

QUESTIONS.

SUPERPHOSPHATE.

(a) *As to Dealers' Compliance with Act.*

Hon. L. A. LOGAN (for Hon. A. L. Loton) asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) How many times has the Minister for Agriculture required a dealer in superphosphate to forward for analysis to the chemist of the Department of Agriculture a sample of fertiliser for the years—

- (a) 1948-49;
- (b) 1949-50;
- (c) 1950-51?

(2) Why have not the dealers in superphosphate complied with the requirements of Section 12 (c) of the Fertilisers Act, 1928, which requires the dealer to give to the purchaser an invoice setting out the analysis of the fertiliser?

(3) Has any action been taken against dealers for not complying with the Act?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) At no time during the years mentioned has the Minister for Agriculture requested a dealer in superphosphate to forward samples for analysis but during those years samples of superphosphate have been taken by inspectors appointed under the Fertilisers Act, 1928—

- (a) 1948-49—6.
- (b) 1949-50—6.
- (c) 1950-51—Nil.

(2) Section 12 (c) is complied with by the manufacturers of superphosphate in that they supply invoices, on the back of which is printed the registered analysis of all fertilisers sold by them. Breaches of this section by dealers have been noticed by inspectors of the Department of Agriculture and, following action taken, these are being remedied.

(3) No. Breaches of the Act which would warrant action have not arisen.

(b) *As to Analyses of Samples and Standard.*

Hon. L. A. LOGAN (for Hon. A. L. Loton) asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) How many analyses of fertilisers were made during the years 1948-49, 1949-50, 1950-51, by the Government Chemical Laboratories?

(2) How many samples of superphosphate were not up to the required standard?

(3) How many samples showed an excess of moisture?

(4) How many samples showed a deficiency of—

- (a) nitrogen;
- (b) water soluble potash;
- (c) acid soluble potash;
- (d) total phosphoric acid?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Fertilisers analysed during—

	1948	1949	1950	1951
	35	24	35	11

(2) Superphosphate:

	1948	1949	1950	1951
Samples analysed	6	3	6	0
Deficient in phosphoric acid, P ₂ O ₅				
water soluble	3		2	
citrate soluble	3		0	
acid soluble	0		1	
total	0		1	

Thus—

No. of samples below standard	1948	1949	1950	1951
	4	0	2	0

(3) Moisture content is not required to be registered under the Fertilisers Act, 1928, and thus there cannot be "excess of moisture" under the Act.

(4) Acid soluble potash is not a constituent registered under the Fertilisers Act, 1928, and thus there cannot be a deficiency of it under the Act.

Deficient in—

	1948	1949	1950	1951
(a) nitrogen	5	3	4	0
(b) water soluble potash	8	2	5	2
(d) total phosphoric acid	4	3	4	2

TUBERCULOSIS.

As to Total and Migrant Cases.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES asked the Minister for Transport:

Can he inform the House—

(1) How many cases of tuberculosis have been notified since 1947?

(2) What number of such cases are new Australians?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) 2,354.

(2) An answer cannot be given to this question because cases have not been classified in this manner. It would require comparison of all names with the migration authorities, and even then unassisted arrivals and transfers from other States might be omitted. A definition of the term "new Australian" would be necessary.

HARBOURS.

(a) *As to Fremantle Trust Renewals Fund.*

Hon. E. M. DAVIES asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) Is it a fact that £2,000 is the amount the Fremantle Harbour Trust is permitted to retain in the renewals fund?

(2) If so, will he consider increasing this sum in view of the amount of renewal work necessary, and the fact that the trust is a revenue-producing body?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) A regulation provides for an annual sum of £2,000 being set aside for a renewals fund. The amount in the fund at the 30th June, 1952, was £102,000.

(2) It is unnecessary to create any special fund for renewals and replacements as funds required for this purpose are now provided from loan funds capital. Repayments of loan being made to Loan Repayments Fund over a period of estimated life of the asset.

(b) *As to Availability of Loan Moneys.*

Hon. E. M. DAVIES asked the Minister for Transport:

Can he give any indication when the loan moneys allocated to Fremantle, Albany and Bunbury for harbour work will be available?

The MINISTER replied:

Loan funds are made available progressively each month to the Public Works Department for harbour works construction purposes.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Ninth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. L. A. LOGAN (Midland) [4.40]: In common with other members, I wish to congratulate those who, after facing their electors, have again been returned to this Chamber and also to convey my best wishes to the new members who have been elected to seats in this House for the first time. In the short period of five years I have been in this Chamber, the faces I have seen before me have changed frequently. Five years ago I was the youngest member here, both in respect of age and length of service. Today I find that there are five younger than I am as regards age, and nine or ten who are junior to me from the standpoint of service. Thus, changes, both as regards age and membership, are continually occurring. The trend in the direction of having younger members will, I hope, prove to be in the best interests of the House and the State generally.

I also congratulate Mr. Fraser upon his appointment as leader of his party in this House. One cannot refer to him as the Leader of the Opposition in this Chamber, because he and the members of his party have proved, to a large extent, to be consistent supporters of the Government.

Hon. W. R. Hall: I am pleased to hear you say that.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: What intrigues me, however, is what those members will do when they go on the hustings during the elections that will take place next year. I think it is safe to say that they supported the Government in respect of at

least 90 per cent. of its legislation, and the only thing they can do, as far as I can see, is to stand as supporters of the Government.

Hon. G. Fraser: We will fix that part of it.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: While I have been able to congratulate Mr. Fraser, I must say that I hope he will continue to hold office as leader of his party in this House for many years to come, but that during that time he will occupy the seat he has at present. Having extended my congratulations to him, I must take him to task for the reference he made to a paragraph appearing in the Governor's Speech with respect to communism. Mr. Fraser rather slated the Government for having included that paragraph in the Speech to be delivered to members of both Houses of Parliament by His Excellency the Governor. I should say that whatever appeared in that Speech was only in accord with the wishes of His Excellency.

Hon. G. Fraser: Do you believe in embroiling His Excellency in political arguments?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I believe that people holding positions of high authority who have great experience should give a lead to the rest of the community, and it is refreshing to find that we have such people in our midst. I do not know why it is necessary that there should be any difference between us in respect of this topic. I do not know if Mr. Fraser read a report in the Press within the last day or two where Mr. Dougherty, the general secretary of the A.W.U. in the Eastern States, made some strong comments on this very subject. Coming from a man with his experience, I would say we should be able to support him, realising that there is a lot in what he had to say. We should be prepared to give him all the support we can.

Hon. G. Fraser: The point I raised was that it was wrong to involve His Excellency the Governor in a political argument, that was all.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The reference in the Speech must have been in accordance with his wishes, otherwise he would not have read that part of the Speech.

Hon. G. Fraser: It was there in the Speech for him to read.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: During the course of his contribution to the current debate, Mr. Henning made reference to primary production and asserted that the State was sick and needed medicine. I quite agree with that and, in my opinion, the first dose of medicine that is necessary is one that will cause the people generally to have a change of mind regarding primary producers. People have to be taught that a prosperous and contented primary producer is the first essential to the

achievement of a contented and prosperous community. On the other hand, we find that over the last few years when the primary producer has been endeavouring to get out of the rut in which he has been for so long, when he has bought a motor car at a cost of £200 or so more than that of a less attractive type and because he has purchased a washing machine or an electric lighting plant, some people say that he has no right to do so.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Why should he not do so?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Quite so, but I am pointing out that it is in such directions that there must be a change of mind on the part of the general community respecting the primary producer. In many places and on many occasions we have heard such remarks passed. Unfortunately, as the cost of production has increased so greatly over the last few years, the margin to the producer today is rather small. It seems to me that not sufficient cognisance is taken of the effect of wages and costs on the primary producing industry. On the other hand, that should be one of the first considerations weighing with any wages or costs tribunal. I refer to the effect any increase under either heading would have on the producing section of the community. That is an essential, because unless we have a prosperous producing element in our midst, it is impossible to have prosperity prevalent throughout the State.

To my way of thinking, one of the reasons for the decline in production today is the costs involved. Before a farmer starts to produce, especially if he is on country that has to be fallowed, a period of at least 16 months must elapse prior to there being any possibility of a return from his land. Within that period he probably works the holding two or three times and then, at least seven months before there is any possibility of a return being obtained, he seeds the property. In the intervening period he has to face the possible effects of the elements, diseases, fires, storms and so on. When we realise the cost of machinery, it must be appreciated that very often a machine costing £1,000 may be used during three or four weeks out of the 52 and has to lie idle for the rest of the year.

We have to bear in mind the abnormal cost of super, about which I shall have something more to say directly, and the terrific cost of unskilled labour. I use the word "unskilled" advisedly because I can give one instance that lends point to my remark; and it can be multiplied by many others. A man who had a new drill also had an unskilled man on the property to help him. He tossed up to decide whether he would put the man on the tractor or on the drill. Unfortunately, he put him on the drill, thinking that was where he could do the least harm. The man had not gone

half a round when, in turning a corner, he threw the machine out of gear. While the engine was racing full ahead, he put it in gear again. The result was a broken machine, and it was a fortnight before the parts could be replaced. Those who know anything about the matter will be aware that a fortnight's delay at the beginning of seeding can result in a loss of thousands of pounds.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Is there no training school for agricultural workers?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: One has just been held; but that does not overcome the fact that all these fellows cannot be trained at present.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: I was not criticising; I was just wanting to know.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: A school was recently held at Bassendean and was, in my opinion, the beginning of something well worth while. Young lads were put through a course of tractor maintenance and the handling of farm implements generally, and then had to go into the field and submit to a test to determine whether they had learnt anything from the instruction.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: That should be a step in the right direction.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: It is.

Hon. L. C. Diver: They are only junior farmers.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Yes, but they are the farmers of the future. When it is realised that it costs for maintenance over a period the equivalent of 85 per cent. of the original price of the machine, it will be understood that anything that boys can be taught that will help to reduce such costs will be for the betterment of the industry as a whole.

I mentioned that declining output was due principally to the high cost of production. I am pretty sure that if the effect on production costs had been taken into account when the 40-hour week was granted and an increase of £1 per week in the basic wage was agreed to in 1949 or 1950, some other alternative would have been found. The stage has been reached where the primary producers are looking for something easy. They go into town on Saturday morning and find everybody running round doing nothing. They are therefore no longer content to be serfs for the rest of the community; no longer satisfied to work 50 or 60 hours a week while the other fellow loaf. They are looking for something that will bring them almost as much revenue as before, but with much less work and at half the cost.

If we study the facts, we find that is the first cause of lack of production. Many people blame taxation; but that, in my opinion, is incidental. I do not think it has been stated clearly enough that taxation rates have not increased over the

last 10 years. They have remained exactly the same, except probably for some concession in regard to exemptions. Naturally the amount of taxation paid has increased on account of the higher incomes received. Nevertheless I believe that taxation is too high and something should be done to reduce it, especially in connection with those in the higher income group. When men are paying 14s. 8d. out of every £1 they earn, they have not much incentive to increase production.

"The West Australian" seems rather anxious these days to try to control the primary producing industry in Australia. In a leading article one day last week, the paper suggested that primary producers should get away from all the boards set up for their benefit and throw themselves on the open market and that they should receive world parity prices for all their commodities; in other words, that they should go back to what, in my opinion, were the bad old days. If we consider what that would mean to some of our industries, we realise that such a policy would not be in the best interests of the producers.

We can start with the meat industry. We find that the oversea price for meat is much lower than that on the local market. Egg producers would be in the same boat. The amount received for eggs in Singapore and the United Kingdom is much lower than that obtained on the local markets. The same applies to dried fruits, although since the recent rise secured for the producers by the Minister for Trade and Commerce, the gap has been closed to a certain extent. Under the proposed policy, the dairy farmer would also be selling his produce at a lower value.

But "The West Australian" is not satisfied with that. In addition, it would like to have the 25 per cent. exchange removed. So the policy would be to bring those four industries on to the basis of the oversea market and then take away 25 per cent. as well. If effect were given to that kind of policy, there would soon be no production at all in this country. Unemployment would increase and we would find men walking the streets or hanging round the Premier's office looking for sustenance. At present wheat is bringing more oversea than on the local market. What I am about to say is only conjecture, but it has some basis, as will be evident to anyone who has been through the mill and knows what happened to the price of wheat in days gone by when certain information came from various parts of the world at certain times of the year.

One can imagine, if free market conditions were in operation, what the effect would be of information which has come to hand that America and Canada have the highest crops on record; that in Argen-

tina the conditions are favourable; and that most European countries will have excellent crops. Back in 1927, 1928 and 1929 such reports had a very adverse effect on the price of wheat; and if similar conditions prevailed today, we would experience a fall in the price of wheat. I have already said that that is conjecture. It must be so, because we cannot say for certain what the result would be. But those who have been through the mill have a realisation of what would be likely to happen.

Admittedly the free-market price for wheat today is 4s. or 5s. above the International Wheat Agreement price. Were it is not for the International Wheat Agreement we might find the position reversed. It is possible that without that agreement the price of free-market wheat would be down. It was also stated that the Federal and State Governments—Sir Charles can answer this if he wishes—had no faith in the sterling value of wheat. That was the last sentence in the subleader in yesterday's issue of "The West Australian." To me it seems a stupid statement.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: It is amazing how we continue to support them.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Surely responsible men in both Commonwealth and State Governments realise their responsibilities. In 1948 when a referendum was held among the wheatgrowers on the question of the stabilisation plan, the leaders of the Wheatgrowers' Federation submitted to Mr. Pollard, the then Minister for Trade and Commerce, a 15-point plan, of which he granted only four points. Nevertheless the wheatgrowers still decided to vote for the stabilisation plan. The reason for that—I got this from many sources—was that they anticipated a change of Government and thought that when that occurred they would receive at least 14 or 15 of the points of their plan. At that stage the plan, as I have said, contained 15 points and eventually another was added making the total 16. I understand that the present Commonwealth Government has granted them the whole 16 points.

Hon. L. C. Diver: Feed wheat was not reduced.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: They got the price, which was one of the things they wanted. The very fact that the Commonwealth Government has acceded to their demands shows faith in the industry, to my way of thinking. The Farmers' Union was criticised on two points. It was stated that the time had arrived when the union should look round and find out whether it represented the producers. It was further said that the Farmers' Union had supported the wool plan and the oats Bill, both of which were turned down by the growers.

For the edification of "The West Australian," I would point out that the growers in this State voted in favour of the wool plan which, had it been put into effect, would have reduced the worries of the Commonwealth Government, which is at present waiting anxiously for the price of wool to be announced next Monday. I will not deal with the question of the merits of the Oats Marketing Bill on this occasion, except to point out that "The West Australian" said the Farmers' Union was out of step with those it is supposed to represent. That Bill was defeated in another place by 26 votes to 18 and if we look at the names of those who voted against it we find that only two of them actually represent producer interests. It might therefore be said that "The West Australian" is out of step, and not the Farmers' Union.

I must mention next the Government's almost indecent haste in supplying water to Kwinana. I do not believe in unnecessary criticism and I think that in one respect we should congratulate the Government on the expeditious manner in which it has undertaken the supplying of that water, but on the other hand, unless it changes its attitude towards country water supplies, I am afraid it will have to stand up to criticism.

The Government undertook, firstly, to supply 200,000 gallons of water per day to Kwinana within three months, and that was accomplished. It was then to put in a 10-inch steel pipe from South Fremantle, via Naval Base, to Kwinana, with a 1,000,000-gallon tank on Mount Brown and a pumping station on Naval Base Road. That work was commenced on the 15th March and is almost completed. The Government was next to plan ahead for a 30-inch steel pipe from Armadale to a hill near Lake Thompson, where a 20,000,000-gallon reservoir was to be put in. That work has to be accomplished within two and a half years. When we see the speed with which the work is being carried out in that area—

Hon. G. Fraser: Or what they say they will carry out.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: — and compare it with the time taken on the South-West water scheme or the eastern wheat-belt or the Geraldton scheme, it will be found that there is no comparison. If the Government would apply the same attitude of mind to country water supplies as it has to the Kwinana project, it would be doing a good job; but I am afraid that a considerable change of attitude is necessary.

Hon. G. Fraser: Are you losing confidence in the Government?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: No. All I ask of the Government is that it adopt the same outlook towards the country water supplies as it has towards Kwinana. If that is not done, we might have to shake the

foundations of this House in order to get results. In His Excellency's Speech we find mention of the loan position and here, again, I may be accused of criticising—

Hon. G. Fraser: That would be a tragedy.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: If I do criticise, the Government may have the answer. There is little less money available this year than there was last year—the difference being something in the region of £2,000,000—and if that is so, the curtailment of work by the Government seems out of proportion to the reduction in the available funds. If the Government thought that the available loan moneys would be increased, when from its own evaluation of the position it should have known that that could not be so because of the decrease in overseas credit, it must have been blind.

It may have been that the Government had placed too many overseas orders for plant and equipment—orders that all came due sooner than expected—and in that case there may be some excuse for what has happened. If that is so, I do not think we have any kick coming but, failing that, we are entitled to know why the Government could not see what was looming ahead and why it committed itself to so much expenditure of loan money on overseas equipment in one particular year.

Hon. G. Fraser: It has known for a long time what the loan position would be.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I have made the query, and the Government can answer it.

Hon. L. C. Diver: Dr. Coombs fell down on the job.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I come now to the cost of production of super. It seems to me that somebody is playing ducks and drakes with the supply of sulphur as a world commodity. For the last three years we have been warned that the production of brimstone in America was limited and that the total in sight was so small that it would be necessary for America to cease exporting it altogether in three years' time. Acting on that information, the Government, in its wisdom, negotiated with the superphosphate companies to have pyrites used instead of imported sulphur. I want to know who is responsible for what has taken place.

Last week we read in the Press that the superphosphate companies in Australia are to approach the Tariff Board for a duty to be placed on cheap imported brimstone. If there were no brimstone available from America, there would be no need to approach the Tariff Board in that way, but we find this week that the necessity for the rationing of sulphur in America has disappeared and that there

is plenty available for everybody. I hope the Minister for Agriculture can tell us who was responsible for giving inaccurate information to the Government.

Unfortunately the Government has committed itself to a great extent with the Norseman Goldmining Coy. for the supply of pyrites. The company's works have had to be altered in order to treat the pyrites and it will therefore be impossible for this State to make use of any cheap brimstone that may be available. It is a tragedy that such a state of affairs should have been brought about, and I therefore desire to know who is responsible for what has occurred in that regard.

I mentioned the loan position and I would like to relate that to land settlement. Every member has received a copy of the report of the Land Settlement Board. In my opinion, it is a very fine report and a good survey of all that has been accomplished. In the summary, however, mention is made of every area except one in which I am particularly interested, and that is the area around Hill River, west of Moora, where a quarter of a million acres have been set aside for soldier settlement. As the costs of clearing and preparing land in the lower South-West are very great these days, and as this area can be developed immediately at a fraction of the cost, work should be concentrated on it immediately if our loan moneys are to be expended so that we may make the best use of them.

As I said, no mention was made in the summary of when or how it was intended to open up this area. I hope and trust the Government will see fit to make some move to get on with the development of this area immediately. Recently there has been some criticism concerning land settlement and portion of it in regard to minor details is possibly justified. When we consider that the scheme costs almost £8,000,000 and reflect on the type of man to be employed, namely overseers and the like, and when we consider the new ideas adopted in regard to clearing, I think we can say that those mistakes have been minor ones. Overall, the Government can be commended on the attitude it has taken in regard to soldier settlement.

Reference has been made to the town planning Bill which was the subject of a Royal Commission. I do not want to deal with the Royal Commission aspect of it. I would mention, however, that the scope of the work of planning must of necessity cover a wider area than just the metropolitan area. We must make sure that when a planner is appointed he is qualified to plan both country and metropolitan towns, which I regard as most essential. The sooner some of our country towns are planned, the better off we shall be.

There is one feature of planning in the metropolitan area which I trust will be impressed upon whoever may be respon-

sible for undertaking the task. I refer to the fact that certain areas should be set aside for the production of foodstuffs. I mentioned this matter when I spoke on the Kwinana land resumption Bill, but I do not seem to have got much satisfaction from anybody. To my mind, it is imperative that this land be set aside now, before it is too late. In most places, such land is being rated higher and higher all the time, so much so that it is being rated out of productivity. The only way an owner can get anything out of it, is to convert it into building blocks. Unless something is done to stop that drift, these people will be forced out of production and the State will suffer considerably.

Hon. G. Fraser: An efficient town planner would not allow the land to be cut up.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: That is why I say the town planner should be aware of the need for this. I do not think the matter can be stressed too much, because it is most essential to the economy of the State.

I fear I must take the Government to task concerning the training of nurses. Up till now, the Government adopted an excellent attitude and should have been awarded full marks. There was not a week during the first 12 months I was a member of this House when we were not inundated with applications from country hospitals for nurses to work in those institutions. At that time the Government tackled the problem with realism, and I am happy to say the difficulty was largely overcome. These days, however, it is very seldom that we get requests from nurses to staff our country hospitals. After having arrived at a most excellent position, lo and behold, the Government alters its system under which country hospitals, such as Geraldton and Northam, were allowed to become training centres.

When these hospitals were recognised as proper training centres, their efficiency was increased enormously. Now, however, we have the London Nurses Registration Board saying that it will not grant reciprocity to Western Australian nurses unless they have done the full course at either the Fremantle, Kalgoorlie or Perth hospitals. To me it seems wrong that the Western Australian Nurses Registration Board should be dictated to by the board in London for the benefit of a very small percentage of nurses who go to London to complete their training.

The idea, under the new setup, is that a nurse can do her first 12 months' training at these hospitals and then go to Kalgoorlie, Fremantle or Perth for the other two years. It is also intended to introduce a system of nurses' aids. These are young women who will never become nurses; they are probably just hewers of wood or drawers of water. Let us consider the position in the hospital at Gerald-

ton, in which I am interested. First we will have the first year nurses, then there will be the nurses' aids who will never become nurses; after that we shall have a vacuum until we reach the sisters at the top. People who go to hospital expect the best service they can get, and I am confident they will not get it under this system. I hope the Government will take some notice of what the medical profession and the matron of the hospital at Geraldton have already said regarding this matter, because it is serious.

I noticed in the Governor's Speech reference to the bringing down of a Bill to amend the Nurses Registration Act. If that Bill is designed along the lines I have mentioned, then I will do my best to see it is defeated. I cannot understand the attitude of the Government in this matter, or why it should break away from a system that has proved so completely satisfactory merely because the Nurses Registration Board in London refuses to accept these girls unless they do their training at certain centres here. We are training our nurses for Western Australian conditions and surely the Nurses Registration Board here should have sufficient power to act without being dictated to from London. I agree that reciprocity is a good thing, but if it operates to our detriment, we should do something to prevent it. I trust the Government will make every effort to see that the move from London is counter-acted.

I would now like to refer to the Licensing Act. I have no great worries about the measure except that in my area there is one public house which is open all the week from Monday to Saturday, but I understand that it is the only place in Western Australia that cannot open on Sunday. This is so because one sentence was omitted from the principal Act. These people work under what is called an Australian beer and wine license, and because that is not defined, they are not allowed to open on Sunday. I tried to overcome the difficulty by saying that the omission had been made and that the man I have in mind should be permitted to open his premises. But this was not allowed. The other nine hotels open but this unfortunate fellow's place has to remain closed. I do not think it is a fair go, and the Government should do something about it.

The Minister for Agriculture: Is that in the town of Geraldton?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Yes.

The Minister for Agriculture: Then I think they are all right as they are.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Why should one be penalised?

The Minister for Agriculture: He does not provide accommodation or meals.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Yes he does, to a certain extent.

The Minister for Agriculture: He does not.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I do not wish to say very much about education except to congratulate the Government on the excellent job it has done. If the Director of Education and the Minister for Education are kept as a team, I can think of no better reason why the Government should be returned at the next election! Here we have two outstanding men who have done wonders for education in the State.

Hon. G. Fraser: Come and have a look down our way.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The hon. member can look where he likes.

Hon. G. Fraser: They cannot be much of a team if they fail to provide schools.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The hon. member would be a wizard if he could mention any Minister for Education or any Government that has done more for education in Western Australia, particularly when we know that 5,000 children are entering school each year.

Hon. E. M. Davies: We have taken that into account.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Then I say the hon. member is a wizard.

Hon. G. Fraser: There is not enough vision.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I do not think anyone can point the bone at this Government for what it has done in relation to education. Even those people who criticise feel in their hearts, I am sure, that it is a job well done.

Hon. G. Fraser: I am not so sure about schools in my area.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The people in my area are also waiting for schools. The leeway of past years is gradually being overtaken, but when we remember that 5,000 children are reaching the school-going age every year, it shows what an enormous task confronts the department.

Two members have referred to the Victoria Park bus service. I do not know whether they were speaking from experience or observation, but as one who travels fairly regularly on that route, I think I can speak from experience.

Hon. G. Fraser: In which direction?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: From here to Victoria Park and from Victoria Park back to Perth. Mention has been made of people having to stand in the rain while waiting for a bus, but the fact of there being no conductor on the bus would not make any difference to that. The people who travel in the busy periods have their tickets before they board the bus.

Hon. G. Fraser: The one-man bus is a detriment because of the delay.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I cannot see that it is a detriment. If one bus is five minutes behind time and the same applies to the bus ahead of it, there would be no actual delay.

Hon. G. Fraser: There would be five minutes longer for the people to stand in the rain.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I have travelled on this route frequently when drivers and conductors were employed and very often those buses would run to the same schedule as they do now. I have noticed that there were periods when, in my opinion, a conductor could be usefully employed. I have studied this problem, and on the whole I think that a good job is being done with the one-man buses. I can imagine what the drivers have to tolerate during the day's work, especially at a busy time like the present week when the school holidays are in progress. Usually, I have found the drivers very considerate, and I cannot see that the travelling public has reason to complain. Rather has the driver reason to complain when a passenger puts down a shilling without mentioning his destination or the amount of the fare he requires. Evidently such people expect the driver to be clairvoyant, and that sort of thing goes on all day.

I would say that at times insufficient attention is paid to the maintenance of the buses, especially as regards the brakes. There is a terrific squeal every time a bus pulls up. Too many buses are in that condition and some attention should be paid to them. However, as I have said, there are certain periods when it would be advisable to put on a conductor. Mention has also been made of the danger arising from the one-man buses. I consider that that sort of talk is all hoovey, because I cannot see that any danger whatever exists. The driver does not start the bus until he has collected the fares, but I have noticed that that does not always apply on the private buses. The only fault I have to find with the one-man buses is that at some periods it is rather difficult for the driver to collect the fares, and so I suggest that at such times as the present, when school holidays are on and the buses each morning are packed, it would be advisable to have a conductor. On the other hand, there are certain periods when one man is sufficient.

Another point mentioned regarding this route is that of delay. One of the worst delays is caused through the driver, at the end of each section, having to record the numbers of the tickets sold. Just what is gained by that I do not know. To me, it seems to be folly. If the Minister is desirous of speeding up trips, I suggest that that requirement be cut out.

The Minister for Transport: It is required as a necessary part of the routine.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: But if an inspector boards a bus and finds that a passenger has travelled a block further than the fare he paid entitled him to, he could catch that man.

Hon. G. Fraser: Is any blame put on the driver for the delay?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I do not know. In my opinion the driver should not be blamed. Whether he is blamed by the department, I do not know. Mr. Barker, in speaking last evening on the half-caste problem, suggested assimilation into the white community. I regret that the hon. member is not in his seat at present because I desired to ask him what he meant by assimilation.

The Minister for Agriculture: If he were in his seat, he could not reply by interjection because interjections are highly disorderly.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I am wondering whether the hon. member was suggesting that certain portions of the white community should be forced to marry half-castes or vice versa. If it is not so, the talk about assimilation does not mean anything. As a matter of fact, assimilation is taking place now, and that is why we have the problem of the half-caste with us. If we were to wipe out the whole of our present half-caste population, the problem would arise again in the next generation. If the hon. member does not mean what I have suggested, his ideas do not make sense. I understand that another speaker wishes to follow me, and as it is not proposed to sit after tea, I shall conclude my remarks by supporting the motion.

HON. E. M. HEENAN (North-East) [5.40]: In supporting the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply, I wish to associate myself with other speakers in extending congratulations to the new members. I shall not weary the House by indulging in repetition, except to assure those members that I heartily concur in the remarks that have been offered and wish them a long and happy sojourn as members of this House.

In the brief space of time at my disposal, I wish to refer to the goldmining industry which, of course, is easily the principal industry in the province I represent. In Mexico City next week, a meeting of the International Monetary Fund will be held, and it will have tremendous consequences for Australia and particularly for Western Australia. At that meeting another attempt will be made to increase the dollar price of gold. It is pleasing to know that our delegate has been instructed to support the move for an increase. However, the real champion of our cause and that of his country is the South African Minister for Mines, who, for years past, has been carrying on the fight

against tremendous odds and who, in my opinion, has not received the whole-hearted support that should have been forthcoming from the Government of this country—a country that should be vitally interested in the outcome.

For years past, the goldmining industry has been caught between the millstones of rising costs and a fixed price for its commodity, and the limit has now almost been reached. Unlike commodities such as wheat and wool and other minerals, gold has been singled out as the one commodity to which a rigid price-fixing must apply. No matter how costs and wages might rise, the edict of the International Monetary Fund has been that the price of gold shall remain fixed. The obvious result of this policy, as applied to Western Australia, has been the gradual strangulation of the industry. What this might ultimately mean to our State is too serious not to evoke the gravest thought.

Goldmining is peculiarly a Western Australian industry, because it laid the foundations of our economy and of our way of life. For almost 60 years it has been the very basis of our prosperity. It was directly responsible for bringing population to the State in its early days, and it helped largely to tide us over the difficult depression years by finding direct employment for 30,000 men, and indirect employment for, possibly, another 70,000. It has accomplished more than any other industry in opening up the far distant portions of the State, and now, when difficult times of unemployment threaten us, it has an immense potential value.

How strange, therefore, that there is a tendency nowadays to forget the record of the industry and its worth to the State. I must concede that the all-important matter of the world price of gold is largely beyond our control, although, as I have said previously, the Commonwealth Government has not been to the fore in the campaign for a rise. In my opinion, it could have played a far more active role than it has.

Getting nearer home, I have some criticism to offer of our own Government. If others underestimate the value of the industry, forget what it has done and lose sight of what it can still do, surely we in Western Australia should not fall into that error! I feel that our State Government has shown no real concern for the unhappy trend of events, or any tangible appreciation of what the industry still means to the State.

The Minister for Transport: You should have a look at some of my files.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Here is an industry which has carried on in the more remote portions of the country, which we want to populate and develop, and it is being allowed to die; and towns are going out of existence, one after another.

I realise that goldmines do not last forever, but that, sooner or later, their ore reserves become depleted so that they are forced to go out of existence. On the other hand, if it is at all possible, new mines should be found to replace those that go out of production, so that the industry may have some continuity. New mines, I maintain, can be found in the vast auriferous areas which extend over various parts of the State. For years past I have been advocating that the prospecting side of the industry should receive greater encouragement because it is the prospector who will discover the new fields.

Prospecting is a highly skilled calling, and requires lots of hard training and experience, to say nothing of the financial aspect. The successful prospector needs a lot more than luck. He must know his job and have the means to carry on his work. My suggestion therefore—and I do not want to be critical without making some constructive suggestion—is that the State should formulate a scheme whereby suitable men could be trained and equipped, and then sent out under proper supervision. Let us have some worth-while and carefully-planned scheme because I am confident that new mines can be found to replace the old.

The present Government prospecting scheme is hopelessly out of date, and achieves little or nothing. I recently asked the Minister a question in this House, and in reply he said that in all there are 31 prospectors receiving assistance under the scheme; and that from the 1st July, 1951, to the 30th June, 1952, the total amount expended on the scheme was £2,532 13s. 3d. These figures speak for themselves, and in my opinion they are a sad commentary on the Government's attitude to that aspect, at any rate, of the goldmining industry.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: How many members are there of the Prospectors' Association?

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: There are several hundred scattered throughout the State. If the goldmining industry is really worth while, and we believe it to have a useful part to play in the State's economy, then I submit something more will have to be done towards encouraging prospecting.

This view is supported by Mr. R. J. Agnew, president of the Western Australian Chamber of Mines. His remarks, made at the recent annual meeting of the Chamber, are worth reading. This is what he had to say on the subject—

Though prospectors have in a few instances during the year discovered rich patches of gold, prospecting is still at a very low ebb. In an industry such as ours, all producing mines must eventually come to the time when they are worked out, and if the industry is to continue to play its

part in the national economy as it has done for so many years, then other deposits must be found to take the place of those mines which have become exhausted. I think it is in the interest of the State Government therefore that the prospectors, or rather the prospecting side of the industry, should be given more attention than it receives at present. Not only should the genuine type of prospector be encouraged to get out into the bush, but if he unearths anything of promise then he should be assisted by the Government with all facilities towards determining whether his discovery is of sufficient importance to warrant taking up by a large development company which would in turn be in a position to bring it to the producing stage. The money is not available to the mining companies today to take the risks that were taken in past years, and little money is forthcoming from the outside investors for this purpose. I feel, therefore, it has now become a function of the Government to help the industry to replace its casualties by assisting in bringing new finds up to the stage of proving whether a deposit is worth while or not. The present-day prospectors, or those few of them who are still seeking gold, are almost invariably looking for rich patches and not large lower grade deposits.

I have spoken as I have, because I feel, like many others, that the present state of the industry warrants some virile new policy. Only a few days ago I asked the Minister a couple of questions relevant to the railway between Meekatharra and Wiluna, and also the line between Leonora and Laverton, because for some time past rumours have been current that consideration is being given to pulling them up. If ever that does come about, it will be a great tragedy.

I for one—and I know that eminent geologists and others with far greater experience than I, hold similar views—contend that much gold remains to be found between Leonora and Laverton. I also maintain that we must not continue to accept the idea that half of our population will continue to live down in this part of the State. I was greatly impressed with Mr. Henning's remarks the other night. We have to make some practical approach to the policy of decentralisation, otherwise we will get into really serious trouble. The goldmining industry has a splendid record, although it is passing through a difficult phase now. But in the big auriferous area between Leonora and Laverton I think a real effort should be made to find further goldmines. We just cannot leave it to the hardy old race of prospectors, who are dying out, to do something. Times have greatly changed

and today prospectors have families to support and a living to earn. We have now gone a stage further, and prospecting should be done on a more scientific and comprehensive basis.

If new mines are found we will not have to pull up railway lines; we will have to build houses and find employment for the many people who are cluttering up our cities. The same applies with respect to the Meekatharra-Wiluna district. Once the railway line is pulled up, all hope of a revival of activity at these places will be dashed to the ground. So I earnestly trust that we will never see the day when these lines are pulled up. They may be working at a loss, and they may be unprofitable for the time being, but we do not live by bread alone. Many people have their all staked in these parts, and I think they should be encouraged to remain there. We also have to do our part in locating new mines which many geologists and others firmly believe exist in those portions of the State.

Hon. L. Craig: Would not they be better served by motor transport rather than by railways?

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I do not believe that good roads entirely replace the necessity for railway lines. Quite apart from the respective merits of the two types of transport, the uprooting of railway lines has a very bad psychological effect.

Hon. L. Craig: The rails are needed for other purposes and they are very hard to get.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I think towns such as Wiluna, Laverton and Morgans have done such a lot for the State, and the people who are resident in those towns have done such a good job, that the gravest consideration should be given to any proposal to pull up the railway lines. My remarks have been confined almost entirely to the mining industry and I hope I have not conveyed an impression which could be interpreted as too pessimistic. However, I have tried to paint a picture of the facts as I see them and I think that too many people in Western Australia are too prone to overlook the great importance of the goldmining industry. They are inclined to forget what it has accomplished in the past and they lose sight of the great importance that it may be in the times that lie ahead.

We are most fortunate in having such large auriferous areas and we should do all we can to exploit them and populate those parts of the State in which they exist. If we do that it will be to the ultimate benefit of the State. I had some comments to offer about other topics, but with these few remarks I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

On motion by Hon. W. R. Hall, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.4 p.m.