your Government.

Hon. G. FRASER: Unfortunately a majority of the members of the Council do not do so, but I hope they will give the Government a fair deal on this occasion by passing the measure.

**THE HONORARY MINISTER** (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West—in reply) [8.35]: I am sorry that at least one member is of opinion that I made a mistake when moving the second reading to the extent of not explaining fully the meaning of the measure. I was under the impression that I dealt with the Bill very fully. I certainly did not spend any great amount of time on it, but I think I explained to members the full scope and incidence of every provision. Even if I did not do so, members have shown by the debate that they have taken advantage of the opportunity presented to them to study the Bill in detail as a result of the memorandum attached to the Bill. So, when Mr. Mann suggested that I might have got along a little better if I had given a rather fuller explanation of the Bill, I am inclined to think that he was somewhat hard up for an argument—hard up for something to say.

Hon. W. J. Mann: You wait until the Committee stage is reached. You will have to explain some things pretty fully.

**The HONORARY MINISTER**: The hon. member might be successful in that direction.

Hon. W. J. Mann: You are a bit ahead of it yet.

**The HONORARY MINISTER**: The explanations to which he is referring are matters of detail, and if I have the information and members desire it, I shall, as I always do, supply it. No member can accuse me of a wish to keep from the Chamber information regarding any measure submitted for consideration.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Wait until the Bill is finished with.

**The HONORARY MINISTER**: I should like to refer to the debate initiated by Mr. Baxter, followed by Mr. Thomson, Mr. Holmes and almost every other member. I must confess that I am somewhat at a loss just where to commence my reply. We have sat here for hours listening to a welter of

words, arguments repeated one way and another, nothing new brought forward, nothing fresh demanding a reply, excepting a few small details which some members seemed to convey might affect their judgment of the measure. Out of this welter of words—perhaps I should be more correct in calling it a welter of propaganda—there are a few points that I feel it my duty to deal with. I hope that if I do not refer to some members, they will not conclude that I took no notice of their remarks, but the same arguments have been used by so many members that my statements in rebuttal will, I hope, apply to all of them.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Mr. Holmes's reference to the speech of the Premier in 1932 was something new. I do not remember having heard that quoted here.

**The HONORARY MINISTER**: I do not know which quotation the hon. member has in mind. Whatever it may be, we have the word of Mr. Holmes that he holds the Premier in the highest respect, and considers that he will do the right thing.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: When he is allowed to.

**The HONORARY MINISTER**: There are other members of the Ministry for whom Mr. Holmes has not an equal respect. For that I am sorry. I regret that I am not included in that category.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I think you were included.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Yes, I put you in.

**The HONORARY MINISTER**: The hon. member did not.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Yes, I did.

**The HONORARY MINISTER**: I was placed in the same category as Mr. McCallum.

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT**: As an afterthought, Mr. Holmes included you.

Hon. J. Nicholson: A compliment.

**The HONORARY MINISTER**: After all that has been said, I wonder whether it is a compliment. I am pleased to be in the company that I keep in Parliament and I wish to give members a gentle reminder that this Government is not a one-man Government. Every Minister can stand up to anything that is done or said by other Ministers. I wish members to understand that, even though I am only Honorary Minister, when I make a statement on a measure, it has the full approval and backing of the Government. I wish to apply these few words with particular force to

some remarks I desire to make at a later stage. Among the points to which I wish to reply is one that has been given most prominence—that of private employment. As some members consider that I did not deal sufficiently comprehensively with this phase of the emergency legislation, I must reiterate something of what I have said previously, and I hope members will excuse me for so doing. First of all I have to point out that the Labour Party, not only while in office but when in Opposition, right from the time when emergency legislation was first introduced, have strenuously opposed the inclusion of private employment. I do not think any member will deny that statement. The issue was fought for days in the Assembly; it was fought for hour after hour in this Chamber, and my colleagues and I did our best to endeavour to persuade the House to adopt our point of view, but without success. In season and out of season we have argued that particular point.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: If we had agreed, where would the equality of sacrifice have come in?

The HONORARY MINISTER: It would have been present then just as it is to-day. I raise the point at the present moment only to satisfy members, if possible, that the present Government are endeavouring to give effect to a principle in which they believe. Not only did we in the two Houses of Parliament oppose the inclusion of private employment in this legislation, but it was made an issue at the recent elections. The Leader of the Party in his Policy Speech at Boulder made special reference to it. In every speech he delivered during the campaign reference was made to it in one form or another. Mr. Nicholson, looking for something fresh to say, stated that the Governor's Speech of last year contained only a few words with reference to the financial emergency legislation.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Only two words.

The HONORARY MINISTER: He said there was no detail, but that reference was made to the fact that Parliament would have to consider financial emergency legislation.

Hon. J. Nicholson: No, emergency legislation.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I stand corrected. It is the same thing. Is it necessary for reference to be made in the Governor's Speech to all the measures that have

to be dealt with during the ensuing session? Can the hon. member quote one occasion during which I have been in the House, namely ten years, when all the measures to be dealt with have been enumerated in the Speech?

Hon. J. Nicholson: Important measures invariably are mentioned.

The HONORARY MINISTER: And this is an important measure, and it was referred to in the Speech.

Hon. J. Nicholson: No.

The HONORARY MINISTER: It is not worth while wasting time on the point.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It was not featured as it should have been if the Government really relied upon it.

The HONORARY MINISTER: There is no need to include in the Governor's Speech every measure the Government are to deal with. It may be that during the course of the session the Government may be compelled to bring down legislation, of the necessity for which they may have had no knowledge at an earlier date. We claim we knew we would bring down this legislation.

Hon. J. Nicholson: But you did not mention it.

The HONORARY MINISTER: It was part of our policy. Every person who reads must have known that during the course of this Parliament every effort would be made by the Government drastically to amend the emergency legislation.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: In the dying hours of the session.

The HONORARY MINISTER: That does not matter very much. The principles involved in this Bill are few, and it does not take long to indicate them. There are at least two principles involved, for which the present Government stand. My remarks on this point will apply particularly to Mr. Nicholson, who said last night he could recollect many promises that had been made by various political parties on the hustings, and were never fulfilled. He is correct in that statement. I also remember many promises that were made on such occasions. I can say without fear of contradiction that the present Labour Government have at all times shown that they are prepared to endeavour to honour their promises. The same thing applied to the previous Labour Government.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Every Government tries to do so.

The HONORARY MINISTER: They are not all successful. Sometimes this Cham-

ber steps in as it has done on this occasion. No one can say that the present Government have not made a genuine attempt to fulfil their promises. If Mr. Nicholson's remarks are to be taken much notice of, I suggest that the present occasion is the exception which proves the rule. It would appear that members have an entirely erroneous idea of the actual position in regard to private employment. I have been astounded to hear members, including Mr. Holmes, say that if this Bill is lost all the private employees will automatically go back to the wages and salaries they received prior to the Financial Emergency Act. They seem also to believe what they said. What a commentary that is upon their knowledge of the situation! It makes one wonder whether they had really considered the position and understood the full purport of the Bill. Members should know that only a limited number of private employees will be affected by the Bill. I refer to those who are subject to the Industrial Arbitration Act, and therefore come under various awards and agreements issued by the Court. Those people are subject to variations in the basic wage. Whether the Bill is passed or lost these people will not go back to the wages they were receiving before the Act was passed.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Subject to the basic wage.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I am dealing with the statements which have been made, and I do not intend to qualify what I am saying. They will not go back to the wages that operated prior to the introduction of the Act. They will merely go back to the wages last declared by the Arbitration Court, and which have been subject to basic wage declarations, and the only difference the Bill will make to them is the difference between the cut they have had to endure for some time, and the total amount of the variations in the basic wage that have taken place since the inception of the Act.

Hon. J. Nicholson: That is what most members understood.

The HONORARY MINISTER: It is not what they said, nor what the hon. member said.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I said it.

The HONORARY MINISTER: It is not what Mr. Holmes and other members said.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I explained that position.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: It is what I said.

[Hon. F. H. Gray took the Chair.]

The HONORARY MINISTER: There are other sections of people in private employment. Many of them have suffered an even larger cut than the employees who came under the Financial Emergency Act. There are large numbers of executive employees engaged by various firms in the town, who have never been subject to the Arbitration Court or to basic wage variations. Those people are still at the mercy of their private employers. They will not be affected by the Bill whether it is agreed to or rejected. When members say the measure will place industry in jeopardy and bring ruin upon private enterprise, it is just as well for us to remember the facts. Members have referred to the closing down of establishments, the dismissal of large numbers of employees, the throwing on to the sustenance roll of thousands of men, and so forth. Let us see what there is in those arguments. I quoted figures previously. Mr. Bolton the other evening quoted quite correctly some figures with regard to one classification of employees. Several speakers, including Mr. Macfarlane, whether deliberately or otherwise, misquoted the position to an extent which was quite unwarranted in people who are supposed to know what the position is. Mr. Macfarlane said he could not agree to anything that was going to increase the average of the wages of private employees by approximately 5s. per week. He said that this sum, in addition to the difference between the State and Federal basic wage, was a burden which primary industry could not stand. This statement showed conclusively that the hon. member, although he may have given some consideration to the measure, either did not altogether understand it, or was making very misleading remarks.

Hon. J. Nicholson: He was seeking to contrast the wages paid here with those paid in the Eastern States.

The HONORARY MINISTER: There was no need for him to exaggerate the position whilst doing so. During this debate, and the debate on the other Bill, I have endeavoured to refrain from any form of exaggeration, and to confine myself to actual facts. At present the employees in private industry who to-day receive 9s. a week over the basic wage would have been outside the

scope of the Act if it had remained in operation. The relief which these employees would receive under the Bill will vary from 8d. per week, in the case of those who receive 10s. over the basic wage, to a maximum of 4s. 5d. in the case of those on 24s. a week margin, as stated by Mr. Bolton. The range is from 8d. per week to 4s. 5d. as a maximum. That, we are told, is going to break down private industry. It would be interesting if I could supply some of the information asked for. I really think the hon. member asking for it knew it was impossible for me to get it, because he wanted to know the number of tradesmen in private employment who would be affected, and the amount of money they would receive if the Bill were passed. All I can say is that the amount would range from 8d. per week to 4s. 5d. Speaking of industry as a whole, I think the 4s. 5d. man must be in a somewhat small minority.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Have you the comparative figures for the Eastern States?

The HONORARY MINISTER: In regard to what?

Hon. J. Nicholson: Take any industry. Can you show how one compares with the other? Take the timber industry.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I think the hon. member would find that there is very little difference between the States and ourselves in respect to that industry.

Hon. J. Nicholson: There is a difference.

The HONORARY MINISTER: A very small one. Most of the employees are piece-workers.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Oh no!

The HONORARY MINISTER: Yes, they are.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Not most of them. That is absolutely wrong. Only a comparatively small number are piece-workers.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The hon. member may know the position better than I do. I am telling him what I believe. The majority of the workers in the timber industry who would be affected by this Bill are piece workers.

Hon. J. Nicholson: No.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I am not speaking of those who are on the basic wage, but of those who are on the margin, the skilled workers, those who are working mostly in the bush. Some men around the mills are receiving a margin of 15s. or £1 a week, but they are few in number. The majority of the men are working in the bush, on piece work. The only way I can imagine

you would be able to arrive at the information would be, if possible, to ascertain the total amount of wages paid, and so on. That information I cannot give the hon. member. I would impress upon members that the Bill, if agreed to, will not have anything like the drastic effect that some members have predicted. One member said he knew of a firm who would have to dismiss at least six of their employees if the Bill became law. Now, suppose those six employees were being paid the maximum margin of 24s. above the basic wage, then the extra amount they would receive would be 26s. 6d. a week. That firm must be in a parlous condition if, as a result of the passing of the Bill, they have to dismiss six employees because their wages bill is increased by £1 6s. 6d. a week.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: Many businesses are in a parlous condition.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I agree. One or two employers have told me that they would have to shorten hands because of the additional payments they would have to make if the Bill became law. When discussing the matter last week, or the week before, with a fairly large employer of labour in this city, he was astonished to find he would not be affected to the extent of £1 a week. He had been under the same impression as Mr. Macfarlane and other members, that the Bill would result in every worker in private enterprise receiving an increase in the wage he was being paid.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: My remarks were with respect to skilled artisans.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Then the hon. member's remarks were not correct, because all skilled workers are not receiving a margin of 24s. above the basic wage.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Most of them are.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Not at all. That shows the hon. member has not studied the question.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Only a certain number receive a margin of 24s.

The HONORARY MINISTER: That is so. Some skilled workers receive a margin of 12s.; others only 10s.; still others 15s. and 16s., according to the award under which they are working.

Hon. J. Nicholson: And according to their varying degrees of skill.

The HONORARY MINISTER: All those are matters which members should take into consideration.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: The Honorary Minister is not as well acquainted with the subject as I am.

The HONORARY MINISTER: If the hon. member were as well acquainted with it as I am, he would not say that the Bill meant on the average the payment of 4s. 5d. per week additional. It does not mean anything of the kind. So we arrive at the stage, as far as private employment is concerned, where we, as a Government, say we are desirous of honouring our pledge. That is the first principle in which we believe. The second principle, which I mentioned a little while ago and which is involved in this Bill, is that the Government should endeavour to put into operation their policy and carry out their promises. We do not agree that the Arbitration Court should be interfered with in any shape or form by Parliament, unless it be by amendment of the Industrial Arbitration Act. To that we would offer no objection. We do say, however, as we have always contended, that this matter was never part of the Premiers' Plan. I would like to confirm what Mr. Fraser said in reply to Mr. Hamersley. Mr. Hamersley, who was one of the last speakers, said, "It seems to me a terrible thing for anyone even to suggest breaking away from that contract, honourably entered into." He was speaking of the Premiers' Plan. But this was never part of the Premiers' Plan. I do not wish to spend any more time on that subject, because I feel the majority of members agree with my statement.

Hon. J. Nicholson: But you know it was necessary to introduce it into that particular Act.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I do not say anything of the sort. Even to-day the Arbitration Court has power to deal with applications made to it in regard to wages. It also has power to take into consideration the economic position, as was mentioned by Mr. Nicholson a little while ago by interjection.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I deny that. It does not come under the Arbitration Act.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Not only has the Arbitration Court that power, but it has exercised it. I will quote one or two instances.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Yes, under the Financial Emergency Act, but that has been wiped out.

The HONORARY MINISTER: No, quite outside the Financial Emergency Act. I will take the hon. member back to a case heard a year or two ago by the Arbitration Court. It was in connection with the mining industry. There the court took into consideration the state of the gold-mining industry and declared that, on account of the parlous nature of that industry at that particular time, it could not give to the workers in the gold-mining industry the wages it would have given them had the industry been in a normal and prosperous condition. That is the first case. I have copies of the "Industrial Gazette" containing a report of it, if the hon. member desires to see it. The second case was in connection with the timber industry, of which industry the hon. member has some knowledge. That case was heard some time ago and was not taken under the Financial Emergency Act. The court delivered a somewhat similar decision. One might go even farther and say that until recently the court, by its decisions, has been giving effect to that phase of industrial arbitration.

Hon. J. Nicholson: That was done under the Financial Emergency Act, and not under the Arbitration Act. I refer to the recent decisions, not to the previous ones.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The hon. member makes the definite statement that the Arbitration Court has not the power—

Hon. J. Nicholson: Neither it has.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I say it has. If the hon. member is not to be convinced, it is no use my wasting time on him. I say definitely, and I want members to believe me, that the court has the power, quite outside of the financial emergency legislation which was put on the statute-book last year.

Hon. J. Nicholson: If you will read Section 121 of the Industrial Arbitration Act, you will find that is wrong.

The HONORARY MINISTER: If I remember correctly, that section deals with the basic wage. It has no reference to this particular matter. As far as that phase of the financial emergency legislation is concerned, that is where we, as a Government, stand. May I make another remark and so finish with regard to private enterprise? There is nothing in the Bill dealing with private employment. Members have been allowed to discuss that matter, because there was a

section referring to it in the previous Bill. Most members who have spoken have stressed the fact that, if the Bill be passed, it will prove disastrous to most of the industries of the State. May I point out to the House that, if lost, the Bill will be just as disastrous to private enterprise as it would be if passed? I would like members to consider that phase.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: Is that a threat?

The HONORARY MINISTER: It is not a threat at all. I am asking members to take that into consideration.

Hon. G. W. Miles: As the Bill stands, with the amendment that has been proposed?

The HONORARY MINISTER: That is so.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Private enterprise will be just as badly off whether the Bill is passed or not passed?

The HONORARY MINISTER: If the Bill is passed as it stands to-day, private enterprise will be in the same position as if it were lost.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Private enterprise will not be benefited, whether or not the Bill is passed.

The HONORARY MINISTER: That is so, and it is just as well that members should understand that. I do not want members to say they do not understand the position. If they have full knowledge of it, I am quite satisfied. I would like now to deal with another matter that has been raised and debated at some length by most members of the House. I have been asked by those members, "Where are you going to get the money?" That reminds me of a question which was asked some years ago in another place. That question was, "Where had the money gone?" I believe the reply was that it was in the pockets of the people.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Take it out of the pockets of the people.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I desire to amplify the replies I have given to various members at different times during the debate. I told those members that the money would come from the same source from which money usually comes so far as Governments are concerned.

Member: The printing press?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Not at all. I suggest that some hon. members at least have not a very clear idea of Government finance: neither have they a very

clear idea of the way in which the Estimates of a Government are prepared and submitted. The £115,000, about which so much has been said by almost every member, does not belong to this financial year, but has been acquired on a per annum basis. It is divided over every department of State. Some members ask, "Where is it? Why was it not shown on the Estimates? If you have this sum of money, why cannot you do this, that or the other thing with it?" The amount of money this year is approximately £51,000. I will give the figures shortly, in reply to a question asked by Mr. Seddon. The amount is made up of varying sums from every department where men or women are employed who are subject to Arbitration Court awards, or who are receiving less than £293 per year. They will be called upon to pay some additional money. In some departments, the amount may be only £20 or £30; in other departments it may be £3,000 or £4,000, or even more; but, as I told the House before, the Treasurer, when making up the Estimates, did take into consideration the necessity for providing additional money in this way. The amount I have referred to is included in the various Estimates which were submitted by the various departments of State. May I also point out to hon. members, if they do not know it, that some of it is from loan money and some from moneys provided out of revenue. Some is paid from other sources; but whether it be from loan money, revenue or from any other source, these items have been taken into consideration by the Premier when submitting his Estimates. The amount involved for this financial year is nothing like the £115,000 about which so many members have had so much to say during this debate. I have made this correction time after time and I make it again now. I hope it will be recorded, as it will be. The point is that the total amount which the Government will have to find this financial year, if the Bill be passed, is approximately £51,000. It may reach £60,000, after the various anomalies and other matters I have mentioned have been dealt with.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Does that include the adjustments already made?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Yes. On a previous occasion, I supplied the hon. member with the particulars and I can give them to him again. Mr. Seddon quoted certain figures and he will correct me if I am

not right in giving them. He said that goldfields exemptions represented £20,000 and salaries and wages £75,000, giving a total of £95,000.

Hon. H. Seddon: Yes, and £18,000 for adjustments.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Giving a total of £113,000 per annum. Mr. Seddon was not far wrong in his calculations. He also asked for information as to how that amount would be made up for this financial year. As near as I can give him the figures now—they will be approximate only, but I think the figures can be taken as practically accurate—goldfields exemptions for the eight months that the measure will operate, will amount to £13,000. Salaries and wages for the balance of the financial year from the 1st January last, if the Bill be agreed to, to the 30th June, will represent £80,000 approximately for salaries and £30,000 for wages, giving a total of £38,000, plus the goldfields exemptions of £13,000, making an approximate total of £51,000. Incidentally I have been reminded that I did not refer, in moving the second reading of the Bill, to the fact that the measure is retrospective to the 1st January. I rectify that omission now. Various anomalies and adjustments will necessarily have to be made and we make provision accordingly to the extent of £9,000, which will bring the total, in round figures, to approximately £60,000 for this year.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Have you made any provision for the adjustment of pensions?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Yes. Now that the pensions question has been raised, I desire to point out that the Government have naturally a good deal of sympathy with those who are in receipt of very small pensions and have no other source of income. On the other hand, the Government are paying out about £30,000 a year for pensions and some of the beneficiaries receive up to £600 per annum. In many instances those pensioners have other sources of income as well. The Government, rightly so in my opinion, take the stand that such pensioners are in a position similar to that of civil servants who are in receipt of from £400 to £700 per annum. While the provisions of the Financial Emergency Act did not give the Government power to deal with cases of hardship, such as those referred to by Mr. Holmes, we have embodied the necessary provisions in the Bill now before the Council to enable the Government to do so.

Hon. J. Nicholson: In what way?

The HONORARY MINISTER: We provide power so that we can deal with each case on its merits. The Government contend that they cannot lay down a hard and fast rule. Mr. Holmes referred to one man who had been paid a pension of £15 per annum.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: And had been reduced to £12.

The HONORARY MINISTER: That is not right and I would not agree to it. On the other hand, the Legislative Council agreed to it and put it in black and white. They did not give the Government or anyone else power to alter the position.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You altered it regarding a lot of people on the goldfields.

The HONORARY MINISTER: No. There was no provision in the Act that enabled the Government to grant any easement in such cases. On the other hand, we have inserted a provision in the Bill that will enable the Government to take those cases into consideration and do the right thing. I do not think Mr. Holmes will accuse Mr. Drew or Mr. Collier of any desire to deal with such cases except by way of granting easement, and he will agree that they would not be slow in giving the relief. I believe, in view of their reputation in the eyes of Mr. Holmes, he will agree that they would do the right thing.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: We will amend the Bill.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I think Mr. Holmes will agree that even irresponsible members of the Government, like myself, would be equally agreeable to deal with such cases in a similar manner. If he does not believe that, I can assure him that I would.

[The Deputy President took the Chair.]

Hon. J. Nicholson: I think you would.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Thank you very much!

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Then we will put it in the Bill.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The question was asked, "Where is the money to come from?" The Government can merely repeat what they have stated on more than one occasion. This problem has received every consideration over an extended period. The clauses of the Bill were not agreed upon as the result of any hasty consideration, but only after due research and calculations were the provisions embodied



in the measure. Only after thorough consideration were its provisions accepted. We have agreed to it not because we think it embodies all that we desire, but because we realise it goes as far as we can at the present juncture. That reminds me of a remark made by several members, the subject probably having been introduced first by Mr. Macfarlane who said that the Government and their followers claimed there was no need for emergency legislation respecting wages and salaries. I think it was Mr. Macfarlane who later on quoted the reply given by the Premier to a deputation from the Teachers' Union in which Mr. Collier said he regretted very much it was not possible for the Government to repeal the Financial Emergency Act in its entirety. If Mr. Macfarlane has taken any notice of what the Premier has said, or of Mr. Drew's remarks on other measures, to say nothing of what I have said on the present Bill as the spokesman for the Government, he and others must know that we have regretfully admitted that there is still need for some emergency legislation. On the other hand, we say there is room for amendment in the Financial Emergency Act as it stood up to the end of December last, and the extent of those amendments is indicated in the Bill the Government have presented to Parliament. What does this mean to the great majority of men who will receive relief as a result of the Bill? The amount involved certainly means a considerable sum in the aggregate, but to the individual the relief means very little.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: What about those who do not get any relief at all?

The HONORARY MINISTER: There are many individuals employed by the State in receipt of very high salaries indeed, and it appears to me that there is a division of opinion among members of this Chamber as to whether such officers should be granted any relief. Some members say we should not give any relief unless we are prepared to give something to everyone. The Government say that that would not be as fair as the proposals embodied in the Bill.

Hon. E. H. Harris: You are prepared to discriminate.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Some members think that we should increase the maximum from £293, and one member said that if we would extend the margin to £400, he would be agreeable to the Govern-

ment's proposals. Another member said that if we increased it to £600 he would be agreeable, but he qualified his statement by saying that members of Parliament should not be included. It will be seen that there is a wide divergence of opinion in the minds of members regarding the application of the Bill. What I have quoted makes it clear that the objection is to the line of demarcation, and it is not the principle that is objected to. It is simply a matter of the extent to which members are prepared to go.

Hon. G. W. Miles: May it not have been suggested by way of compromise by those members?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I do not think that was the suggestion. I think the point I made stands good, that it is not the principle that is objected to, but the extent to which we are prepared to go. From that standpoint the Government have gone as far as the finances of the State will permit. We have endeavoured to implement the policy on which the Government were returned to office, and we claim the right, irrespective of the views of members of this Chamber, to have the opportunity to give effect to our policy. As to civil servants who are in receipt of salaries of over £400 a year, I do not know of one who would not be quite satisfied with the position to-day if he knew that the Government were going as far as they possibly could in granting relief. I believe they appreciate the fact that the Government will endeavour to carry out their pledge and repeal the Act in its entirety at the earliest possible moment.

Hon. G. W. Miles: As any Government would, if they were in the position to do so.

The HONORARY MINISTER: And we say we are not in a position to do so at the present time. The Bill is evidence of the Government's desire to do all that is possible at present and members of this Chamber are endeavouring to prevent them from doing it.

Hon. J. Nicholson: No.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You are prepared to grant an increase to permanent employees and not to others.

The HONORARY MINISTER: We are desirous of doing a fair thing.

Hon. J. Nicholson: The trouble is that some members think that something else is a fair thing.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I shall go a little farther before I sit down. The Bill represents an instalment of what the Government are prepared to do as opportunity offers. As the financial position of the State improves, so we will endeavour to give back to those people what they have sacrificed during the past few years. The civil servants and Government employees generally are in a different position from private employees. To the extent that Government employees are covered by Arbitration Court awards or agreements, we say the position is the same. Mr. Seddon asked why, if the Government could not afford to pay, private enterprise should be expected to pay. The Government are not only prepared, but willing to pay whatever may be necessary if the Bill be agreed to.

Hon. G. W. Miles: By increasing taxation.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The Government will be bound to pay, just as private employers will have to pay.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: You have the taxpayers behind you.

The HONORARY MINISTER: If that were not so, we could not carry on for two minutes.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Neither could private enterprise.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Quite so. It does not affect the position in the slightest degree. In reply to remarks made by some hon. members, who tried to ridicule the argument that the spending power of the public has much to do with the prosperity of the country, may I say that practically the whole of the money involved in the Bill, whether to be paid by the Government or by private enterprise, will be put into circulation. It affects the lower-paid members of the community, those members of the community who for years past have not been in a position to do as they would ordinarily do, a large percentage of them having been out of employment for many months, some of them for years, and therefore naturally having a great many requirements which they desire to fulfil.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The Bill will not affect them.

The HONORARY MINISTER: It will help them; true, only to the extent of a shilling or two per week but nevertheless the whole of that money will go into circulation. The hon. member, if he is sincere, will admit that if £60,000 more goes into circu-

lation this half-year than went last half-year, the community as a whole must be considerably better off. It is the spending power of the people which to a great extent determines the prosperity or otherwise of the traders of this State.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The community as a whole would owe £60,000 more.

The HONORARY MINISTER: That may be perfectly true, but I am not admitting that it is. The thing may pan out that way, but we can accept the word of the Premier that he has made allowances for this expenditure and feels that he can meet the bill when the necessity arises. Next, Mr. Seddon tried to make a point that no other Australian Government had done anything of this kind. In reply, I say that no other Australian Government in the first place did anything of this kind with regard to private employment. Then I would inform Mr. Seddon that there is one other Government which has done something of this kind, in addition to the Commonwealth Government.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Queensland.

The HONORARY MINISTER: No, not Queensland. The hon. member has missed this time. It is New South Wales and not under Mr. Lang, either. Last November the New South Wales Government passed a Bill conferring relief on officers in receipt of salaries up to £325 per annum. New South Wales has a deficit, just as this State has, only the New South Wales deficit is much larger than ours. The amount of rebate in New South Wales ranged from £5 per annum to £30.

Hon. J. Nicholson: To what extent was relief given?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Relief ranging from £5 up to £30 per annum. Many complaints have been made here that the relief we are giving to public servants in many cases amounts to only £2 per annum. That is so, but it is not a question of the number of employees who will get relief under the Bill so much as a question of the amount of money those employees are receiving. That is the determining factor. Those who were receiving £293 on the 30th June, 1930—not £293 to-day, but on the 30th June, 1930—are the Government employees to whom we are intending to give some relief. As that is the limit to which we can possibly go with our finances as we see them to-day, there is no logic in the argument that instead of giving relief in this way we should spread

it over the whole of the Public Service, making a pro-rata or percentage distribution. Why should we give to a public servant receiving £1,000 a year relief at this stage, when we are not in a position to give it to all? Would the hon. member say that a public servant receiving £1,000 a year is entitled at this stage to be exempted from the operation of such legislation as this? To be honest, in view of what he has said many times in this Chamber, the hon. member must reply in the negative. I cannot conclude my remarks without making reference to what appears to me a wonderful change which has taken place in the outlook of a number of members of this Chamber. They have taken up the attitude that the Government have a sum of £115,000 just waiting ready to be given out to this one, that one and the other one, and that instead of dealing with the money as we propose under the Bill, other ways of distributing it would be more satisfactory. Almost every member opposed to the Bill has suggested that we might give the money to the unemployed. After a long association with the workers of this State, and after a particularly close association with the unemployed of this State, more especially during the depression, I do believe there are very few of the unemployed who stand for a whittling away of wages and conditions which have been secured as the result of many years of struggle. The unemployed know just as well as I know that as they become absorbed in industry or in Government employment, they will be paid according to the work they perform. They recognise just as well as members of this Chamber recognise that there is some argument in favour of the margins which have been established by the Arbitration Court. They know just as well as we know that the labourer is worthy of his hire. Our system of society goes further and says that those who are possessed of skill, or who carry certain responsibilities, or occupy certain positions in the community, shall receive higher remuneration than the ordinary labourer. I have never heard that view disagreed to in this Chamber.

Hon. E. H. Harris: The anomalies created by the Bill show that the man in charge will get less than the men working under him.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Admittedly, there are anomalies created by the Bill.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Is that a fair thing?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Yes, perfectly fair. It is admitted that there are anomalies, and it is also admitted that there is power under the Bill to correct those anomalies in certain directions. The anomalies of which the hon. member speaks apply to a mere handful of individuals; and I venture to assert that those individuals, being in receipt of the remuneration they are in receipt of, will be quite agreeable to carry on for a little while longer suffering the reductions they have suffered during the last two years. They will be willing to carry on because they realise that at last an effort is being made to get away from the position created by the old Financial Emergency Act.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: How do you explain all those letters from school teachers and railway officers? Are those teachers and officers satisfied?

The HONORARY MINISTER: The letters are easily explained. The hon. member is a member of an organisation which is supposed to look after the interests of his section of the community, and I believe looks after them fairly successfully. He expects that organisation to do its best in the interests of all its members. Naturally, the Teachers' Union, or the Railway Officers' Union, or the Pastoralists' Association, or the A.W.U. in a case of this kind would be desirous of securing, if possible, the same treatment for every one of its members. Unfortunately, that is not practicable at the present time. However, the Government are prepared to go to the full extent of their present financial resources in order to give relief to those who are most in need of it. That is the answer. Whether we fix £293 or, as suggested by one member, £400 or, as suggested by another member, £600, there would still be the same condition of affairs. Organisations existing in the interests of the higher paid workers would naturally take up the cudgels on behalf of their members, and other organisations would naturally support them. If such action were not taken, it would be said, "What are you doing? You are slipping on your job."

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You took something from all the public servants.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I admit quite freely that every public servant has had to suffer a reduction. At the earliest possible moment the Government will remove that reduction.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: We say this is the moment to give them something back.

The HONORARY MINISTER: If the Bill is lost, that is what will happen. Instead of the £65,000 to which the hon. member referred, when speaking, as representing the cost to the Government, the cost would, I fear, be considerably higher. On an annual basis it would amount to £350,000 or £355,000. The hon. member can calculate just what it would mean for the current financial year. However, I am getting away from the point I wanted to make, and that is with regard to unemployment. During last session there were several debates on unemployment, and this is the first time, to my knowledge, that the hon. members who suggest that the £115,000 should be distributed amongst the unemployed have expressed themselves in that way. Every time the subject of unemployment has been discussed, we have been faced with the argument that too much is already being done for the unemployed here, and that Western Australia is paying a higher rate of relief to the unemployed than any other State of the Commonwealth. Yet during the last two days we have had to listen to one member after another getting up and expressing sympathy with the unemployed.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Because the Minister for Employment says he cannot do any more.

Hon. G. W. Miles: We are saying that you have neglected the unemployed.

The HONORARY MINISTER: So far as my neglect of them is concerned—

Hon. G. W. Miles: Your Government's neglect.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The Government are quite prepared to stand on their record in that respect. One hon. member spoke of 10,000 unemployed in our midst at this time.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Three thousand.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Yes, but one hon. member spoke of 10,000—a much exaggerated figure. Unemployment has been reduced, until to-day there are about 2,500 unemployed. Many others who were unemployed are on relief work, and are not receiving full time. Nevertheless, the policy instituted by the present Government is so far in advance of what was done by their predecessors that, I believe, every storekeeper in the metropolitan area, especially during

the last few weeks, supports the argument I used a little while ago, that it is the spending power of the great mass of the people that counts. The fact that those thousands of former unemployed have been able to receive wages, particularly during the last month or two, has made all the difference to the position of many of those storekeepers. Politics aside, and quite apart from any suggestion that the persons in question were desirous of patting me on the back, or anything of that kind, I am pleased to say they have admitted quite freely that as a result, first of all, of the action of the present Government in finding relief work for the unemployed, and, in the second place, as a result of the campaign waged by the Minister for Employment on behalf of local products, their returns during the last month or two have been greatly ahead of their returns for the corresponding period of last year. I do not want it to be understood that I think we are around the corner. I think we are quite a long way from it.

Hon. J. Nicholson: A very long way.

The HONORARY MINISTER: But I believe this Bill will help us on the way.

Hon. J. Nicholson: That is just where we differ. If we could see eye to eye, some means might be suggested.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I could keep the House much longer. I have ample notes from which I could speak for hours. If I endeavoured to reply in detail to all the statements made by various members opposed to the Bill, I do not think I could finish this side of midnight.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Every member is supporting the Bill.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The hon. member is perfectly correct in that statement up to a point.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That is so.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I shall conclude with a few words of which I hope members will take particular notice. I realise from what members have said that they propose to agree to the second reading, and that when the Bill reaches Committee, they intend to amend it in a very drastic way. They are entitled to their opinion, but as I said in the opening passages of my reply, so long as members are fully aware of the position, I cannot complain. They have to take the responsibility for their actions. Speaking on behalf of the Government, I have to advise members that:

our attitude to the Bill is the same as was our attitude to the amending Bill introduced last month.

Hon. G. W. Miles: What is that?

The HONORARY MINISTER: It is proposed so to amend this Bill that the measure will apply to private employment. I have to advise the House that when that amendment is moved, I cannot accept it, and that under no circumstances will the Government be prepared to agree to private employment being included in the Bill. I have already remarked that so long as members really understand the position, they must take the responsibility for the way in which they vote.

Hon. G. W. Miles: What do you want to say—the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I am not saying that at all.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Pretty near it.

The HONORARY MINISTER: If the hon. member likes to put it that way, he can. I say the Government have determined that private employment is to be taken outside the scope of the financial emergency legislation.

Hon. C. B. Williams: You could not have that any more definitely.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I do not want any member to say that he was not told or that he did not understand the position. We are determined to carry out our pledges to the people of this country. We are determined to stand to the principles we have enunciated in this connection during the last two years. Having made up our minds on that point, we say it is only right that we should endeavour, as far as possible, to treat all sections of the working community in the same way. Consequently the explanation that I have already given twice—once during consideration of the amending Bill last session, and again when I introduced this Bill—still stands. Having decided to exclude private employment from the financial emergency legislation, we are endeavouring, by this Bill, to place Government employees who are subject to the Arbitration Court in the same position and to exclude them from the operation of the measure. To give as fair or equitable a deal to those employees of the Government who are not subject to the Arbitration Court, we have determined that the salary of £293 received on the 30th June, 1930, shall be the line of demarcation.

We admit that a number of anomalies will be created. We also say that as far as possible we will correct those anomalies; we will make adjustments that will probably ease the situation a little. Speaking by and large, that is the line of demarcation upon which we have decided; it is the limit to which we can go in accordance with our finances, and I, on behalf of the Government, sincerely hope that, in the time that has elapsed since the defeat or loss of the previous Bill, members have taken a little more notice of the viewpoint of the Government because, as I have already said, it is a determination which we have arrived at after mature consideration, and it is not possible for us to depart from it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*To refer to Select Committee.*

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I move—

That the Bill be referred to a select committee of five members consisting of the Hons. A. M. Clydesdale, J. Nicholson, H. Seddon, H. V. Piesse and the mover, with power to call for persons, papers and records and to report on Wednesday, 24th January.

In accordance with Standing Order 274 I nominate that three of the five members shall form a quorum. I presume I am in order in saying a few words on the motion. We have had so many conflicting statements as to the financial position—

The Honorary Minister: Not from me.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: —and the financial effect of this proposed legislation that I think a select committee would save considerable time in the Committee stage. We shall be able to frame amendments to the Bill to be submitted to the House from an equitable standpoint, and it might pave the way to a solution of the difficulty. We are told definitely that private employers are to be excluded from the measure. Inquiry should be made into the question of the effect that that will have on the community as a whole. I presume some inquiry has been made and that the Government have the information, although it has not been disclosed. We are entitled to know whether the £60,000 is to be equitably distributed as the Minister claims is proposed. We should find out what amount the unemployed are going to get out of the £60,000. So far as we can judge, they are not going to get anything.

We have been told that provision has been made to meet this liability in the current year's Estimates. We have searched the records, and we cannot find that provision has been made. Presumably, if a select committee be appointed, we shall be able to obtain that information. So far as I am concerned, we should require to examine only four or five witnesses—one an officer of the Taxation Department, another an officer of the Treasury; I think the Employers' Federation should be heard; I think the manufacturing industries should be heard, and I think the Trades Hall should be heard if those people desire to give evidence. This matter is so important that time is not the essence of the contract. I am quite satisfied that if this procedure be adopted and we take until Wednesday next for our inquiries—we shall have Friday, Saturday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday up to 4.30 p.m.—it will save time and perhaps go a long way towards solving the difficulty.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I second the motion.

Hon. A. M. CLYDESDALE: I beg to decline nomination.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Would I be in order in nominating Mr. Gray in place of Mr. Clydesdale?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Under the Standing Orders, unless otherwise ordered, a select committee shall consist of three members, the members to serve on it shall be nominated by the mover, and if a member so demands, they shall be selected by ballot. Mr. Clydesdale has been included amongst the members of the proposed select committee, but has declined to act. I do not know that the Standing Orders relieve him of the responsibility, but it would be ridiculous to put on the committee a member who had declined to act. In the circumstances it would probably be better to appoint another member. If Mr. Clydesdale wants a way out, I suggest he calls for a ballot.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: That is what I should like.

The Honorary Minister: The motion has not yet been agreed to.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: He could intimate to the House that when the time comes he is not prepared to serve on the committee. It will then be a responsibility of the House if he is elected.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The custom hitherto has been that if a member declines to act in this capacity, another is nominated in his

place unless a ballot is called for. If Mr. Clydesdale declines to act, I do not want to hold him to it; but I think the House will require a committee of five, and if Labour does not care to be represented, it will be their fault, and perhaps their misfortune.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Would I be in order in moving that the name of Mr. Gray be substituted for that of Mr. Clydesdale?

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Is it the wish of the House that Mr. Clydesdale be allowed to withdraw his name from the list of nominations? I will put this as a motion.

Motion put and passed.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: There being no dissentient voice, the name of Mr. Clydesdale is, by leave, withdrawn. I will now take further nominations.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move—

That Hon. E. H. Gray be appointed to the select committee.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I ask that my name be withdrawn.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Is it the wish of the House that Mr. Gray be allowed to withdraw his name from the list of nominations? I will put this as a motion.

Motion put and passed; Hon. E. H. Gray's name withdrawn.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move —

That Hon. T. Moore be appointed to the select committee.

Hon. T. MOORE: I will not act upon the select committee whether I am elected or not.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The hon. member has only been nominated so far. Is it the wish of the House that Hon. T. Moore be allowed to withdraw his name? I will put this as a motion.

Motion put and passed; Hon. T. Moore's name withdrawn.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: We have tried nearly all the Labour section of the House. I think we will have our committee just the same, and I have therefore pleasure in nominating Hon. L. B. Bolton as the fifth member.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The number is now complete.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I oppose the motion. I submit this is one of the most unusual actions that has ever taken place in this Chamber.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: These are unusual times.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The Legislative Council desires to appoint a select committee to inquire into the financial policy of the Government, which was recently returned at the poll by—

Hon. E. H. Harris: By a minority of the people of the State.

The HONORARY MINISTER: One of the largest majorities that any Government in Western Australia has ever enjoyed. Moreover, the retiring Government were defeated more severely than any other Government in this State, in that four of the Ministers lost their seats. Now this Chamber says the Government have made up their mind upon this point, but that it will have a select committee before deciding to agree to implement their policy.

Hon. E. H. Harris: To get the information we could not otherwise get.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Now you understand.

Hon. T. Moore: There is a plot or understanding.

Hon. W. J. Mann: I want the information.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I can only repeat that, irrespective of what finding the select committee, if it is appointed, may bring in, the Government will not agree to the inclusion of private employment in the financial emergency legislation. That being so, the hon. member's suggestion that a select committee would save argument in the Committee stage carries no weight with me. I may tell him that when we do reach the Committee stage, and have to deal with the amendments which have been forecast concerning private employment, I shall take no part in the discussion except to advise the Committee, and as we cannot accept them, I shall not waste the time of the Committee in discussing them.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Then we can put in the amendments.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The hon. member can do so if he wishes.

Hon. G. W. Miles: We are not going to be bluffed by you.

Hon. C. B. Williams: We are not going to be bluffed by you either.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: It is not a question of bluff, but of reason.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That is what we want.

The HONORARY MINISTER: It is just as well that the question of bluff has been introduced.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Leave it alone.

The HONORARY MINISTER: No. I want to give members an assurance on behalf of the Government that there is no bluff in this matter.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill. There is no such thing as compromise about it.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I ask for a withdrawal of the words Mr. Miles used just now.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I am sure the hon. member will withdraw them.

Hon. G. W. Miles: What words?

The HONORARY MINISTER: That I have used those words or said something to that effect.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The inference was—

Hon. T. Moore: Mr. Deputy President, a withdrawal has been asked for.

Hon. G. W. Miles: I withdraw anything I have said that is offensive to the Honorary Minister.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I want to disabuse the minds of members who have been under the impression that I have been trying to put up a big bluff. It is rather unbecoming of them to speak in that way, as one or two of them have done during the last 24 hours. I hope I have said sufficient to satisfy every member that the Government are standing foursquare to their policy in this regard, and that in no circumstances will they agree to the insertion of private employment in this financial emergency legislation.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I cannot see that there is any connection between the appointment of a select committee and the victory or defeat of the Labour Government at the last election.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Surely you are not going to support this motion.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The hon. member is like a pet parrot. Further than that, in the long period of years I have been a member of this House, I have never known the Government to take up such an unfortunate stand as the present Government have adopted on the Bill.

Hon. C. B. Williams: It shows the strength of the Government.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I am afraid that strength will give out in a few weeks. In spite of the unfortunate stand taken up by the Government, this House has its rights

and should assert them. The Government must accept responsibility for the stand they take. Because the Government made a promise at election time, shall we be able to manage without an amount of £350,000? Is that their concern only and not ours? I cannot see that anything will be gained by the appointment of a select committee. If I thought any good would result from such an appointment, I would support the motion. I cannot agree with the members who are moving in that direction. Perhaps they can see what good will result, but I am afraid I cannot. I shall vote against the motion.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Some reference was made during the course of the discussion on this matter as to the importing of heat into the argument. I am astonished to see the apparent manifestations of the heat which has, somehow or other, been engendered by the proposal for the appointment of a select committee.

The Honorary Minister: Has it ever been done before?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: What?

The Honorary Minister: A select committee of this House on the financial policy of the Government? Never!

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The Honorary Minister says that the proposal is that the select committee to be appointed shall inquire into the financial policy of the Government. I wish to put him right on that point. Mr. Holmes's motion does not in any way import an inquiry of that nature. It does, however, aim at reaching some stage of enlightenment in regard to a very important Bill.

The Honorary Minister: Use whatever language you like; it is what I said it is.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I assure the hon. member that there is no intention on my part nor, I feel sure, on the part of those members whose names have been suggested as members of the select committee, in any way to make an inquiry into the financial position of the Government.

The Honorary Minister. Then what is the object of the motion?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The appointment of a select committee is a step in the right direction. The Honorary Minister has been requested not only on the present occasion, but on a previous occasion, when a Bill of a similar nature was before the House, to supply information as to the source from which this money was to be

obtained, in order to provide what was required to carry out the proposals contained in the Bill.

The Honorary Minister: Do you want a select committee of this House to inquire into the Estimates prepared by the Treasurer?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The point which has been raised with such vehemence by the Honorary Minister is this: on no account will the Government entertain any proposal on the part of this House to re-introduce Part V. of the previous Bill into the present measure.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! The hon. member will resume his seat. The motion before the Chair is that the Bill be referred to a select committee. I admit that I allowed the Honorary Minister a certain amount of latitude in speaking to the motion. Because he is the Minister in charge of the Bill, I deemed it my duty to allow him to outline the attitude of the Government. He has done so. I cannot, however, allow the motion to be debated in the way proposed by the hon. member. Twenty-two members have spoken on the second reading of the Bill and surely they have now arrived at the stage when they can say, whether in their considered opinion, the Bill should be referred to a select committee or whether the House should go into Committee forthwith.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: All I wanted to explain was the attitude of the Honorary Minister towards the Bill.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I explained why I allowed him to make the statement he did.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Will you permit me to add two or three words? I merely desired to remove doubts which apparently are in the mind of the Honorary Minister. He is apparently of opinion that this select committee would be of an investigatory character. It is not intended to be anything of that sort, at least, not to the extent the Honorary Minister thinks. The point I wish to make is this: It was stated very emphatically by the Honorary Minister that Part V. would not be re-introduced into the Bill or considered by the Government.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The Honorary Minister, as he was entitled to do, made a declaration of the intention of his Government. That point could be debated if the Bill is referred to a select committee, when the committee's report is being de-



bated, or when, in the Committee stage an attempt is made to re-insert Part V. into the Bill. I think members will agree that if we go on as we are doing now, we shall end in chaos.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The question seems to me to be of such vital importance to the State that I want to impress the other view on the Honorary Minister. I want him to realise that every member feels the responsibility devolving upon the House in regard to the matter.

Hon. C. B. Williams: You want a nice soft spot to fall on.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: We wish to see that whatever legislation is passed, it is of the best character and in the best interests of the State. I am sure the Honorary Minister wishes the State to prosper. If other members here believe that the Government are going the wrong way about achieving prosperity by the proposals contained in this Bill, surely the Honorary Minister will listen to reason. The select committee would at least unearth some information which would be of benefit to the Government as well as to the State. I hope the House will agree to the proposal.

Hon. G. W. MILES: The Honorary Minister's remarks are an argument in favour of the appointment of a select committee. The matter is most serious and he has practically told the House that the Government will refuse to accept any amendment of this Bill.

The Honorary Minister: Part V. of the previous Bill.

Hon. G. W. MILES: After having that definite statement, the House should agree to the appointment of a select committee.

Hon. E. H. Gray: What can a select committee do? They can do nothing.

Hon. G. W. MILES: A select committee will be able to get information and find out what effect the legislation will have on the community.

Hon. T. Moore: All in three days?

Hon. G. W. MILES: Yes, and they will be able to furnish information and advise members.

Hon. T. MOORE: I am not surprised that this motion has been sprung on the House at the present juncture. Now we understand the position. Certain members have always claimed that the Legislative Council is a non-party House. Now we know it is no such thing.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It is like your arrangement to keep quiet, and then you put up the last three speakers to-night.

Hon. T. MOORE: The point is that it is now admitted this is not a non-party House and no longer can the claim be advanced that members are not bound by party ties.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You have never understood that it was a non-party House.

Hon. T. MOORE: So long as we understand where we are, it is all right.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: It is non-party, apart from your party.

Hon. T. MOORE: We, as members of the Labour Party, have been told that there is no party in this House apart from our own.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That is so.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It is because yours is such a strong party that this trouble has been created.

Hon. T. MOORE: I am inclined to think that Mr. Baxter has been left out of this understanding.

Hon. W. J. Mann: You are a bad guesser.

Hon. T. MOORE: I think I am a good guesser. It was Mr. Mann himself who gave the game away when he said, "We want," not "I want."

Hon. W. J. Mann: I did not say that. I said, "I want." Don't you put words into my mouth.

Hon. T. MOORE: There is no doubt about it you used the word "we." The point is that at last members of this House understand that it is no longer a non-party Chamber. A meeting of some members has been held, and now we see the result of their decision. I have always been prepared to say that I and others who share my views, have stood for a party, and, without it, the Government of the State would be in a ridiculous position. It is idle to suggest that men can be thrown together from various sections and be expected to carry on the Government of the country.

Hon. G. W. Miles: There are parties in the Assembly, but not here.

Hon. T. MOORE: Now members are starting to quibble straight away. Let them stand up to what they have done, and cease quibbling. That would be the honest course to adopt.

Hon. W. J. Mann: On a point of order. If the hon. member is accusing me of having attended any meeting, he is totally wrong. I did not attend a meeting to deal with this matter.

Hon. T. MOORE: Now we are getting it. Are there any others who are prepared to stand up and explain their position.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Yes, I am.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! This is not a House of interrogation.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Now, Mr. schoolmaster Moore, is there anything else you want to know?

Hon. T. MOORE: I do not want any misunderstanding to arise.

Hon. G. W. Miles: What are you talking for?

Hon. T. MOORE: I want to put you in your place for once, and you can wriggle out of it if you like. I want the truth. I do not quibble about belonging to a party nor am I ashamed of the fact that I am a member of the Labour Party.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: We give you credit for that.

Hon. T. MOORE: If it were a question of an honest debate in this House, I would show what Labour has done to build up the standard of living, and how the other crowd are engaged in tearing it down. What will the select committee find out? That is the point. A few members have sat in caucus and decided upon this course. What do they propose to do? Mr. Nicholson said that they did not want this and they did not want that.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I did not say anything of the sort.

Hon. T. MOORE: I hope the "Hansard" report will not be altered this time. I do not mean that.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The hon. member will withdraw that statement, not on account of members, but on account of "Hansard."

Hon. T. MOORE: I do so; I have a very great regard for "Hansard." The select committee, I presume, will inquire into the doings of the Government who stand high in the estimation of the public. Now in the opening stages of their administration, we have a few members of the Legislative Council meeting together and agreeing to move for a select committee to inquire into the financial administration of the Government.

Hon. E. H. Gray: And to do it all in two days.

Hon. T. MOORE: Why did they not inquire into the financial administration of

the Mitchell Government? What did they do?

Hon. H. V. Piesse: They passed the original Act without amendment.

Hon. T. MOORE: What did the Government do in the interests of this State?

Hon. G. W. Miles: What have you got to hide?

Hon. T. MOORE: Nothing, but the idea is that the Government are doing wrong.

Hon. R. G. Moore: Why did not the Government re-enact the Financial Emergency Act?

Hon. H. V. Piesse: They increased the emergency tax to 9d.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! I hope members will get away from a discussion on parties and Governments to deal with the appointment of the select committee.

Hon. T. MOORE: That is what I am endeavouring to do. It is particularly unfair that at this stage a section of the members of this Chamber should have caused so much extra expense for the taxpayers of the State.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: They do not pay our expenses while we are in Perth.

Hon. T. MOORE: Extra expense is occasioned as the result of this futile attempt to dictate to the Government. I hope Ministers will stand firm on this occasion. The suggestion is that the Government have not acted honestly, and it is not right that they should be discredited in the eyes of the people by the appointment of the select committee. It should not be for this undemocratic House to say whether the Government are carrying out their policy as members of this House may desire. The Honorary Minister has shown his preparedness to make the figures available. If members do not believe the figures, why do they not say so? I resent the attitude of members of this Chamber, towards a Government who were in power for six years previously, and was always referred to as a good Government. It would be the honest course if members rejected the motion for the appointment of a select committee.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Briefly I wish to point out what I think the select committee can do. First of all, they can ascertain whether the money is available.

Hon. E. H. Gray: How long will it take to do that?

Hon. G. Fraser: The Government have given that information.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: We want to find out whether the money is available, as provided in the Bill.

Hon. G. Fraser: Do you not believe the Government?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Assuming the money is available, the committee can find out something about the distribution of that money among one section of the community.

Hon. T. Moore: This is propaganda!

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: They can consider the distribution of that money among Government employees who were called upon to make a common sacrifice. Then again, the committee can consider how we can amend the Bill to assure that the pensions of old faithful civil servants are properly protected by Act of Parliament and not left to the mercy of this or any other Government, to increase or decrease pensions as they think fit.

Hon. T. Moore: What about shareholders getting their percentages? You keep off that subject all right.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! I remind hon. members that all interjections are disorderly.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: When I get interjections from all quarters, I always know that I am right on the spot. The next point is what effect this legislation, if the Minister's threat is carried out, will have upon the industries this country is trying to build up. Yet another point is that the reduction of interest under mortgages is mixed up in this Bill. No matter what may happen to the Bill itself, provision must be made somehow that the reduced rate of mortgage interest shall continue as long as the emergency legislation continues. Those are the matters we have to consider, and I submit to the House that they justify the appointment of a select committee.

Question put, and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes .. .. .	15
Noes .. .. .	8
Majority for .. .. .	7

## AYES.

Hon. L. B. Bolton  
Hon. J. T. Franklin  
Hon. V. Hamersley  
Hon. E. H. Harris  
Hon. J. J. Holmes  
Hon. J. M. Macfarlane  
Hon. W. J. Mann  
Hon. G. W. Miles

Hon. R. G. Moore  
Hon. H. V. Piesse  
Hon. E. Rose  
Hon. H. Seddon  
Hon. C. H. Wittneoom  
Hon. H. J. Yelland  
Hon. J. Nicholson  
(Teller.)

## NOES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter  
Hon. J. M. Drew  
Hon. G. Fraser  
Hon. E. H. Gray

Hon. W. H. Kitson  
Hon. T. Moore  
Hon. C. B. Williams  
Hon. A. M. Clydesdale  
(Teller.)

Question thus passed.

## ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [10.38]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Wednesday, the 24th January.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 10.39 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Thursday, 18th January, 1934.*

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

## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

## Presentation.

Mr. SPEAKER: I desire to report that this morning I waited on His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor and presented the Address-in-reply agreed to by the House and that His Excellency was pleased to make the following reply:—

I thank you for the expressions of loyalty to His Most Gracious Majesty the King and for your Address-in-reply to the Speech with which I opened Parliament.