

Mr. RAPHAEL: I hope my remarks of this evening will sink into the mind of the Minister who has taken on a certain job. I hope also that the Minister for Education will give a little attention to the East Victoria Park school, where much needs to be done.

The Premier: There is need for lots of education in Victoria Park.

Mr. RAPHAEL: Yes, especially when the Premier arrives there. I hope further facilities will be provided in the way of school accommodation at East Victoria Park. At present there is a class of 35 kiddies held in a cloakroom, where the air is humid and foul. The ground is not adequately drained; gravelling is urgently needed there. I was out of the State for about 3½ months, and in that period I fully expected the departmental officers would have attended to the job of gravelling. In conclusion I hope that at any rate matters affecting my own electorate on which I have touched will receive attention from the Government. It is a pretty poor old thing if one has to be castigated by one's Leader when one finds it necessary to bring up matters for consideration. However, I have the hide to take a castigation and, if necessary, look for more. I will not be sat down in the middle of my remarks if they are needed. I prefer to make them and take what is coming. In conclusion I congratulate the Government on what they have done up to the present time, and I trust that matters needing attention will receive it.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 9.31 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 2nd October, 1935.

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

QUESTION—STATE TRANSPORT BOARD.

Truck Licenses.

Hon. A. THOMSON asked the Chief Secretary: 1, How many of the 589 motor trucks referred to in his speech on the 26th September on the State Transport Co-ordination Act Amendment Bill are licensed in the metropolitan area? 2, How many motor trucks outside the metropolitan area have been granted a license to convey commercial goods, and on what routes do they trade? 3, How many of the motor truck licenses outside the metropolitan area are engaged in work for the Main Roads Board on road construction?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, None—see Section 33 of the Transport Act. 2, (a) 589. For interpretation of "Goods" see Section 3; (b) Involves the preparation of a return. 3, 128.

QUESTION—MINING, WATER PRICES.

Hon. J. CORNELL asked the Chief Secretary: 1, What is the price charged for water per 1,000 gallons used for mining purposes at—(a) Marvel Loch; (b) Burbidge; (c) Palmer's Find; (d) Bullfinch; (e) Southern Cross? 2, (a) Have the prices charged in these districts been recently raised; (b) if so, to what extent; (c) what is the reason for the increase? 3, What is the price charged for water per 1,000 gallons used for mining purposes at—(a) Kalgoorlie; (b) Coolgardie? 4, (a) Have the prices charged in these two localities been recently raised; (b) if so, to what extent; (c) what is the reason for the increase? 5, What are the prevailing standpipe charges at—(a) Palmer's Find; (b) Marvel Loch; (c) Burbidge; (d) Bullfinch? 6, Is it a

fact that indigent individuals have been refused small supplies of water at these standpipes? 7, Is it proposed to recondition the reticulation of the town of Marvel Loch and to reticulate the town of Palmer's Find? 8, If so, can any approximate date regarding a commencement be given?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, (a) and (b) 7s.; (c) Not yet connected; (d) and (e) 7s. 2, (a) No; (b) and (c) Answered by (a). 3, (a) and (b) 7s. 4, (a) No; (b) and (c) Answered by (a). 5, (a) The price is 10s. per thousand gallons. The custodian of the standpipe is paid 30s. weekly plus 2s. 6d. per thousand gallons commission; (b), (c) and (d) This is a free standpipe and has been in existence for some time. 6, Not known. The custodian at Palmer's Find charges 3d. for 25 gallons of water and has discretionary power to supply any persons, actually in want and unable to pay, with small quantities of water without charge. 7, No. 8, Answered by 7.

BILL—RURAL RELIEF FUND.

In Committee.

Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—How fund controlled:

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 of Subclause 1, all words after "Governor" be struck out, and the following words inserted in lieu:—"One of such trustees shall be the Director, the second shall be a farmer, and the third trustee shall be a person of commercial experience."

I consider that the Director under the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act, Mr. White, has had exceptional opportunities to gain experience during the past four or five years. He has dealt with the affairs of farmers during a very difficult period and has had opportunities to negotiate with financiers. He has, on many occasions, submitted propositions on behalf of farmers. When the Bill was originally presented to members in another place, it was the intention of the Minister for Lands that Mr. White should be one of the trustees. When an amendment was moved, a sudden thought seemed to strike the Minister who, of course,

is allowed to change his mind, in common with the rest of us. He decided to agree to a farmer being substituted for the Director. Great and grave powers are to be vested in the trustees, and the whole success of the measure will depend upon those who are appointed to carry out this important work. For that reason, we must have men of experience to act as trustees. If the Director is one of those trustees, the confidence of the farmers and the business community of the State will be retained.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I oppose the amendment. I have already explained the reasons why it is considered advisable that first of all applications shall go before the Director under the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act, and that official will be called upon to review the applications in the light of material particulars supplied by his officers. He will have a tremendous lot of work to carry out under the provisions of the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act, and once the Bill becomes law there will be hundreds of cases to be dealt with by him as Director, which will necessitate the whole of his time being devoted to that work.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: Could not the Director delegate some of his duties to other officers?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Not very well, if Mr. White is to carry out his duties as we expect him to do. If he does that, I do not think there could be any great delegation of his duties to others, particularly if the farmers are to have the benefit of his experience, to which Mr. Piesse has referred. The Director under the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act will have the responsibility of dealing with the applications first, and the trustees will have to shoulder their portion of responsibility regarding the decisions finally arrived at. It is not fair that the officer who will have to review the applications in the first instance, get all the information necessary, and furnish recommendations to the trustees, shall also be one of those trustees, with the right to sit in judgment on his own recommendations.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The Minister thought it was fair when he moved the second reading of the Bill.

The HONORARY MINISTER: It is admitted that when the Bill was originally presented to members in another place, the Director was included as one of the trustees. As in other instances, however, the problem developed, and as the effect of the Common-

wealth proposals expanded, so it was realised that the method of control outlined in the Bill was not advisable. Consequently the Government cannot accept the amendment. Members will have to rely upon the Government appointing men of proved ability as trustees. With the assistance of the Director, as I have indicated, the trustees will receive great help from him, but I am afraid Mr. White's time will be more than fully occupied for some time to come with his duties as Director under the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I cannot accept the Minister's explanation. The Director is conversed in what is needed and so accused to interviewing farmers that his advice would be of undoubted assistance to the other trustees. That is one reason why I am so keen on his being one of the trustees. The machinery of the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act was really preparatory to the distribution of this money.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: At first sight the amendment appeared to me to be wise, but on studying the Bill I foresaw some of the objections advanced by the Honorary Minister. Under Clause 6 no stay order may be issued by the trustees until a farmer has submitted a proposal under the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act and an effective resolution sanctioning the scheme has not been passed. I am heartily in sympathy with all that Mr. Piesse has said regarding the qualifications of the Director, but it will be the duty of the trustees to work in co-operation with him. They would be unable to manage without his help. To make him one of the trustees, however, would place him in an anomalous position, because he would be administering the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act and dealing with all the cases that must come before the trustees under this measure. His hands will be more than full, and if there were to be added to his duties as Director the extra duties of trustee, no one would envy him the position.

Amendment put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	4
Noes	14
Majority against	10

AYES.

Hon. V. Hamersley
Hon. H. V. Piesse

Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. H. Seddon
(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. L. B. Bolton
Hon. A. M. Clydesdale
Hon. J. M. Drew
Hon. C. G. Elliott
Hon. J. T. Franklin
Hon. G. Fraser
Hon. J. J. Holmes

Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. C. B. Williams
Hon. J. M. Macfarlane
(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I move an amendment—

That the following be added to Subclause 2:—"All or any of the powers of the trustees may be exercised at any duly convened meeting, but whenever the trustees present thereat are equally divided upon any question or matter, the determination thereof shall be postponed to a meeting at which all the trustees are present."

The amendment speaks for itself. If only two trustees were present and they disagreed, the chairman would have a casting vote. A full meeting should be required on any question of importance.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The amendment simply sets forth what would happen in the circumstances mentioned. I have no objection to the amendment.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: The amendment is dangerous because the business of the trustees might be held up if, for some reason, one trustee could not attend. The clause provides that two trustees shall form a quorum.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment seems to be a contradiction of that.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: If one trustee did not attend to his duties, the only course would be to leave control in the hands of the chairman, unless five trustees were appointed and three formed a quorum.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: A similar provision appears in the Victorian Act, and to include it in this measure would be advisable, as arguments might arise as to the amount to be paid out by way of composition.

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

Clause 5—agreed to.

Clause 6—Trustees may grant stay orders where a deserving farmer cannot make arrangement with his creditors:

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I move an amendment—

That in paragraph (ii) of Subclause 1 the word "and" be struck out and the word "in" inserted in lieu.

A farmer might have been involved in other legal matters, but he should be questioned only about his farming operations.

The Honorary Minister: I have no objection to the amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I move an amendment—

That the following words be added at the end of the subclause:—"as amended by this Act."

The amendment speaks for itself.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I move an amendment—

That a further subclause be added to stand as Subclause 8, as follows:—

(3) Section twelve of the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act, 1930-34, is amended by adding thereto a further subsection as follows, to stand as subsection (5):—

(5) Notwithstanding anything contained in this section the farmer shall be at liberty, until a receiver is appointed, to continue to operate upon his account at any bank, whether such account is in credit or not, and a mortgage holding at the date of the stay order a mortgage or other security over the real or personal estate of the farmer to secure advances and/or further advances shall be at liberty, until a receiver is appointed, to continue to make advances to the farmer, on current account or otherwise, on the security of such mortgage or security, up to the maximum amount covered thereby to the same extent and in all respects as if no such stay order had been made.

I desire to allow the farmer who will come under the Bill to be able to carry on and finance his affairs. When a stay order has been issued under the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act, it closes a man's bank account. The object of the amendment is to avoid terminating a man's operations with his bank if the bank will permit him to carry on. If the bank or the creditors do not desire him to carry on, a receiver will be appointed and automatically the account will be closed. My desire is to see that such a serious position is avoided, because under the Bill there is no thought of placing those who come within its scope in the hands of receivers. The way I propose is, in my opinion, the only manner in which that can be avoided.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I have no objection to the amendment which makes the position clear.

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

Clause 7—agreed to.

Clause 8—How applications are dealt with in the first instance:

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I move an amendment—

That after the word "instance" in line 2 the following words be added:—"unless any such application is made through a district debt adjustment officer as hereinafter mentioned."

When the Bill was before another place a clause was added authorising a debt adjustment officer to be appointed. Unless my amendment is carried, I do not think that officer will be able to act in accordance with the Bill.

The HONORARY MINISTER: There is no need for that amendment. If the Director desires any information it can be obtained by one of the persons appointed in the particular district. The Director will be able to call upon a particular officer to do what is required.

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I move an amendment—

That a further paragraph be added to the clause to stand as paragraph (b), as follows:—"Notwithstanding anything contained in the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act, 1930-1934, and the regulations made thereunder the fees payable by a farmer of and incidental to his application under this Act, shall not exceed in the aggregate the sum of one pound."

It does not seem right that a farmer should be called upon to pay £5 when in many cases he will have no money whatever. That amount would probably be equivalent to a couple of months' sustenance. The Commonwealth never intended that the State should impose a fee and compel the farmer to pay it. It seems little enough to ask the Government to find this money.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I oppose the amendment. Under the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act the total fees will be £5 4s., representing £1 application and £4 4s. for calling together the meeting, etc. There will be a lot of applications from persons who may be in difficulties and whose affairs will require a considerable amount of work before the trustees will be able to arrive at a decision. A lot of accountancy work will have to be done, and this will be carried out at the expense of the State. We must retain the right to impose fees and I do not think anyone can object to that. A considerable amount of expense is going to

be incurred by the State in regard to these matters, and it is only right that instead of the work being done free the State should have the right to charge fees.

The CHAIRMAN: I can see no reference in Clause 8 to the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act, and no reference to any proposed charge. The amendment is drastic, and I presume it will cover the whole of the measure, not only the clause. It says, "notwithstanding anything contained in the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act, 1930-1934, and the regulations made thereunder, the fees payable by a farmer of and incidental to his application under this Act, shall not exceed in the aggregate the sum of £1." The amendment states, "this Act," not "this clause." I am afraid I must rule it out of order, but I suggest to the hon. member that he should withdraw it and move it at a later stage as a new clause.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: A point arises in my mind with regard to the amendment. In view of the provisions of Clause 14 read in conjunction with the Federal Act about charges for administration, I do not see how we can incorporate the suggested amendment. I think Mr. Piesse might be doing an injustice to the farmers by incorporating it, because one of the conditions laid down by the Federal Act to be observed by the State is that the State shall undertake the complete administration of the distribution of the money. The question is whether the administration of the distribution of the money includes the application by the farmer. Some effect is given to that in Clause 14 of the Bill, which reads as follows—

The funds necessary for the administration of this Act shall be such as may from time to time be appropriated by Parliament.

When the opportunity comes I propose to add at the end of that Clause 14 the following—

And no portion of the fund constituted or received under this Act shall be used for the payment of expenses in connection with such administration.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: Would you call the preparing of a composition administration?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: It might be argued that the administration of the Act is something apart from the preparing of a man's application. On the other hand, it could be shown that in administering the Act it was necessary for an application to be made. The spirit underlying the Federal Act is that the State has to bear the cost of administering the Act.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: That is only for the payment of remuneration to the trustees.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: When once a man's application is granted, the trustees secure themselves by taking a mortgage.

The CHAIRMAN: It will cut short this discussion if I rule—as I do—that the amendment is not admissible to Clause 8, inasmuch as it proposes to limit a charge, whereas the clause provides for no charge.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I did place my amendment before the parliamentary draftsman as a new clause, and he advised me to have it inserted where I moved for that purpose.

Hon. A. THOMSON: The Government are to be commended on their decision to provide district adjustment officers. That will minimise delay and be of great assistance. We are having £1,300,000 made available as a free gift to Western Australia, and so even if this is going to cost the State Government some small amount in the preparation of these cases, it will be money very well spent. There is no reason why Mr. Piesse's amendment should not be redrafted and brought forward on the recommittal of the Bill. We require to minimise the charge. Of course I realise the Treasurer's viewpoint, for naturally he wishes to get some return for the money he will have to spend.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 9—Powers of trustees in relation to making advances:

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I move an amendment—

That the following be added at the end of paragraph (b):—"Provided that any farmer who is dissatisfied with the decision of the trustees under this subsection may appeal against such decision, in such manner as shall be prescribed, to a judge of the Supreme Court, whose decision shall be final and binding on the trustees."

We have been hearing a lot about appeals during the past two or three days, and I have been requested by certain farmers' organisations to bring this matter forward. Many farmers, it may be, have not carried out their obligations under the Agricultural Bank Act during the past three or four years, and those men may possibly be ruled out from any help to be given under this measure.

Hon. G. W. Miles: And many of them should be.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I would not say that, for we must try to see the view of a

man faced with starvation for himself and his family. At all events, I think those men, or any man, should have the right of appeal.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I cannot accept the amendment. It is not unlikely, as one member has suggested, that this would bring forward as many as 2,000 appeals. The trustees, of course, will give satisfaction in the great majority of instances, but there will always be the feeling in the minds of some farmers that they have not had a square deal. Again, in what better position would a judge or magistrate be than would the trustees to give a finding?

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Of course not, for it is a question of fact, not of law.

The HONORARY MINISTER: If we are at all fortunate in the selection of the trustees there will be but little reason for appeals.

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I move an amendment—

That in paragraph (c), after the word "successfully" in the last line, there be inserted:—"And in arriving at the opinion as to whether the applicant has such a reasonable prospect the trustees shall assume that the amount (including bounties, bonuses, and similar payments) realised for wheat and wool will at all material times be three shillings per bushel and one shilling and threepence per pound respectively, at overseas shipping ports in the State, and for other primary products the average market rates for the same in the State during the preceding twelve months."

In valuing a property, it has to be borne in mind that the prices of wool and wheat fluctuate. The prices suggested in the amendment I consider reasonable, as being on a par with those ruling during the past five years. However, there is no definite guarantee that prices will not fluctuate in the future. Therefore it seems reasonable to arrive at valuations on the lines suggested in the amendment, which are similar to the lines adopted in South Australia. When a farmer applies for a composition of his debts, one of the first and most important factors to be taken into consideration is the value of his assets. As the Bill, if enacted, is likely to run for many years, there should be a standard valuation.

Hon. J. Nicholson: But would not the amendment create a sort of fictitious value?

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I do not think so. There must be a standard valuation.

Hon. J. Nicholson: But if a man cannot possibly get the fixed price for a particular season, the price becomes fictitious.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: The average valuer values somewhat on these lines. He inquires concerning the productivity of the farm—how many sheep it can carry, what quantity of wheat it produces to the acre.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: And are the replies to those questions accepted as correct?

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: No. That is the reason why a valuer is appointed. Valuations should be stabilised because this will render the work of the trustees easier. The ideas expressed in the amendment are my own.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. member intend his amendment to apply to paragraphs (a) and (b) as well as to paragraph (c)?

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: The amendment suggests an addition to paragraph (c).

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I am glad the mover has admitted that the amendment emanated from his fertile brain. The whole scheme is unworkable. I should have thought Mr. Piesse would know that rainfall is a factor of the first importance. No matter how good land may be, without a rainfall there can be no returns.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I oppose the amendment. There should be no statutory restriction on the trustees. They are to be given wide powers, and we must expect them to be experienced men who are prepared to accept the responsibilities placed on them. If statutory restrictions are imposed on them, there can be no consistency.

Hon. J. Nicholson: A requirement of the Federal Act is that the trustees should be unfettered.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Circumstances will vary in different cases. We shall have to trust the trustees to do the right thing, irrespective of prices of primary products.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall not rule out the amendment as qualifying "unfettered." I will leave the matter to the Committee.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 10—Form of relief:

Hon. A. THOMSON: I move an amendment:

That in line 3 of Subclause 1 "twenty" be struck out and "forty" inserted in lieu.

The Commonwealth Government have made this money available, to be disposed of entirely at the discretion of the State Govern-

ments. When the gold mining industry was languishing and subject to very great disabilities, as the result of agitation by the people interested in that industry and by the Minister for Mines the Commonwealth Government decided to grant a bonus on the production of gold, and there was no condition imposed whereby that bonus should be repaid by the producers of gold. Even if farmers were fortunate enough to get double the price which they received for their wheat and wool prior to the depression, there would still be need of legislation of the character which we are now discussing. The farmers should not be asked to refund this money. The Federal Act provides that it shall be a gift to the farming community. It would give the farmers more breathing space if the period for repayment were extended to 40 years.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Who pays the interest on the money?

Hon. A. THOMSON: The money has been presented to Western Australia by the Federal Government.

Amendment put and negated.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I move an amendment:

That in lines 4 and 11 of Subclause 1 "three" be struck out and "five" inserted in lieu.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I cannot agree to the amendment. The terms of the Bill are very generous. No repayment is expected for the first 20 years. I hope that in three years' time the agricultural industry will be in a much more satisfactory position than it is to-day. If it is, the farmer will have no objection to honouring his obligations. If the position is no better, or if it is worse, the Government can be relied upon to give sympathetic consideration to the farmer.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I support the amendment. I cannot see that the outlook for wheat will be very much better within the next three years.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The clause as it stands is liberal enough.

Amendment put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	9
Noes	14

Majority against .. 5

AYES.

Hon. L. B. Bolton	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. J. T. Franklin	Hon. C. B. Williams
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. W. J. Mann
Hon. H. V. Piesse	(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. E. H. Angelo	Hon. J. M. Macfarlane
Hon. A. M. Clydesdale	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. C. G. Elliott	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. Seddon
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. H. J. Yelland
Hon. W. H. Kitson	Hon. L. Craig
	(Teller.)

Amendment thus negated.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I move an amendment—

That at the end of Subclause 1, the following words be added:—"but this section shall not be deemed to confer any priority over any other encumbrances existing at the date of the stay order."

As the clause stands, it is not clear what is intended regarding the existing securities. The latter should be protected. It is not right that subsequent action should override existing mortgages.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I am advised that the statutory mortgage does not confer any priority whatever over existing encumbrances and therefore the amendment is quite innocuous.

Hon. H. Seddon: Well, we will insert it.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: Yes, put it in.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: The money advanced by the Commonwealth is primarily to counter the effects of the depression and is not to provide funds for an indefinite time to relieve financial stringency. It is an indefinite kind of relief, and it is certainly most unsatisfactory to substitute one secured debt for an unsecured debt. Although the Minister has included clauses in the Bill under which the trustees can stand down in favour of mortgagees who make further advances, it is nevertheless calculated to put the applicant to unnecessary inconvenience and expense. Although the Honorary Minister has indicated how the advances will rank, I shall oppose, for the reasons I have previously set out, the clause as amended.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 11 to 13—agreed to.

Clause 14: Funds for administration:

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move an amendment—

That at the end of the clause the following words be inserted:—"but no portion of the

fund shall be used for the payment of expenses in connection with such administration."

The inclusion of the amendment will bring the provision into conformity with what is set out in the Federal Act.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Mr. Nicholson is endeavouring to make assurance doubly sure. I do not know that the amendment will make any difference, and I shall not object to it.

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

Clauses 15 and 16—agreed to.

New clause:

The HONORARY MINISTER: I move—

That a new clause, to stand as Clause 7, be inserted as follows:—

7. Subsection (1) of Section twelve of the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act, 1930-1934, is amended—

(a) by striking out the words, at the beginning of the subsection, "The farmer shall not while subject to this Act" and substituting the words "After the appointment of a receiver and during the continuance of the receivership no farmer shall";

(b) by inserting after the word "effects" in the fifth line the words "subject to the receivership."

Section 12 of the Farmers' Debt Adjustment Act provides that while the farmer is subject to the provisions of that measure, he shall not agree to any new mortgage or assign any of his property without the consent of the receiver. If there is no receiver provided for in the Bill, I hardly think it necessary to deal with the matter, but the question has been raised and the suggestion made that the position should be clarified.

New clause put and passed.

New clause:

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I move—

That a new clause, to stand as Clause 15, be inserted as follows:—

"Notwithstanding anything contained in the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act, 1930-1934, and the regulations made thereunder the fees payable by a farmer of and incidental to his application under this Act, shall not exceed in the aggregate the sum of one pound."

I have already stated my reasons for moving along the lines indicated by the new clause, and I shall leave the matter to members for decision.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The question arises whether the new clause would apply to this measure only or to all applications under the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act. If we are going to amend the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act to provide that fees shall not exceed £1, the clause will have a far-reaching effect, probably more so than the hon. member intends. I cannot agree to the new clause. If any hardship or injustice were inflicted on an applicant, the fees could be waived as they are under the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act. What has been satisfactory under that Act should also be satisfactory under this measure.

Hon. A. THOMSON: The applicants under this measure will not come under the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act. The amount chargeable should be limited and a sum of £1 would be reasonable.

Hon. L. CRAIG: The £1 would cover the inspection and valuation of the farm?

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: That would be done by the Agricultural Bank officials.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I support the proposed new clause.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: My reason for moving for the insertion in Clause 8 of the words "unless any such application is made through a district debt adjustment officer as hereinafter mentioned" was to bring before members the proposal that applications placed before the trustees should carry a fee of not more than £1.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Clause 14 provides that the funds necessary for the administration of this measure shall be such as may from time to time be appropriated by Parliament. What interpretation is to be placed on that clause? If it means that no charge can be imposed—

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: That is for the administration of the money.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: It says "for the administration of this Act." A sum of £1,500,000 is to be distributed, and the measure cannot be administered unless someone makes application for the money.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: Farmers will make application through the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act, which is not this measure.

Hon. L. CRAIG: No, through the trustees.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The trustees are to distribute the money, and Clause 14 provides for the appropriation of funds for the administration of the measure. If the hon. member's new clause is carried, he will be

imposing upon indigent farmers some charge that otherwise they would not be called upon to pay.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I am prepared to take the risk of charging the farmers £1. They will be pleased to know that the charge is definitely fixed at that amount.

The CHAIRMAN: It was originally intended to insert the proposed new clause as an amendment to Clause 8. The proposed new clause has a wide application and is capable of various interpretations. I understand that the applications to which Mr. Piesse referred are those mentioned in Clause 8. I suggest that it would be better to recommit Clause 8, and there provide that in no case shall a fee in excess of £1 be charged for any application for an advance. Would that achieve Mr. Piesse's object?

Hon. H. V. Piesse: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: I suggest that Mr. Piesse does not press the new clause.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I ask leave to withdraw the proposed new clause.

Proposed new clause by leave withdrawn.

New clause:

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I move--

That a new clause, to stand as Clause 17, be added as follows:—

"Notwithstanding the provisions of any Act relating to local government the consent of the Minister shall not be required to the writing-down and/or suspension under this Act of any debt due to a local authority when the local authority has agreed to such writing-down and/or suspension."

The object of the new clause is to obviate delay where local government bodies join in a composition. Country road boards have large amounts of rates owing to them. When a composition is agreed to it will be necessary, under the Bill as it stands, for individual boards to obtain the Minister's consent before any rates can be written off; and this might take considerable time. Local government bodies should have the power proposed.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I appreciate the motive animating the mover of the amendment, which I have to criticise solely in respect of its wording. I suggest an alternative new clause, reading, "Notwithstanding the provisions of the Local Government Act it shall not be necessary for any local government authority to obtain the consent of the Minister controlling

the administration of that Act for the writing-down and/or suspension under this Act of any debt due to the local authority." This new clause will attain Mr. Piesse's object, and is preferable to his new clause from the aspect of draftsmanship.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I ask leave to withdraw my proposed new clause.

Proposed new clause by leave withdrawn.

New clause:

The HONORARY MINISTER: I move—

That a new clause, to stand as Clause 17, be added as follows:—

"Notwithstanding the provisions of the Local Government Act it shall not be necessary for any local government authority to obtain the consent of the Minister controlling the administration of that Act for the writing-down and/or suspension under this Act of any debt due to the local authority."

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Candidly, I dislike the far-reaching effects of the amendment. Parliament has placed all local government authorities under a responsible Minister. Any local government authority now must obtain consent to writing-down. If that consent is rendered unnecessary as proposed by the new clause, we do not know where we shall get to. In some centres, as is well known, the road board consists of the publican at that centre and sundry other people.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: The amendment refers only to compositions; the reduction would have to be approved by the trustees.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The board, and not the trustees, will approve of the reduction.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: The trustees approve of the composition.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The trustees will approve of any reduction, of course. It is the Minister who should approve of the reduction. I am not prepared to vote for the amendment.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I, too, oppose the amendment. Rates now take precedence over first mortgages, but this amendment will have the effect of placing rates in the same category as unsecured debts. That in itself is dangerous. It will not be difficult to obtain the consent of the Minister.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: But that will take time.

Hon. L. CRAIG: The amendment is wrong in principle, and I oppose it.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I question whether the amendment comes within the title of the

Bill, because it is really an amendment of the Municipalities Act and the Road Districts Act.

The CHAIRMAN: It comes within the subject matter of the Bill.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Do you so rule?

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think this amendment is an amendment of the Municipalities Act or the Road Districts Act.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If I wished to take proceedings under the Municipalities Act or the Road Districts Act, I should not be expected to look at this Bill. The amendment is foreign to the title.

The CHAIRMAN: If a farmer is granted a stay order, the local governing authority becomes an ordinary creditor.

Hon. L. Craig: But a secured creditor.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: My ruling is that the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act does suspend the operation of the local governing Acts in those cases where farmers come under the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act. That being so, the amendment would apply to any farmer to whom a stay order was granted. The amendment has been drafted by the Crown Solicitor.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: Mr. Craig said that rates took precedence over a first mortgage. That is so, but these men who will be applying for rehabilitation in many instances possess assets not nearly sufficient to meet their liabilities. They would not be making application under the Act if they were in a sound financial position. As the Honorary Minister has said, the amendment was drafted by the Crown Solicitor. I think it is in order, and would ask hon. members to approve of it.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I have not advocated the amendment, but have referred to its wording. On the face of it, it may appear that there is something in the argument put forward by Mr. Holmes, but if we were to carry the matter to a logical conclusion, it seems to me that before the local authority could agree to the writing down of the debts of a farmer, including a debt owing to the local authority, that body would require to have the consent of the Minister. That is the point.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It refers to public money

The HONORARY MINISTER: Under the Road Districts Act, a local authority has no power to write down without the con-

sent of the Minister. We can assume that no local authority would be in a position to agree to the writing down of indebtedness under the Bill until Ministerial assent had been received. In my opinion, it would be better to adhere to the provision as it stands and reject the amendment. All parties concerned will be anxious to finalise matters as soon as possible, and I do not think Ministerial approval would be withheld.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I do not propose to challenge your ruling, Mr. Chairman, because I am anxious to allow the Bill to be passed without unnecessary delay and without complications. I would point out, however, that your ruling does not finally decide the point. If someone outside should take legal action as a result of which it were shown that your ruling was wrong, the legislation might be held up for a long time.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: After listening to the arguments advanced, I ask leave to withdraw the proposed new clause.

The CHAIRMAN: The easier way will be to vote against it.

New clause put and negatived.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

Recommittal.

On motion by Hon. H. V. Piesse, Bill re-committed for the purpose of further considering Clauses 4, 8 and 10.

In Committee.

Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill.

Clause 4—How fund controlled:

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I move an amendment—

That at the end of Subclause 1 the following words be inserted:—"All such appointments shall be subject to the approval of Parliament."

The appointment of the Commissioner of Railways and the Public Service Commissioner, to mention two officers alone, are subject to the approval of Parliament. Under the Bill, £1,500,000, roughly speaking, will be spent. The taxpayers will have to make good the principal by way of a sinking fund and will also have to provide interest year by year. The authority that will be possessed by the trustees is more extensive than that wielded by any judge or set of judges I know of, unless it be the Privy Council. There will be no appeal from their

decision, provided they keep within the four corners of the Act.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: And that is very wide.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Parliament should be in a position to approve of the individuals who are to be appointed to wield such extensive powers. That procedure is not unusual.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I do not like opposing an amendment of this description, but where are we getting to? There has already been an effort on the part of some members to have one individual included among the trustees, and it may be that other members have ideas regarding who should be appointed.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I can assure you I have not.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I do not suggest that the hon. member has. What will be the position if this House does not agree to the nominees of the Government and the Legislative Assembly does agree? Before the argument is finished, the end of the session will be reached and there will be considerable delay. Quite apart from the arguments that might be used, it would give rise to controversy, which would not be in the best interests of all concerned. Surely the Government, who are responsible for the administration of the measure, can appoint persons quite competent to do the job. It is essential that we have three persons whose qualifications for the position shall be above all question. I do not know who is likely to be appointed. I must oppose the amendment.

Amendment put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	10
Noes	9
Majority for	1

AYES.

Hon. E. H. Angelo	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. H. V. Piesse
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. H. Seddon
Hon. J. M. Macfarlane	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. W. J. Mann	Hon. H. Tuckey

(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. L. B. Bolton	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. C. G. Elliott	Hon. C. P. Williams
Hon. C. Fraser	Hon. A. M. Clydesdale
Hon. E. H. Gray	

(Teller.)

Amendment thus passed: the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Progress reported.

BILL—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE ACT CONTINUANCE.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

BILL—TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. A. THOMSON (South-East) [8.18]: Some of the amendments contained in the Bill I am prepared to support, but others I certainly intend to oppose. It is provided that Section 5 of the Act shall be amended. That section lays it down that a man shall be fined a sum not exceeding £20. It is now proposed that he shall be fined £1 or one-half the value of a licensee fee, whichever is the greater, but not exceeding £20. If it were prescribed that the fine should be anything from £1 to £20, I would not have any serious objection to it; but under this provision, a man who is really not in a position to pay is found on the road with an unlicensed vehicle, and for the offence he is to be fined £1 or one-half of the value of the license fee, whichever is the greater. It means that the £1 penalty would automatically go by the board, and a man might have to pay £5 by way of a fine as well as the license fee. Of course I admit that he should have paid the license fee. I hope the House will agree to an amendment of that clause. Another clause proposes to amend Section 6 of the Act. It seems to me that every measure that comes before us is designed to whittle away the rights and privileges of the individual. In the eyes of Government officials, it is becoming a crime for a man to take out a party of his friends if they pay for the benzine and oil and give him a little money for his trouble. Evidently the officials administering the Act fail to look beyond the narrow confines of the city. Consider the metropolitan area with all its transport facilities. There are trams, motor buses and taxis, and possibly there is a certain amount of justification for endeavouring to prevent people from utilising motor trucks to give friends a little pleasure by taking them into the country. The officials, however, entirely overlook the position in the country districts, where similar facilities are not available to the people.

Hon. E. H. Gray: There are more opportunities in the country to ride on motor trucks than in the city.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I do not know that there are. It would be interesting to know the number of motor trucks running between Perth and Fremantle, and how many people get a lift in them.

Hon. G. Fraser: It would be more interesting to find out how many get a lift. There are not too many.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Country people are willing to give a lift to a man who is walking along the road. The proposal is absurd. The Act states that a carrier's license is required for every vehicle regularly used for the carriage of goods for hire or reward. The Bill proposes to strike out the word "regularly." Possibly some poor individual may be escaping the payment of a license fee. He might use his motor truck for one one-third of the year. Evidently the departmental officials, by eternal vigilance, are endeavouring to extract the last ounce from the people.

Hon. H. Tuckey: The local authorities will administer the Act in the country.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes, but I commend the clause to the careful consideration of the hon. member. The proposal is that a carrier's licence will be required for every vehicle used for hire or reward. Amongst the people in the Swan district engaged in producing grapes for wine or dried fruit, a certain amount of reciprocity exists. The work extends over a very short period of the year, and a man with a truck might be paid for carting grapes from a friend's place to the drying shed. If the word "regularly" is struck out, whoever undertakes to transport his friend's produce must take out a carrier's license. I do not think we should be so avaricious as to drag in everybody and make them pay when they are trying to earn a living. Another amendment is to strike out the words "for hire or reward." If those words are deleted, the authorities will graciously allow an owner, with the permission of the local authority, to carry any member of the family, or parent of the wife or husband of the owner or the servant of the owner engaged on the business of the owner.

The Honorary Minister: It is hard to believe that that is your interpretation of the proposal. It is not correct.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I am dealing with motor trucks.

The Honorary Minister: Read the Bill.

Hon. H. Tuckey: The hon. member is wrong.

Hon. A. THOMSON: The Act states that a carrier's license is required for a vehicle regularly used for the carriage of goods for hire or reward, and a passenger vehicle license is also required for such vehicle if it is used for the carriage of passengers for hire or reward. It is proposed to strike out the words "for hire or reward," but there is an exception that the permission of the local authority will not be required on special occasions that are stated. A further provision stipulates that the permission of the local authority shall not be required when any such vehicle is being used for the carriage of the owner or any member of the owner's family or a servant engaged on the business of the owner.

The Honorary Minister: You said previously that permission would be required.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I apologise if I led the House to believe that.

The Honorary Minister: It is not a matter of leading the House to believe it; you said it.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Very well, the Honorary Minister has corrected me and I withdraw the statement. The owner will not require permission to carry any member of his family or any servant engaged on his business.

The Honorary Minister: There is a line of demarcation.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Certainly there is, and the provision will be detrimental to residents of the country. The line of demarcation was so clearly defined in another place that the provision was passed only on the casting vote of the Chairman of Committees. That showed that another place viewed the proposal with a certain amount of disfavour. Let me direct attention to the position in which people of country districts are placed. I hope members will not think that I am giving undue prominence to one section of the Province I represent when I quote the examples I have in mind. I desire to adduce Kojonup and an adjoining district as examples. By road Kojonup is 90 miles distant from Albany, and therefore within $3\frac{1}{2}$ or four hours' easy journey by motor car. If Kojonup residents are desirous of visiting Albany, they have first

to catch a train from Kojonup to Katanning, 33 miles occupying two hours 49 minutes. Departure from Kojonup is at 7.41, and arrival at Katanning at 10.30 p.m. Then there is a wait on the Katanning railway station of four hours 44 minutes, until 14 minutes past 3 o'clock next morning. And thereupon the Katanning-Albany passengers have to face a journey of 115 miles. Under the clause a definite embargo is placed upon residents of the Kojonup area who may say, "Let a party of us go to Albany for two or three days. You have a truck on which you can take us. We will provide the petrol and the oil, and give you a bit for your trouble." Such an arrangement is prevented by the clause, unless the road board's permission is obtained. No doubt the road board will grant the permission, but why put country people living under difficult conditions to the trouble of obtaining permission to travel on a motor truck? The Act has worked for a number of years. Then why this continual tightening-up to the detriment of country residents? Take the Cranbrook district, which is 66 miles distant from Albany. Certainly the town of Cranbrook is served by the Railway Department, but there are Cranbrook district residents living 40 and even 50 miles out west of Cranbrook. In that area there are neither trains, motor buses, taxi cabs, nor trams—no facilities whatever. If we permit the clause to pass as printed, we shall impose a severe hardship on the people affected. To my mind, each and every one of the regulations promulgated under the Act is to the detriment of country residents. Every Australian citizen deplores the fact that not less than half the population of each State lives in metropolitan areas. The great bulk of the Australian people live in the metropolitan areas, and why? Simply because all the facilities and comforts are to be found in the cities. Sometimes I am surprised that people remain in country districts under existing conditions. Suppose country residents have to ask the road board's permission to travel on motor trucks. The road board secretary may say, "I do not think I have authority to give you that permission. You will have to wait for permission until the board meets." That might mean a month's delay. I know the Bill is not the Chief Secretary's Bill, but I hope the House will not pass this particular clause. The Bill proposes to re-

gulate pedestrians. Such regulation, as I interjected when the second reading was being moved, is long overdue. To me as one who occasionally motors in the metropolitan area, it is a matter of surprise that motor drivers in that area avoid running down pedestrians in view of the manner in which they zigzag across the street. Further, the Bill proposes that safety regulations shall be prescribed in connection with pillion riding on motor cycles. It would be interesting to ascertain how many of the accidents occurring in the metropolitan area have been caused by motor cyclists. There is no gainsaying that the motor cyclist needs some form of regulation. Seeing the way he tears along the road and cuts in and out, one marvels that there are not more accidents. Control of ordinary cyclists was proposed by a motion moved, but unfortunately defeated, in another place. Unquestionably the way cyclists cut in and out in front of motor buses and trams invites accidents.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Moreover, they ride without tail lights.

Hon. A. THOMSON: It would be well if the Deputy Postmaster General of Western Australia issued a warning to telegraph boys about the manner in which they cut in and out, taking very serious risks when doing so. A point to which I desire to draw the Minister's attention is the danger associated with ordinary bicycles. Messenger boys and others travel with their hands off the bar, at the same time carrying parcels. Anything carried on a bicycle should be a fixture. Now let me refer briefly to a subject which is causing Press discussion. Those who have parked their motors in the streets at night have experienced this as a distinct annoyance. I have an amendment on the Notice Paper dealing with this trouble. Mr. H. L. Downe, president of the Omnibus Proprietors' Association, in to-day's "West Australian" states that the men I have in mind are a perfect pest, and that he hopes a clause dealing with them will be included in the Bill. I endorse that remark of Mr. Downe, and also a remark by Mr. De Rose to the effect that car watchers are unnecessary and have become a charge on the travelling public without any return. If a man pulls up his car, immediately one of these watchers rushes up to him and tells him what to do. If the motor car driver

does not do what he is told by the man, he may upon his return find himself so jambed that he will experience considerable difficulty in getting out. I wonder that the system has continued as long as it has, and I trust my amendment in this connection will be carried. The Bill makes provision for power to be given to certain local governing authorities, but I understand that these are outside authorities. In any case, I think that the persons to whom I refer should be under proper control. Another matter to which I wish to refer is third party insurance. I asked a series of questions yesterday in the hope that there would have been made available to me certain figures before I made my speech on this Bill.

Hon. G. Fraser: Could you not have got the figures from the Year Book?

Hon. A. THOMSON: Sometimes those figures are contradicted. I wanted the latest figures, and was under the impression that I would be able to get them much quicker by asking the questions. I speak at a disadvantage, not knowing the exact number of motor cars, motor trucks and motor cycles which are licensed in the State. We know it is possible for a man to pay a deposit of £25 or £30 on a second-hand car, then take possession of it and drive it along the street and perhaps maim someone for life. He has no money and is uninsured. Frequently he seriously injures a breadwinner, who can receive no compensation from him. Possibly some of my friends may suggest I am advocating the establishment of a State trading concern. I consider motor cycles should pay just as much into the fund which I am about to suggest should be created as would be paid by motor cars and motor trucks, because the motor cycle is just as great a potential danger. It would be interesting to ascertain the percentage of accidents caused by motor cycles. I think I am safe in saying that there are between 60,000 and 70,000 licenses issued.

Hon. G. Fraser: Fifty-two thousand and thirty-one.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Are you including push bicycles?

Hon. A. THOMSON: No. Let us assume that 60,000 licenses are issued. If £1 were set aside from each license fee and paid into a central fund in order to meet claims for compensation in respect of personal accidents. I do not think the local authorities

would suffer to any extent. Damage done to motor cars or motor trucks would, of course, be covered by ordinary insurance.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: You would make the fee for a driver's license £1 5s. instead of 5s.?

Hon. A. THOMSON: No. The £1 would be deducted from the license fee for the vehicle.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Do you suggest that £1 would cover third-party risks?

Hon. A. THOMSON: I am dealing with personal accidents only. As I have said, I have not figures available showing the number of licenses issued, but £70,000 would be paid into the fund as a nucleus.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: That would not pay the doctors' fees.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: It would not pay the lawyers' fees.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The relatives would not get £700 each under your scheme.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I am at a disadvantage in not having accurate figures.

Hon. G. Fraser: You are endorsing a scheme that was suggested four years ago.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Who would pay the balance—the State Accident Insurance Office?

Hon. A. THOMSON: I would not raise any objection to that. I have put forward the suggestion and hope that it will be a practical one. I shall support the second reading of the Bill, several clauses of which I certainly approve, but there are others which I hope will be defeated.

HON. E. H. ANGELO (North) [8.45]: I intend to support the second reading of the Bill, but there is one provision in it which I view with considerable anxiety. It is the provision which gives the Government the right to frame regulations for the control of pedestrians. I am not opposed to regulations controlling pedestrians to a certain limit. It is but right that some regulations should be framed to prevent silly people from doing silly things; but what I am afraid of is that, with the pressure that is being brought to bear on the Government by the motoring section of the community, the regulations will be very harsh and will really interfere with the liberty of the subject.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: But we can disallow them.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Yes. I am coming to that. I hope that when the Bill passes

the Government will lay the regulations on the Table of the House before the session closes, so that Parliament can decide whether they are right or not. I am led to this view and this anxiety by having read in the Press at various times the resolutions that have been passed by persons belonging to the motoring section of the community and their clubs and associations. I noticed that the Honorary Minister, when introducing the Bill, said the Government were following to a great extent the recommendations of the Automobile Club and the Chamber of Automotive Industries.

The Honorary Minister: And of the Commissioner of Police.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I am not afraid of the Commissioner of Police.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: You are lucky.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I do not think for one moment that the Minister for Police would suggest anything that is unfair to the pedestrians, but I am afraid, from what I have read in the Press, that some very harassing conditions may be imposed on pedestrians. I am afraid that the average motorist—I do not say all motorists by any means, because we can thank God we have still some decent men who drive cars and yet think of the other fellow—has become a very selfish and aggressive person who thinks only of himself.

Hon. A. Thomson: You should drive a car through the streets of Perth sometimes.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: That is all very well, but I hope the hon. member will let me continue my remarks.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Evidently you cannot be a motorist.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I am grateful for that interjection. I drove a motor car for over 18 years. I held one of the oldest licenses in the State. I travelled for tens of thousands of miles in the country districts and in the city as well, and I never had an accident because I always thought of the other fellow.

Hon. C. B. Williams: The other chap was watching you too carefully.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: He could see you coming.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: When the regulations are being framed, I hope the Government will remember just one point—it is not the pedestrian who is killing the mo-

torist, but the motorist who is killing the pedestrian. While I agree that there should be further regulations that will lead to additional safety, I do not want pedestrians to be unduly harassed, but I want the regulations applying to motorists tightened up considerably.

Hon. A. Thomson: Do you not think we should regulate pedestrian traffic at the crossing places in streets?

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I have already stated that I am in favour of tightening up the position, but we should not go too far. I have secured a return showing the traffic accidents that have occurred in Western Australia over a period of years. It shows the number of traffic accidents annually, the number of persons killed and the number injured. I shall give the figures from 1927 only, and those details are as follows:—

Year ended 30th June.	No. of accidents.	Persons killed.	Persons injured.
1927	2,310	42	320
1928	3,298	45	269
1929	4,594	54	397
1930	4,620	43	506
1931	3,493	60	730
1932	2,638	54	618
1933	2,608	59	675
1934	2,801	48	721
1935	3,123	69	971

Hon. A. Thomson: Where were those accidents?

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Good heavens, I could not ask for a return to be tabled that would go into all those details! The figures give an average of 50 killed per year and 540 injured.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: How does that compare with the experience in other States?

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I do not know. I want fewer accidents in this State.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Yes, this is where we live.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Over a period of 10 years, 190 pedestrians were killed or an average of 19 per year, and 1,843 were injured, or an average of 184. On the other hand, if we peruse the return, we find that no motorist was killed by a pedestrian.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: That is a brain wave.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Some months ago every paper I perused for eight or ten days contained some reference to a motoring accident in which some person had been killed in the metropolitan area. I interviewed one of the traffic officers and told him I intended, when Parliament met, to move

for the appointment of a select committee to inquire into the reason for the great increase in motoring accidents and to ascertain if we could not suggest some means by which they could be minimised. Of course, the introduction of the Bill has rendered that step unnecessary. I asked the traffic officer what he considered was the explanation of the number of motor accidents increasing to such an alarming extent. He told me there were three chief reasons.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Carelessness on the part of pedestrians.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: That is why I want regulations tightened up against motorists. They should not be framed so as to interfere too much with the liberty of the subject.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: How do you suggest doing that?

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Sell the hon. member a motor car!

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I dare say I could afford to buy one, but the fact remains I am not driving a car at the present time. Two years ago my doctor advised me not to do so. In consequence, I have refrained from doing so for the time being, not because I was afraid of being killed or hurt but because I thought of the other fellow. I thought it was not a fair thing, if I was not in the best of health, to drive a car and perhaps become ill when at the wheel, as the result of which I might kill two or three people.

The Honorary Minister: Hear, hear!

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I can assure members that that is the only reason why I am not driving a motor car at present. The first reason the traffic officer gave me by way of an explanation was that there are not nearly enough policemen to deal with the motor traffic in view of the huge increase in the number of motors. The police could not possibly watch all motorists. Some member suggested this evening that the police should replace the car watchers. How can the police possibly control the motor traffic everywhere, without a large increase in the numerical strength of the force? I quite agree with him that that was one reason why there are so many accidents. The second reason was that some magistrates—I do not say all—and especially some honorary magistrates, are far too lenient in the penalties they impose.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: And some are far too severe.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I would like to know who they are. I know the magistrates are pretty severe on trifling offences such as the parking of cars, but when it comes to motorists driving while under the influence of liquor or speeding to the danger of the lives of the people, the majority of magistrates are not firm enough and their penalties are not sufficiently severe. The third reason we must all agree with, namely that a jury will not convict. It is very seldom that a jury will convict a man for an accident caused by a motor car. That traffic officer told me they had two plain cases coming on presently—this was some time ago—that both should be severely punished, but that probably they would be let off.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: No officer had the right to say that.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: We must all agree that the jury system is breaking down, that it is obsolete.

Hon. C. B. Williams: You are becoming aged and old-fashioned.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Thank God I am, rather than that I should be holding some of the opinions of the younger generation.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: God help the motorist you had to deal with.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Being old-fashioned, I can remember when we had horse vehicles, and at every street corner there was a public notice, "Walk round corners." That was considered necessary then. Those poor old creaks of horses would come along at four or five miles an hour, but for the safety of the public there were those notices displayed, "Walk round corners." Now we see motorists flying round corners at 30 miles an hour, and if anybody should step off the kerb they will yell out, "Where the hell are you going?" Some are the most aggressive and selfish creatures I have ever known. It is up to the whole community, not to try to do away with the motorist, or not in any way to harass him, but—

Hon. E. H. Gray: You are putting in the boot to-night.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: No, but I am afraid the average motorist deserves it. It is up to the Government, and to all public-spirited men to assist the Government, to lessen these motor accidents. It is most glaring—69 deaths and 971 persons injured during the last 12 months in Western Australia. Does not that call for some special

action of prevention? I think it can easily be done if we can prevent the motorists from breaking the regulations. The difficulty is to find out when they break the regulations and bring them to book. As I have said, we have not sufficient police. Therefore, is it not the duty of every public-spirited man, especially members of Parliament, justices of the peace, members of municipal councils and road boards and other public men, to be appointed as honorary inspectors? I shall be only too glad if members will suggest some other means of reducing these accidents. I know that all members desire that this sort of thing should stop.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: It is no worse here than in other parts of the world.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: It should be the duty of every public-spirited man to agree to take note of any breach of the regulations he may see and communicate it to the Traffic Department. People may say they are not going to act as pimps for the Traffic Department. But if any one of us here saw a burglar getting in at a window—I compare the road hog to the burglar—

Hon. E. H. Gray: A lot of them are worse than burglars.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I do not agree with that. Suppose one of us saw a woman being assaulted in the street. Would not we rush up and intervene?

Hon. C. B. Williams: You are speaking for yourself, of course.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Look at the women who have been killed during the last 12 months by motorists—look at the number of little children who have been killed by motorists. Surely we would not think it below our dignity to try to prevent those happenings, perhaps those murders.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: Why do not you inform the police of breaches of the regulations?

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I have already done so on several occasions.

Hon. C. B. Williams: They have all occurred outside your electorate I hope.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Thank God my electorate is a long way from Perth. The Government should take this matter seriously into consideration. We cannot get away from the fact that over 1,000 people have been killed or injured in Western Australia during the last 12 months. That is too serious to be allowed to go on. Why

not ask public-spirited men and even the motorists themselves to report any breaches of the regulations?

Hon. A. Thomson: They do it now.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: They do not. Only recently I saw in the newspaper a letter from a motorist who, when it was suggested that he should report breaches of the regulations, said he was not going to be a pimp for the Government. Either we shall have to do that or double the police force. I would vote for doubling the police force if it would prevent this onslaught on the public, but the Government have not the money. Is it not right that every public-spirited citizen should help? The Government could appoint certain men as honorary inspectors for the one purpose of reporting breaches of the regulations, and the Traffic Department could do the rest.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Those honorary inspectors would have to give evidence.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Of course.

The PRESIDENT: I ask members to allow Mr. Angelo to proceed without interruption.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Members, by their interjections, will not disturb me in my advocacy of this proposal. I would have liked the Bill to go further. If the Government made the appointments and gave the appointees a letter authorising them to take a motorist's name, it would be helpful. Something must be done. The Bill suggests that regulations should be framed to control pedestrian traffic on roads and footpaths. Are pedestrians to be deprived of the use of the footpaths? It looks like it. I feel anxious to know what the regulations will contain. I suggest that when the Government frame regulations, they should be laid before Parliament previous to being enforced so that we can see what they contain. I was very glad to note that the Bill proposes to tighten up the provisions relating to the granting of drivers' licenses. I cannot speak of the last year or two, but previous to that the examination for drivers' licenses in some parts of the State was absolutely ridiculous. I have seen people in charge of cars who did not know how to drive them.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: The cars must have run themselves.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I said to one, "How the dickens did you manage to get a license?" The reply was, "I went out

with so and so, and he was all right." I am sure that is not going on now.

Hon. A. Thomson: You are not suggesting that the man was given a bribe.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Perhaps he was given a joy ride. When I started to drive, I thought of the other fellow, and drove for months on deserted roads before entering traffic.

Hon. C. B. Williams: It took you months to do it?

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: It was months before I entered traffic, because I considered the other fellow.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Mr. Angelo is addressing the Chair.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I am glad that members are taking such an interest in my remarks.

Hon. A. Thomson: The interjections remind one of another place.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: There are penalties for failing to give one's name and also for neglect to report injury. The maximum penalty for the former offence is £20 and for the latter £25. A man might commit serious injury and drive off without reporting it. If he is discovered, he is to be fined £25, although the cost to the poor beggar who had been run down might be £250.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: There are further penalties beyond that.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: The hon. member refers to civil action.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Penalties for not reporting.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Then I shall be satisfied. Mr. Thomson and others have referred to third party insurance. I would welcome a Bill providing for that. It is not right that motorists, without a penny behind them, should be driving in the streets. If they killed a person, the relatives might be left destitute; if they injured a person, he would have no recourse. It has been said that third party insurance would involve considerable expense to the motorist. Why should not he meet that expense? If a motorist finds that he has to stand up to third party insurance, he will be more inclined to be careful and also to lend the police or public-spirited citizens a hand to discipline his fellow-motorists and thus lessen the chance of accident and injury.

It has been asked, who will contribute to a fund to pay the compensation? The motorist should have to take out a policy, just as an employer has to insure his employees.

Hon. G. Fraser: Pay it when the license fee is taken out for the car.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Mr. Thomson has suggested that perhaps £1 out of the license fee would meet third party insurance. In Western Australia there are 50,000 licenses in force. Last year there were 70 deaths from motor accidents. Divide £50,000 amongst the relatives of 70 people, and it would give them only £700 or £800 each. Would that compensate them?

Hon. W. J. Mann: What about the victims of accidents?

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I was coming to that.

Hon. C. B. Williams: That is only the value of a working man. The maximum amount under the Workers' Compensation Act is £750.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: What is going to happen to the 971 persons who were injured?

Hon. H. V. Piesse: If that money were put into insurance premiums, what would it return by way of compensation?

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: You are assuming that all motorists are alike.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I am assuming nothing of the kind. If it were found that a motorist had not been in the wrong, there would be no claim. The time for the introduction of third party insurance is overdue, and I would welcome the appearance of a Bill providing for it. It would mean that a great many people who are driving cars would no longer be able to afford to do so. We can easily spare a few thousand cars off the roads, and I feel certain that there are a few thousand people driving cars who should not be doing so, because they cannot afford it. I know quite a number who are driving cars and not providing their families with sufficient food.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: A lot of people play cards who cannot afford to.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: If motorists were compelled to provide third party insurance, which would not be obtained for £1 or £2—

Hon. C. B. Williams: Another half-crown a week.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: That would amount to £6 10s. a year.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Equal to 2½ whiskies a week.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Perhaps if some motorists drank 2½ whiskies fewer, there would not be so many accidents. I am now in far better health than I was when I owned a motor car, a year ago. Nowadays I walk, and as a result am in much better condition. If a good many people who really cannot afford cars had to do without them, the world would not stop nor would the development of Western Australia be arrested. I do not know, either, that too much of this motor-car business is good for the morals of the community.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Is that why you abandoned your car?

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Last night, when going home from the House at 10 o'clock, I saw four cars parked without lights on the other side of Harvest-terrace.

Members: Why bring that up?

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: There was no one in the front seats of those cars, but I heard giggling from two of the cars as I walked past. I wonder whether the parents of those young people—

The PRESIDENT: I think the hon. member is going beyond the scope of the Bill.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Probably I am, Sir; and I shall not pursue that line any further, just as I refrained from pursuing my investigations into those motor-cars. However, I do at this opportunity make an urgent appeal to the Government to give very serious thought to the question of the means that can be adopted to lessen the terrible slaughter of innocent people that is going on at present—not by competent motorists, and not by all the motorists by any manner of means, but by a lot of irresponsible, selfish, arrogant, road hogs who do not for one moment consider anybody except themselves. If the regulations applying to motorists need tightening up, let us tighten them up to the utmost degree; but let us be most careful to see that we do not interfere beyond what is absolutely necessary with the rights and privileges of those persons who cannot afford to drive motor cars, who have been brought into this world without the wherewithal to buy motor cars, but who have a right to walk along the public thoroughfares in safety. It may be said that many of these

suggestions will entail hardships on motorists. Probably that is so, but who has paid for all these wonderful streets and roads?

Members. The motorist.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Is that so? Every year we authorise the expenditure of huge sums of loan money for the making of roads.

Hon. A. Thomson: But you take a lot out of the petrol—7½d. per gallon.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: After a speech like this I will never give you a ride again.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: If the hon. member gets his third-party insurance he will, I feel sure, not omit to give me a ride. On behalf of the North-West I wish to say how grateful we are for the reduction in the fees for trailers. Many of our pastoralists have to use trailers to carry luggage and perishable goods from their stations to the railway line, and the fee imposed under the old Act was altogether excessive. I am glad the Government have put that matter right. Now for the last time, I do hope the regulations the Government intend to make will be laid on the Table of the House, so that members of this Chamber will be able to review them and consider them carefully before the session closes.

On motion by Hon. L. B. Bolton, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.25 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 2nd October, 1935.

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

QUESTION—WHEAT, BULK HANDLING.

Mr. PATRICK asked the Premier: 1, On what date did the Royal Commission on