

Housing Commission. This particular brickyard had been operating a system whereby it never saw the permits. It had a carter who was the go-between. He got the permit from the permit-holder and then went to the brickyard where he picked up the bricks. I understand that the company was getting somewhere in the vicinity of £15 a thousand for its bricks.

When this came to the ears of the State Housing Commission, the chairman immediately took action and said that the provisions of the Building Materials Control Act were to be carried out in their entirety, and the firm then was not to deliver any bricks unless it was given a release. The result was that it endeavoured to call the bluff of the Government and said, "Very well, we will close down." But, as the Deputy Premier said, that brickyard has not closed down, and I do not think there is much likelihood of its doing so, either.

I wish to make only one other observation, and that is that I want to apologise to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for having used a word last evening which I did not intend when I said that Capt. Bruce had cooked up a story. I see in the report of my speech that I said it, and I must admit to having said it, but I was endeavouring to infer—

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: The Minister said it very deliberately.

THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING: I was endeavouring to infer that this gentleman, when he went to see Mr. Brownlie, was led away, as many of us are at times. I said last evening that Mr. Brownlie denied certain of the things that he was supposed to have said in the presence of Capt. Bruce and which actually were said. Finally, now that this subject has been ventilated to such a large extent, I think the course the Government is going to take to have a magisterial inquiry is definitely fair to both gentlemen.

We have listened for three days to the rights and wrongs of Mr. Harrison and the same applies to Capt. Bruce. Now Capt. Bruce will have the opportunity to do what it was hoped he would have done before the inquiry at the State works, and that is, be able to go before the magistrate and look Mr. Harrison in the eye and make certain allegations, and it will be for the magistrate then to determine on the evidence whether he is right or wrong.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	16
Noes	21
Majority against	5

Ayes.

Mr. Brady
Mr. Graham
Mr. Guthrie
Mr. Hawke
Mr. J. Hegney
Mr. W. Hegney
Mr. Lawrence
Mr. McCulloch

Mr. Needham
Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Panton
Mr. Sewell
Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Styants
Mr. Tonkin
Mr. May

(Teller.)

Noes.

Mr. Abbott
Mr. Ackland
Mr. Brand
Dame F. Cardell-Oliver
Mr. Doney
Mr. Griffith
Mr. Hearman
Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. Mann
Mr. Manning
Mr. McLarty

Mr. Nalder
Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Owen
Mr. Read
Mr. Thorn
Mr. Totterdell
Mr. Watts
Mr. Wild
Mr. Bovell

(Teller.)

Pairs.

Ayes.
Mr. Kelly
Mr. Hoar
Mr. Coverley
Mr. Marshall
Mr. Rodoreda

Noes.
Mr. Hill
Mr. Perkins
Mr. Cornell
Mr. Grayden
Mr. Yates

Amendment thus negatived.

On motion by Mr. Needham, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.43 p.m.

Legislative Council

Tuesday, 28th August, 1951.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.

HOUSING.

(a) As to Commonwealth-State Rental Homes, Fremantle.

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

(1) How many Commonwealth-State rental houses have been erected in Fremantle?

(2) How many of such houses, including small-unit dwellings, have been made available to State Electricity Commission employees?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Houses erected in the Fremantle area under Commonwealth-State rental scheme—

Hilton Park	216
Mosman Park	173
Melville	7
Fremantle (timber-framed flats)	120
	516

(2) Houses allocated to State Electricity Commission employees in the Fremantle area—48.

(b) *As to Refusal of Materials to Spec. Builders.*

Hon. G. FRASER asked the Minister for Transport:

If I accepted the Minister's invitation (contained in reply to the question asked on the 22nd August, 1951) to inspect files at his office, would I be required to treat these particulars as confidential?

The MINISTER replied:

Yes.

FREMANTLE HARBOUR.

As to Proposed Extensions and Railway Communications.

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

(1) Is he aware that the Fremantle City Council has—

(a) expressed anxiety at the delay in commencing the proposed harbour extensions, and the possibility that the railway communications between Perth and Fremantle might be disrupted due to the limited life of the existing railway bridge;

(b) requested that the proposed south of the Swan River railway communication with Fremantle be treated as an urgent measure?

(2) Can the Minister give any information concerning these important questions?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes, a letter from the Town Clerk, Fremantle, couched in these terms and dated the 20th June, 1951, was received by me and referred on the 22nd June, 1951, to the appropriate departmental officers for discussion, following an examination of the points referred to in the letter. Further discussions in this regard are to be held.

(2) (a) The preliminary work essential to the harbour extension scheme is being handled with the utmost possible expedition. At present the consulting engineering firm of Sir Alexander Gibb and partners is making surveys to permit of the accurate layout of roads, railways, etc., and for the new bridges to be designed.

On the completion, early next year, of these preliminary details, the actual and urgent work of moving the existing Fremantle road and rail bridges and approaches will be commenced and completed as soon as possible. No anxiety is felt by the Railway Commission in regard to maintaining railway facilities between Perth and Fremantle pending the replacement of the existing bridge.

(b) Proposals for a south Swan railway are being investigated by a sub-committee appointed to consider the necessity of additional suburban lines and full notice has been taken of the Fremantle City Council's representations.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eighth Day.

Debate resumed from the 23rd August.

HON. H. HEARN (Metropolitan) [4.39]: I desire to associate myself with the congratulations extended to you, Sir, on the well-earned honour bestowed upon you by His Majesty, the King. Your record of public service and your position as President of this Council is known to all of us, and we all trust that both Lady Seddon and yourself will live for many years to enjoy this well-deserved honour. I also desire to welcome to this Chamber the two new members, Hon. C. H. Henning and Hon. J. Murray. I am sure that both of them will be a tower of strength to this Chamber in their respective spheres, and that before very long we will discover their intrinsic worth. I would like to congratulate the new officers—Mr. Sparks, on being appointed Clerk of Parliaments; and Mr. Roberts, on his appointment as Usher of the Black Rod.

Since the House rose in December, it has been my privilege to pay a visit to the United Kingdom; and I heartily endorse the remarks in the Speech of His Excellency the Administrator to the effect that the Premier's visit to London did some good for Western Australia. I was there during most of the time he was in London; and I realised, in moving up and down the length and breadth of the country, that he had made an impression. I consider that whoever happens to be Premier of this State should make periodical visits to the Motherland.

I would also pay a tribute to the work of the Western Australian Agent General and his staff. At one end of the Strand is our Agent General's office, and at the other end is Australia House. I visited both places quite regularly. In the Agent General's office in Savoy House, there is a little spot of Western Australia, and Mr. Kitson is doing a wonderful job as Agent General. I would like to make a suggestion to the Government regarding the members of his staff, with whom it was my privilege to come in contact quite

regularly. I feel that it would be a good thing if we allowed those officers to come back to Western Australia periodically for refresher courses.

The man at Savoy House who gives most of the information to members of the public who go there to learn about this State has never visited Western Australia. Yet when one talks with him, one would almost think he was a native of the State. That indicates the interest he has taken in his job and the study he must have made of every publication, and even the geographical maps of Western Australia; because he can discuss the State just as well as, if not better than, some of us who have lived here for many years.

The Minister for Agriculture: Mr. Kitson told me that.

Hon. H. HEARN: The time is long overdue when some of those officers should be brought to Western Australia so that they will be able to speak with more confidence and study some of the problems that face intending migrants and also talk with very much more authority about conditions here. There is a wonderful staff at the Agent General's office; and I am sure it is a source of great pleasure to any Western Australian—and, indeed, any person at all—who requires information, to pay a visit to those headquarters.

I was glad to notice in the Speech a reference to the expansion of secondary industries. That is bound up with the question of electric power; and I would like to congratulate the Government on taking a very long-range view of the subject of electricity needs in the development of this State. I am sure all members will agree that secondary industries have suffered very heavily during the past two or three years on account of the troubles occasioned through shortages of electricity. The total cost to industry in that connection could not be assessed; and the many hundreds of thousands of pounds that had to be invested in emergency plants in order that secondary industries might carry on, deserves some notice, particularly when it is realised that without them industry would have been at a standstill.

Mention was made in the Speech about Government policy regarding the erection of industrial and commercial buildings. No one recognises more than I the urgent priority that must be given to the building of homes for the people; but I venture to suggest that, if the Premier gave us his candid opinion of what was happening in Britain today, where the housing position is, if anything, more acute than in this State, he would say that the erection of industrial buildings, offices and homes, was proceeding very steadily together.

Times will not always be as prosperous as they are today; and if we place a handicap on secondary industries in the matter of development, owing to their inability to obtain buildings, that policy will later have a boomerang effect, and when we are looking for avenues of employment for the people for whom we are building houses, we will find that industry is not in a position to absorb them. I suggest, therefore, that the Government should go carefully into the question of a balanced building programme.

I noticed with interest that it is the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill to amend again the Workers' Compensation Act. I think that private enterprise would support any adjustment in monetary payments under the Workers' Compensation Act considered necessary on account of the depreciation that has taken place in the Australian £; but the Government must be very careful to ensure that, just as the payments are increased in these times, so, if and when the Australian £ appreciates, industry will not be called upon to bear an intolerable burden. I hope, therefore, that there will be some kind of rise-and-fall clause in any alterations contemplated in regard to payments under the Act.

I was pleased to note that at last the Government seems to be slightly interested in town planning. I represent a constituency which, for the last 30 to 40 years, has remained intrinsically the same. By that I mean that, if I took a tram ride from the terminus right through to Beaufort-st., I would still jog along the same old track. I feel I can say that my constituents—who, by the way, contribute extensively to the exchequer; for, although the money may come back through the Commonwealth, it first goes to the Commonwealth—have been quite long-suffering.

It is not my intention to take members on a tour of my constituency. We have already had one or two such tours, and I suggest that in future members might provide illustrations to let us know just where we are from time to time in the course of such excursions. I am going to deal with two matters that are of Commonwealth-wide importance. The first of them is the inflationary tendency of the present day. Mr. Watson dealt at length with cause and effect in this regard; but I believe that the question of inflation has been made a political sounding-board throughout Australia, in spite of the fact that it is a problem that can never be settled by any one party. The difficulty is not just Commonwealth-wide but world-wide. I wonder whether members read the excellent speech made by the Rev. Alan Walker and published in last Saturday's issue of "The West Australian."

Hon. E. H. Gray: It was really good.

Hon. H. HEARN: It goes to the heart of things and, with your permission, Mr. President, I will read part of it to the House. It is as follows:—

Today no-one can move through the community as a Christian minister does without finding the sorrows of inflation: the grim struggle of the pensioner, and the lower economic groups with large families to make ends meet; the proud and pathetic attempt by some fixed-income people to hide their growing poverty and want. The human values that lie behind inflation are very great indeed.

Then inflation judges us as to whether we are little Australians or world citizens. It would be possible for us to ease the burden of inflation on ourselves by taking action which will increase the poverty and want, even the hunger, of our neighbours in Asia and the world at large. The temptation to think only of ourselves, as suffering becomes perhaps even more acute, will be strong indeed.

Ourselves and Europe.

Yet, after all, no action should be taken by us without asking what it does to people, living people like us in other lands. There is already rising the cry that we should stop the present flow of migrants to our shores. Does that mean we shall increase the human suffering, the despair, even the hunger of many in Europe who yearn for a new life on these shores? Such a question must be asked before we take action which may seem in our own narrow interests.

There are some of us willing to restrict the sowing of wheat, for example, because wool prices have been so high that taxation will only claim the return gained. Are we limiting production, employer and employee alike, because we are not gaining enough personal profit for our effort? What effect are these attitudes and actions having on world supplies? The largeness or the smallness of our vision as we live through an inflationary period is really presenting a moral and spiritual issue of great importance.

The Blunt Truth.

Then it is becoming increasingly clear that there can be no solution to the problem of inflation apart from a quickening of the spirit of service and sacrifice in our midst. If the picture given at the Prime Minister's Conference continues—that is, of all groups manoeuvring so as to push the burden of the sacrifices demanded on to others—we shall be lost. The blunt truth is that we are in the presence of a grievous national crisis and any man who puts his own personal or sectional interest before that of the whole betrays his fellows and his country.

So I suggest that the question of inflation is beyond party politics. It is one to which every person in the Commonwealth of Australia should address himself in his own particular sphere, and in this regard England has led the way. We all know how England suffered during the tragedy of the recent war, the physical impact of which is still in evidence wherever one goes in that country, and how quickly that war was followed by an economic crisis.

I am well seized of the reasons underlying the opposition of the trade union movement generally to incentive payments in Australia. As I have said before in this House, I feel that the real reason is the memory of harsh and bitter days when piecework was in evidence in the United Kingdom. Today in Australia there is a rooted objection by the trade union movement to any form of incentive payment. We must accept that attitude. But look at what is happening in Great Britain. Without the incentive-payment system, Great Britain would have been bankrupt four years ago.

The average wage in England today is about £6 10s. per week and is agreed upon between various boards and the different trades. I studied the furniture trade while in England and can speak of the position in that regard from personal knowledge. In the furniture trade there, the agreement is for a wage of £6 10s. per week and, with the co-operation of the union and the proprietors, there is not a man there today in that trade who takes home less than from £11 to £14 a week. How is it done? It is done by a system of incentive payments. In every factory there is an agreement between the shop steward or union secretary and the factory management in this regard.

I have nothing but praise for the industrial relations that exist in most of the industries in Britain today. One hears occasionally of an odd strike there, but such a strike is usually what is known as an "unofficial strike." It is the same sort of thing which we see today all over the world, being a communist-inspired effort to disrupt the English economy, just as we hear of a strike on the shipboard of America and find, a few days later, its counterpart in the Eastern States. That is not indicative of the industrial conditions that apply in England today, as the incentive payment system has transformed industry and has enabled Britain to face her obligations, feed her people and gradually—though at the moment she is again receiving a temporary set-back owing to the tremendously high world prices of commodities—find again her place in the sun.

There is no need for me to mention the attitude of the United States of America towards incentive payments. Members who read the "Australian Worker" will, within the last week or so, have read a good article by John L. Lewis, who stated definitely that the mines in the U.S.A.

would never have been mechanised had it not been for the trade unions themselves. He goes on to prove to the worker how immeasurably better has been his life on account of increased production. After all, it is increased production that we want. I am not one of those who moan about the 40-hour week, and I believe the time will come when we shall have to consider the possibility of an even shorter working week. The answer to our troubles today is to get the people of this Commonwealth of ours to live up to their obligations. Admittedly, the 40-hour week was introduced at a bad time.

Hon. A. L. Loton: Do you want a 40-hour week for all sections of the community?

Hon. H. HEARN: I think that should be the ultimate aim.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: It would be difficult to implement it in the dairying industry without making slaves of the children.

Hon. H. HEARN: Notwithstanding all the evidence given before the Commonwealth Court of Arbitration that there would not be a lessening of output, we know that that is not so. We know we want one extra for every eight men to keep production up to its pitch. Had we the men available, I do not think that the 40-hour week would have had the terrific impact on industry that it did have. But the other eight men felt that there was no need for them to worry, because their jobs were safe, anyhow.

As members know, I am a private enterprise merchant. All through my life I have tried to look upon private enterprise as being something that contained, within itself, the spirit of adventure. Men would get together, save money, risk that money, go into business, and either succeed or fail. In larger business, where companies are formed and capital is subscribed, again men took the risk either of making money or of losing it.

I believe that today we are inclined to lean too much on governments. Mr. Strickland said that he felt increased production was being retarded by increased taxation; by the terrific taxation we are paying. He may have something there; but I would have preferred him to go on and say that the time was fast approaching when Governments should show some signs of economy. The Commonwealth Government wants to spend such money as comes into its exchequer. If it were prepared to put that money on one side and not spend it, I would have a little more faith in its idea of what it calls "skimming the cream." However, I believe that as soon as it gets money, such money will go down the drain.

I now wish to outline a few ideas I have on price control. Such control has been with us for a long time and, on the face of things, it looks as though it must become a political sounding-board again and may be with us for a long time yet. However, I am now going to speak to private enterprise itself. I want to ask those in industry and commerce one question: Do they realise the extent to which they have allowed efficiency to be penalised and inefficiency rewarded by not appreciating that many of the existing price formulae are outmoded and out of tune with advancing mechanisation?

I am afraid the usual formula given has developed into a glorified cost-plus system, leaving very little to the imagination, to the enterprise, or to the efficiency of the individual trader. Do those engaged in industry and commerce realise that the key to defeating the so-called inflationary spiral is not in the hands of Governments, and never can be, but is in the hands of private enterprise itself? Governments can make price control as severe as they choose, and it will fail to bring down prices; since, in the last resort, it is quite illogical to envisage that any government would fix continuously a price at less than cost, because if it did, what would happen? No goods would be produced.

So I believe private enterprise itself must take the lead. It must be prepared, if necessary, to make some temporary sacrifice, because this question of inflation is one which could easily sweep away the assets of a lifetime and not only the working man's savings. So instead of the short-range view, which I am afraid is being taken by many today, of getting the last pound's worth of profit, the time has arrived when we should place more emphasis on endeavouring to reduce costs rather than make profits. Men in industry and commerce, exerting the leadership which surely they must have—because the history of private enterprise is the history of genius—should be able to dictate to governments and not allow governments to dictate to them.

Do not think I am in favour of swinging away from all price control. What I am trying to tell the private enterprise merchants of today is that these are times when we have to exhibit that generalship which made our businesses in the first place. We definitely have to ensure that we are introducing every means of efficient manufacture; of efficient distribution. Today, on the formulae given by the Prices Commissioner, there is no incentive for any man to make such an introduction.

I will now give an example of what I consider an outmoded formula. This is a typical price-fixing formula, but it is

not based on the exact percentage allowed. It is merely to give an idea of what happens. One receives a formula from the price-fixing authorities if one is a manufacturer. This outmoded formula is as follows:—

1. Direct labour.
2. Plus factory overhead—50 per cent. on direct labour.
3. Plus materials at cost.
4. Total factory cost.
5. Add profit margin 10 per cent. on factory cost.
6. Factory selling prices.

Using this formula, article X would cost—

	£	s.	d.
Direct labour—3 hours, say	1	0	0
Factory overhead	0	10	0
Materials	1	0	0
Factory cost	2	10	0
Profit margin	0	5	0
	2	15	0

The manufacturer decides to re-expend £5,000 on modern plant, etc., and reduces the hours of direct labour to 1½. Under most of the price-fixing formulae the manufacturer would be forced to reduce his price as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Direct labour 1½ hours	0	10	0
Factory overhead	0	5	0
Materials	1	0	0
Factory cost	1	15	0
Profit margin	0	3	6
	1	18	6

In other words, for his enterprise, the manufacturer has had his profit reduced by 1s. 6d. What sane person would consider such a project? Would not the normal human reaction be to continue with the antiquated method for greater profit and increased selling price? The time has arrived when private enterprise itself should be prepared to form some ideas on the question of efficiency and production, to reduce costs, and to resist with all its power such an out-of-date formula, which is bringing most businesses today to a state of being Government contractors on the cost-plus basis.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Would not the increased turnover increase a merchant's overall profit?

Hon. H. HEARN: Not necessarily; it would tend to decrease it. I will now give a simple illustration of the effect of production stimulus even by a small percentage of 10 per cent. It is as follows:—

Factory produced 100 articles per week at following cost:—

	£
Labour	100
Overhead	50
Materials	100
Factory costs	250
Profit	25
Selling price	275
Price per unit	2.75

If the same labour force and facilities produced 110 articles per week, the unit price would be—

	£
Labour (unchanged total)	100
Overhead (unchanged total)	50
Materials (increased by £10, i.e., £1 per unit)	110
Factory cost	260
Profit (assuming control sufficiently realistic to allow the extra £1 without penalising the extra effort)	26
Selling price	286
Price per unit	2.6

The effect is—

Without reducing the profit per week and, in fact, increasing it slightly, the selling price has dropped £.15 per article.

Obviously this is the first step towards cost reduction. It must be encouraged and not penalised.

In some of the organisations in which I take an interest, I have suggested that the time has arrived when we should have a committee formed in order that a full discussion may be entered into on the question of how we are drifting with price control. I trust that during the coming year we will see private enterprise take up its responsibilities.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: You want them to be permitted to do so.

Hon. H. HEARN: It has sat back too long on an assured margin of profit, no matter what the cost of the article may be. That is not healthy. Eventually it will lead to the extinction of private enterprise; and I believe that the time has arrived when some of us who profess to lead in some ways in the industrial world should be game enough to tell our brother industrialists that they are on the left foot, because I honestly believe they are.

I hope I have not wearied the House, but I want to make it perfectly clear that in this matter there are three parties concerned—the public, the worker and the employer—and all will be equally affected by what happens in the next one or two years with regard to costs in this great country of ours. I trust that all of us will see to it that wherever we are, in whatever sphere, we play our individual part.

HON. L. A. LOGAN (Midland) [5.15]: I wish to congratulate you, Mr. President, on the honour that has been conferred upon you by His Majesty the King, a fitting recognition of the efficiency with which you preside over this Chamber. To the Clerk and Clerk Assistant, I offer my congratulations on their appointment to those offices. We know that they will uphold the dignity of the positions they now occupy. To Mr. Murray and Mr. Henning, I extend congratulations on their election, and Mr. Henning should be complimented upon the manner in which he sponsored the motion now before the Chamber.

I should like to make reference to rent control, a subject that has already been dealt with by Mr. Watson. There is no gainsaying that members displayed a great deal of interest in the measure when it was before the House last year, and for my part I cannot understand the remarks made by magistrates and the publicity which has been given to them. We have been told that the phraseology of the Act is wrong and all the rest of it. Yet there were two lawyers in this House and two lawyers in another place when the Bill was under consideration. Furthermore, I went through the whole measure and the amendments with three other lawyers when the Bill was before this House and was satisfied that, as amended, it expressed the intention of Parliament.

The Bill went to a conference of managers representing the two Houses, and at the conference the Solicitor General was present to ensure that the amendments were put into shape. In view of the fact that no fewer than eight lawyers were satisfied with the phraseology, I do not know what more could have been expected of this House; and I contend that what was inserted in the Bill was perfectly reasonable and should be understandable by those who have to interpret it. It is the duty of those who have to interpret the law to read exactly what it means and realise what Parliament intended. Had they read what was said in this House and in another place, they could not have failed to understand what was intended. There is only one way to ascertain what an Act means, and that is to read it and learn something about it.

Hon. G. Fraser: They would have to go back to the original Act to find out.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I still think that there is not much wrong with the measure as we passed it last year. When first an intimation was given that alterations to the Act were contemplated, I had people waiting on my doorstep wanting to know what alterations were proposed and asking, "What is the prospect of getting my house?" There was a case of a woman with a bedridden mother living in a tin shanty which leaked in winter and was like an oven in the summer. Natives occupied the house the woman had bought, and the magistrate would not allow them to gain possession. That is only one case and there are plenty more. Those who are crying out about the tenants and their hardships should give some consideration to the owners as well.

In the Speech, reference is made to the proposed visit of the Royal Family next year. I have a suggestion to make, though I may be rather late in making it, namely, that on the occasion of the Royal visit, provision should be made for school-children of nine years and over to be brought to the city so that they will have an opportunity to see the King, the Queen and Princess Margaret. We are well aware that the Royal Family is the symbol of the British Empire, and the best way to teach our children the significance of that symbol would be by giving them an opportunity to come to the city and see the Royal Family.

To bring the children to the city might be rather a big task, but I cannot think that anything better could be done in the interests of the children and of the Empire. I have given this matter some thought and I believe that the requisite arrangements could easily be made. We read in the Press about the intention in Melbourne to spend £42,000 on a Mayoral Ball, and I believe that £10,000 could easily be spent in Western Australia to ensure that children from the outback districts have an opportunity of seeing the Royal Family.

It is all very well to have the Royal Family visiting us, but the children of Perth should not alone be privileged to see them. We are all members of the British Empire and, for the sake of the children in the country, I hope that the Government will do something along the lines I have suggested. So far as I am aware, the Royal itinerary does not provide for much in the way of country tours, but if the children were brought to the city, it would be a step towards knitting the Empire more closely together. I do not think we can do too much to impress upon the children, who will be the citizens of tomorrow, the need for keeping the Empire intact, and it is my belief that there is no difficulty that could not be overcome so that the country children may be brought to Perth.

Reference was made to native affairs by Mr. Parker, who gave a very good address on the subject. I do not propose to say much about it, but will quote an instance from my province to show the difficulty of dealing with these people. A farmer living in my area erected a four-roomed hut. His wife went to the trouble of putting up curtains and making the place really nice for a native family, who subsequently moved in. It happened to rain the night they took possession. When the farmer's wife went along on the following morning to see how they were getting on, she found all of them camped outside the hut in front of an open fireplace, cooking their breakfast in the rain. The only way to accomplish anything worth while seems to be to take the children away from the parents. That may seem hard, but I believe it is the only course we can adopt. Otherwise, the native people will never get anywhere.

I wish to deal with the subject of inflation and the effect it is having on this country. I may be wrong in my view, but I cannot see why a person should not pay 10s. for an article if he has the 10s. to pay for it or £1 for an article if he has the £1. I should say that inflation is caused largely by the issue of paper money. The money brought to this country has been derived from the sale of farm-produced goods, and most of it has been earned by the primary producer. I cannot see how that money can be said to be the cause of inflation. The tragedy is that the primary producers have battled for the last 15 years in an endeavour to put their house in order and now they are unable to procure the necessary goods. Mr. Strickland mentioned something about the men in the North and their disabilities, and I agree with him.

What is the experience of the primary producers? They have to wait five years to get a harvester, a plough, or a bit of fencing wire, unless they are prepared to buy the imported articles at a much higher figure. It is difficult to understand why these goods are not being produced. There are today 750,000 more men employed in industry than there were in 1939, and there are 40,000 fewer engaged in the primary industries. In 1939, one could walk into a shop and buy a harvester or whatever wire one needed. Yet, with 750,000 more employees in industry, we are told we have to wait for five years for these things.

There is certainly something wrong somewhere, and, in my opinion, the 40-hour week has a lot to do with it. Nobody can tell me that the shorter working week is not having an appreciable effect. With 192,000 man-hours lost per year for every 1,000 employees in industry, it cannot be otherwise. What is happening is this: There are men engaged in industries not producing the

goods required and the whole balance is moving over to the wrong side. Eventually the primary producers—40,000 fewer than there were in 1939—will find that the burden cast upon them is too great and primary production will fail.

Let us look around and see what effect this is having. This year wheat production in Australia will be down to something like 150,000,000 bushels. It seems that New South Wales will have no exportable surplus. Locally there is a shortage of onions, and the vegetable market has risen sky high. Insufficient vegetables are being produced to keep the market supplied. According to Press reports, apples are selling at 8½d. each. Thus it goes on and the balance is well and truly out. It seems that eventually some of the 750,000 men who have gone into industry will have to return to the country. Starvation, if nothing else, will force them to do so.

I was disappointed to find that the Speech makes only one reference to the province I represent and that is the reference to the light lands west of the Midland line. It may be that the Government has done such a particularly good job that there is no need to mention the area. I am not going to say that is so, but I will admit that it has done a reasonably good job. We have not got the hospital about which I spoke so strongly last year, when Mr. Parker smartly took me up on the remarks I passed. We have reached the stage where the Minister for Health admitted the other day that rough plans are now ready. So long as we can report progress, we have something to look forward to; and at least it is something to know that the Government is endeavouring to move on the right lines, and that we are getting to the stage where we can start building a hospital.

I wish now to say something about light lands. Many people are asking for all the area I mentioned to be thrown open for selection. In my opinion, that would be utter folly. It would be impossible for any man starting out to take up 5,000 acres there and make a living unless he had a large bank balance. I think there is only one way to open up that country—and it could be done within the next three or four years—and that is for the Government to build a lateral road from each township to the light land area. Then the people in the district, with good heavy land, and with plant and capital, would go out and develop it.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: What about the local governing bodies doing something?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: They will help, but it is beyond their capacity to do it. There is unexpended money that could be allotted to the road boards for the job. This is a simple solution. When the lateral roads have been made and the land developed by farmers with experience, the blocks could be sold as single units to men who could make a living off them.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Do you not think that would be open to speculation?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: No, because the speculator would not be able to do much about it. I also wish to mention the tomato industry, which is worth such a lot to the town of Geraldton. It was anticipated that this year something like a record number of 400,000 cases of tomatoes would be produced. But, unfortunately, like the Carnarvon banana-grower, the Geraldton tomato-grower has been pretty badly hit. Too much heavy rain early in the season caused the first crops to be badly affected with black spot; and then there was a severe electrical storm, so that quite a lot of the crops were damaged by hail. But, as if that was not sufficient, they had a severe frost—the worst for 15 years—which completely wiped out some of the gardens. I hope that if the people whose crops were wiped out make some claim on the Government for assistance to enable them to start again next year, the Government will be sympathetic to them. They will not be asking for a gift, but purely for a loan on generous terms.

For some time past, we have been endeavouring to have a research station established in the Geraldton area. I realise that such a station would be impossible at the present time, and I have endeavoured to make the tomato-growers realise that; but I would like to see an officer of the department spend a certain amount of time there, and for the department to capitalise on the experiments being conducted at the University. It is useless to tell the Geraldton grower that the University experiments will do him any good unless he can see what is being done by means of trial plots. So I suggest to the Minister that he agree to my suggestion, that a man be made available for the purpose. That would have a very good effect on the industry as a whole.

I make a special plea that the Government endeavour to ensure that the case position is rectified before the next season commences. Mr. Hearn has talked about private enterprise quite a fair bit tonight. Unfortunately, private enterprise has fallen down somewhat in the matter of the supply of fruit cases, so that it has been left to Wundowie, in the main, to supply Geraldton with tomato cases. I think it is up to both private enterprise and the Government to make sure, before next season starts, that there will be sufficient cases for all concerned. This matter affects not only the tomato-grower but the fruit-grower as well. I hope that private enterprise, plus the State Saw Mills, Wundowie and the new Dean Mill will be able to supply all the cases needed.

I am disappointed with the attitude of the Commonwealth Government to whaling on our coast. The North-West Whaling Co. started whaling operations at Pt. Cloates. Immediately the venture looked like being a favourable proposition, the

Commonwealth Government hopped in and started at Babbage Island. I do not know what the cost was, but it must have been terrific. Another company wanted to start at Pt. Gregory, the ideal spot for such a venture in my opinion; but the Commonwealth said, "No, you will take too many whales, and we will not get our quota," or words to that effect. I think it is wrong, when Government enterprise such as that stifles private enterprise, and it is time all Governments realised it. If private enterprise is willing to have a go, it should be allowed to do so.

I spoke last year of the futility of our betting laws. I objected most strongly to people being fined for obstructing traffic when betting. Walking through the city today, I found that from the Ambassadors Theatre in Hay-st. almost to the Terrace in Barrack-st., there was such a queue that it was only just possible for one person to walk along the footpath. We do not read about those people being fined for obstructing the traffic, yet a person taking a bet in the street is fined for the offence of obstructing the traffic. This is bringing the whole of our laws into ridicule. If we wish to fine a man for betting, let us do so, but not resort to a subterfuge such as this. It is time that we, as responsible men, and the Government, did something to rectify the position. I would like to say something about "City Sucker," the man who wrote that able—

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Disable.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: —commentary on the dairying industry in "The West Australian" a day or so ago, but I consider he is such a sucker that it is not worth while trying to answer him. It is obvious he did not know the first thing of what he was talking about.

The Minister for Agriculture: He was a retired dairy farmer.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: There may be something in what I heard this afternoon, that it was written by a dairy farmer to draw comment from someone else. If so, it was done with good effect. I also wish to speak on the activities of the Department of Agriculture. I was told last year that I had criticised the Government, and had done all sorts of things. Actually I was endeavouring to assist the Government. The remarks I passed last year have borne some fruit because, in my opinion, the department today is fulfilling its duty as it has never done before. We can go from one end of the State to the other and find that its officers are carrying out experiments and assisting the primary producer in every phase of agriculture. Admittedly, the department is still short staffed; but, with the officers it has, it is doing a desirable job.

Hon. E. H. Gray: It is a pity the farmers do not take more notice of the departmental officers.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: They do to a certain extent, but the farmer is a hard man to teach. He eventually takes advantage of what is told to him. But the department is not always right, as has been shown in the past. If it can be proved to be right in what it does, then the farmer will take notice. The departmental experts go out and talk to the farmers in a real, practical way, and much notice is being taken of what they say.

The Minister for Agriculture: I think the farmers generally appreciate their efforts. The attendances at field days prove that. At the Geraldton field day there were 1,280 people.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Yes. The speech given by Mr. Dunne on that occasion was a gem, and one which was listened to with interest by all present, and I am sure they learned something from it. I am not going to weary the House any longer, but I do hope the suggestion I made earlier in regard to the Royal visit and the bringing to the city of school-children over the age of nine will bear some fruit. We should give equal opportunity to children in the outback areas and to those in the city.

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

House adjourned at 5.45 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, 28th August, 1951.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.

COAL.

As to Open-Cut Supplies for Loco. Use.

Mr. BRADY asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

(1) What quantity of open-cut coal is being received by the Railway Department each month from Collie for locomotive purposes?

(2) What was the approximate quantity of coal rejected by the Railway Department from open-cut mines during the last six months, due to unsuitability for loco. use?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied:

(1) At two of the three open-cut mines at Collie, the open-cut coal is passed through the screens and loaded with deep-mine coal. The actual quantity of open-cut coal purchased for loco. purposes cannot, therefore, be accurately determined,