

believe in Western Australia, and that we do not talk with our tongues in our cheeks. We will show that we are a responsible Government, and accept that responsibility in accordance with our policy.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member has three more minutes.

Mr. E. H. M. Lewis: Would you not agree that the erection of works at Geraldton and Picton—

Mr. BROWN: I am not interested in discussing coastal fertiliser works. They serve only half the radius.

In conclusion, I would like to say that the committee will leave no stone unturned. It has received 100 per cent. support from every farmer contacted in the Yilgarn Shire Council area, which is the largest shire area in the region. So far 90 per cent. of the farmers in the Yilgarn have been contacted. From the farmers in the region who have so far been contacted, the committee has received more than 50,000 tons in pledges, which represents more than \$500,000 in share capital. The business people in Merredin realise the value of these works within their own enterprises, which will enable them to be more competitive. A sum of \$50,000 will be raised by them initially in debentures because they cannot buy shares in a phosphate works which will be run as a co-operative.

I congratulate the Government on establishing an example of decentralisation for the people of Western Australia. I urge the Federal Government to look at its subsidies, which should apply to inland works as much as to works in coastal regions. There are many other important matters but the one which is of importance to the people of the eastern wheatbelt is the establishment of a fertiliser works, and the people who are making this endeavour deserve the approbation of every person in Western Australia.

MR. A. A. LEWIS (Blackwood) (8.02 p.m.): Mr. Speaker, it would be remiss of me if at the commencement of my remarks I did not thank you and the members of the staff for the help I have received since I was elected. I am pleased to announce to the House that I have not as yet had to erect a tent, and I have settled in quite well.

Australia is one of the world's greatest exporters of agricultural products, yet our agricultural industries tend to be regarded as a source of economic instability in our economy rather than as the basis of our national wealth. I think the reason for this is that in times of good seasons and good prices our rural industries have not put aside enough money for the promotion of their products. Their marketing techniques went out with the horse and cart, to say the least

When we look at modern marketing techniques, we find the first thing done by anybody who wishes to market a product is to make a survey of his market. He goes into the market place, finds out what type of product is required, how he wants the product to be presented, and relays this information back to the producer. At the same time, he attempts to promote his product in the market place.

Unfortunately, sound business practice dictates that we should use 1½ per cent. to 2 per cent. of our turnover on promotion. The agricultural industries use less than one-tenth of that amount, and this becomes obvious when one travels around the world to places where our agricultural products are being marketed and notes the lack of knowledge of Australian rural products.

The time to start promoting products is when prices are good. I do not think there is at the moment an agricultural product that is in the doldrums. Even apples, about which some fears people had several months ago, are returning to the producer \$1 a bushel more than they were returning at this time last year. Let us not use 1½ per cent. on promotion. Let us use ¾ per cent. as the basis for a promotional scheme, which would mean that in this State we would be expending some \$3,250,000 on the promotion of our agricultural products. With that sum of money we could afford to hire international experts of high repute to go into the market place, make surveys, and communicate the needs of the consumers to the producers.

To give one example, the Canadians went to Italy to promote lamb, and through promotion they increased their sales to Italy by 800 per cent. in one year. International companies are promoting many products. I mention only soaps and motorcars. Can members imagine a soap manufacturer or a motorcar manufacturer leaving it to his engineer to promote his product? He pays experts to do his promotion, and the agricultural industries should do likewise.

All too often the answer to overproduction is seen as Government assistance and the creation of some impotent body which hopes to alleviate the farmers' mental and financial burden in the short term. The only answer to senseless, unplanned overproduction is what may be termed the "shotgun" approach—preferably with both barrels and from very close range. The long-term prospects for the expansion of rural production will depend in the future, as they have in the past, on profitable markets. These markets must be surveyed and the products must be promoted. To do nothing may be the recipe for survival but it is rarely the recipe for success.

At times we have heard of boards being set up to sell various agricultural products, with membership varying according to the type of board. Unfortunately, the majority



of members are usually grower representatives. These boards do nothing for the products as far as the public can see—either the consumer or the producer—except add an extra cost in the middle.

Let us take a fresh approach to marketing. Let us go out and market our agricultural products in the same manner as all other products are marketed. Let us sell through promotion and surveys of the markets, and modernise our concept of the marketing of rural products. When we do this we will have no overproduction because this country, with the markets it has on its doorstep in South-east Asia, will be able to supply the needs of those countries; and, strangely enough, in the years to come the European Economic Market will still be buying a great deal of our agricultural produce.

I will leave that subject and deal now with the controversy in regard to sleepers. We often hear how much the Federal Government might save—I think it estimates 10 per cent. One wonders how much of that 10 per cent. is made up of benefits that are handed out to the manufacturers of concrete sleepers by the South Australian Government and others. We, as members of the Parliament of Western Australia, must let the Federal Government know that the majority of the communities in the south-west of this State are built on sleeper production. Farms and farmlets have been established throughout the south-west because of there being a timber mill in close proximity from which they could make their daily bread.

Not only will we lose the market for jarrah sleepers and those farmers who are pioneering in the best sense, at great risk to their own capital, but we will also lose the communities, the tennis, football, and cricket clubs, and all the community efforts which make life bearable for the resident farmers who have not needed to rely on timber mills. I therefore urge that every member let Mr. Jones know that we in Western Australia expect him to appreciate the community problem which would be created in this State by superseding jarrah sleepers. Too often Governments think only of an odd saving in actual primary economic figures and not of the cost to the people in the community and the long-term cost to the State.

[Applause.]

**MR. McPHARLIN** (Mt. Marshall) [8.12 p.m.]: There are several matters to which I wish to refer during the debate on the Address-in-Reply. One of them is the general, overall buoyancy in the agricultural areas of Western Australia, which is referred to in His Excellency's Speech and which demonstrates that we are now reaching a stage which a couple of years ago we thought we would not reach for a long time.

Before continuing, may I offer my congratulations to the honourable member who has just resumed his seat. He has just made his maiden speech, which is a rather traumatic experience and one which none of us will ever forget. Now that he has broken the ice, I feel sure he will make a very useful contribution to the debates in this House.

When he opened Parliament recently, His Excellency referred to the agricultural industries. He said—

Western Australian agriculture shows a continually increasing stability, with fewer applications for Rural Reconstruction assistance.

Given a favourable season, it is expected that improved wool prices, wheat quotas and markets will make 1973 a record year for our rural industries.

In looking through the references to legislation that will be presented during this session, I cannot see any reference to the Government making approaches to the Federal Government for more financial assistance for extensions to the comprehensive water scheme.

In many parts of the State at the present time, as mentioned by the member for Merredin-Yilgarn, shire councils are so desperate for water that they are applying to have their areas declared water deficient areas and obtaining assistance from the Government for the carting of water to certain points so that farmers do not have to cart water more than 20 miles. Those who have never had to cart water over that distance do not know the costs that are involved in doing so.

Consequently, I think it is a matter of extreme urgency that the people who are in that position should be given some form of encouragement. They should be informed of the planning of the Government and whether or not it intends to continue extending the scheme or whether it proposes to implement some other methods whereby water supplies may be provided from areas which perhaps have a good rainfall and where dams may be sunk.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is too much talking going on.

**Mr. McPHARLIN:** Only recently I have received letters from people in various parts of my electorate who are desperate for water. I received a letter yesterday from the Wilgoyne-Bonnie Rock Progress Association. That area is north of Mukinbudin. The people there wrote to me and also to the district engineer of the Public Works Department in Northam, and they clearly outlined the desperate situation in which they find themselves. This area is, of course, outside the water scheme. It is only one example of many districts throughout the State in which people are