

7, Mortgagees' Rights Restriction Act
Continuance.

Introduced by the Minister for Lands.

8, Metropolitan Public Utilities Trust.

Introduced by the Minister for Works.

9, City of Perth Superannuation Fund.

Introduced by Mr. Needham.

House adjourned at 10.8 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 23rd August, 1934.

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

QUESTION—WORKERS' HOMES, INTEREST RATES.

Hon. A. THOMSON asked the Chief Secretary: Seeing that the Associated Banks have reduced the rates of interest to their clients to 4½ and 5 per cent., when can people who have erected their homes under the Workers' Homes Act expect to have their interest rates similarly reduced?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: Approval has already been given for a reduction to be made in the rate of interest charged by the Workers' Homes Board.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eighth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. H. J. YELLAND (East) [4.35]: With other members I welcome you, Mr. President, on your return from the Old Country. You had a very worthy object in visiting the Homeland. I wish I had the

same opportunity of doing so myself. It broadens one's vision, and gives one an opportunity to see other parts of the Empire, and acquire some knowledge of their resources and political and civic conditions. It also makes one more acquainted with the outside world. It is a great privilege that you have. It has also provided you with the opportunity to advance the interests of Western Australia. We are glad to know you have consistently done your best in that direction, and this has been greatly appreciated, I am sure, by all sections of the community. There seems to be very little in the Speech calling for comment. It contains a citation of the events that have taken place during the previous year. It mentions the conditions which have existed. These are already known to most of us. It is probably necessary to make these statements in order that the public, who read the Speech, may get the gist of the conditions that have been in existence during the period under review. The portion of the Speech referring to the proposed legislation is not very illuminating. It merely whets the imagination, and causes us to look forward to the coming legislation with a certain amount of interest. A unique event of the current year, an outstanding one, is the projected visit of a member of the Royal Family. Our thanks are due to His Majesty for again sending one of the princes to Australia. This will be the third visit of a Royal Son to the Commonwealth. On every occasion they have been shown that loyalty which is such a characteristic feature of the people of Australia. The coming event will provide us with a unique opportunity of showing our loyalty to the Throne. When the question of secession first came up we were accused on several occasions of disloyalty. I do not think there was any ground for the accusation. I am a secessionist. It is the desire of the secessionists to obtain a closer union of parts of the Empire, but we do not want our loyalty attached through the Commonwealth. No one can doubt our loyalty. The visit of the Prince will give us an opportunity to counter the accusation which has been preferred against us, especially by the delegates who came from the Eastern States during the secession campaign.

Hon. J. Cornell: Who, the Prime Minister?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: I should say one of the delegates. No one can doubt our loyalty to the Empire. It is a stronger thing to us than the loyalty of the States to the Federal body.

Hon. J. Cornell: Loyalty is only a question of degree.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: The degree of loyalty indicates the amount of attachment one has for the Motherland. I do not propose to touch very deeply on finance. I have always taken a keen interest in the deliberations on finance as shown in the debate on the Address-in-reply, and particularly have I paid attention to the remarks of the two stalwarts, Mr. Holmes and Mr. Seddon. I have heard many comments from business men upon the soundness of the arguments which have been advanced by Mr. Holmes during the past ten years on the financial situation. He has never been slow to advocate what he considers is the right attitude to adopt in respect to our borrowing policy. Finance is the root of good government. It marks the limitation of the spending legislation that is brought forward. It governs our taxation, and is therefore of great importance to us. We shall have an opportunity of dealing with that question when the taxation measures and Loan Estimates come before us. It is easy to spend someone else's money. Come easy, go easy.

Hon. A. Thomson: We can always be generous with other people's money.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Yes. We have noticed the disastrous effect of extravagance in private affairs, when managers who are paid to do their job and who are handling money for other people are not competent to do the work. If that is the case in private business, it is of even more importance in our public affairs. On looking over the figures which have been supplied from time to time during the ten years I have been in the House, I notice that only once has there been a surplus. We are now beginning to ask why our expenditure cannot be restricted to the amount of the receipts. The expenditure has always been in excess of receipts, with the one exception I have mentioned. As the receipts improve there is a tendency to spend more money. The tendency has been to cause the expenditure to keep pace with the revenue. This spending ability on the part of the country has tended to in-

crease prosperity, though I do not say the policy has been a sound one. There is increased prosperity and as a result there is more reckless expenditure, and so it goes on. We continually spend more than we receive. I do not say the present Government are the only guilty ones. It was in the first year of the last Labour Government that we had the surplus I have indicated. There have been deficits year after year. The only method adopted to meet the situation has been to borrow more money. I am not opposed to borrowing, provided the money is spent in avenues that will produce the necessary interest. The last ten years do not reveal the satisfactory use of borrowed money. I am not reflecting upon any individual Government. Loans have been raised for certain works, and the works have never been carried out. Two railways were approved last year, but we do not know where the money which should have been spent on those works has gone.

Hon. J. Cornell: Nothing was put down on the Estimates for those railways.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: We authorised the Government to go ahead with them, and they practically promised to have them completed.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: What about the Yarramony line?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: The construction of that line was approved more than 10 years ago, and yet it has not been constructed. The most astounding position of it all is that half of the revenue of the State is used in paying interest abroad, and half of the revenue only is used for productive purposes within the State. If we are to continue to borrow money for expenditure on other than reproductive work, the time will soon arrive when we will come to a standstill and the interest bill, which is increasing out of proportion to the revenue, will be of such magnitude that something drastic will happen. We shall have to call a halt and ascertain just how we can meet our obligations. The Loan Council have been of considerable help in that direction and have enabled us to meet obligations that otherwise could not have been liquidated. Taking the period of the last 10 years, I find that the total loan flotations of the State have amounted to £33,000,000. The public debt has risen from £58,500,000 to £79,500,000. During that period the population of the State increased

from 345,000 to 436,000. The only complete figures available are those to the end of 1932. These, however, show that the per capita indebtedness has risen from £168 to £188. It will be seen that the indebtedness has risen to an infinitely greater extent than has our population, hence the increase in the per capita indebtedness. Mr. Holmes has repeatedly called attention to the position, and I emphasise the fact that the time is arriving when we shall have to consider seriously whether we can afford to continue borrowing at such a rate as we have in the past. With regard to the various industries that come under our purview on an occasion such as the present, I shall refer to gold mining. I do not know much about that industry directly, but during debates in this Chamber, I have listened to one goldfields member in particular who told me, as an agriculturist, how I should carry on the agricultural industry. As an agriculturist, I have been severely criticised by that hon. member, who probably knows more about mining than about agriculture. In the circumstances, I may be pardoned if I have something to say about the mining industry. Its progress has been one of the most encouraging features during the past few years, and had it not been for the recovery of the industry, I do not know where Western Australia would have been. It is well known that the price of gold always increases with the diminution of the returns available on account of other industries. When there is a fall in the returns from agriculture, naturally we expect to see the price of gold rise. In the early nineties, when the whole of Australia was at a very low financial ebb, gold was discovered in Western Australia, and that saved the situation. I believe that to a large extent the gold mining industry saved the situation in recent years, not only for Western Australia, but for the Commonwealth, and proved of tremendous advantage during the crisis through which we have been passing. Due to the high price that gold commanded, an extension of prospecting and also the development of low-grade propositions have been made possible. Naturally that provided much employment, and, with increased employment, their naturally follows a greater circulation of capital. It has to be considered, however, that should our primary industries return to normal conditions, then the gold mining industry in its turn will

also drop to normal. That is the difficult problem that we will have to face.

Hon. T. Moore: It is unusual for the price of gold to rise.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Yes, because until now there has been a standard price.

Hon. J. Cornell: This is the first time gold has risen in price for 200 years.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Nevertheless, there is a possibility of gold returning to its normal value and should that come to pass, we will probably have the spectacle of a large number of goldfields towns again looking to the country areas for assistance, as they did from 1914 to 1920. With regard to the pastoral industry, its importance is recognised generally, but I sometimes wonder whether we are doing justice to the North-West by means of our administration from Perth. At times, I think, we do not give that part of the State the consideration due to it, and a suggestion has been made that portion of the northern parts of the State should be handed over to the Commonwealth. If the Federal Government were to make such an unholy mess of the north of Western Australia as they have made of the Northern Territory, we would do no injustice to the North-West if we allowed separation to take place and Federal jurisdiction to obtain throughout the northern areas. I recognise the great assistance Mr. Holmes has rendered this Chamber in providing us with so much information regarding the North, and I was most interested in his references to the Wyndham Meatworks. He indicated that the upkeep of the Wyndham jetty was a responsibility of the meatworks, and if that be so, it means that the cattle producers are being expected to maintain what should be a national undertaking. I would like to know definitely if that is the position, for I can hardly imagine it is. The Wyndham Meatworks have not paid interest on the capitalisation of the undertaking. If I remember correctly, if the whole of the capital for one year in the early history of the concern had been made available without cost, even then a loss would have been shown on the operations for the year. If that be so, one begins to compare those works with our railways. It has to be recognised that, primarily, the railways were not built to be paying concerns. They were constructed for the purpose of opening up outlying areas. If the effect of the establishment of the meatworks

at Wyndham has been the development of the hinterland, then, even though it may have proved a drain on the public purse, there is compensation in the fact that additional country has been opened up. Mr. Holmes had a good deal to say with regard to tick and pleuro. I do not know much about the tick problem, but I am given to understand that the insects will not live in a cooler climate. If that is the position, then it seems that the restrictions are unnecessary. On the other hand, we have to remember that in the spread of such a pest, it is necessary for it to be acclimatised before the insect can become prolific. We have an instance regarding the rabbit. When that rodent was introduced into Australia 40 or 50 years ago, it was not regarded as a pest, and it did not breed with any great rapidity. When the animals became thoroughly acclimatised after the passing of several generations, they bred with greater rapidity until now they represent a menace to the whole of the agricultural community. When introduced from England the rabbit was a much larger animal than it is now. When it was acclimatised, it became both smaller and more prolific in its breeding. The same thing would apply to the cattle tick. It is necessary therefore to look years ahead and, in the circumstances, there is reason to be found for the restrictions. The same has to be said with regard to pleuro. Two or three years ago when the pleuro restrictions were prominently before the House, I took the opportunity to point out that there is a certain condition of the pleuro-infected animal at which it is impossible to tell whether it is infected or not. That is the cist or sleeping stage of the disease, and that is the most dangerous period from the standpoint of its distribution. An animal may apparently be quite healthy and it may be the means of spreading the disease although there may not be anything apparent to suggest that it is affected by pleuro. Such an apparently healthy animal may carry pleuro germs for 12 months, without showing any indications of the fact. If such an animal, shipped from the North, encountered a cold winter in the South-West, it would probably develop pleuro pneumonia to such an extent that the disease would spread amongst our herds almost immediately. While the spread of the disease is comparatively easy in the North-West where the cattle travel long distances to secure their feed and where it is

almost impossible to isolate an infected animal, the position is different in the more thickly populated South-West, because an infected animal can be isolated and treated, with the result that the disease will not spread to any great extent. In the circumstances, there seems to be need for caution with regard to the shipment south from the North-West of animals affected by pleuro. At the same time, we can be over-cautious to the extent of being unfair to those who are operating in the far distant parts of the State. When I was in South Australia two years ago, pleuro made its appearance among the dairy herds. The outbreak gave the people there little concern. They knew how to handle the matter. They isolated the affected animals in certain localities and treated them. By that means the pleuro-infected animals did not mix with the rest of the herds while suffering from the disease. Eventually after the beasts were cured they were sent to the butcher and killed under close supervision. I think the restrictions could easily be relaxed for the benefit of the North-West and without any serious difficulties arising.

Hon. J. Cornell: I saw cattle inoculated for pleuro in New South Wales fifty years ago.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: With regard to the Agricultural Bank, I do not propose to refer to that institution to any extent because, like other members, I prefer to wait until we have before us the full report and the reply of the trustees. I hope the opportunity will be given to us to discuss the report, but I do not think we are justified at the present time in putting any blame on the trustees in the face of what is already known in connection with the association of the various Governments with that institution. With respect to electoral matters, it seems to me that the postal vote scandals connected with the recent Legislative Council elections indicate the need for tightening up the Act. One does not feel disposed to go into this question very fully, but I hope the Government will make some effort to prevent a recurrence of these scandals. I do not propose to touch on Mr. Gray's case except to say that I have a warm regard and appreciation for that hon. member. At the same time, I cannot subscribe to the action of Cabinet. As that matter, too, will be discussed on the motion, notice of which

has been given, I shall not deal with it any further at the present stage. I cannot allow the attitude of the teachers and the position of the Education Department to pass unnoticed. The Government have decided to re-open the Training College, and, although it is not now in what might be said to be full swing, it is being conducted according to a re-organised plan. Under the old regime the institution was costly, and I suggested that a saving of £17,000 might be effected if the college were closed and the work done by the University. As a matter of fact, the teachers could carry out their training just as well, and perhaps better, and less expensively at the University. The additional cost of running the Training College is not justified, but now that it has been re-opened and is being conducted on a modified scale, a modification that does not provide for residence, the University is taking most of the responsibility. I hope the next step will be that the Government will be able to use the building for some other purpose, and that the University will do the work for that centre, and in that way relieve the State of enormous expense. Regarding the teachers, I should like to correct an impression that the present attitude of the union is endorsed by all the teachers. I am satisfied that that is not the case. The present position is that the union is taking the attitude it has done without all the teachers being fully behind it. Unfortunately the teachers, it appears to me, are afraid to disobey the orders of the union. I cannot believe that all the teachers are oblivious of their duty to their charges and their schools, as well as to the State through the children of the State. Their duty is to train the children as well as to teach them. The union declares that teachers must just instruct and leave out all other work. That, however, is not what the teacher is expected to do. Although it might not have been in the letter of their appointment, it has, for many centuries past, been recognised that the teacher has a moral obligation to the child. Teachers are specially selected for their moral and intellectual attainments, and they are trained to impart these and to give instruction both by precept and example in national responsibilities. The example of the union to-day is a direct negation of those responsibilities and I feel that no comment is too strong to show our resentment of the attitude of the Teachers' Union in the stand that has been taken up.

Hon. J. CORNELL: After all, the teachers are doing merely what other trade unions have done.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Teachers are paid to instruct in the three R's, but other principles are attached to the appointments by tradition. Their attitude in respect of the Royal Show exhibits is puerile in the extreme. Nothing could be more childish, nothing could be more out of step with the opinions of the general public and less acceptable. The average teacher, I am certain, would not follow his union if he dared to refuse. The individual teacher has a far higher ideal and interest in the work of his pupils, both of which are necessary for successful teaching. His work is not confined to the four walls of his school. His main work is psychological, exerting a moral effect the ultimate results of which cannot be calculated. When I was in the Education Department I remember an incident which will probably explain what I mean. The head teacher recognised his responsibilities to the children of the school, to the town in which he was living, and, more than that, the ultimate result of his influence upon the child that would be exerted upon the State. Some of the little children had found a piece of ordinary school chalk, and with it began to mark the outside walls of the school building. When the school assembled, the teacher told the boys what had happened and called upon them to maintain the good name of their school. He said, "The school is not mine, it is yours; it belongs to you and it is for you to maintain its bright appearance and, moreover, uphold its dignity." He did not attempt to punish any of the children, or even to find out who the culprit was, but after that the school was kept in scrupulous order, the children having been made to realise their obligation to the institution. I maintain that that in embryo is what those boys would do in connection with bigger things later in life. But the union says to the teachers to-day that this must not take place, that the teachers must restrict themselves to teaching just the school curriculum, and adds, "Your influence on them is not acceptable to them, and you must disregard the unwritten obligation you have to the country and to the State that employs you." The influence of the teacher reaches far beyond the school: it reaches the home, the civic and national spheres: hence the teach-

er's personal influence is of the utmost importance. I maintain that the attitude of the union is a negation of the great work teachers are expected to perform. It is a case of spragging the wheels of national progress by attacking its embryo to vindicate a personal grievance. Mr. Cornell, by way of interjection, asked what were the complaints of teachers and whether those complaints were justified. I maintain that they are justified, but the manner in which redress is being sought is not.

Hon. G. W. Miles: They are losing everybody's sympathy.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: That is so. I know the teachers have some just cause for complaint. In the first place, when entering the service, they were promised long-service leave. I am not going to say I subscribe to the principle of long-service leave. In some cases it is all right, but I will say that the work of a teacher is at times distressing and imposes a higher mental strain than does any other profession. If anyone deserves liberal holidays, it is the teacher. His work is not finished when the school is closed. The teacher cannot sign on at nine and sign off at a quarter past four and say, "I have finished." There are lessons to prepare and routine work to carry out. There is also the mental strain of maintaining the interest of 40 or 50 children during the whole of the teaching hours.

Hon. W. J. Mann: There are many other walks of life in which the conditions are worse.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Teaching is a most noble profession and it carries great responsibilities. The man who is not morally and intellectually suited for the work is not fit to take it on. He is not able to set an example to the children and neither can he train them by precept. It is the teacher's duty to give of his very best, because that is reflected in the lives of his charges. The work that the teacher is engaged on to-day is work the effects of which will be seen 10, 20, and perhaps 50 years hence. The teacher's is one of the noblest and highest of the professions. As regards long service leave, the position is that that concession is in the teacher's contract: and this House has always maintained the sacredness of contracts. It is not a question whether the concession should or should not be in the contract: it is there, and the

teachers are therefore entitled to long-service leave. There is another matter I have to complain of, and in this respect I consider the Government to blame. There has been differential treatment of the teachers, treatment not meted out to other members of the Public Service. I know perfectly well what the answer will be; but the teachers, in connection with last year's legislation, notified the Government of the anomalies which were occurring through the granting of concessions to other members of the Public Service and not to the teachers. By what has been termed, and what I still term, a vote-catching concession granted to civil servants last year, the Government bestowed on other sections of the Public Service benefits that were not extended to the teachers. For example, the reduction under financial emergency legislation in the case of a police officer is much less than it is in the case of a teacher on the same standard of salary. I have not the figures at hand, but that is the fact.

Hon. J. Cornell: That is because the police work under an award of the Arbitration Court.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Quite so, but if we alter the conditions under which the Arbitration Court gives awards, so that an advantage can be given to the police force, we should at the same time, in justice, alter the positions and standards of other public servants. To the teachers differential treatment has been meted out, and naturally they are disposed to object to it. The Government courted the trouble, and now they have it they need not complain. Still, the teachers have taken up an altogether wrong attitude in penalising the rising generation just in order to vindicate their own position. We cannot plead for the teachers in that respect. I do not know that I need take up more time, though I did intend to touch upon two or three other matters. However, I shall content myself with a reference to bulk handling. I wish to express my keen disappointment that the bulk handling company are not permitted to extend their operations. I say this as one who from bulk handling last year received benefits amounting to between £75 and £100. Further, I am only one of some hundred or two farmers who brought their wheat to a particular centre. Now it is proposed to extend the system to another 40 or 50 centres, where the same

advantages would accrue. Because that would affect a few lumpers at Fremantle, the whole thing apparently has been turned down.

Hon. T. Moore: The Wheatgrowers' Union disapprove of it.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: They disapprove of it for other reasons altogether. They do not disapprove of bulk handling, but of the present system of bulk handling.

Hon. T. Moore: Which you are advocating.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: I will advocate any system of bulk handling that will enable the farmers to transport their wheat in bulk. I am not prepared to send overseas for wheat bags every year hundreds of thousands of pounds which should be kept in the State and distributed among the producers, who in turn would distribute the money among other members of the community. I think £400,000 a year represents the cost of bags. If that amount can be saved on bags alone, it indicates that the bulk handling system is satisfactory. We have been informed that the present system of handling is not suited to Western Australian requirements. For my part, I consider that its suitability has been amply proved. In connection with bulk handling we use our local timbers. The most costly thing associated with it is the iron, and that fact arises simply from the tariff. Bulk handling has affected the individual growers to such an extent that they are standing solidly behind it. In spite of that, we find a Royal Commission is to be appointed to ascertain whether the system should be State-wide. It does seem to me that a system which has proved itself wonderfully advantageous to the growers is one whose extension should commend itself to every person who has the best interests of the State at heart. I express my appreciation of the hearing hon. members have given me, and I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

HON. T. MOORE (Central) [5.23]: I desire to welcome new members to this Chamber, and I hope that during the time they are in it they will discover what I have learned—that it is a party House. Since the new members have been here, it has been suggested to them that this is a non-party House. From my experience I know it to be a party House, and I hope new members will

not be misled by any remarks to the contrary which have been made. They will find the case to be as I have stated.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That is as far as you are concerned.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. T. MOORE: I have listened with interest to the remarks of previous speakers, and I was especially struck with the observations of North-West members. They have shown a good grasp of affairs in the North, which constitute a fairly perplexing problem, and one that should arouse the interest of all members. We know from what North-West members have said that things are wrong in the North, but they have not told us how we can do much to assist. They have shown the disadvantages under which the North is labouring, but I have not gathered from their remarks what we can do for the North. I have wondered why the cattle grown there are not travelled overland through the pleuro country, seeing that, as Mr. Holmes has said, they now have to be travelled across a tick-infested area to the coast, from which fact losses result. If these cattle were treated properly, they would be killed at Meekatharra: and thence the meat could be sent in refrigerated trucks to the metropolitan area. By that method severe losses would be avoided. The carriage of cattle in trucks on the hoof to-day from Meekatharra I regard as utterly wrong. The same remark applies to sheep. Huge wastage takes place in the transit of the stock. Great loss occurs through bruising in the trucks. Cattle get down; and so do sheep, and the wool is damaged. It would be worth the Government's while to ascertain whether it is not possible to kill the meat for the metropolitan area in the country districts, and bring it down in refrigerated trucks.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The cost of railage for refrigerated trucks would kill it.

Hon. T. MOORE: In my opinion, that is the right way. Consider the sheep which are brought down from the Mullewa district. I am referring to special stock trains made up at Mullewa from places beyond. Those sheep could be killed at Mullewa without any freezing, and transported to the metropolitan area during the night in trucks.

Hon. J. Cornell: It would be necessary to ginger up the railway system a bit.

Hon. T. MOORE: The special stock trains travel fairly fast from Mullewa, where they

are made up. Journeying up and down the line I have observed the enormous waste that goes on. I consider that a large proportion of the meat for the metropolitan area could be killed in the country and sent down here in trucks.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The matter is worth investigating.

Hon. T. MOORE: Much has been said regarding what should be done with the loan moneys we are now raising and spending every year. It has been declared that they should be spent only on reproductive works. As various members have said, however, it is pretty difficult for a Government to discover reproductive works in these days. No member who has spoken so far has revealed what he would do if placed in charge of State finance.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I know what men would do with their own money. The Government are not taxed.

Hon. T. MOORE: As regards reproductive works, I am prepared to make a suggestion to the man who is handling the finances. One reproductive work is being carried on at the present time—regrading of the railways. More men could, in my opinion, be advantageously put on that work. Our railways were thrown down when a one-in-sixty grade would serve. The goldfields lines, over which much wheat is brought to the ports to-day, were thrown down with the idea of carrying stuff into the country in trucks, and letting those trucks come back empty. That was all right, but the position is now reversed; millions of tons of wheat are being brought over the goldfields railways now, and therefore the regrading must be looked to. I repeat, the aspect to-day is altogether different.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That would be a reproductive work.

Hon. T. MOORE: Yes. The Government are doing that, and I say it is better to do that than dig drains in the South-West in winter time. The Government should remove the men from the South-West altogether from May till the end of July: that is, if they wish to get results for the money being expended there. No man expecting results would put other men down the South-West in winter time, when one shovel is required to scrape the clay off another. There are plenty of works in other parts of the State for those men during winter time.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: What about the drain at Yarloop?

Hon. T. MOORE: That is an endless job and is by no means reproductive. One other work that might be carried out is the provision of water to farmers. Through the Agricultural Bank we have a number of farms minus water supplies. It does not matter to me whether those farmers are paying their interest; many of them are not in a position to pay interest; but it is wrong to allow those men to go on from year to year with the heartbreaking work of carting water. There should be more co-ordination between the Public Works Department and the Agricultural Department with a view to providing water for the farmers. It is up to the Government to see if we cannot get that co-ordination, so that there would be an ample supply of water on every farm worth putting a farmer on in the wheat belt.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Where would you get the water from?

Hon. T. MOORE: There are many ways of getting water, including conservation. But the farmers themselves are not in a position to supply those requirements. The provision of water would be essentially a reproductive work, and there would then be a possibility of the farmer paying interest, whereas to-day there is not. Generally speaking the wheatgrower is in an unenviable position. As the Federal Commission pointed out, 50 per cent. of our wheatgrowers are paying interest of from 7d. to 1s. 10d. per bushel of wheat. That applies to 50 per cent. of the 482 farmers that were selected to give evidence.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: A lot of wheat has been sold for less than that.

Hon. T. MOORE: Yes, sold down to 1s. 8d. per bushel. I want members to realise what an impossible position 50 per cent. of the farmers are in.

Hon. G. W. Miles: A lot of them are inefficient.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I am an efficient wheat farmer, yet I cannot make it pay.

Hon. T. MOORE: From that point of view, we must look for a reduction in interest. Something will have to be done in the way of re-conditioning the farmers' debts.

Hon. J. Cornell: We want a reduction of capital before a reduction of interest.

Hon. T. MOORE: We want a reduction in interest; we are not paying the capital.

Hon. G. W. Miles: And do not intend to pay it.

Hon. T. MOORE: The great bugbear is the interest bill which, as someone has said, comes round with sickening regularity. The Commission has shown that the interest bill is pushing down the farmers and taking all initiative out of them. The wheatgrower to-day is in the position of the chap who has always got something good and attractive ahead of him.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Like your election promises.

Hon. T. MOORE: Unfortunately election promises do not always come true. The farmers are looking for a reduction in their interest bill.

Hon. L. Craig: They are not paying it, are they?

Hon. T. MOORE: But it is being heaped up against their properties. It is time something was done so that the farmer might know exactly what is ahead of him.

Hon. G. W. Miles: What about the destruction of vermin?

Hon. T. MOORE: I was just going to mention that in many parts of the district I represent, the fox is becoming a menace. Long ago I said that in this State of large and unoccupied areas the fox would become a greater menace as the years went by. That is already being demonstrated in my district, where the fox is making great headway. Up to date there has been a fair amount of food for him in the way of rabbits, but he is now taking to the lambs. Unless we make an effort, it will be much more difficult to deal with the fox as time goes on. It has been suggested that the bonus should be increased, but I believe the farmers should make a concerted effort in every district simultaneously, such as they are called upon to do against the rabbits. As for the bonus, it is all right in its way, but if we suggest increasing the bonus, it is quite on the cards that the tax we are already paying will have to be increased also, and the farmers are not in a position to bear more taxation. If the department were to go into the matter and arrange for a concerted effort to be made in every district, we could deal with the fox; otherwise the fox is going to make great play in this State.

Hon. G. W. Miles: And the rabbits, too.

Hon. T. MOORE: Yes, they are already very troublesome. Another matter I should like to touch upon is the stallion subsidy, paid annually. I would suggest to the department that instead of bringing stallions from the Eastern States—and only

on stallions from the East is the subsidy paid; no subsidy is payable on locally produced stallions.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: I think that was altered last year.

Hon. T. MOORE: No, the subsidy is given only for imported horses. Instead of bringing over stallions alone, I suggest we should bring over a good line of stud mares, so that we could breed from them, and I suggest further that each of the State farms should be equipped with them. We should then get a good line of stallions bred within the State. It is believed by some breeders that you can start with a nondescript mare and, provided you have a good stallion, you can breed up further good stallions. But it would take years and years to do that. In cattle breeding one can achieve good results from the male line, but not so much in the breeding of horses. So I suggest that we should bring over stud mares. We have not been breeding horses for years past. Mr. Angelo, dealing with the number of horses in the North-West, quoted the number that were there some years ago, and the few that are there to-day. We cannot blame the Government for that. When, through the introduction of tractors, the horse trade went down, unfortunately breeding was no longer carried on up there. But within the next few years thousands of horses will be needed in this country because, horse-breeding not having been carried on for some years, most of the horses now on the farms are ageing, and so within the next few years we shall have to import a lot of horses. Some nice stud farms have been established in this country, but we have very few stud mares.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Have they been getting no good results from the stallions?

Hon. T. MOORE: Yes, but we are not getting along as fast as we should be. Coming to the discontent of the school teachers, I am well in their corner. I believe that, after all, when the School Teachers' Union go to some trouble to bring their grievances before the public they have just grounds of complaint. Quite a lot of people, including some members of the House, are misguided by the belief that school teachers enjoy short hours and nice positions. I should like some of those people to have to go through the schools and break in the youngsters. It should be understood that the teacher's hours are not restricted to

school hours. The teachers even snatch part of their meal hour to correct lessons. Then after the ordinary classes have gone, the teachers continue on with the more advanced pupils; and after they in turn have gone the teachers again give attention to the lessons, this time the lessons for the next day. I believe the attitude of the teachers is justified. Their only means to bring their grievances before the public was to adopt some such attitude. I hope the trouble will be rectified. If there is any profession that needs long service leave, it is that of teaching.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You do not approve of the teachers' methods, do you?

Hon. T. MOORE: They had to adopt some method, and no harm is being done by the attitude they have adopted.

Several members interjected.

Hon. T. MOORE: I do not believe that any harm will accrue to the children.

Hon. W. J. Mann: The teachers already get nine or ten weeks' holiday a year.

Hon. T. MOORE: When?

Hon. W. J. Mann: Well, they get six weeks at Christmas for a start.

Hon. T. MOORE: And I suppose five or six weeks at some other time. It would be better for both teachers and children if there were more school holidays. The idea that we should endeavour to cram everything possible into the heads of children in the space of a few years is a mistake. Too much cramming is being indulged in, and we are not getting the results that would be obtained if more leisure were given to the children and to the teachers. The teachers have a right to let us know that they are not satisfied with existing conditions. Members have said that the teachers are falling down on their job, but for years we have been adding a little more and still a little more to their burdens, and apparently are prepared to work the willing horse indefinitely. Teachers, in common with members of the civil service or other workers having a grievance, have a right to bring it before the public. I hope they will receive the attention they deserve.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Their greatest grievance was that they were not included in the benefits given to civil servants last year.

Hon. T. MOORE: That matters not.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: They thought their grievances should have been remedied then.

Hon. T. MOORE: Members, in finding fault with the teachers for their action, are not doing the right thing. It would surprise members if they knew the amount of charity that the teachers are giving the children.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Have you all the knowledge in the country? Do not you think we know anything?

Hon. T. MOORE: If members appreciated what the teachers are doing for the children in the way of charity, less fault would be found. I know how unfortunate is the position of many school children. Many of them are under-clad. It is not fair that members should attack teachers who cannot speak for themselves. The position of the Government, in the present time of stress, is a very difficult one. The turning of the corner, about which we used to hear so much, is not in evidence yet and will not be until such time as the prices for primary products increase. While wool and wheat prices remain at their present levels, any party in power must experience difficulties.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: You were not so sympathetic two years ago.

Hon. T. MOORE: I said at the time that I appreciated the difficulties confronting the then Government. The position of the wool-growers is very bad. It was said that the wool-growers had surmounted their troubles and last year farmers were advised to purchase sheep. The advice was followed; sheep were bought at high prices and the farmers who bought them have been working at a loss. I hope that the prices that ruled at the opening wool sales the other day will not prove to be the ruling prices for the season; otherwise the Government and the wool-growers will find it difficult to carry on. The drop in the price of wool at the opening sales was alarming, and the State as well as individuals must suffer financially on that account. The mining industry is a bright spot. I am pleased that at long last foreign capital is being introduced to develop gold mining in the Murchison. It is not generally known that the development of the Murchison in the boom times was undertaken by residents of the Murchison, and that very little money was introduced for mining development

there. However, money is now being introduced to work promising shows and big things are expected from the Murchison. I hope that the price of gold will continue to be high. The previous speaker said that the price of gold was likely to fall as the prices of other commodities increased. That does not necessarily follow. If gold is in demand, there is no reason why it should not command a higher price than it did in former years. Anyhow, I trust that the price will not recede to its old level for many years. As the years go on there is likely to be an even greater demand for gold, and I am hopeful that the price will increase. Gold should always have commanded a higher price, because its production cost more than was ever obtained for it. The industry, unfortunately, has been the means of rendering unfit many of the men engaging in it, and I hope that in these times of good prices the mining companies will bear that fact in mind. In many of the mines ventilation and other conditions are good, and we should be careful to see that they are maintained, so that we shall not have so many miners as we have had in the past finishing their lives at Wooroloo.

On the motion by Hon. G. W. Miles, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.53 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 23rd August, 1934.

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

QUESTION—FREMANTLE HARBOUR TRUST.

Handling Charges.

Mr. NEEDHAM asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Why are the Fremantle Harbour Trust charges for handling cargo considerably higher than charges for similar service at Eastern States main ports? 2, What advantages, if any, are given to owners of cargo at Fremantle as against Eastern States main ports right to point of delivery to owners' lorries, and, if any advantages are given, what do the Trust estimate them to cost?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1 and 2, The Fremantle Harbour Trust is the only port authority in Australia which undertakes the handling of cargo upon the wharves and publishes a schedule of rates for such services. Similar services, of course, have to be performed at the other ports, but the interests concerned in the various operations undertake these on their own account, and we have no knowledge of the separate costs to enable us to make a comparison with the Trust's scheduled charges at Fremantle. For instance, the Melbourne Harbour Trust, although it does not undertake the handling of cargo, does publish a list of charges which may be made by contractors in respect of services in connection with the handling of cargo upon the wharves. A comparison of the Fremantle Harbour Trust handling charges with these without a thorough knowledge of the ser-