

# Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 7th August, 1934.

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

## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

### Second Day.

Debate resumed from 2nd August.

**HON. C. F. BAXTER (East) [4.38]:** We are entering upon another session of Parliament and it is pleasing to note that the clouds of depression are gradually disappearing. Unfortunately, while that may be so among private enterprise, it cannot be said of the Government's ramifications. In this respect things do not appear to be too bright, and the Lieutenant-Governor's opening speech was a most doleful document, full of despair. The Speech was very depressing to visitors, and the only brightness in it were the references—for which the Government no doubt claim credit—to certain improvements that have occurred in various avenues. Those improvements have been brought about by increased confidence on the part of private enterprise, who have loosened their purse strings tremendously during the past 12 months. Yet the Government have not given those people very much encouragement. First of all they started off with the Emergency Tax Act, an Act against which the present Government, when in opposition, could not say too much. They then gave a distinct promise that if they were returned to power the legislation would not be re-enacted. However, on coming into office, they not only re-enacted it, but they introduced a rate almost double the previous rate. Thus they have taken an enormous amount of money from private enterprise and other persons.

**Hon. C. B. Williams:** And from the workers as well.

**Hon. C. F. BAXTER:** Yes, the workers as well. Private enterprise would have made good use of that money, not only in the expansion of industry, but in the lifting

of a lot of men off the unemployment list and introducing what is necessary to carry on the State, namely revenue. It is a great pity that emergency tax, if brought in at all, should have been brought in at so high a rate. Again, the Government deleted Part V. of the emergency measure, a part which had previously done good service; the Government wiped it out of the Act altogether, and as a result, many industries have suffered considerably, including one which the Government themselves are carrying, namely, the Wyndham Meatworks. This action will mean an increase of no less than £9,000 or £10,000 to the operating expenses of those works. It is a colossal sum to impose on an industry which is not meeting interest, which amounts to £66,000 per annum. The removal of Part V. from the Act places an impost, not only on the Wyndham Meatworks as a department, but also on the cattle supplied.

**Hon. G. W. Miles:** The cattle-growers have to meet that.

**Hon. C. F. BAXTER.** They do, but under the agreement the cattle-growers receive 90 per cent. of any surplus over and above operating expenses.

**Hon. C. B. Williams:** How much does that amount to?

**Hon. C. F. BAXTER:** Last year it amounted to 6s. per head, the cattle-growers receiving £2 11s. per head for their stock. Six shillings from that amount leaves only £2 5s. per head, and every one interested knows that it is not possible for a cattle-grower to put a four-year-old beast on to the market or into the Wyndham Meatworks for less than £4 per head, if he is to clear expenses.

**Hon. C. B. Williams:** How are they going to get out of it?

**Hon. C. F. BAXTER:** Unfortunately, the Government also are in it, for they have several stations, on which £30,000 has been advanced. There are other institutions that have had to find money, and the question is how long are the taxpayers going to sit back and furnish £66,000 for interest, plus a certain amount lost in operating expenses? I hope to see the season more successful than the last one, although it does not look like it at present. How long is private enterprise going to put money into something which is not only returning no interest, but is failing to pay back the capital?

Hon. C. B. Williams: It is the poor farmers who are the mugs.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Fortunately, we are producing gold, which is a godsend to the State. On Thursday the unsophisticated member of the Chamber, as I may call him, Mr. Fraser, allowed himself to be carried away by the platitudes in the Speech, and gave unstinted praise to the Government and more particularly to the Minister for Employment. Even hardened members of the House were moving uneasily in their seats while he was making his speech. Amongst those who attended the opening of Parliament last week were many people who can be looked upon as captains of industry. They have rendered wonderful assistance during the current crisis, and by their enterprise have given employment to thousands and relieved the position generally. Loud praise such as that given by Mr. Fraser is out of place at present, and is certainly not warranted in the case of the Minister for Employment. Before the last elections a good deal was said about the necessity for the appointment of a whole-time Minister for Employment. It was stated that if the Labour Party were returned to power they would appoint such a Minister. Members of the Ministry of that day told the electors there was no need for such a special appointment, and that such a Minister could be of no use. There would be nothing for him to do because he would be overlapping the duties of other Ministers. Very soon after assuming office Mr. Kenneally found himself with nothing to do, as was apparent to everyone. I congratulate him on the way he found a way out of the difficulty, the avenue he chose being that of boosting local production. It is a good thing to encourage local production. To assist him in this he also appointed a huge committee, a handy organisation to have in existence to take the blame for this, that and the other. He also found it necessary to inspect all small factories to see how they were worked. His title should in fact be altered to that of superintendent of factories. We cannot expect much from work of that nature or from the campaign itself. No person will purchase an article merely because it is made in Western Australia if it is not suited to his purpose. No one's loyalty extends to paying shillings more for an article, because it is locally made, than

an imported article would cost. The Government found themselves in the same position. They wanted 10,000 water meters. It would have been a sound proposition if the meters could have been purchased in Western Australia, but the Government were obliged to go outside for their requirements.

Hon. C. B. Williams: They gave the work to another State.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: No, to an English firm. I commend the Government for what they did in this matter.

Hon. C. B. Williams: They bought the meters outside the State.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The Government wanted the meters at a reasonable price and were forced to make the purchase outside the State. That kind of thing will frequently occur. We must not go too far in the direction of supporting local industry in cases of that kind. No doubt Mr. Kenneally is doing good work, but it is only work that could be done by an officer in receipt of £6 a week. I admit such an officer could not fill in his time by making frequent trips to the Eastern States, as Mr. Kenneally has done, attending labour conferences. When a person becomes a Minister of the Crown he owes allegiance to the Government. Mr. Kenneally is holding a dual position, and cannot satisfactorily work both. He is also president of the Australian Labour Federation, a political faction.

Hon. C. B. Williams: There is no question about that.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: One position will not fit in with another. Mr. Kenneally should weigh up the whole thing and see just where he stands. He should then forego whichever position seems to have least claim upon him. If he does not do that serious trouble may occur, for he cannot be loyal to both bodies.

Hon. C. B. Williams: In other words you mean he will not do justice to the working class movement. Is that what you mean? He represents that movement.

The PRESIDENT: I would remind the hon. member that Mr. Baxter is addressing the Chair.

Hon. C. B. Williams: He had stopped speaking when I interjected.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The hon. member is only helpful. There has been a wonderful improvement in the employment figures, and it is well to remember the enormous extent to which private enterprise has con-

tributed to this improvement. It would be interesting to get the figures showing the increase of employment in the building trade. A tremendous amount of building is going on to-day. The architects are all busy, and other people associated with that business are also well occupied. The saw mills, the brickworks, the quarries, the steel and iron works, the glaziers, and other artisans are all getting employment now. This has been of wonderful assistance all round. I estimate that in the sawmilling industry alone an additional 600 men have been taken into employment. That is a large number for one industry alone. Until recently most of the sawmills were working only part-time, but they are now working full time. It is very gratifying to know that, because when men are in employment they create employment for others. All this expansion leads to an improvement in the general situation. Reference was made in the Speech to the financial situation. We are told that it is still extremely grave. We all agree with that. Because of the additional moneys that have been received during the past financial year there should have been a greater improvement in regard to the deficit. A huge expenditure was incurred during the previous six years of the Labour administration, the loan expenditure alone amounting to £25,000,000. The revenue was also very buoyant at the time, and there was plenty of industrial activity. I do not think the present Government realise that circumstances have altered, and that we are in the throes of bad times, otherwise they would not be proceeding along the lines they followed before. The £25,000,000 is not returning more than one per cent. interest. That is no good to the State. People may rejoice over the latest loan of £3,000,000, but it is only another means of adding to the public debt. The point is whether that money will be expended so as to bring in reasonable interest, in which case one would not raise any objection.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Do not you think that will be the case?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It has not been so in the past. If the Government keep on borrowing millions and using the money on works that do not return interest, we shall soon find that we will need all we can produce to meet the interest bill. We shall then be worse off than ever. A few years

ago the Australian States agreed to follow the Premiers' Plan. It was thought that by such means we would gradually work out our own salvation. For the first year or two it seemed that everything was going along well towards that end, but in the last two years there has been no suggestion of an improvement, and gradually we have become worse off. Last year's deficit was £780,000—£40,000 above the estimate. There should have been a decided improvement. We should have had nothing like that deficit considering the amount of money the Government have had to spend. They have failed in their duty in not arriving at a lower deficit. In 1932-1933 the last year of the Mitchell Government's regime, the loan money available amounted to £1,955,000. In the following year, the first of the Collier regime, the loan money available amounted to £2,750,000. This year the loan money allocated amounts to £3,200,000, out of which £150,000 is allocated for increasing the plant at the power house. In addition to extra loan funds the Collier Government had the advantage last year of £795,000 more than the Mitchell Government had to expend in their last year of office. The Collier Government received £210,000 more last year from the financial emergency tax than did the Mitchell Government in their last year. The figures are colossal.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Do not forget the Government gave back to the civil servants £115,000.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: When the Financial Emergency Bill came before this Chamber, the Government gave an assurance that for the whole 12 months it would not yield more than £400,000. Members will recollect the ridicule that was heaped upon me when I estimated a figure far in excess of that. I had an amendment on the Notice Paper providing for a range of tax from 2d. to 7d. Ministers said that was ridiculous and the civil servants said the same. Had the Chamber supported me, the Government would not have had so much taxation revenue as has actually been collected. I also pointed out at the time that the men on the basic wage, as it was then, would not be free from taxation for very long. I said that everything pointed to a rise in the basic wage and to numbers of the men being brought within the scope of the emergency tax, thus yielding a considerable

increase in revenue to the Government. That is precisely what has happened. It is safe to say that for the next 12 months the tax will yield the colossal sum of £600,000. That is an enormous amount of money to take out of the pockets of the people. The community generally can expend such a sum of money to much better advantage than can any Government. As a matter of fact, private enterprise can make a pound go twice as far as can any Government.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You should have got rid of some of the trading concerns while you had the opportunity to do so.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I have no doubt I could have done so by practically giving them away, and the Government with which I was associated had no intention of doing that. There are still six months to go and members will find that close on £300,000 will come from that tax. The tax will come up for review during the present session and it will be interesting to see what the opinions of hon. members will be.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: They will reduce it.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It will be interesting to see whether they will or not. The amount collected by the Mitchell Government when the tax was 4d. was £202,000 over a period of seven months, whilst the existing tax has yielded over a similar period no less a sum than £412,000. One has to remember that the collection of so much money by such a tax means retarding our recovery, because the more money we leave in the control of private enterprise, the sooner shall we get out of our difficulties.

Hon. G. W. Miles: We are taxed to a lower extent in this State than are the people in the Eastern States.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Surely the hon. member realises that Western Australia is a pioneering State, that it has very few secondary industries, and that therefore we cannot carry taxation to the same extent as can the other States.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Reduce the deficit and it will be all right.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I was pleased to note that Mr. McCallum, the Minister for Works, on returning from a meeting of the Loan Council in Melbourne, said that loan money would be spent where it would return interest. I sincerely hope that the Government will carry out that policy. There

are not many avenues in which money can be spent so that it will return satisfactory interest, but I do hope the Government will be able to find them. When the Leader of the House is replying, I should like him to tell us in what direction loan money has been spent in recent years, and the interest it is returning. This is information that the House should have. Probably it will be fairly lengthy and it may be advisable to have a return prepared and laid on the Table. It would also be interesting to know what works the Government have in view at the present time and on which it is proposed to spend the £3,000,000 to be raised by way of loan this year, and, further, what interest it is expected will be returned as a result of that expenditure. I notice in the Governor's Speech there is a reference to gold mining. The output of gold at the present time is proving a real God-send. The Minister for Mines set out with a laudable scheme of sending men out to prospect for gold, and I hope it has met with a degree of success.

Hon. G. W. Miles: It has.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: No one knows whether it has been successful or not, and it would be interesting to have the information. I should like the Leader of the House to tell us the number of men sent out and the total expenditure, the information to include what was spent on sustenance, tools, transport, etc., and, further, the amount that has been repaid as a result of the gold won. I notice also in the Speech that there is a short reference to the wheat question. This has been all-important to Australia and at last the Federal Government have taken a serious view and have promised to assist the wheatgrowers. Unfortunately, I am afraid their assistance will not extend very far because at the present time the price of wheat is 3s. a bushel and it looks as if the opening price of the season will be well over that figure.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: We should rejoice at that.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The Federal Government have been considering the question of assistance for over four years, and during that time many farmers have become impoverished, while others have been forced off their holdings.

Hon. J. Cornell: What about the six millions they did give?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: They propose now to go to the assistance of the farmers when it is too late.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You are making an electioneering speech now.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Not at all; I am not concerned about the elections. Whilst a few farmers will benefit by the increased price of wheat, judging by the remarks I heard in the country last week, many are still looking for that £100,000 promised them by the State Government to help them through. It is close on 18 months since that promise was made by the present Premier and the farmers are still harping on it and are looking forward to receiving it. Reverting again to the expenditure of loan money, the only avenues from which we might expect reasonable interest are the extension of water services in country towns, and the construction of sewerage works, which are so necessary for the maintenance of the health of the community.

Hon. G. W. Miles: We should remove the septic tanks from the riverside at East Perth.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It is interesting to peruse the figures regarding unemployment throughout the Commonwealth and to make comparisons between the various States. The figures are these:—

30th June, 1932.			
			Per cent.
New South Wales	..	..	32.2
Victoria	..	..	27.7
Queensland	..	..	19.9
South Australia	..	..	35.2
Tasmania	..	..	27.4
Western Australia	..	..	30.3
Australian average	..	..	30
30th June, 1933.			
			Per cent.
New South Wales	..	..	25
Victoria	..	..	18
Queensland	..	..	12.7
South Australia	..	..	25.4
Tasmania	..	..	17.9
Western Australia	..	..	18.3
Australian average	..	..	20.9

Thus we find that the average for Western Australia is slightly below that of the Commonwealth. After all, we are not in such a very bad way.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Are you congratulating the Minister?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: No, because private enterprise has been responsible to a considerable extent for the reduction in unemployment.

Hon. E. H. Gray: It shows the confidence they have in the Government.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: There is another matter to which I wish to refer and that is an appointment made to the Fremantle Harbour Trust a little while back and to which I take strong exception. There is no one in the State I hold in higher esteem than Mr. Angwin who received the appointment. I doubt whether there is anyone who can say anything but good of that gentleman. He is sincere, conscientious, thoroughly reliable and a very hard worker. Some years ago the farming section of the community had a representative on the Harbour Trust, though it was recognised that any particular industry had no right to representation. Still, it became the custom to see that various interests were represented, and that custom might have been continued with advantage. When I became a member of Ministry some years ago, the Fremantle Harbour Trust was under my control, and amongst its members was one who indirectly represented the lumpers. The time came for the retirement of the members of the Trust through effluxion of time, and strong pressure was brought to bear by other sections of the community to replace the lumpers' representative by one to watch the interests of a different section. I refused to agree to the proposal because I held the opinion that those who were engaged on the wharf were entitled to representation on the Trust. The moment the farmers of the State lost their representative on the Trust, advantage was taken of that by the present Government to appoint one of their own people. That, I claim, is wrong and it was the policy that I refused to countenance.

Hon. J. Cornell: Surely a man who, for four years, was a Minister of the Crown would be capable of doing the job?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Yes, but he is not representing the farmers of the State. In spite of all the pressure that was brought to bear upon me, I kept the representative of the lumpers on the Trust, even though he was not in any way associated with the farming industry. I did what I thought was right. I also wish to direct attention to the fact that Government money is being expended

on city improvements. I refer to the beautification of the harbour.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Do you call the river a harbour?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I should have said river; I hope the river will never be opened up to make a harbour of it. The work of beautification includes the reclaiming of an island and the construction of a drive along the river banks. Such work is undertaken for the benefit of the City of Perth; it is not a State or a national work. If beautification work of the kind is desired, the cost should be borne by the ratepayers of the metropolitan area and not by the people of the State as a whole.

Hon. E. H. Gray: What about the country people enjoying those improvements?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The hon. member has taken the narrow view that he always takes. Let me remind him that the people of the country have to find the money with which to beautify their own surroundings. The residents of the metropolis should not have the benefit of Government money for improving the river; the expense should be borne by the ratepayers of the metropolis.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Have the ratepayers control of the river?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: They have control of the foreshore. The drive is being constructed at the expense of all the people. I can understand the hon. member, representing as he does a metropolitan province, taking exception to my remark, because his constituents will benefit by the work. Legislation is to be introduced to deal with the Agricultural Bank. I have read a portion of the Royal Commission's report on the Agricultural Bank. Doubtless there will be opportunity to discuss the report at a later stage.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Will there be an opportunity to discuss it?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: As legislation is to be introduced, naturally opportunity will be afforded to discuss the matter. The criticism levelled at the bank is unfair in many respects. That a reorganisation of the institution may be necessary I do not dispute but it should be remembered that the Agricultural Bank is not an institution that can be run on the same lines as one of the trading banks.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: The Commission suggest the appointment of a board.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Would the hon. member destroy the usefulness of the institu-

tion? The Agricultural Bank has been of wonderful service to the State. Much blame has been laid upon the executive officers by the Commission, whereas the blame rests with Parliament and the various Governments.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Quite right.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Time and time again the officials of the bank have opposed the expenditure of money in various directions, but have been overruled. They have been compelled to carry out the directions of Parliament and of Governments, and have even been worried by individual members of Parliament. The trustees have been placed in an unfortunate position.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Hon. members will have an opportunity later to reply to Mr. Baxter's speech.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Why lay the whole of the blame on the officers of the bank?

Hon. E. H. Gray: It is unfair.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I hope that the Government will afford the officers of the bank a certain amount of protection, for they have been harshly dealt with by the Commission and are being harshly spoken of by the general public. We are told that the bank has incurred a tremendous loss. That may be so, but do complainants consider the heavy fall in land values, which has so injured securities? Just when we were passing through a crisis, the Government appointed a Royal Commission. If inquiry were made into the affairs of many other institutions, it would be found that their securities were in an equally bad position. But those things will right themselves. We in this State have reached the point of harvesting over 50,000,000 bushels of wheat, and I am satisfied that, but for the Agricultural Bank, this State would be growing no more than 30,000,000 bushels, if that.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: But it would be producing that quantity under a sound policy.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: This State must produce wheat for export.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Even if it costs 7s. a bushel.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Consider the enormous amount of development that has been made possible—development extending from Northampton to the other side of Esperance.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: The development was too rapid.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Immense tracts of country have been brought under cultivation, which constitutes a valuable asset to the State. With the improvement in farming conditions, I look to the time, and very soon too, when we shall be producing 70,000,000 or 80,000,000 bushels.

Hon. C. B. Williams: God help the poor mugs who grow it!

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I do not agree with the hon. member's sentiment. During the last two years I have said to farmers who were threatening to grow no more wheat, "Keep on, the day will come, and soon too, when wheat prices will recover." Wheat is a staple article of diet and prices must recover. Other countries have provided millions of money with the object of growing wheat within their own borders, but they cannot afford to continue that policy. The taxpayers of those countries will not stand it. Many countries that are growing wheat could turn their land to better use.

Hon. J. Cornell: What do you think of the Commission's report on wheatgrowing in South Province?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: In reading the report, I have not yet reached that stage. There is a fair amount of reading in the report, and much of it is unpleasant.

Hon. J. Cornell: The members of the Commission have outdone Eggleston & Co. easily.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I admit that mistakes, and bad mistakes have been made, but we should not condemn everybody because of that. Wonderful development has been brought about in this State and the credit for that belongs to the Agricultural Bank. Other financial institutions have certainly given valuable service, but they could not apply their deposits as the funds of the Agricultural Bank have been applied. When the Agricultural Bank had built up a security, other institutions took it over, and thus rendered useful service by taking clients off the hands of the Agricultural Bank and enabling that institution to use its funds in other directions. Development may have been carried into districts that do not appear to be sound, but that has yet to be proved. Difficulties exist, but they will be overcome. I believe, by the scientists. In some parts of the State there are belts of country that produce wonderful crops, while in other parts only light crops

can be raised, but all the country can be turned to good account. We should not roundly condemn the bank and all concerned with it without admitting the beneficial work it has performed. What causes me concern is that the report is not likely to do the State any good.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Do not you think that the taxpayers have had the dust thrown in their eyes long enough and that it is time they knew the true position?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I think the taxpayers know the position. Anyhow, the hon. member has occupied a seat in Parliament long enough.

Hon. G. W. Miles: And I have pointed out the position, too.

Hon. C. B. Williams: And do not forget the Wyndham Meatworks.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I could say something about the Wyndham Meat Works also. Both activities are necessary to this community. The Speech mentions that an amendment of the Constitution Act is to be introduced. We do not know the scope of the measure, but I hope it will be along the lines I indicated in this House last session. The Constitution has not been amended for many years, and the alteration in State activities has been such that we are operating under conditions that should not obtain. It is necessary that that matter be remedied, and I hope that is what the proposed Bill portends. A section of the Electoral Act is to be amended, and if its object is to improve the system of postal voting, it will be appreciated by many people. As there will be opportunities to speak at length later on, I do not propose to occupy further time now. I hope that during the current year the improvement that has been noticeable during the last 12 or 18 months will continue. The wheat position has improved to such an extent that growers should now be able to show a profit. Wheatgrowing is one of our most important industries because it creates so much labour, puts so much money into circulation and provides such a large margin for export which, in turn, means bringing wealth into the country.

Hon. C. B. Williams: You have not said much to-day about the poor farmers!

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The wheat position is certainly more heartening than it has been for three years. I hope the pre-

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

On motion by the Honorary Minister, debate adjourned.

## BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1), £2,200,000.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

*House adjourned at 5.30 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Tuesday, 7th August, 1934.*

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

## QUESTION—MOTION PICTURES, DISTRIBUTORS' RESTRICTIONS.

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

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

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

## QUESTIONS (2)—WHEAT.

### *Carting Subsidy.*

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

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

### *Wheatgrowers' Relief Act.*

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

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

## QUESTIONS (3)—RAILWAYS.

### *Footwarmers.*

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