

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 instigation?

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