**WHEAT STABILISATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL 1979**

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, 7 NOVEMBER 1979, PAGE 812**

**Second reading**

**The Hon. W. E. CHAPMAN (Minister of Agriculture)**obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Wheat Stabilisation Act, 1974-1979. Read a first time.

**The Hon. W. E. CHAPMAN:** I move:

*That this Bill be* now *read a second* time.

This short Bill is designed to ensure that the complementary Commonwealth-State wheat marketing arrangements can continue without any hitch during the Parliamentary recess preceding the resumption of the present session in February. The position is that the Commonwealth is in the course of preparing an Act to replace the Wheat Industry Stabilisation Act of 1974. It is not entirely clear, at this stage; what complementary provisions will be required on the part of the respective States. If the new Commonwealth Act is brought into operation during the Parliamentary recess, between the date on which this House rises soon and before it resumes again in February or thereabouts next year, it may be desirable for this State to make complementary alterations to its legislation to ensure that the scheme as a whole will operate smoothly.

This Bill makes provision for the necessary changes to be made expeditiously by regulation. It is envisaged that any such regulations would be supplanted by legislation to be introduced during the February sittings. Accordingly, the Bill provides that no such regulation shall have effect beyond 31 March 1980. Before referring to the clauses, I would like to point out that the Government believes that the prices for stock feed and industrial wheat should be fixed by the Australian Wheat Board and that the market place should determine those prices.

It is appreciated by the Government that the Australian Wheat Board is the authority which fixes the price within the Commonwealth and, accordingly, within each of the States, and we believe that commercial good sense will prevail at that marketing authority level with the Australian Wheat Board. Even if the occasion should arise when the community at large, or any part of it, is exploited, there is even further public protection incorporated in the current and proposed wheat stabilisation legislation in this country. Section 8 of the old Wheat Stabilisation Act refers to the specific powers of the Minister for Primary Industry, to the extent that that Minister may intervene where cases occur or are identified in which the Australian Wheat Board has over-exercised its authority or has exploited the community in price fixing.

As a result of discussions recently with the Minister for Primary Industry, I am assured that the intent and the content of section 8 of the old Wheat Stabilisation Act will be maintained and incorporated in section 18 in the new legislation presently before the Commonwealth Parliament.

I appreciate the co-operation of the Opposition in this matter, because it is somewhat unusual that we should be seeking to introduce a Bill at such short notice, but, in the interests of the wheat growers and the consumers of the various varieties of wheat, we must act swiftly in taking action complementary to that taken by the Commonwealth Government on behalf of the industry at large.

**Mr. McRAE (Playford):** The Opposition is quite overwhelmed by the devastating logic of the Minister’s argument. We support the Bill, and we are prepared to let it pass through all stages.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I must inform the honourable member for Playford that, regrettably, the form of suspension sought by and granted to the Minister requires that the honourable member should take the adjournment. A further suspension will be required in due course to allow the Bill to pass through all stages. I ask the honourable member for Playford to seek the adjournment of the debate.

**Mr. McRAE:** I ask that the debate be adjourned, with the understanding that the Opposition will agree to an adjournment on motion.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.