**TOBACCO INDUSTRY PROTECTION BILL 1934**

**Legislative Council, 13 September 1934, pages 1066-7**

**Second reading**

**The Hon. A. P. BLESING (Northern— Minister of Agriculture)—**The object of this Bill is to prevent the spread of diseases of tobacco plants, particularly blue mould, which is a very destructive and active disease. The Bill has been asked for by the growers in the principal tobacco growing districts. additional inspectors will be required to police it, nor is it likely that it will place any burden on the public revenue since the inspectors now employed in the Department of Agriculture will see to its observance in the course of then ordinary duties Nor does it place any restriction on the right of anybody to produce anything. It does, however, require persons producing tobacco or selling tobacco seeds or seedlings to take certain precautions to prevent the spread of the disease. Clause 3 provides that the occupier of land on which tobacco is grown must destroy the remains of all tobacco plants before the 31st July after the end of each season. The Government is advised that after the leaves have been picked from tobacco plants for curing and sale, it is most inadvisable to permit plants to remain in the ground for a protracted period, because at this stage the agency causing blue mould is particularly active. The clause also provides that if the occupier himself does not destroy the plants an inspector may do so, and charge the cost to the occupier. Where, however, the plants were grown by some person other than the occupier of the land, the occupier, although liable to see that the Bill is observed, can recover from the actual grower any expenses incurred in complying with the Bill. Clause 3 prohibits a grower of tobacco from selling any tobacco seeds unless taken from an area which has been inspected by an inspector during the growing of the plants from which the seeds are taken. The object is, of course, to ensure that only seeds from plants free from disease shall be sold and thus prevent the spread of disease through the medium of seeds. Clause 5 contains a rule for the same purpose applicable to seedlings. It requires that tobacco seedlings must be inspected and approved by an inspector before sale. Clause 6 empowers inspectors to enter upon any land for the purpose of securing the observance of the Bill. The remaining clauses are the usual machinery provisions for carrying such rules into effect. The Commonwealth Government has made a grant to each of the States, and it will considerably help the tobacco growers to pioneer the industry in this State. It would be disastrous if precautions were not taken to prevent the spread of diseases such as blue mould, which has a very bad effect on tobacco. The growers have asked for this legislation.

The Hon. W. Hannaford—How much are we producing in South Australia?

The Hon. A. P. BLESING—I cannot say offhand. We have produced a considerable quantity which is not suitable for sale in this country. The money provided by the Commonwealth enables us to appoint an inspector and that will assist growers. Only a limited area is suitable.

The Hon. H. Homburg—What growers are in favour of the Bill?

The Hon. A. P. BLESING—The present tobacco growers. They want the legislation in Australia to be uniform.

The Hon. H. Homburg—Is that an association of growers?

The Hon. A. P. BLESING - The people now growing. The South-East is fairly suitable and some is grown in the Mount Barker hills.

The Hon. J. Anderson—Do they want other industries to pay for it?

The Hon. A. P. BLESING—There will be no increased cost to the State. The industry is in its infancy here, but suitable tobacco leaf can be grown.

The Hon. H. Homburg—Did a deputation of the growers ask for this legislation?

The Hon. A. P. BLESING—They made a request in writing. I am not anxious to bring down legislation unless requested by those interested in the industry. Then it is my duty to bring the matter before the Chamber. We should give them a chance to see if tobacco can be grown with commercial success. I move the second reading.

The Hon. J. Anderson—It is a question of State aid.

The Hon. W. HANNAFORD secured the adjournment of the debate.