

"In Search of England" will recollect the passage that states—

The towns should understand the problems of agriculture, because as the life of a countryside declines and city life flourishes, the character and physique of a nation deteriorate.

I do not think that any truer words were ever written, and it is definitely essential that a sound rural policy be inaugurated whereby the country people will be supplied with the necessities and the essentials of life. Unless the man in the city realises the necessities of the man in the country, industry will be hampered and the economy of the State will deteriorate. There are many matters grouped under that heading including good housing and adequate ways by which that can be obtained. Then there are electricity supplies, telephone services, water supplies and I will go so far as to say refrigerators as well. These are definitely necessities in the rural areas. Until the needs of the country with respect to these essentials are supplied, the drift to the city will continue.

In years gone by we often heard the slogan "Go on the land, young man." We do not hear that slogan these days, and if we were to suggest to anyone that he should go on the land, the individual approached would probably say, "I am going where I can enjoy the amenities of life." We must have those amenities associated with life in the country areas; and the sooner that is the position the better it will be for all concerned.

Mention was made in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech of the reorganisation taking place in connection with the Child Welfare Department. A move in that direction is long overdue. I notice that the Government intends to proceed with the provision of a home for mentally deficient children and intends to reorganise the Children's Court. These improvements, too, are long overdue and the wisdom of the last-mentioned course will be realised in the near future. With the wonderful opening we have had of the present season in the agricultural areas and the glorious day we have experienced for the opening of this session of Parliament, we surely have a good omen for the future.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (East): I formally second the motion.

On motion by Hon. E. H. Gray, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 3.39 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 31st July, 1947.

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MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Legislative Assembly met at noon, pursuant to proclamation by His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor, which proclamation was read by the Clerk (Mr. F. G. Steere).

MESSAGE—OPENING BY COMMISSIONER.

A Message from His Excellency's Commissioner requested the attendance of members of the Legislative Assembly in the Legislative Council Chamber. Hon. members having accordingly proceeded to that Chamber and heard the Commission read, they returned to the Assembly Chamber.

SWEARING-IN OF MEMBERS.

His Honour the Chief Justice, Sir John Dwyer, having been commissioned by the Lieut.-Governor, appeared in the Assembly Chamber to administer to members the oath of allegiance to His Majesty the King.

The Clerk produced election writs showing the return of 50 members; also writs for by-elections for North Perth, Subiaco, Williams-Narrogin, West Perth, Murray-Wellington, Pingelly, Toodyay and Katanning (Ministerial), and for Sussex.

All the members elected, with the exception of Hon. F. J. S. Wise, were present and took and subscribed the oath as required by statute and signed the roll.

The Commissioner then withdrew.

ELECTION OF SPEAKER.

THE PREMIER (Hon. D. R. McLarty): The House being duly constituted, I move—

That Mr. North do take the Chair of this House as Speaker.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. A. F. Watts): I second the motion.

MR. NORTH (Claremont): I submit myself to the will of the House.

There being no other nomination,

The **SPEAKER-ELECT**, having been conducted to the Chair by the mover and seconder of the motion, said: I thank members for the honour they have done me and I shall now assume the Chair.

THE PREMIER [12.43]: I desire to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on being elected to that high office. You have been a member of this House for many years, during which time you have earned the respect of all those who have been associated with you. Apart from that, I know that you have paid close attention to your Parliamentary duties and I am sure that fact will be of great assistance to you in carrying out your new duties. In addition, you have served under a number of Speakers, all of whom have upheld the high traditions of the office. I feel sure you will follow their example and that you, too, will prove a worthy successor to them. I wish you a long and happy term of office.

HON. A. R. G. HAWKE (Northam) [12.44]: On behalf of members of the Labour Opposition, I desire to join with the Premier in offering congratulations to you upon the important position you have attained in this House. I am sure every member feels happy in the fact that you of all members have succeeded in securing appointment to the Speakership on this occasion. I think it can be said that those members who were here prior to this Parliament were not only friendly with you and towards you, but were most affectionately disposed towards you. I feel sure you will endeavour

to carry out your important duties in a fair and reasonable manner and, in respect of those of us who are not expertly versed in the Standing Orders, I am sure you will find it within your heart to be generous to us when generosity is required. You have, of course, the dead hand of "May" to guide you in any difficulties with which you may be faced; and if that is not sufficient there is in this Parliament, for the first time, a live May and you will perhaps find it necessary to consult with him to get you out of some of the difficulties that may develop from time to time. I again congratulate you and hope your sojourn in office will be a very happy one.

THE SPEAKER-ELECT: The formal notes of procedure do not provide for any remarks from the Chair at this stage. But having been given a little advice by my friends and being aware that other Speakers have said a few words by way of thanks for the congratulations offered to them by members, I feel that perhaps I may be allowed to make a few remarks without unduly prolonging the proceedings or keeping members from lunch. The first thing that I would like to say is that I feel it a great honour to be elected to the Speakership of an Assembly which has the reputation of being the best conducted in Australia. That, of course, has been largely due to the good feelings engendered by the Government and Opposition leaders. I think, however, that a lot can also be done from the Chair by way of fair dealing towards members, which must lead to less friction. That is the good example that has been handed down to me by my predecessors.

The only other thing I would like to say is this: The office of Speaker is one that would appear to take the holder away from activities associated with furthering the progress of the State, which is the privilege and right of every member. There is this to be said, however, that if the business of the House takes up a smaller proportion of time than would be the case if it were badly handled and undue friction were thus created, members have the necessary time to put into their duties outside the precincts of the Chamber. That, to me, is a very urgent reason why the business of the House should be well conducted, thus enabling the representatives of the people to have a greater opportunity to do

outside the vital work which eventually is consolidated here in the form of legislation. I thank members for their kind reception of their own choice and hope that I will be able to follow the good example of my predecessors.

PRESENTATION OF SPEAKER-ELECT.

The PREMIER: I desire to announce that His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor will now be pleased to receive the Speaker-elect and such members as desire to accompany him.

Sitting suspended from 12.49 to 2.55 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: I desire to inform the House that I have waited upon His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor, and have received from his hand the following:—

The Hon. the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly,—

It is with much pleasure that I learn that you have been elected by the members of the Legislative Assembly to the high and honourable office of Speaker of that House. I have every confidence that you will fill the office in a worthy and dignified manner. (Signed) James Mitchell, Lieut.-Governor.

I wish also to report that His Excellency has handed me a Commission to swear in hon. members, and this I now hand to the Clerk.

SUMMONS FROM THE LIEUT.-GOVERNOR.

Mr. Speaker and hon. members, in response to summons, proceeded to the Legislative Council Chamber and, having heard His Excellency deliver the opening Speech (*vide* Council report *ante*), returned to the Legislative Assembly Chamber.

QUESTIONS.

ELECTORAL.

As to Pilbara Roll.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN (without notice) asked the Attorney General:

Is he aware that the Electoral Registrar at Marble Bar, who is also the Returning Officer for Pilbara, issued 53 objection notices to electors on the Pilbara roll two or three days before the issue of the writ, and that 32 persons whose enrolment was objected to lodged appeals within the specified time?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied:

I was informed this afternoon by the Solicitor General that a question had arisen as to the composition of the Pilbara roll. I have not yet had opportunity to examine the position, but will do so.

ROYAL COMMISSIONS.

As to Honorary Minister's Attitude.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN (without notice) asked the Honorary Minister:

In view of her attitude as a private member does she agree with the attitude of the Government now in appointing so many Commissions?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied:

I ask the hon. member to place a question of that nature on the notice paper for the next sitting of the House.

RAILWAYS.

(a) *As to Minister's Comment on Administration.*

Mr. NEEDHAM (without notice) asked the Minister for Railways:

Does the Minister think he was acting within the strict bounds of propriety when he attacked the Railway administration in a speech at Bunbury while the Railway Commission was proceeding with the inquiry and the whole question was sub judice?

The MINISTER replied:

Yes. In any case the terms of reference for the present Commissioner do not include the administration of the railways. They are confined to the workshops and the supply of broken coal.

(b) *As to Return of A.S.G. Engines to Traffic.*

Mr. MARSHALL (without notice) asked the Minister for Railways:

What change, if any, has been made by the present Government in the arrangement set down by the previous Government for the purpose of returning expeditiously to traffic the A.S.G. engines?

The MINISTER replied:

As it is customary to supply the Minister with a copy of a question of that kind without notice, unless it is an urgent matter I ask for notice of the question.

Mr. MARSHALL: What authority has the Minister for Railways, Mr. Speaker, to refuse to answer a simple question without notice, when any change that could have been made by the present Government must have been made at his own investigation?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MARSHALL: I want to know on what authority the Minister refuses to answer a simple question.

The Minister for Lands: On the same authority as you had when you were a Minister

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Minister has asked that the question be put on the notice paper and the full answer will be given at the next sitting.

Mr. MARSHALL: I want a full answer to my question.

The Minister for Lands: That is all you will get today.

Hon. A. H. Panton: I do not think you are wise to take up that attitude.

BILL—STATE HOUSING ACT AMENDMENT.

THE PREMIER: In order to assert and maintain the undoubted rights and privileges of this House to initiate legislation, I move, without notice, for leave to introduce a Bill for an Act to amend the State Housing Act, 1946.

Leave given; Bill introduced and read a first time.

LIEUT.-GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH, DISTRIBUTION.

Mr. SPEAKER: I desire to announce that with hon. members of this House, I attended His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor in the Legislative Council Chamber to hear the Speech which His Excellency was pleased to deliver to members of both Houses of Parliament. For the sake of greater accuracy I have caused copies of the Speech to be distributed amongst members of this Chamber.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

First Day.

MR. BOVELL (Sussex) [3.33]: I move—

That the following Address be presented to His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor in reply to the Speech he has been pleased to deliver to Parliament:—“May it please Your Excellency: We, the members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our most gracious Sovereign and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament.”

I desire to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your elevation to the high office of the Speakership of this Chamber. I regret the circumstances that have led to my presence in this Chamber; I refer to the untimely death of my predecessor, Mr. W. H. F. Willmott. It is unfortunate that he should have been called from us and I repeat that I regret the circumstances that have led to my presence here. I wish to pay a tribute to the work of Mr. Willmott, and hope that I shall be able to follow his example in serving all sections of this community.

May I congratulate members of the Government on their attaining the Treasury benches. I hope their labours will be blessed with achievements for the further prosperity of this State. I personally am particularly pleased to know that the Government has allotted a most important portfolio—that of Education—to the Deputy Premier. The care of the body in health and the training of the mind by education, to my way of thinking, constitute the first duties of any Government. The Deputy Premier's academic qualifications, in my opinion, fit him admirably for the task of leading the training of the mind in this State. We are living in a scientific age, and I am very pleased to note from His Excellency's Speech that it is the desire of the Government to have equal educational opportunities for all. In the past country children have suffered to some extent through lack of opportunity. The country man, the primary producer, has to contend with many difficulties and he should be given the opportunities of education that the people in the city enjoy.

I consider that it should be possible for the Government to investigate the question

of establishing farm research centres in closely-settled farming areas. In the closely-settled areas south of Busselton, it would be advantageous to the dairying industry if an opportunity could be provided for settlers to study the complex problems that confront them as primary producers. A farmer has to understand markets, soils, fodders, grasses, diseases in stock and crops and the like, and I feel that when the time is opportune the Government might consider the possibility of establishing farm research centres in such rural areas. Primary production is the basis of our national wealth and prosperity, and I am sure that the Government will foster primary production so that the State will continue to progress.

Another great primary industry is seen in our timber resources, and here I should like to pay a tribute to the work of the Conservator of Forests, who is at present abroad. He has done wonderful work in maintaining and establishing the wealth in our forest areas of the South-West. In the immediate vicinity of Busselton, which is the port of the Sussex electorate, 17 timber mills are operating, and employed on those mills directly in the production of timber are over 400 men. There is great scope for the development of the timber industry in the South-West.

Here I should like to express the hope that the Government will give consideration to effecting some improvements to the port of Busselton so that it can be utilised for all-the-year employment for local waterside workers. Lately we have had a cessation of work on the wharf for three or four months of the year owing, it has been said, to adverse weather conditions. This has happened only in the past two years, and members will concede that no body of workers can live on eight months' work in the year. I hope the Government will consider making the port of Busselton, which is the natural outlet for the products of the immediate hinterland, available for shipping during the whole 12 months of the year. One hundred families are dependent upon the work of the men on the waterfront in Busselton, and I repeat that they cannot live on eight months' work in the year. I hope the Government will organise matters to such an extent as to enable all-the-year-round employment to

be found for the men on the wharf at Busselton.

Mention has been made in the Speech of the development of the great mineral wealth of this State. I would commend to the Government's attention the coal-bearing deposits and minerals in the Nanup district, as I feel that research there could be made with great advantage to the State. Mr. Speaker, the season has opened auspiciously; butter production is up; wheat crops are looking well; grasses, fodder and pastures are excellent. It would therefore appear that we may expect a bountiful harvest, and I hope the Government will share our blessings with a hungry and starved world.

MR. NALDER (Wagin): I formally second the motion.

On motion by Hon. A. R. G. Hawke, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE PREMIER: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 4.30 p.m. on Tuesday, the 5th August.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 3.43 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Tuesday, 5th August, 1947.

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DEPUTY PRESIDENT—ELECTION OF HON. W. J. MANN.

The Clerk (Mr. L. L. Leake): I have to announce that the President, Hon. H. Seddon, is absent owing to illness. It is, therefore, necessary for members to elect one of their number, now present, to fill the