

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I fully appreciate the unpleasantness of the Bill to many members of the Opposition. They have put up their opposition in a most Parliamentary manner. Although we have had strong political differences of opinion, I do not think the prestige of the House has lost anything from the manner in which the debate has been conducted.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	23
Noes	..	..	..	17

Majority for .. .. 6

**AYES.**

Mr. Angelo	Mr. James Mitchell
Mr. Barnard	Mr. Parker
Mr. Brown	Mr. Patrick
Mr. Davy	Mr. Piesse
Mr. Doney	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Keenan	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. Thorn
Mr. H. W. Mann	Mr. Wells
Mr. J. I. Mann	Mr. North
Mr. McLarty	

(Teller.)

**NOES.**

Mr. Corboy	Mr. Pantou
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Raphael
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Hegney	Mr. Troy
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Wansbrough
Mr. Kenneally	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Withers
Mr. McCallum	Mr. Millington
Mr. Munsie	

(Teller.)

**PAIRS.**

<b>AYES.</b>	<b>NOES.</b>
Mr. Latham	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Teesdale	Mr. Lamond

Question thus passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

# **BILL—CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT.**

Report of Committee adopted.

House adjourned at 2.0 a.m. (Thursday).

## **Legislative Council,**

Thursday, 30th July, 1931.

Bills:		PAGE
Hire-Purchase Agreements, further recom.	...	4445
Supply (No. 1) £1,370,000, all stages	...	4147
Financial Emergency, 1s., 2s.	...	4163
Firearms and Guns, Assembly's Message	...	4166
Constitution Acts Amendment, 1s.	...	4166

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

## **BILL—HIRE-PURCHASE AGREEMENTS.**

### *Further Recommittal.*

On motion by the Minister for Country Water Supplies, Bill further recommitted for the purpose of again reconsidering Clause 5 and New Clause 7.

### *In Committee.*

Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair: the Minister for Country Water Supplies in charge of the Bill.

Clause 5—Proceedings on vendor repossessing chattel:

The MINISTER FOR COUNTRY WATER SUPPLIES: The clause has been amended by the Committee, but I am not satisfied with it in its present form. The position is not adequately safeguarded, and as the clause stands, it is calculated to seriously hamper the transaction of business. I think it is possible to recast the whole clause to give it some more definite form to meet requirements.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Since the clause was before the Committee last evening, it has been further considered and re-drafted. I suggest that the Minister report progress so that the amendment may be placed on the Notice Paper for members to peruse.

The CHAIRMAN: Some hon. members were good enough to show me the proposed amendment before the House met. It was suggested that we should follow the procedure adopted by leave of the Committee, when dealing with the Hospital Bill, by which a whole clause was struck out with a view to inserting a new clause. That was done for the purpose of substituting a much shorter and simpler clause. If that is to be

done, I suggest that Mr. Seddon move for the deletion of Clause 5 with a view to inserting another clause in lieu.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I move an amendment—

That all the words after the numeral "5," in line 1, be struck out with a view to inserting the following new clause:—

5. (1.) Whenever the vendor except by the request or at the instance of the purchaser shall take possession of the chattel comprised in a hire-purchase agreement, the purchaser may within twenty-one days thereafter demand an account under this section, and the vendor shall within twenty-one days after receipt of such demand deliver to the purchaser an account as between the vendor and purchaser.

(2.) If a vendor shall take possession of the chattel for some temporary purpose by the request or at the instance of the purchaser and shall afterwards refuse to re-deliver the chattel to the purchaser he shall be deemed as at the date of such refusal to have taken possession of the chattel otherwise than at the request or at the instance of the purchaser.

(3.) In such account the vendor shall debit the purchaser with any instalments of rent overdue and unpaid (together with the interest thereon at the rate of 8 per cent. per annum calculated from the date due) and with 90 per centum of the instalments of rent the stipulated time for the payment whereof has not arrived and with such additional sum (if any) as may be necessary to pay under the agreement in order to complete the purchase and also with the amount of any damages (not otherwise allowed for in the account) suffered by the vendor by reason of any breach of agreement on the part of the purchaser, the balance shown on such account subject to such adjustments as may be rendered necessary by taking into account the net proceeds realised by the sale of the chattel by public auction or the value placed thereon by the magistrate shall be a debt due by the vendor to the purchaser or the purchaser to the vendor as the case may be.

(4.) If the vendor or any person acting in his behalf shall refuse or neglect to serve such account or shall wilfully and fraudulently insert in such account any statement or figures which is or are false, or omit any statement or figures which ought to be inserted therein, he shall be guilty of an offence: penalty Fifty pounds.

(5.) Upon compliance with Subsections 1, 2, and 3 hereof, the vendor shall, subject to

(a) the place of sale being mutually agreed upon by the vendor and purchaser and failing such an agreement then the place of sale shall be the place where the hire-purchase agreement was entered into by the purchaser; and

(b) such conditions of sale as will permit both vendor and purchaser to bid; and

(c) at least two advertisements setting out the place, date and hour of sale appearing in a newspaper circulating in the district where the proposed place of sale is situated;

(d) A copy of the said advertisement being served by registered post on the purchaser seven days prior to the date fixed for holding the sale;

within twenty-eight days of taking possession of the chattel cause it to be sold by public auction and the price so realised after deducting the usual expenses occasioned by such a sale shall for the purposes of this section be deemed to be the actual value of the chattel at the date of its re-possession.

(6.) If the purchaser has failed to arrive at an amicable agreement with the vendor and is dissatisfied with the account or considers that in the sale of the chattel any of the provisions of paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d) of Subsection 5 hereof were not complied with, he may within twenty-one days of the date of service of such an account on him, or within twenty-one days of the date of the sale of the chattel, lodge the account and/or an objection to non-compliance with paragraphs (a), (b), (c) and (d) of Subsection 5 hereof, as the case may be, in the local court held nearest to the place where the chattel was taken possession of, together with a request to have such account and/or objection as aforesaid reviewed by the magistrate.

The Clerk of the Court shall thereupon summon the parties to appear before the Magistrate at a time and place stated in the summons with a view to having all questions at issue between them in relation to the disputed account and/or non-compliance with paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d) of Subsection 5 hereof settled and decided by the magistrate.

(7.) Such summons shall be deemed to be a summons in a personal action within the meaning of the Local Courts Act, 1904-1930, and the purchaser shall be deemed to be the plaintiff and the vendor the defendant, and the relative provisions of the said Act and the rules of court made thereunder shall apply to the proceedings accordingly, subject to any necessary modification and the magistrate shall have power to review and adjust the said account in favour of or against either party, and to declare invalid the sale by public auction of any chattel taken possession of by the vendor for non-compliance with paragraphs (a), (b), (c) and (d) of Subsection 5 hereof.

Provided that whenever the magistrate declares the sale by public auction of any chattel invalid he shall declare a value upon such a chattel.

(8.) The local court may extend the time for lodging the account for a period not exceeding two months; and, notwithstanding that he has not brought the account before the local court, the purchaser shall be at liberty, if sued for a balance shown against him, to prove that, by reason of the incorrectness of the account, such balance is not justly due; but subject to this section and to the next succeeding section, the account shall be deemed, in the absence of fraud, to be an account stated between the parties.

The **MINISTER FOR COUNTRY WATER SUPPLIES**: The amendment is very long, and it will be better to postpone consideration of it until Tuesday next.

The **CHAIRMAN**: No. I suggest the better course would be to postpone the further consideration of the proposed amendment until after the new Clause 7 is dealt with and then to report progress.

The **MINISTER FOR COUNTRY WATER SUPPLIES**: I move—

That the consideration of Clause 5 be postponed until after the consideration of the proposed new Clause 7.

Motion put and passed.

New Clause 7:

The **MINISTER FOR COUNTRY WATER SUPPLIES**: I do not think members were seized with the importance of the new clause, which will impose conditions that were not contemplated. Parliament has amended the Bills of Sale Act to exempt from registration certain articles which comprise almost the full list usually sold under hire-purchase agreements. The new clause will mean that those articles should be registered, whereas that course is not necessary. I move—

That all the words after the numeral "7" be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu:—"Any hire-purchase agreement exempt from registration under the provisions of Section 34 of the Bills of Sale Act, 1899, shall, notwithstanding the fact that it is unregistered, be deemed subject to the provisions of Section 29 of that Act."

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: Without studying the Minister's proposal, I cannot tell what relation it might have to the proposed new Clause 5. I suggest that progress be reported in order that both new clauses may be considered.

The **MINISTER FOR COUNTRY WATER SUPPLIES**: If members desire additional time, I am agreeable to reporting progress.

Progress reported.

**BILL—SUPPLY (No. 3), £1,370,000.**

*All Stages.*

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

*Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR COUNTRY WATER SUPPLIES** (Hon. C. F. Baxter—East) [4.51] in moving the second reading said: This request for Supply totalling £1,370,000 covers the requirements of the Government for the months of July and August. The amount is required for expenditure on account of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, the General Loan Fund, the Government Property Sales Fund and for the purposes of the Treasurer's Advance. The individual needs of those services are—

	£
Consolidated Revenue Fund ..	850,000
General Loan Fund ..	200,000
Government Property Sales Fund ..	20,000
Treasurer's Advance ..	300,000

The annual Estimates are now in course of preparation and this is the usual Bill pending their presentation to Parliament. The Estimates will be finalised at an early date and, as soon as possible thereafter, the Budget will be delivered. This Bill is for £360,000 less than the first Supply Act of last year. The reduction is mainly due to less loan money being available. Last year the first Supply Act totalled £1,730,000, made up as follows:—

	£
Consolidated Revenue Fund ..	850,000
General Loan Fund ..	550,000
Government Property Sales Fund ..	30,000
Treasurer's Advance ..	300,000

The financial position, which is still most difficult, is attributable to the heavy deficiency in our revenue and expenditure accounts which set in early last year. The Government had to expend £436,146 on unemployment relief and had to find £331,152 for additional exchange. There was also a heavy falling-off in revenue. Collections, excluding railways, fell away to the extent of £549,073. The railway returns were below the estimate by £869,021 but the expenditure was less by £500,309, leaving an unfavourable balance of £368,722 on the railway account. The results from taxation were very disappointing. Under all heads there were shortages amounting to £286,243. Land rents were also short by £82,559 and timber receipts by £89,239 and the Government had to meet an expenditure of £45,117 in consequence of the late passing of the Hospital Tax Bill. The deficiency in the accounts was met by means of short term advances through the Loan Council, and, for the year, totalled £1,600,000. That necessary assistance had to be availed of so that

certain loan works could be carried on for the relief of unemployment, and it was also essential to obtain funds to meet the commitments of the Agricultural Bank and for group settlement purposes. The expenditure on loan account was £1,759,263, and all of it was absolutely necessary to meet the needs of the community. In the latter part of the previous year a portion of a Commonwealth loan was made available and from that source the State received £1,536,224 in the first half of last year; also £64,511 in respect to migration and £411,781 on account of Federal Aid Roads. Except for those moneys, loan funds have been unprocurable. Funds for the Agricultural Bank were provided by the Commonwealth Bank through the Finance and Development Board to the extent of £600,000. That assistance was extremely opportune, and it was only obtainable by reason of the existence of the Finance and Development Board Act. Members are aware that meetings of the Loan Council were almost continuous throughout the year, and it could not be otherwise in view of the distressing times through which Australia is passing. It can safely be said that the financial position in all Australia has never been so difficult, but now we feel that we are on the road to more prosperous conditions. although we may experience greater difficulties ere reaching the journey's end. Our foremost trouble in carrying on is the heavy expenditure for exchange and unemployment relief, over which we have absolutely no control. It is expected that the crippling expenditure under those headings will amount to more than £1,000,000 this year. This amount must be met at all costs, and we shall have to bend our backs to get it. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

**HON. H. SEDDON** (North-East) [4.58]: This is the first Supply Bill for the present financial year, and I congratulate the Minister upon the interesting figures he has submitted on the operations of the past year. The figures are significant because, although the year was one in which finance was particularly difficult, the Government were able to obtain no less than £1,750,000 to expend on loan works. There is no doubt that that was the means of enabling the Government to provide a considerable amount of employment that otherwise could not have been made available. According to Mr. Cornell,

post-mortem examinations are not of much use, but I hold that there is an advantage in revising figures because they give some indication of what might be expected to occur in future. When the Estimates were placed before Parliament last year, the Premier budgeted for a surplus of £5,000. As a matter of fact, the year closed with a deficit of £1,400,000 odd. Obviously it is almost an impossibility to make anything like an accurate forecast. Bearing in mind the estimate and the realisation last year, the Premier will probably be confronted with similar difficulties in making his forecast for the current year. For two years we have been feeling the effects of the depression, and it is interesting to note its influence upon the finances of the State. Unfortunately, I have the figures of loan expenditure only up to March last. The returns have not yet been placed before us, but it is interesting to note the manner in which the loan money was spent. To the end of March the expenditure on loan account amounted to £1,400,000, and it was distributed as follows:—Goldfields water supply and the goldfields, metropolitan utilities, and departmental buildings, etc., absorbed £151,062; whilst on agriculture, harbours and rivers, and country water supplies there was spent £1,356,593. It will be seen that 10 per cent. of the total was devoted to the first three items, and that the money was spent in the metropolitan area and on public utilities whilst 90 per cent. was spent in agricultural development, harbours and rivers and country water supplies. That is very significant because it shows that the policy of the Government has been concentrated in rendering assistance to the people of the country and in endeavouring to develop the country, thereby assisting production. It is quite true, as the Minister has pointed out, that the expenditure of that money in the country must have resulted in providing considerable employment, and I trust he will be able to furnish us, if not shortly, then at some future time, with information showing just exactly how that money has been devoted to providing employment for men who otherwise would have been entirely without work. It will be interesting too, to learn the manner in which the money was spent by reason of the fact that the total was small as compared with the loan moneys expended in previous years when Governments had the advantage of using amounts totalling as

much as £4,000,000. I shall touch briefly on consolidated revenue figures that the Minister has placed before the House. It is interesting to note that for the nine months ended the 31st March last the three main increases were interest £416,264, due largely to exchange, the Treasurer's increase was £174,753, and that of Welfare £264,678. The last named represents an increase of something like 240 per cent. on the figures of the previous year, doubtless due to the existing depression. There were considerable decreases in some departments and these should be brought before the notice of members. Up to March last Utilities showed a decrease of £346,188, Agriculture £68,406, Public Works £68,684 and the Premier's Department £34,182. I quote these figures because they show the way things have been going, and because they also demonstrate that while attempts have been made to cut down expenditure, it is on the revenue side that the estimates have been so entirely astray. We have before us a Bill to provide supply for two months of the new financial year, and the present is the time when we should scrutinise expenditure very closely, because it is only before the money is expended that we have the opportunity to offer suggestions. We can look to the Minister to make a statement as to the direction in which this money will be expended. In the figures to March the biggest item of loan expenditure was devoted to the assistance of agriculture. The development of this industry took £721,233 up to March last. That figure was divided up under the following heads: Agricultural Bank working capital, £260,234; assistance to settlers £192,078; agricultural group settlement £202,800; and there were two smaller items making up the balance, these being, Development of Agriculture £30,658 and Soldier Settlement £33,060. Hon. members will notice what a large sum of money has been devoted to the development of agriculture. The sum of £260,000 has been added to the working capital of the Agricultural Bank. I should like the Minister to make a note of this and to give us an indication later on, showing exactly how that capital has been employed, whether it was used to carry out further improvements on holdings, or whether a considerable amount had to be used to make up interest which will be due from the settlers. Assistance to settlers,

as I have just shown, was responsible for £192,000. Last year we had some interesting figures in the return of the Industries Assistance Board, and I take it that the assistance to settlers is really an indication of expenditure in that and other directions. An analysis of this total would also be very interesting. We find that the group settlement scheme is still taking a large sum from loan funds, to enable it to be carried on. I should like briefly to refer to the subject of unemployment about which a great deal was said in another place last night. The question is not new; it was with us before the present Government took office, but the conditions were nothing like those existing to-day. The previous Government were unable to cope with the situation, although the numbers at that time were only about 30 or 40 per cent. of the total that exists at present. The Minister might give us figures showing the extent to which unemployment has been relieved by the present Government. I take it that we shall have the opportunity later on when the Appropriation Bill is before us to discuss the proposals of the Government with regard to expenditure. The present, however, is the time when we must watch expenditure closely because it is in the opening months of the year that revenue is invariably low, and when deficits occur. We shall look with interest to reading the figures as they are published from month to month because, realising the existing position, we know that deficits can duly be carried on from month to month by bank advances, but no one knows when the banks will declare that they are no longer able to make funds available to meet those deficits. I shall support the second reading of the Bill.

**HON. J. NICHOLSON** (Metropolitan) [5.8]: I should like to express appreciation of the full statement made by the Leader of the House in introducing the Bill, and also for the interesting review of the position by the previous speaker, who showed that he has followed the subject with a depth of interest that we know he is capable of. His review will enable probably those of us who may not have followed the matter as closely as he has done to grasp more clearly the position relating to both revenue and loan expenditure. There were certain matters to which the Minister alluded that

might be referred to. He called attention to the fact that two points of difficulty presented themselves to the Government—we are all fully cognisant of those points—with respect to solving many of the problems now facing the State. One of these was the high cost entailed by reason of the exchange in the remittance of money overseas. The other is a serious item that strikes us even more forcibly as we walk along the street—the question of unemployment. Every man, if he has any sense of feeling at all, must sympathise very deeply with those who are experiencing difficulties as a result of unemployment. The position prompts one further to consider whether means cannot be found for alleviating the distress that exists. We have built up around us a certain wall, and established certain standards which have resulted very largely in unemployment. We ourselves have created those difficulties to a large extent.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: The Arbitration Court is one of them, and I am not quite sure that the Agricultural Bank is not also responsible for a good deal.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I would not like to agree that the Agricultural Bank is responsible for any of the trouble. I consider it has been the means of rendering valuable assistance. Whilst no doubt the bank has spent a great deal of money which will never be recovered, at the same time it has been the means of placing a large number of men on the land. Unfortunately through adverse conditions overseas, prices have decreased to the level existing to-day. If there is any body of people deserving of success it is undoubtedly those on the land. They are the backbone of the country, particularly in Western Australia.

Hon. G. W. Miles: I am glad to hear you admit that at last.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: At all times I have appreciated the valuable services rendered by the man on the land. I was referring to the fact that we had established various standards. We have built up those edifices thinking that we could create conditions which we could maintain. No one would welcome the expansion of those standards more than I, but it will depend entirely on our ability to maintain them. If, for example, we seek to say that because of our difficulties we have to pursue a certain line of action and then we must devise means to maintain that standard by supplementing our revenues which have fallen so seriously.

I think those who have advocated the creation of those standards should seriously consider whether some method of suspension of those standards should not be provided so as to furnish the means of alleviating the distress caused by unemployment.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Would the lawyers agree to suspend their standard?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: They would be only too pleased to do anything to join in the general sacrifice. We are passing through a condition which, if we do not seek to arrest its growth, will undoubtedly overwhelm us. Wisdom should triumph as against beliefs in mere shibboleths. If we have not the means to enable us to support those standards, surely we must be like that wise tailor and cut our coat according to our cloth. That is the measure, and there can be no other measure. Otherwise there will come a time when there will be no means to satisfy even the wants of the unemployed. That will be a disaster indeed. We shall be overwhelmed with misery: no one will benefit by it and the country will suffer. That should cause one to reflect and see what can be done to arrest the progress of unemployment. For example, we have a large body of men stationed at Blackboy. Those men are yielding nothing to the common fund. It is not that they are not desirous of doing so, for I know amongst those men some of the finest characters one could wish for.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: Send them out prospecting.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I do not care what means are devised. I know certain men up there who are of the finest character, and who have no desire to be classed as unemployed. They want work, but they cannot find it, and there is no one there to provide that work for them. If means could be devised to furnish those men with some form of employment, surely it would be much better for them to have their wish gratified and be enabled to furnish something to the common fund and save the country from disaster. The matter should be very seriously considered and the Government, if they have not already done so, should seek a means of usefully engaging the services of those men which would be much better for the country and probably avert a financial catastrophe.

Hon. G. W. Miles: If the Government had the courage to suspend the operation of the Arbitration Act it would relieve the situation at once.

**Hon. J. NICHOLSON:** For example, suppose a man is employed at a lesser wage than customary, at such a wage as the industry can pay—many industries at present cannot afford to pay even the basic wage—if a man or several men could be employed in an industry at a lower wage, it would be very much better in the interests, not only of the men themselves, but also of the industry and of the country at large. If those men had a certain amount of capital in the way of wages furnished to them from week to week, getting as nearly as possible a living wage, this would mean money put into circulation; and if they could not get a living wage they could earn something and it could perhaps be supplemented by the Government—

**Hon. E. H. H. Hall:** Where are the Government to get the money from?

**Hon. J. NICHOLSON:** At present they are getting it from some source and the Government are getting nothing in return for it. There is no real wealth being created at present by those men receiving Government sustenance.

**Hon. E. H. H. Hall:** How do you propose to get over that?

**Hon. J. NICHOLSON:** The Government should devise means. There should be a general conference of all those interested, those representing the various unions of employers and employees; everyone should investigate the matter and see what can be done to avert a catastrophe. If there is a certain amount being paid in wages the sum represented will form a fair amount of capital in the aggregate, and it will be put into circulation. Suppose a man is getting so much per week, which is added to by some form of sustenance provided by the Government; that capital would be put into circulation, which would be very much better than the mere paying out of a dole by the Government. Money put into circulation is of service to all of us, and in addition it provides him who distributes it with certain goods for himself. And, under what I am outlining, it would arise from a source which helped to create wealth. That is the way in which to emerge from our difficulties; we have to create wealth, else we shall not get out of our difficulties.

**Hon. E. H. H. Hall:** Can the hon. member mention any way of producing wealth at present, except by the production of gold?

**Hon. J. NICHOLSON:** Whether it is possible to create new methods of production

I must leave to those better versed in the subject than am I; but the finding of gold would be one of the greatest aids to success and prosperity.

**Hon. J. Cornell:** For a time.

**Hon. J. NICHOLSON:** Yes, for a time. Then we must get into other avenues, so as to create other forms of wealth. The Minister indicated that he hoped a time of prosperity would come. I am sure everyone of us re-echoes that sentiment, but I cannot see how a time of prosperity can possibly come without great effort on the part of everybody. For there can be nothing done to rectify the position in the conditions under which we are operating at the present time, since every effort we put forward is nullified by the steps that are taken in the opposite direction. All that has to be done is to bring those two factors more into harmony than they are at present. In the interests of everyone it is desirable to re-establish our affairs and, as the Minister said, to bring back that state of prosperity which we are all desirous of seeing. I will support the second reading.

**HON. SIR EDWARD WITTENOOM** (North) [5.26]: I do not propose to say anything in opposition to the measure, for even if I were to do so it would be useless. At the same time I cannot resist taking the opportunity to make a few remarks in justification of what I said a little while ago, namely, that the Agricultural Bank was to some extent responsible for a certain amount of unemployment. I am greatly in favour of the farmer and of anybody who is making the land productive, but I think that in many cases people have been placed on the land who were not fit to go on it, while many that were fit to go on the land have been put on to land not fit to use. The result has been many failures. I have not at my fingers' ends the amount of money that has been lost by the Agricultural Bank through the failure of its clients, but it is a considerable sum. Because of the attitude of the Agricultural Bank and of various Governments we may well say that in no other part of the world have the primary producers been the subject of such paternal regard by Governments as they have been in Western Australia. The land here is more easily accessible than is land elsewhere, and men who have no capital have capital found for them by the Agricultural Bank. I am only putting that forward as a suggestion

that in the framing of the Budget next year care should be taken that not too much money is allowed for the expansion of land settlement. In a time of great distress, credit was found for the settlers by the Industries Assistance Board, whose good offices in too many instances were ill requited by ungrateful clients. Against no Government, past or present, in this country can a charge of unconcern for the well-being or prosperity of the settler, or of indifference to his trials and tribulations be sustained. The mistakes made have arisen mainly by excess of zeal for the settlement of the land and the succour of distressed settlers, and on the other hand by a lack of zest in the settlers for that hard work which is inseparable from successful husbandry on their holdings. Among the mistakes made by several Governments has been the placing on repurchased estates of men without money. It is not that the price of the repurchased land has been excessive in itself; it is that it has been excessive to men who have embarked on its cultivation without capital, and so necessarily have been denied the privilege enjoyed by the settler who takes up Crown land and is exempted from the paying of rent for the first five years of his tenure. It is impossible, after the advances have been made from the bank, for these men to make the industry pay. What industry under modern conditions could be successfully developed by men without capital or experience, and financed entirely by the State? That so many wheat farmers have prospered is due in no small measure to the depreciation in land values which has come so fortuitously to their aid. Incidentally, this has led to the development of a sense of security which, however, vast debts have for a moment destroyed. We should do all we can to make the land productive, and find as much labour and work as we can. I am only putting this suggestion forward in the hope that the Government may take care, in making their estimates, not to allow so much money to be advanced, unless people are well fitted to take it, as has been the case in the past. I have been told that men have been financed by the Agricultural Bank on a return of three, six or nine bushels to the acre. A wheatgrower cannot make his business pay under 12 or 15 bushels to the acre, and not even on that average in these days. The Government should, therefore, be careful in making up their esti-

mates. I was sorry no alternative suggestions were advanced to those I put forward, and which were turned down, but on Tuesday I hope to have something more to say on this question. In the meantime, I support the second reading of the Bill.

**HON. J. CORNELL** (South) [5.32]:

Whilst I favour the Bill being passed, I do not agree with the methods followed by the Government in dealing with the unemployed. I know of innumerable cases of men who, by industry and sobriety, have saved a little money, who have been thrown out of work, and are now almost "stony-broke" and who unless they register can get neither employment nor money. That is the type of man to whom I would give assistance.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Yes, the thrifty man.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I know of men who, rather than sink their individuality and independence, are living on less than the dole. They are passing from door to door and place to place in an endeavour to get a little job. I know that the circumstances by which we are surrounded have come upon us like a thief in the night, and that it is easy to be wise after the event. I endeavour to view our unfortunate circumstances cheerfully, and with some degree of humour. If in our days of adversity we were to lose the saving grace of humour, the Claremont Asylum for the Insane would not hold us all. But I do not see how one can maintain a sense of humour and possess a degree of fortitude when such a policy has no other purpose than the destruction of fortitude in mankind. Although the hour is late, I trust that in any future dissemination of unemployment relief, that section of the community whose independence and sobriety form such outstanding traits in their character, will not be penalised and be forced to use up all their reserves before something is done for them. I listened patiently to the remarks of Mr. Nicholson as to what should be done and what might be done. The set of circumstances which confronts Australia equally confronts all civilised countries. I have yet to learn that any civilised country has evolved a system that gets beyond the dole and unemployment relief. That can be attributed to the fact that primary products have practically no value in the world. Everything is produced practically at a loss. What we want is the production of real wealth. What I rose to touch upon was the



speech by Sir Edward Wittenoom. Without desiring to be vulgar, I think someone has been pulling his leg again. He accuses the Agricultural Bank of spending money in certain directions where it should not have been spent. He ought to couple the Agricultural Bank with the chartered banks. I claim that the chartered banks have done ten times as much to bring insolvency upon the farming community as the Agricultural Bank has done. They have hawked their business. They practically slept on the doorsteps of farmers' houses in order to get second mortgages over the properties.

Hon. G. W. Miles: They were practical men to whom the bank were advancing.

Hon. J. CORNELL: They were the first to "go broke."

Hon. G. W. Miles: No fear!

Hon. J. CORNELL: Yes, they were. The worst off farmers in Western Australia are not those in the Westonia and Yilgarn districts, but those in the older settled districts who drew up to £2,000 from the Agricultural Bank, though some of them have paid back practically nothing since, capitalised themselves at £2 an acre with that institution, and then drew up to £3 an acre from the chartered banks.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: How much has the Agricultural Bank lost through bad farming?

Hon. J. CORNELL: How much have the chartered banks alone lost?

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: In my experience they have lost very little.

Hon. J. CORNELL: If that is the hon. member's opinion he cannot take an intelligent interest in his post as a bank director. I should like him to tell the House how he proposes we shall get out of our obligations to the man on the land. Who were the first men to send out an S.O.S. in this country? Where did they come from? They came from the Wheatgrowers' Union, not in the outback centres but the close-in centres. Sir Edward Wittenoom knows, and other members know, that the men who received 9s. a bushel for their wheat and 2s. 9d. a lb. for their wool were the first to go bankrupt, and they are likely to remain bankrupt. When we reach the period of reconstruction, they will start out with a capitalisation of £5 or £6 an acre, against a capitalisation of 25s. in the case of the Westonia and Yilgarn districts.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: If they have any acres left.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The acres will still be there. If the Agricultural Bank had not pioneered settlement, the chartered banks never would have done so. It would be impossible to make a mathematical calculation of the good that has been accomplished by the Agricultural Bank in terms of pounds, shillings and pence. Sir Edward Wittenoom has said he was told that the Agricultural Bank had put inexperienced men on the land. Every member who knows the farming community knows that the greater percentage of our successful farmers had no previous farming experience.

The Minister for Country Water Supplies: Quite right.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Although they had no preconceived ideas on the subject, they were guided by men who did know. I ask Sir Edward Wittenoom where this State would turn to get experienced men to settle on the land? He would not suggest we should get them from the Old Country. What experience has a man from the Old Country that will enable him to understand the conditions in this State?

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: Let them work on good farms first and gain experience.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I came from the Eastern States. Just as gold mining is totally different in this State from the Eastern States, so are our farming conditions here different from those that exist in the other States. If we had had to wait until we had trained inexperienced men to go upon our lands, we would not have reached the enviable position of being the premier wheat-producing State of Australia.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: With a million and a half deficit. What a splendid position!

Hon. J. CORNELL: I read an article in the "Bulletin" the other day which said that a certain gentleman in this State had remarked that Western Australia possessed some of the worst farmers in the world. The journal in question stated that a country which could produce up to 28 and 30 bushels to the acre, with a rainfall of 7 or 8 inches, must of necessity possess some of the finest farmers in the world. It went on to say the country which could do that

could almost grow wheat at present prices without an increase until 1930. There is no State in Australia which, on the rainfall, can grow the crops this State has grown. Sir Edward Wittenoom has said that the Agricultural Bank has put men on land which has produced only three bushels of wheat to the acre. I should like to know where those lands are.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: I could tell you but I will not do so.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The hon. member does not know.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: I do know.

Hon. J. CORNELL: There might be an individual who did not grow more than three bushels to the acre, but he is the exception to the rule.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: You know the cases I have in mind.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I know of no district in this State that has ever come down as low as a 3-bushel average.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: I know of it.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Anyone who told Sir Edward Wittenoom 20 years ago that wheat would be grown at Westonia would have been informed that he had better get his head read. But last year the district yielded 18 bushels to the acre. The whole of the Yilgarn, which produced over 3½ million bushels of wheat, this year gave a 17½ bushels average to the acre. The farmers there were inexperienced, but they had not the advantage of assistance from the banks after the Agricultural Bank had helped them, and they are now capitalised at between 25s. and 30s. an acre, against a capitalisation of £5 or £6 in other districts. I regret that Sir Edward Wittenoom should have singled out the Agricultural Bank and its clients for certain suggested economies. The hon. member also said that he hoped too much money would not be made available for land development. There are to-day about 9,000 clients of the Agricultural Bank, and probably a third of them are drawing sustenance. That sustenance is a charge against their crops.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: You must have a lot of farmer supporters.

Hon. J. CORNELL: If the Agricultural Bank were not assisting in that way, and if Sir Edward's bank were not doing likewise,

clients would leave their holdings and come to Perth for sustenance. They would have to receive it, because in a civilised country people cannot be allowed to starve. What is the difference between a man in the country drawing sustenance and a man in the city drawing sustenance? That the man in the country is doing something for his sustenance, whereas the man in the city is not. If this State is going to be pulled out of the mire, it will be done by the primary producer, assisted by such institutions as the Agricultural Bank, which started the primary producer on his way and will see him through. If that section of the community cannot pull us out of the mire, we shall probably be compelled to eat each other for lack of sustenance. At least we should do nothing to discourage the man on the land, if we cannot help him. If he read Sir Edward's remarks, he would be to some extent discouraged. I support the Bill, and when the turn of the wheel comes—it must come as night follows the day—when the men engaged in the production of wool and wheat and the conversion of timber can again produce at a profit, then, and only then, will prosperity return to Western Australia.

**HON. E. H. H. HALL** (Central) [5.49]: I would not rise were it not that this is the time and place to register my disapproval of the delay which occurs in securing sustenance for men in the country districts, men with good records, and in sad need because of large families. I have tried for as long as six weeks to obtain the granting of sustenance in such cases. On the other hand, people in the cities and towns are able to secure sustenance with little trouble. I appreciate, as we all must, the difficulties of the Government. They have accomplished good work in this respect. It is not my desire that they should deprive any of the people in the cities or towns of the sustenance which is being given them; but I do ask that the Government pay more attention, through their officers, to cases in the agricultural districts which sadly need assistance. That assistance should be rendered more promptly than has been the case. A conference on the subject was held recently between the Agricultural Bank and representatives of the country districts. Even then, official methods are too roundabout. I have knowledge of two or three families who are within 25 miles of Gerald-

ton, but whose location is within the Northampton police district. The police officer in charge at Northampton complains bitterly that he is overworked, having only one assistant. The inspector of police at Geraldton has 12 or 13 constables. The families in question are on the verge of starvation; and this information is backed up by the road board secretary. Nevertheless they have to wait for relief until the police officer at Northampton can send out his one assistant to make inquiries. I agree with Mr. Cornell that it is the desire of Ministers that primary producers shall remain on their blocks. I was with the Minister for Lands when he told the people along the Wongan Hills line that they must not get rattled but must stop on their blocks, and that the Government would assist them. However, the official inquiries precedent to giving effect to the Government's policy take too long.

Hon. J. Cornell: The Agricultural Bank inspector has power to advance.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I consulted the Agricultural Bank inspector at Geraldton, and he told me that he had not received such authority. I ventilate the matter here because it should be seen to. We do not want people coming from the country into the cities and towns, where men get three meals a day and sleeping accommodation. People in the bush are under the mistaken impression that they are being neglected. Mr. Cornell remarked that post-mortems get us nowhere. He has, however, been led away by some remarks of Sir Edward Wittenoom. The Agricultural Bank, in common with all other banks, in common with all Governments, and in common with all of us, has been guilty of great mistakes, due, I believe, to want of co-operation between two important departments, those of Agriculture and Lands. I do not think the trouble is likely to continue. It has been the boast of various Ministers for Lands that they have been the means of throwing open for settlement hundreds of thousands of acres. What has happened in such cases? Men anxious for land have settled in those areas. When the number of settlers was eight or ten, they applied to the Agricultural Bank for assistance. Along the Wongan Hills railway plenty of land is available for selection, and yet the Government threw open areas in the Southern Cross district, where men are said to be farming as much as 30, 40, and even 50 miles from the railway.

Hon. J. Cornell: They are east of Lake Grace.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Yes, in the province of our friend Mr. Glasheen. Want of co-operation between departments has helped to put us in our present unfortunate position. Mr. Troy, when Minister for Lands, withdrew from selection some 250,000 acres that had been thrown open. Why? Because he was convinced that the land was being taken up in areas that were too large, areas of 5,000 acres. The Minister woke up on that occasion, but at other times what I complain of has been permitted to go on. I support the second reading of the Bill.

**HON. SIR WILLIAM LATHLAIN** (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.55]: I did not intend to speak on the measure, but the remarks of the Leader of the House on the enormous amount of money which is being spent in sustenance must make all of us think once again. On another Bill I stated that I had been through the crisis in Victoria, which was even worse than the present depression. Victorian conditions were most serious, but the methods adopted to remedy them were different from those which are being adopted here. Most members of this Chamber have been along the banks of the Yarra and have seen the beautiful Alexander Garden. The whole of the foundation work in connection with that garden was carried out at a time when unemployment was rife. It was proclaimed a relief work, and unfortunately the men employed on it were paid only 4s. per day. I am not advocating that scale of payment, or anything like it; but I hold that a number of works might be created as relief works here, and arrangements made for the men engaged on them to receive less than the sacred basic wage. As Lord Mayor of Perth I am gaining considerable experience in endeavouring to find work for unemployed men. However, when one has to pay the basic wage to men who are incompetent to carry out even the simplest duties, one feels that one is not getting a fair return for the money expended. The beautifying of the foreshore and surroundings of the Causeway is a scheme which I think might well be carried out if created as a relief work. I do not refer to the building of another causeway, but to the beautifying scheme. The work was in progress previously, and the necessary plant is lying there, a plant procured at great expense specially for that particular work.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: Will it be reproductive?

Hon. Sir WILLIAM LATHLAIN: It will create employment for men willing to work rather than receive sustenance for nothing. It would be the means of giving to many men what they desire, an opportunity to retain their manhood by working for the money they receive. I mentioned the scheme because there is nothing to be done in the way of preparation. The plans are complete, the plant is on the spot, and the work was in progress prior to the crisis. A scheme might be devised by which men would be given work at something better than a sustenance rate per week. There would be some return for the money. Other schemes might be mentioned—for instance, the widening of Mount's Bay-road. This could be undertaken in conjunction with the causeway scheme, because it would involve the raising of an enormous quantity of material, which would have to be deposited somewhere.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: That is unnecessary work.

Hon. Sir WILLIAM LATHLAIN: Mount's Bay-road may have been wide enough when the hon. member was a youth, but since those days, Perth has grown enormously and to-day the road is not nearly wide enough to cope with the traffic. I make these suggestions to the Leader of the House, because I am convinced that the work could be carried out advantageously at the present juncture, but not at basic wage rates. While I regret that such a position confronts us at the moment, I remember the circumstances that had to be faced in Victoria, where the position was much worse than is ours to-day.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: And there was not a paternal Government either.

Hon. Sir WILLIAM LATHLAIN: It is not only a question of finding £430,000, because that amount will be increased by the end of the financial year. In sustenance and exchange payments, nearly £1,000,000 has to be found. That is an enormous sum for a small State like Western Australia to provide, for which there is no return whatever. I hope something will be done so that the men at Blackboy and Hovea, as well as elsewhere—I include the men who are residing in their own homes, but are unable to secure employment—may have an opportunity to obtain work that will be of benefit to the citizens as a whole. I am not

contemplating works that may be regarded as profitable, and I suggest the Causeway scheme, because it will add to the beautification of the city. When I remember the conditions that obtained along the banks of the Yarra years ago, I can assure hon. members that they were in no better condition than the banks of the Swan at the Causeway. With the advantage of the reclamation works and other improvements, the banks of the Yarra to-day provide one of the most beautiful spots to be found in any part of the world. The foundation of the scheme for beautifying the Yarra was relief work furnished in the days following the land boom. Something along the same lines can be done here, for it will help many of our citizens in these stressful times and give them an opportunity to maintain their manhood. I hope the Minister will ascertain whether something can be done along the lines I have suggested. It is impossible to find work for men at the basic rate of wages because we have so many men who require employment. If relief works were undertaken, such as I have indicated, much could be done to provide the necessary work at a rate of wages that would at least keep the wolf from the door of every man employed.

**HON. V. HAMERSLEY** (East) [6.4]: I wish to emphasise the fact that I dissociate myself entirely from the remarks made by Sir Edward Wittenoom. We must realise what an immense benefit the establishment of the Agricultural Bank has been to Western Australia. Those of us who can look back over a number of years will remember how impossible it was to develop the back country with money advanced by the chartered banks. It could not be done. The difficulty arose from the fact that the land was owned by the Government who sold it on 20-year terms. Unless they could hand over their first mortgages to the bank, the settlers found that the Associated Banks were disinclined to lend money for developmental purposes. To overcome the difficulty, the Agricultural Bank was established and it has proved to be a huge success.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: How much money has it lost?

**HON. V. HAMERSLEY**: Settlers who have been able to go on the land as a result of assistance from the Agricultural Bank, have carried out tremendous developmental

operations that have been in the interests of the State. For at least the last 15 years, and until the recent depression made itself felt, the earnings per head of those engaged in the agricultural industry, and the results achieved by them, surpassed anything accomplished in any other part of the world.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: How much of the taxpayers' money has the bank lost?

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: As the settlers proved successful, the Associated Banks eagerly sought to secure the good accounts, leaving the bad accounts to the Agricultural Bank. Even so, many of those who have been further assisted by the Agricultural Bank will prove successful in the end. I can assure Sir Edward Wittenoom that the Associated Banks have done remarkably well as the result of the development that has taken place throughout the agricultural areas. No doubt the banks are suffering to-day, in common with the rest of the community. It would be of great advantage if we could wipe out the Arbitration Act and the awards made under its provisions. None of the settlers to-day is in receipt of the basic wage. All of them have to work long hours, and many are operating on a starvation basis. Still those people are prepared to make enough money to shift the goods overseas to pay the exchange rates and provide the State Government with the necessary financial assistance. The Arbitration Court awards represent a burden that it is impossible for the primary producers to shoulder, whether they be pastoralists or agriculturists.

HON. F. W. ALLSOP (North-East) [6.7]: I sympathise with the Government regarding the difficulties confronting them in the task of providing adequate funds to meet the present-day requirements. One of the best means of overcoming much of the unemployment that exists to-day would be to send men out prospecting. In my opinion, the Government are not at present giving the prospector the deal he is entitled to. I am in a position to state definitely what many of those men are doing. I know many of them personally. Last week I received a letter from a man at Ora Banda. He is a well-known prospector, and a very good man. He told me that he had been granted sustenance over a period of three months, and enclosed a letter from the Mines Depart-

ment saying that they could not continue making the sustenance payments available to him. In the circumstances, that man was contemplating selling his horse and cart and going to Blackboy in order to get three meals a day and 5s. pocket money weekly.

Hon. J. Cornell: He would have to spend the proceeds from the sale of the horse and cart before he could get into Blackboy.

Hon. F. W. ALLSOP: I believe that is so. It is a shame to force such a well known and good prospector from the auriferous country down to the coast. As indicating what work is being done in the industry to-day, I should say that there is seventy per cent. more gold bars being turned out now than two years ago. At Kalgoorlie a lot of extra work is being carried out. We have the task of determining the assays. The banks take the gold bars, which they have assayed, and the resultant wealth has represented an increase of many pounds. I should say that, as a result of the activity shown in the industry, the volume of assay work has been increased by fully 70 per cent. compared with two years ago, and most of the gold has come from small shows. It is a mistake to sneer at the inexperienced prospector because quite 25 per cent. of the new gold that is being produced has been discovered as the result of the work of men who had no experience until quite recently. As a matter of fact the newcomer is not so conservative as the old prospector, and is prepared to try new ground. Some of these young fellows have had a fair measure of success. The fact that there exists so much depression to-day, has its bright side in regard to the mining industry. It has to be remembered, for instance, that for gold that was worth £100 a few years ago, the prospector now receives £129 5s. or thereabouts. The difference is accounted for by the exchange that is in favour of the producer under existing conditions. Immediately gold is assayed, the fortunate prospector or mining man secures not only the value of the gold contents, but benefits by the adverse exchange in addition. It is that phase of the industry that is making so many men eager to embark upon prospecting work in the goldfields areas. I listened attentively to the remarks by Sir William Lathlain who said it would be splendid if the unemployed were allowed to carry out improvement schemes about the City of Perth. On the other hand,

if those men were allowed to go to the gold-fields areas and engage in prospecting, new wealth possibly could be added to the coffers of the State, and that would be of advantage to the Treasury. If those men could receive the same treatment as those at Blackboy, namely, three meals a day and 5s. pocket money a week, I am sure that 50 per cent. of the best men at Blackboy would be prepared to go out prospecting. I am sure that before long they would be producing gold.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Some such scheme has been started in Victoria.

Hon. F. W. ALLSOP: I understand that last year Victoria doubled her output of gold. In this State our output is increasing each month by 4,000 or 5,000 ounces. No doubt that is due to the opening up of operations at Wiluna, but some of it must be attributed to the increased numbers of prospectors fossicking for gold. Certainly the interests of Australia as a whole would be advanced if large numbers of those now out of work were employed looking for gold. Although many of them may be disappointed, many will be successful. In this State we have one of the largest auriferous belts in the country known in the world. I remember 37 years ago when Cecil Rhodes took Hayes Hammond, one of the most experienced and notable engineers of the time, up to Rhodesia. In South Africa great interest was taken in the visit, because Hammond was to look over the country from a gold-bearing standpoint. Many men followed, and it was not long before thousands of assays had to be dealt with. At that time I was in an assayer's office in Johannesburg, and I can remember how the ore poured in for assay purposes. As a result of that small expedition into Rhodesia, there are now fields being worked from which almost as much gold is produced as we secure in Western Australia.

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

Hon. F. W. ALLSOP: Quite a number of letters have appeared in the Press pointing out how beneficial it would be if men equipped by the Government went out to treat a lot of the old tailing dumps. The firm with whom I was connected have treated more of the tailing dumps and paid

the Government more for water than any other firm in Western Australia. We have had our plants going on almost every field in the State. Many of the newspaper references to those old dumps are absolutely absurd. I am quite sure that no firm properly equipped to treat those dumps in the past when economic conditions were infinitely more favourable than they are at present, would have left thousands of pounds' worth of gold in the dumps. At the same time the adverse exchange is giving gold an extra value, and if the Government sent men out under proper leadership, they might earn £2 or £3 a week. A handy water supply is necessary and the cost of plant for treating an old dump is £400 to £500. When we were treating dumps, and costs were more favourable than they are now, we were compelled, on getting near to the forepart of the dump, to close down. If only the same conditions prevailed here as in South Africa and other parts of the world, we would have been able to treat every ton of tailings instead of having to leave thousands of tons untreated. Still, I would rather see all those tailings left untreated than introduce black labour into Australia. Its moral effect would be bad, and would far outweigh any good that would be derived by the State from the introduction of cheap labour. At the Coolgardie State Battery I believe there is an accumulation of about 4,000 tons of ore. The Minister for Mines is to be commended for introducing the subsidising of private batteries which is giving some relief to Coolgardie, Ora Banda and other Government batteries. The increase in gold production has caught the Government napping. We started ill-prepared for the extra tonnage. Men living near the Coolgardie State battery have to wait perhaps one to three months to get their ore treated and, while they are waiting, some of them can hardly get bread to eat, even though the parcel of ore stacked at the battery may be worth several thousands of pounds. If the Government gave those men sustenance while they were waiting for their ore to be crushed, the cost of it would be repaid as soon as the batteries could crush the accumulation of ore.

Hon. J. Nicholson: The Government battery would have the value of the ore.

Hon. F. W. ALLSOP: Yes, and a few assays would keep the Government on the

right side and ensure that they were not paying too much for the ore. I am very keen on the question of getting men out prospecting. I have seen the good it has done in other parts of the world. If we got some decent prospectors and offered them the conditions that are given to men at Blackboy. I think within two or three weeks we would have 1,000 to 2,000 men out prospecting. Actually the only additional expense would be a free rail pass to the goldfields and the cost of a pick and shovel and a few other tools. This would be one of the best ways to assist to solve the unemployment problem.

**HON. G. FRASER** (West) [7.56]: I do not intend to reply to any of the statements made about abolishing the Arbitration Court or reducing the basic wage, except to say that should the basic wage be brought any lower, the position of the men receiving it will be indeed desperate.

**Hon. Sir William Lathlain**: What about the position of the people who are not drawing it?

**Hon. G. FRASER**: They are in a much worse position, and it is about them I wish to speak. It is time the Government gave more serious consideration to the position of the people on sustenance. If a wife is drawing the old-age or invalid pension, the husband is refused sustenance. It is necessary that this phase of Government assistance should be reviewed. We are told that the Government will permit a man on sustenance to earn at least sufficient money per week to cover rent, but when the wife is receiving a pension of 17s. 6d. a week, it is not sufficient to keep the couple and enable them to pay rent.

**Hon. J. Cornell**: If the wife were drawing the old-age pension, the husband should be beyond work.

**Hon. G. FRASER**: That does not follow. A woman can draw the old-age pension at 60, but a man cannot draw it until he is 65. I have had brought under my notice instances of persons having applied for sustenance under these conditions and having been refused. A pension of £1 a week as it was, or 17s. 6d. a week as it is now, is not sufficient to keep a man and his wife. Such men do not want charity; they want work if it is possible to get work, and in lieu of work they ask for some little assistance from the Government. Consider now the position

of a man and his wife in receipt of sustenance. They draw 14s. per week in all, and out of it they are supposed to pay rent and purchase food and clothes for themselves. Such people are in a desperate plight. Although we passed a measure to give relief to tenants and mortgagors, it provides no permanent relief for such people. They get relief for two months and, on further application, they get an extension of two months, but at the end of that period they are no better off than they were at the commencement and their prospects have not improved to an extent that would permit of their paying rent. Some provision should be made for rent. Consider now a family with children over 14 years of age. If the father is drawing sustenance, 7s. per week is allowed for one child over the age of 14. Consequently a family of four or five people have to exist on a sum of 21s. a week.

**Hon. Sir William Lathlain**: Do you know of any State that is doing better than Western Australia in that respect?

**Hon. G. FRASER**: Because other States are not doing it is no reason why this State should not grant further relief, if possible.

**Hon. H. Seddon**: Can you tell us where the money is to come from?

**Hon. G. FRASER**: The Government will have to find ways and means to assist such people.

**Hon. J. Nicholson**: With diminishing revenue, how are they going to do it?

**Hon. G. FRASER**: We cannot allow those people to starve.

**Hon. J. Nicholson**: Then you must reduce.

**Hon. G. FRASER**: If money is provided to cover the cost of food, we cannot stand by and see those people thrown into the streets, as many have been during the last few months. The amount paid in Government sustenance during the last 12 months has been heavy, but the future of the recipients of sustenance is black. I trust that the Government will give serious consideration to the question of granting further assistance. One other phase has been mentioned and that is the placing of men on relief work. Even under the present sustenance scheme many local authorities are taking advantage of the presence of sustenance men in their districts. Some of them have put permanent employees on half-time and have used sustenance men in their stead.

**Hon. E. H. Harris**: Why would they do that?

**Hon. G. FRASER:** To save expenditure on wages. The hon. member knows that the sustenance money paid by local authorities is found by the Government, but the wages paid by local authorities to permanent employees has to be found out of the local authorities' funds. In order to safeguard those funds, local authorities have either dismissed permanent hands or put them on half-time, and have employed sustenance men in their stead. That was never intended.

**Hon. Sir William Lathlain:** That does not apply to the City of Perth.

**Hon. G. FRASER:** I believe at one stage the City of Perth went very close to doing something of the kind. I understand that Plain-street was to be re-made with loan money, and it was intended or attempted to put sustenance men on to the work. However, the matter was adjusted. We have had to notify the department of what some of the local authorities were doing and the department immediately stopped the practice. This is one of the dangers associated with relief work, and it has to be watched closely. I trust that the Government will give consideration to the questions I have raised, and that they will be able to provide a little more sustenance for people in distress or permit them to earn a little more to enable them to pay rent.

**HON. J. T. FRANKLIN** (Metropolitan) [7.45]: I congratulate the Government on the manner in which they have coped with the unemployment problem. Every hon. member will agree that it is a very difficult subject to deal with, and regret must be expressed at its having been found necessary to resort to the dole system. Sir William Lathlain said it would be a good scheme for the Government to complete the foreshore reclamation and widen Mount's Bay-road. Those two works would find employment for some men, not very many, but it would afford the opportunity to utilise the dredge which was purchased by the previous Government at great expense. The dredging work would not provide a great deal of employment because it would consist of raising silt for the reclamation, and the cost would be about 2½d. per cubic yard. Still, it would be a step in the direction of completing something that will have to be taken in hand at some future time. I am not trying to secure an undue advantage for the metropolitan area, but I only endorse what Sir William

Lathlain said because it is an undertaking that can be carried out economically at the present time. When the question of widening Mount's Bay-road was mentioned, an hon. member interjected that the widening was not necessary. The time is more than past when the road should be increased in width. To the credit of the Labour Government it can be said that three or four years ago they had in mind the work of widening that thoroughfare, and had a conference with the City Council. The Government desired that the width should be 80 feet, but the municipality wanted the road to be made 100 feet in width. Again I admit that that work would not absorb a great number of men because most of the reclamation there, too, would be done with the aid of the dredge. Yet employment would be found for a fair amount of unskilled labour, and we should have the thoroughfare beautified. At the same time, the danger from the overhanging cliffs could be removed. That danger is more serious in the wet season, inasmuch as there is then a greater risk of rock formation collapsing and perhaps injuring passing motorists. Next, there is the Causeway bridge. It is all very well to postpone that undertaking, but there again the time is rapidly approaching when it will have to be carried out. The under-structure at the present time is in a state of great disrepair and it continually requires to be strengthened. Some time back the City Council had photographs taken of the foundations and it was surprising to note the terrible condition in which the piles were. The railways are not paying, but the department must run the services. If conditions were not so bad at the present time, a large number of men would be employed on the work of ballasting. If it is necessary to do that when conditions are good, is it not just as necessary to carry it out now? There we should be able to provide employment for a number of unskilled workers. At the same time a great quantity of material would be required. A good deal of ballast is already beside the lines but more would have to be secured. Again, sleepers would be needed, and the procuring of them would provide employment for hewers or the mills. I realise that, to obtain material, money must be found, but we have our State Sawmills and those mills have considerable stocks of timber. Thus it would not be a very expensive matter to secure sleepers for necessary rail-



way work. In the districts controlled by various local governing authorities, the unemployed should not be given the dole for nothing. The men in receipt of that money should be employed on some work or other.

Hon. J. M. Drew: They are employed in the country.

Hon. J. T. FRANKLIN: I am glad to hear that. I imagine that all local bodies, even the Perth municipality, would be only too pleased and willing to supervise the carrying out of any works the Government might undertake, and also supply the men and the material. I realise that the Minister for Unemployment is doing the very best he can in the circumstances, and we should congratulate ourselves on having a man of his experience in charge, but it is a matter of impossibility for him to find work for all. We should, however, provide means by which relief could be given to all who are out of work, and at the same time get lasting results from any of the undertakings that might be carried out. I support the second reading of the Bill.

**THE MINISTER FOR COUNTRY WATER SUPPLIES** (Hon. C. F. Baxter—East—in reply) [7.55]: I thank members for the support they have accorded the Bill and also Mr. Seddon and Mr. Nicholson for their generous appreciation of my efforts to place information before the House. The question of dealing with unemployment has come above everything else and suggestions have been made by Sir William Lathlain, Mr. Allsop and Mr. Franklin respecting works that could be carried out. Those suggestions are all right, indeed some of them are very good. But we have not the money with which to carry them out.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: Not on the basic wage.

The **MINISTER FOR COUNTRY WATER SUPPLIES**: The Government for a long time now have been in the position of experiencing difficulty in finding enough money to keep people from starving and what little extra money it has been possible to raise has been put into works at Harvey, Waroona and on the goldfields waterway. It is not a question of putting men out to do the work; it is a case of finding money to keep them going with the necessities of life. Sir William Lathlain referred to the Causeway and Mount's Bay road, whilst Mr. Franklin expressed the im-

portance of carrying out certain railway work. Mr. Allsop suggested that mining operations should receive attention. All these are good proposals in their way, especially that with respect to mining. The Government would be prepared to start straight away works that would return interest and sinking fund in a short period of years. But where are we to get the money with which to finance the undertakings?

Hon. J. T. Franklin: You can find money for the dole.

The **MINISTER FOR COUNTRY WATER SUPPLIES**: The money that it has been possible to raise has been used on reproductive works, and outside of that, funds have been devoted to providing food and so keeping many people alive. Mr. Fraser touched on the question of local bodies utilising the services of men on sustenance. We have safeguarded the position as far as we could and laid it down as a hard and fast rule that men must not be put off if local bodies had any men available for the carrying out of works. With regard to sustenance, the Government have endeavoured to utilise all the services possible instead of allowing the money to go out for nothing. But we are in the position that we have not been able to get any Loan money. Mr. Seddon has asked for further information, but there has been very little time in which to secure it. As far as it is possible to do so, I shall supply it. Referring to the proposed appropriation of Loan expenditure, I am advised that the question of obtaining money in that connection is to be discussed at the next meeting of the Loan Council, and with that object in view the Prime Minister has asked the various States to submit their reproductive work proposals for consideration and discussion with the banks. A feature of the conversion loan discussions at the Melbourne conference was the suggestion to raise new money amounting to £8,500,000 for unemployment, and for assistance to farmers through the Agricultural Bank as well as for group settlement purposes. Pending the availability of new money for the Loan Council we have obtained temporary accommodation from the Commonwealth Bank to carry on such relief works as those at Waroona, Harvey, Wanneroo, etc., and to clear up odds and ends of railway work on loan account. At the 18th July there were 2,852 men on sus-

tenance work and they were distributed as follows:—

Meekatharra Railway Works—65 full-time men.

Lake Grace Railway—59 full-time men.

Pemberton Railway—116 half-time men.

Sewerage Areas 39 and 40, Metropolitan Area—183 men.

Fremantle Sewerage Area No. 17—88 men.

Canning Dam—146 men.

The Forests Department is employing 971 men as follows:—

Various places—288 men.

Special grant money—12 men.

Blackboy men at Mundaring—100.

Employed at various places and paid from money from General Loan Fund—317 men.

Relief work for sleeper cutters at various places—254 men.

Under the Public Works Department there are employed at Harvey, Herdsman's Lake, Geraldton, Narrogin, Collie, Busselton and Waroona drainage and water supply works, 504 men. The number has been reduced considerably, for the winter is on us and we cannot keep the same number of men going in winter as we do in drier weather. Also, the Waroona work is practically completed, which means a further reduction in the numbers. In addition, there is the opening of the goldfields water supply mains. In the first place, the goldfields main was buried in the earth. That was a grave mistake, for when a leak or burst occurs and the main has to be unearthed it is a very costly work. At all events, 290 men have been employed on the main. They have been drawn from a number of places en route, such as Northam, Grass Valley, Meckering, York, Merredin and right up to Coolgardie, the distribution being made as equal as possible. Under the Main Roads Board there have been employed on the Waroona road 206 men, on the Newtown-Augusta road 100 men, Clackline-Piawaning 40 men, Herdsman's Lake 47 men, Peel Estate 34 men, and on miscellaneous work 3 men. Then, under the Department of Works and Labour and my own department of Water Supply and Drainage, the relief work statement shows an expenditure to the 30th June, 1931, the end of this financial year, on water supplies £6,859, drainage and irrigation £110,050, Federal aid roads—including £9,662 from the Commonwealth Unemployment Relief Grant—£21,668, or a total of £138,577. The approximate num-

ber of men employed on those several works gives a maximum in the water supplies, drainage and irrigation works of 1,327 men, and in road work 405 men, or a total of 1,732 men. And employed at the 30th June, 1931, the estimate is, for water supplies, drainage and irrigation works 898 men, for road works 405 men, or a total of 1,303 men. Then there are the sustenance men employed on sustenance work by the local authorities. The expenditure in respect of them is being recouped by the Government, but particulars are not immediately available to me. The Unemployment Board states that there are 6,000 families on sustenance in the metropolitan area, and that the weekly cost is approximately £8,000. Further, there are 1,800 single men in the metropolitan area getting bed and meal tickets at an approximate cost of £1,000 weekly. Blackboy and Hovea camps contain roughly 1,600 men, and the weekly cost is approximately £2,000. In the country there are about 2,500 men getting unemployment relief. The total cost of unemployment relief and sustenance is approximately £13,000 weekly, or about £676,000 per annum. This amount does not include relief works. Members will wonder where the Government are getting the money. I do not say this in any spirit of criticism, for members are not to blame, because they did not have this information before them. Consequently I have gone to the trouble to secure it for them.

Hon. J. Cornell: There was no harm in suggesting the money might be more judiciously spent.

The MINISTER FOR COUNTRY WATER SUPPLIES: Of course not. I appreciate what members put forward, and undoubtedly if we can get sufficient money for the purpose the idea is to have all the men engaged on reproductive work.

Hon. G. W. Miles: If you would suspend the Arbitration Act, private employers would find all the necessary employment.

The MINISTER FOR COUNTRY WATER SUPPLIES: I do not know that we would gain so much in that direction. The suspending of the Arbitration Act at the present time might prove disastrous, in that it would lead to industrial trouble. This is not the time at which to start a strike.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Nobody wants to start a strike.

The MINISTER FOR COUNTRY WATER SUPPLIES: This is the time to avoid industrial strife. The Government have been endeavouring to reduce the cost of all industry, so that we may go along on right lines and export our products at a payable price. It is all very well for members to say we should do this and that, but we must proceed as peacefully as we possibly can with our purpose of bringing about a decrease in the cost of production.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee.*

Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair; the Minister for Country Water Supplies in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Sums available for purposes voted by the Legislative Assembly:

Hon. SIR EDWARD WITTENOOM: In this clause provision is made for the distribution of the money. Earlier this evening I voiced a few remarks regarding the Agricultural Bank. Apparently I was misunderstood. What I meant to say was that the bank had as much right to be a bank as had any other institution of the sort, but that I thought it had been mismanaged to some extent by putting the wrong men on to land and giving other men indifferent land. Again, it has been said that I was down upon the farmers. What I advocated was that higher education should be suspended and that the £100,000 thus saved should be spent on the starving farmers. As to my remarks about Mount's Bay-road, what I said was that I thought it should be dealt with in the same way as King's Park-road, and that no traffic should be allowed on it except trams and ordinary vehicles. There are two or three alternative roads to Freantle, and so there is no necessity to spend any money on Mount's Bay-road.

Clause put and passed.

Preamble, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

*Third Reading.*

Bill read a third time and *passed*.

## **BILL—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY.**

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

*Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR COUNTRY WATER SUPPLIES** (Hon. C. F. Baxter—East) [8.12] in moving the second reading said: In furtherance of the nation-wide movement for financial stability members have legislated for the debt conversion phase of the problem in the manner prescribed by the Premiers and their consultants, and it is now necessary to consider the closely related obligation to reduce governmental expenditure and the question of relief in respect of private mortgages as recommended in sections (a) and (e) of the Plan agreed on by the Commonwealth and the States. This Bill represents the Government's legislative proposals in those regards. In recommending the ways and means outlined in the Bill to bring about the desired financial curtailment, the Government have adhered to the governing principle of the Plan, namely, equality of sacrifice, and no close study of the Bill will be necessary to recognise that its provisions apply impartially here, there and everywhere in acceptance of the burden to be commonly shouldered in the task before the nation. Section (a) of the Plan covers a reduction of 20 per cent. in all adjustable governmental expenditure as compared with the year ended 30th June, 1930, including all emoluments, wages, salaries and pensions paid by the Governments, whether fixed by statute or otherwise, such reduction to be equitably effected; and, as previously stated, section (e) of the Plan refers to relief in respect of private mortgages.

As members are aware, the discussion at the Premiers' Conference was based upon a report to the Loan Council of a sub-committee consisting of Sir James Mitchell, Mr. Hill, and Mr. Jones. Those gentlemen co-opted to their assistance certain economists and the Under Treasurers of the various States who, after deliberations extending over a fortnight or so, and after interviewing bankers, insurance managers, and others, reported to the sub-committee, who in turn submitted the report to the Premiers' Conference. That report was distributed to members when the Debt Conversion Agreement Bill was under discussion, and if they

will turn to it they will see that paragraph 7 reads as follows:—

“7. What further economies are possible? A standard for economy is given by the Federal Basic Wage which has now fallen 20 per cent. below the level of 1928 and is, for the present, likely to remain at about this level. (The fall is even greater compared with 1929.) It is equitable on the whole that all wages and salaries in the Government service should have the same percentage reduction as the Federal Basic Wage. Incidentally all salaries and wages should conform to the same standard.”

That recommendation involves a flat rate reduction in salaries and wages paid by Governments, bringing them into conformity with the reduction which has already taken place as regards outside workers, whose wages are regulated by the Federal Arbitration Court. The Premiers' Conference, however, modified the principle involved in the recommendation of the economists and Under Treasurers, and adopted the scheme of reduction proposed in section (a) of the Plan. That scheme does not allow Governments to depart from the necessity for reducing the payments made for wages and salaries by 20 per cent., but it gives individual Governments scope for discretion in making the reductions on a sliding scale. Therefore, the Bill under discussion, whilst aiming to achieve the 20 per cent. reduction, does not do so by a flat rate, but proposes to meet the wishes of the Premiers in the manner laid down in the scale set forth in the schedule of the Bill.

That scale more or less exactly follows the scale adopted by the Federal Government. Its object is to give as much relief as possible to the lower paid members of the Service without foregoing the necessity of achieving the 20 per cent. reduction.

The Government have had no easy task in trying to give relief to the lower paid employees, and in that regard the following figures disclose the limited scope within which it was necessary to work in arriving at the full 20 per cent. reduction: 12,037 employees receive up to £250, and the total payments in respect to them amounts to £1,733,408; 6,763 employees are paid from £251 to £500, and the amount paid is £2,166,974; 401 employees receive salaries from £501 to £1,000, totalling an expenditure of £227,972, and there are 43 employees receiving above £1,000, and the amount paid to them is £48,645. Those figures are substantial evi-

dence of the difficulty met with in devising the spread or scale of reductions indicated in the schedule.

The Bill is divided into seven parts. Parts I. and VII. are more or less formal. Parts II. and III. impose a reduction on salaries, wages, and pensions paid out by the Government to their employees, and the employees of State instrumentalities. In that connection, so far as adult workers are concerned no reduction is to bring the rate of remuneration lower, in the case of males than £185 per annum, and in the case of females £100 per annum; otherwise the reduction, subject to the right of the Governor by notice in the “Government Gazette” to exempt any officer for some special reason, will apply to all employees of the Government.

Representations were made that the reduction should not apply to part-time and rationed workers, but a moment's consideration will show that if that principle were accepted one of two things would happen. Either the Government would be compelled to wipe out rationing, or would completely fail to achieve the results they have pledged themselves to obtain. It is, therefore, the rate of remuneration which is reduced, and not the total amount. Indeed, if that were not done there would be no attempt to comply with the principle laid down in paragraph 7 of the Economists' report, namely, that all wages and salaries in the Government service should have the same percentage reduction as the Federal basic wage. Persons working under the Federal basic wage have had their rate of remuneration reduced and not the total amount received by them during the year, and so, equitably and in consonance with the principles to be obeyed, it is rate of remuneration of Government employees which must be reduced to obtain the full 20 per cent. reduction.

So far as pensions are concerned, care has been taken to prevent civil servants at present in the service, but who are likely to retire during the currency of the Act, from suffering a double cut. It is provided that any civil servant who retires from the service during the currency of the Act shall have his pension calculated at a rate not lower than that which it would have been had he retired on the 30th June, 1931. The measure does not cover the Governor, the Governor's private secretary, the clerk of the Executive Council. Ministers of the Crown and the judges. They are the officials mentioned in Schedule IV. of the

Constitution Acts Amendment Act of 1899, and under that Act any measure which affects the remuneration for their services must be reserved for the Royal assent. For that reason they have been dealt with in another measure, which will be introduced in due course.

Part IV. of the Bill deals with certain grants which the Government make in pursuance of statutory authority, and a typical example of the class of grant referred to would be the annual grant to the University. Such grants are reducible under the Premiers' Plan and it is proposed in the Bill that the Treasurer shall have power to reduce them by not more than 20 per cent. Under Division 1 of Part V. which deals with variation of contracts of service, the grantee bodies are empowered to reduce the salaries and wages paid by them to their employees by the same amount as the Government reduce their grant. The embracing nature of the reduction is carried a step further by Division (2) of the same part, which extends the reduction of salaries and wages to workers employed by outside employers who are bound by the Arbitration Court, and Division 3 of the part applies the principle of reduction to outside employees not bound by the Arbitration Court.

In that respect it has been urged that Part V. of the Bill has nothing to do with the Premiers' Plan, and that the proposals in the Part are not to be found in any of the corresponding Bills introduced by other Governments. Whilst the latter argument may be correct—although, incidentally, it is understood that the Tasmanian Government are making a straight-out reduction of the basic wage—the first argument is undoubtedly incorrect. That is so, because the very foundation of the Plan is the sacrifice already imposed on workers governed by the Federal Court. In the Eastern States such workers comprise the vast majority of all workers. In fact, in Victoria it is said that 70 per cent. of employees are governed by Federal awards and that the balance, whose wages and conditions are determined by Wages Boards, conform to the same standard. In Western Australia, on the other hand, only a small proportion of workers are affected by the fluctuations of the Federal basic wage. Therefore, if outside employees were left untouched, it would mean that the very basis of the Plan would vanish.

If we go back to the experts' report, these words will be found in paragraph 7— "It is equitable on the whole that all wages and salaries in the Government service should have the same percentage reduction as the Federal Basic Wage. Incidentally all salaries and wages should conform to the same standard." Members will see that the machinery proposed to enable the wages of outside workers to be reduced has, as far as possible, been kept in conformity with the existing practice of the Court.

In that connection the President of the Court, in delivering his judgment after the last basic wage inquiry, made it perfectly clear that he had no power to reduce the basic wage to meet the national emergency with which Western Australia, in common with the other States of the Commonwealth, was faced. The formula upon which the Court works is a rigid one, and cannot be varied to fit the requirements of the moment. Therefore it is proposed in the Bill that the employer should be permitted to approach the Court, and ask that the reductions made in respect of Government workers should be applied to his employees. If the proposed provision is exercised by applications from employers the court is given discretion, if it is satisfied that the national emergency justifies such action, to apply the same reduction as is being imposed on Government employees in spite of any provisions of the Industrial Arbitration Act or of any award or industrial agreement or any declaration of the basic wage, but it is also provided that the employee or his representative may show, if he can, special reasons why the reduction should not be ordered. The same principle will apply also to employers whose employees are not governed by any arbitration award or industrial agreement. That aspect is dealt with in Division (3) of Part V.

An important provision in the Bill is the one which enables the Arbitration Court, on the hearing of any application under Part V. of the Bill, if it is of opinion that the same principles apply as applied in a previous case, to make its order without hearing further evidence or argument. That provision, it is thought, will enable the matters concerned to be handled with the maximum of expedition.

The next question is that of the reduction of mortgagors' interest. It is dealt with in Part VI. That part of the Bill is in accordance with the resolution of the Premiers' Conference, which caused to be drafted and adopted a measure on certain lines. In that respect the measure adopted was originally included in the Bill practically word for word; but on further consideration, and after consultation by telegram with the Governments of the other States, it was decided to depart from the Plan adopted at the Conference and, in common with the other States, to adopt the Plan which now finds a place in Part VI. The effect of that part is that on the coming into operation of the Act all interest on current mortgages will be reduced by 22½ per cent., giving liberty to the mortgagee, if he so desires, to appeal to a Commissioner—who will be a judge of the Supreme Court—to demonstrate that in his case the reduction should not apply.

As the Bill now stands it probably would include bank overdrafts. That, however, was never the intention of the Conference; and the other States, or most of them, have expressly excluded bank overdrafts. At the Conference it was realised that to impose a 22½ per cent. reduction by statute on the banks might well place them in an impossible position. It is, however, the Government's view that it is an essential part of the Plan that interest on bank overdrafts should be substantially reduced, and it is anticipated that the banks will announce their definite proposals on the matter in the very near future. The Premier will leave on Saturday for a further meeting of the Loan Council, at which the question of interest on bank overdrafts, and other important matters, will be discussed. In the meantime the House, in the Committee stage, will be asked to consider an amendment making it clear that bank overdrafts are not to be reduced by the Bill.

An endeavour was made in another place to insert an amendment extending the reduction to rents. The proposal was not taken into the Bill because the Government, whilst feeling that rents must be dealt with, do not desire to put into this particular measure any matter which is not found in the corresponding measures of the other States. The principles involved in the Bill are few in number, and do not require, at this stage, detailed explanation, as apart from the gen-

eral principles involved the measure is largely one for Committee. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. M. Drew, debate adjourned.

## BILL—FIREARMS AND GUNS.

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to Nos. 2 and 3 of the amendments made by the Council, and had agreed to No. 1 subject to a further amendment, in which it requested the Council's concurrence.

## BILL—CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT.

Received from the Assembly, and read a first time.

*House adjourned at 8.36 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Thursday, 30th July, 1931.*

	PAGE
Questions: Queensland fruit fly ... ..	4166
Secession referendum ... ..	4167
Bills: Constitution Acts Amendment, 3a. ...	4167
Finance and Development Board Act Amendment, 2a., Com., report ... ..	4167
Trustees' Protection, 2a., Com., report ...	4175
Trustees' Powers, 2a., Com. ... ..	4176
Federal Aid Roads Agreement, 2a., Com. ...	4179
Supply (No. 1) £1,370,000, returned ...	4187
Motion: Statute of Westminster, Protest against enactment ... ..	4187

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

## QUESTION—QUEENSLAND FRUIT FLY.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Agriculture: Is he aware—1, That statements are being made that the Queensland fruit fly—a different variety from the Medi-