

lowest people recognise that it is the one thing we should do. I say quite voluntarily that if they will give me back my boy they can take every bean I have got in the world and I will start afresh from scratch.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [10.5]: I must first thank members generally for the courtesy, consideration and encouragement shown towards me as a new member. I can only repeat the words of the member for Irwin (Mr. Gardiner) and say, that during the time I occupy a seat in this House I hope that I shall endeavour to be scrupulously fair to all parties in debate. I hope I shall never come to the time when it will be necessary for me to indulge in any personalities, such as I heard in the earlier part of this discussion. I desire to join with others in complimenting Ministers upon obtaining their present position. Also I desire to refer particularly to the Minister for Mines. We had the Minister for Mines in Kalgoorlie the other day. Without any wish on my part to give any undue credit to the Minister for Mines, I will say, as one being somewhat connected with him during the recent trouble there, that he did show a considerable amount of confidence in his own opinion and ability, in the first place, to settle the trouble, and in the second place, the greatest willingness and desire to do so. That in itself, I believe, influenced those who were connected with this unfortunate alien trouble in the belief that the trouble would have an early settlement, and that the difficulties would be soon got over. I also say to the Minister for Mines that, while the position of parties is such and we find the Liberal Administration in charge of the affairs of the State, I will, irrespective of all party feeling and considerations, unless it conflicts with our own special policy, to the utmost of my ability and energy assist the Minister in dealing with his departments. He can have that personal assurance from me, that no trouble or energy on my part will be too great to be expended in assisting him whenever he requests my services or requires my aid. As has been rightly said by the Premier, the mining industry must for some considerable time play an important part in the development and commercial life of the country. If he is sincere, and I believe he is, I would tell him that

there are many avenues in which he can show his sincerity in his attitude towards that industry. Irrespective of the commission or board which it is the Premier's intention, I understand, to create to inquire into the best means of developing the mining and mineral industry of the State, there are many ways that it is possible at the present time to give this industry proper encouragement. We have in this State a considerable amount of money invested in the great goldfields water supply scheme. At the present time I do not think that a proper attitude has been taken towards that great scheme, and that it is not being properly utilised and harnessed in the manner in which it should be utilised and harnessed for the assistance of the gold mining industry. We find that a prospector who is prospecting a small show, and in the initial stages of his work requires all the assistance and encouragement he can get, is being charged an extortionate amount of money for his water supply. It is not later on that it matters so much his being charged for his water to this extent, but in the early stages when he is just beginning to crush. In my district alone, the Coolgardie constituency, there is a dozen large, well-defined known lines of reef which admittedly require development and Government assistance. When I was a boy in Victoria my own father was on a mining board, probably 25 years ago. In that year the Government of Victoria spent in the drilling of basaltic deposits alone about a quarter of a million of money. I do not blame the Liberal Administration in particular, but it seems to be the fault of successive Governments that the prospector in particular in the mining industry should to a great extent have been discouraged in his operations. No matter what may be said of the ex-Minister for Mines in his administration of the department, and no better Minister ever sat in that office, I believe he had a sincere desire to assist the industry quite apart from his legislative acts. His administration will stand as a credit to him and this is re-echoed right throughout the goldfields of the State. He showed a sympathetic desire to assist in the development of that great industry. There is one thing that might be done, however, and



that is in regard to the water supply. The Water Supply Department wants 7s. 6d. a thousand gallons for water before they even turn on the tap. We have water running over the Mundaring weir. It would not hurt the Government to try the experiment, when a new show is being opened up, of turning the pumps on of this great water scheme another revolution or two per minute and give the deserving prospector who is helping to develop the country free water and some encouragement. In that way I think they would get very great benefit for the State.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: You have had it as low as 3s. 6d. and 2s. 6d. a thousand.

Mr. LAMBERT: True. Three shillings and sixpence as the hon. member, knowing the conditions there understands, is altogether too high and exorbitant. It is impossible when a man is starting on a small show and possibly putting all his money into it, for him at the end of the month to meet the water bill during the initial stages of his crushing. I ask the Minister for Mines to note the fact that boring plants, of which the Government have many, can be utilised where the geological conditions are favourable, in possibly locating valuable bodies of ore. In the Coolgardie district one can find half a dozen instances where private individuals, especially in the present position of affairs, and owing to the war and the Stock Exchanges in Australia, would hesitate to take on the initial stages of prospecting shows of this sort. But if the Government would utilise their boring plants and possibly reserve certain lands, I believe in the immediate vicinity of Coolgardie it would be possible to open up mines which would prove of great assistance in the commercial life of the town and of this State. I would like to make a brief reference to the Esperance lands and the subject of that railway. I also embrace the agricultural commission suggested by the Premier. I regret that the Government have seen fit to take up a certain attitude towards this Esperance railway. I am not prepared to say that there is not an excess of salt contained in the Esperance land. It seems to be a peculiar time, however, to drag out this in-

formation. As a matter of fact, no man can state with any authority or definitely that these lands are worthless unless he is an absolute expert. My remarks on this agricultural commission apply equally to every other portion of the State. I hope the Premier will, in considering the agricultural development of this State, take into account a couple of very important basic factors. First we have the climatic conditions which vary according to the locality. In many places we have a limited and uncertain rainfall, and I believe that in a greater proportion of this State there is more or less impoverished soil which requires scientific handling to build up. I believe that there is only one class of people who can deal with this soil in a proper manner. I believe that the only person who can deal with this soil is the scientist, and I say that with all due deference to the commission, which has been appointed. In my opinion, the commission should have been one mainly of scientists. Who gave us the one factor which has enabled us to grow wheat in this State, but the scientist? Who gave us superphosphate? It was not discovered by any prosperous farmer, it was discovered by a scientist and developed by science, and there are no other means of coming to any right conclusion upon the proper development of the soils of the State except by the employment of scientists. The Government have no right to promiscuously grant money to all the agricultural areas of the State. I should lay it down as an absolute principle that no money should be granted to a farmer unless that farmer was prepared to accept advice and till his soil under the proper direction and guidance of scientifically trained men. That is the only way to tackle this industry. The deficit in this State can be traceable to a large extent to the succeeding crop failures in the agricultural areas.

Mr. Wansbrough: That is not due to the farmer.

Mr. LAMBERT: In this connection let me say that I am charitable in my disposition towards the farmer. I do not blame him for getting £200 or £300 if a foolish Government will give it to him. I blame the principle of giving a man money promiscuously and allowing him to throw it away on



land that is not suitable for the crop he is endeavouring to grow. A farmer is only a farmer and a successful farmer within the four corner pegs of his own allotment. He is not a successful farmer on the other fellow's allotment. If I clear 50 acres of land to-morrow, the only man who can lay down the proper routine for me to follow is the man who knows the constituents of the soil, and I say it is a scandalous shame to go on consistently courting failures and breaking farmers' hearts by giving money away in the manner which has been done in the past. Let the Government of this country spend their money in a thorough and an efficient manner. Let us copy one of the nations we are absolutely despising to-day and rightly so too; let us copy their methods, let us harness the science and knowledge which has been developed during the past half century as applied to agriculture and we shall not find then so many broken-hearted farmers as we can find in our State to-day. These remarks apply to the Esperance lands and I do not know that Mr. Mann's determination as to the salt contents of the Esperance soil is conclusive. Mr. Mann may have gone there and taken certain samples for probably a different purpose than to ascertain the quantity of salt contained in the soil, but as to whether it is deleterious to growth I do not suppose Mr. Mann would offer an opinion, and I hope, for the good of this State, the Premier will avail himself of every opportunity to get scientific knowledge during the investigations of the Royal Commission. Much has been said about the reduction of the rates on superphosphates, and although I am representing a mining constituency, I believe that the agricultural industry should be tackled earnestly, and I hope in every way the Government will display their sincerity by fostering and assisting it. We have great known deposits of phosphatic material in this State. Have we ever tried the acidulation of it? Although it may give to the State an absolutely valuable asset, I have never heard of that having been done. Let the Administration go in for the manufacture of superphosphates in the State and assist the farmers. I believe a mistake was made in not putting up State superphosphate works.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: If we had put up superphosphate works instead of implement works we would have been better off.

Mr. LAMBERT: I have often thought so, and when speaking to members of Parliament years ago I suggested that the State should enter on the manufacture of superphosphates, and I pointed out that the soil in Western Australia was no good unless it was backed up by the addition of superphosphates in some form or other. Even in connection with the refuse from the abattoirs the Government find it necessary to sell the whole of it to fertiliser agents and they increase the cost of it to the primary producer one hundred or a couple of hundred per cent. Every pound of blood and bone which comes from the abattoirs must first go through the hands of an agent before it reaches the farmer.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: He is a middleman.

Mr. LAMBERT: That is a trading concern. It is something which the Government possess but they call tenders for it and sell it to a man who mixes it up to a known formula, and then disposes of it at a profit of 100 or 200 per cent. Any Government that is sincere in its attitude towards the agricultural industry should not allow that kind of thing to go on, and it is to be hoped that they will try and stop this very unnecessary and roundabout way of supplying farmers with fertilisers. I would like to say a word or two on the question of conscription. At the present time in this supreme moment of the nation's peril, I believe that a man who would make political capital out of another's convictions is an absolute cur. He is a man who, if he had the opportunity, would desecrate the graves of our own fallen heroes. My attitude will be shown in no uncertain way. I am behind Mr. Hughes, and I will be behind him until I find that he is a traitor to the cause of labour and to the cause of democracy. I believe Mr. Hughes is in possession of certain knowledge, and whether it costs me my political existence or not I will stand behind him in any means that he may suggest in order to get the physical and material strength to assist the Homeland at the present juncture. It is all very well for people to talk about conscripting men for home defence, but where is home defence to-day? It



is on the sacred ground of the Allies; it is not in Australia. The sphere of operations is, thank God, removed from Australia, and the man who will not serve behind a rifle on the ground of the Allies would not serve behind a rifle in Australia. The man who is prepared to live behind the shelter and protection of a rifle should be prepared to shoulder one when called upon to do so. I hope that the Federal Government will summon up all the physical and material strength required to win the war. I believe we shall win, in fact, I have not the slightest hesitation in feeling that we shall win. In conclusion, I wish to say that I hope the present Ministry, if they remain at the head of affairs in Western Australia, will remember that they have an obligation to those returning soldiers and let them feel with confidence that those who are in control of the Administration are trying to do their very best to put the returned soldiers back into the commercial life and industry of their country.

Mr. WANSBROUGH (Beverley) [10.28] : In common with the other members I desire to say a few words on the Address-in-reply. I have been goaded to some extent into this position by the remarks which have come from the Opposition benches in connection with the attitude of the Country party in sitting behind the present Government. Before referring to this matter, however, I would like to say a few words in connection with the Industries Assistance Board and the change brought about by the present Administration. The leader of the Opposition the other evening stated that the farmers were better off under his Administration than they are at the present time. They were to a certain extent, but no discrimination was shown. The leader of the Opposition, in criticising the re-organisation of the Board by the present Government, referred to the parts played by the various officials of the old board. In my opinion, the leader of the Opposition, in eulogising Mr. Morris and Mr. Oliphant, unintentionally cast a reflection on another member of the old board, the original member, who had to do all the work, Mr. Camm. To my thinking, Mr. Camm was the only man on the old board who had a grasp of the situation. Mr. Camm, by his unfailing courtesy and his perception of the wants

and requirements of the settlers affected, did much to relieve the situation. I venture to assert that had Mr. Camm been allowed to continue in the capacity of practical manager of the board, even with the present additions, much more satisfaction would have been given. Few members of this House realise the actual position which various members of the Country party had to adopt relatively to the board. Individually I have been nothing more or less than a commission agent for clients of the Industries Assistance Board during the last two years.

Mr. S. Stubbs : Without fee.

Mr. Angwin : Agent without commission.

Mr. WANSBROUGH : Yes. I am occupying the place of, and taking away money from, men who, I know, in some instances have established offices here for the very purpose which I have fulfilled.

Mr. S. Stubbs : You took the bread out of their mouths.

Mr. WANSBROUGH : Yes. While carrying out this obligation cast upon me as representative of a large number of Assistance Board settlers, I came in contact with all the members of the board ; and I say the greatest mistake made in connection with the board was the appointment of men like Mr. Paterson and Mr. Sutton, whose other occupations did not allow them to give sufficient time to the affairs of the board, so that practically the whole of the work fell on Mr. Camm. Had Mr. Camm been allowed a sufficiency of officers to conduct the affairs of the board, I venture to say that the muddle and chaos which resulted in connection with accounts would never have occurred.

Mr. W. D. Johnson : Oh, nonsense !

Mr. Angwin : Mr. Paterson and Mr. Sutton were supplied with all the officers they required.

Mr. WANSBROUGH : Mr. Paterson and Mr. Sutton were otherwise occupied than in connection with the board.

Mr. W. D. Johnson : Mr. Camm got all he wanted.

Mr. WANSBROUGH : Mr. Camm may have had all he wanted ; but, so far as the board members were concerned, Mr. Camm, as a positive fact, did more to relieve the situation, and had a more thorough grasp of the position, than any other member of