**FARMERS ASSISTANCE ACT AMEND­MENT BILL 1939**

**Legislative Assembly, 6 December 1939, pages 2201-2**

Second reading

**The Hon. A. L. McEWIN (Northern—Chief Secretary)—**The object of this Bill is to make an amendment to the Farmers Assistance Act which is rendered necessary because of the expiration of Part III. of the Act. The Bill is not for the purpose of extending the operation of the Act, or of re-opening any expired provisions. It is merely to deal with an administrative difficulty. Part IV. of the Farmers Assistance Act, as members know, deals with two things, namely, farmers’ debt adjustment and financial assistance to farmers pending the completion of the adjustment. This Part expires on June 30, 1940, in the sense that no new applicants can be brought under it after that date. Persons who are subject to Part IV., however, will continue to be subject to it after June 30 next, until released by the board. The difficulty intended to be dealt with in the Bill relates to the seasonal advances made by the board to farmers who are under Part IV. In the past every such advance has been secured by means of a document under which the farmer to whom the advance is made assigns his current season’s crop to the board. Such assignments are made under section 13 of the Act and in order to obtain the benefit of the provisions of that section, farmers under Part IV. have usually applied for their advances under Part III. This procedure has advantages both for the farmers and for the board. The farmer is saved the trouble and expense of executing and registering a bill of sale—whilst the board has the advantage of a more suitable form of security.

Part III. of the Act has now expired so that no new applications or assignments can be made under it. Consequently farmers under Part IV. cannot now, unless the Act is altered, give security for their seasonal advances in the convenient method which has been adopted in the past. To avoid this difficulty it is proposed to enact a new provision in Part IV. of the Act providing that farmers under that Part who require advances are to execute an application and assignment of crops under section 13 of the Act, and that section 13 will continue to apply to such applications and assignments. The Bill really raises no new issues of policy—it merely continues, subject to the existing limitations on the operation of the Act, the present procedure as to taking security for advances. I move the second reading.

The Hon. C. R. CUDMORE (Central No. 2) —I regret the necessity for this Bill, because it makes it obvious that the intention is to continue advances under Part IV. and keep the Farmers Assistance Board in existence.

I have spoken on this matter on a number of occasions when it was proposed to extend the legislation.

The Hon. A. L. McEwin—This amendment does not extend the operation of the Act.

The Hon. C. R. CUDMOREf—I did not say it did.

The Hon. A. L. McEwin—You suggested it.

The Hon. C. R. CUDMORE—I did not say that it extended the time, but it indicates that the intention is to continue lending money under Part IV. On many occasions we have thought that by some means or other we would be able to dispense with this type of legislation, but it has been extended on several occasions since 1934. Part IV. refers to debt adjustment. Now we are confronted with a greatly changed position so that all advances will be made under Part IV. and the board will continue and the unfortunate mortgagee will be in the same position as that to which I previously referred. Advances will be made and in many instances there will not be enough money to repay the money lent, much less pay the mortgagee his interest.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON (Central No. 1— Leader of the Opposition)—Twelve months ago to-day the Hon. A. P. Blesing introduced a similar measure, but as the Chief Secretary said the proposal is to extend Part III. On that occasion I expressed the opinion that certain portions of the Act would have to be extended in 12 months and what I have said has eventuated. I support the second reading.

The Hon. A. L. McEWIN (Northern—Chief Secretary)—The attitude of Mr. Cudmore regarding this legislation is familiar to members but in applying his arguments to this amending Bill I suggest he is a little off the track. The amendment does not in any way interfere with or extend anything which has been done regarding the financing of farmers by the board. If this legislation were not passed it would merely mean that the same thing would have to be done, but under a far more expensive system.

The Hon. C. R. Cudmore—Unless the board intended to lend farmers more money this Bill would not have been introduced.

The Hon. A. L. McEWIN—That is so. The honourable member is only beating the air in applying his arguments to this Bill. If Part III. went out of operation it would be neces­sary to make advances under a bill of sale, which would mean increased expense.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.