

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**TUESDAY, 10 JULY 1923**

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# QUEENSLAND PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

## Legislative Assembly.

FIRST SESSION OF THE TWENTY-THIRD PARLIAMENT

APPOINTED TO MEET

AT BRISBANE ON THE TENTH DAY OF JULY, IN THE FOURTEENTH YEAR OF THE REIGN  
OF HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE V., IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1923.

### LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

TUESDAY, 10 JULY, 1923.

Pursuant to the proclamation of His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, acting as Deputy Governor and on behalf of His Excellency the Governor, dated 14th June, 1923, appointing Parliament to meet this day for the despatch of business, the House met at 12 o'clock noon.

The CLERK OF THE PARLIAMENT read the proclamation.

#### COMMISSIONERS TO OPEN PARLIAMENT.

The CLERK acquainted the Legislative Assembly that His Excellency the Governor, not being able conveniently to be present in person, had been pleased to cause a Commission to be issued under the Great Seal of the State, appointing the Hon. Edward Granville Theodore, the Hon. William Neal Gillies, and the Hon. William McCormack, Commissioners in order to the opening and holding of this session of Parliament, which he then read to the House.

The Commissioners so appointed having taken their places upon the dais,

The SENIOR COMMISSIONER (The Premier, Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*) said: Hon. members of the Legislative Assembly, we have it in command from His Excellency the Governor to let you know that, as soon as the members of the Legislative Assembly have been sworn, the causes of this Parliament being called together will be declared to you; and, it being necessary that a Speaker of the Legislative Assembly be first chosen, it is His Excellency's pleasure that you proceed to the election of one of your number to be your Speaker, and that you present such person so chosen to His Excellency the Governor at such time and place as His Excellency shall appoint.

The Premier thereupon produced a Commission under the Great Seal of the State, empowering him, the Hon. W. N. Gillies, and the Hon. W. McCormack, or any one or more of them, to administer to all or any members or member of the House the oath or affirmation of allegiance, which Commission was then read to the House by the Clerk.

#### MEMBERS SWORN.

The Commissioners, having been themselves previously sworn in before His Excellency the Governor, then administered the oath or affirmation of allegiance to the following members, who thereupon subscribed the roll:—

Appel, Honourable	John George
( <i>Albert</i> ).	
Barber, George	Phillip, Esquire
( <i>Bundaberg</i> ).	
Barnes, George	Powell, Esquire
( <i>Warwick</i> ).	
Barnes, Honourable	Walter Henry
( <i>Wynnum</i> ).	
Bell, Ernest Thomas,	Esquire ( <i>Fassifern</i> ).
Bertram, Honourable	William ( <i>Maree</i> ).
Brand, William	Alfred, Esquire
( <i>Burrum</i> ).	
Brennan, Honourable	Frank Tenison
( <i>Toowoomba</i> ).	
Bruce, Henry Adam,	Esquire ( <i>Kennedy</i> ).
Bulcock, Frank	William, Esquire
( <i>Barcoo</i> ).	
Carter, George,	Esquire ( <i>Port Curtis</i> ).
Clayton, Ernest	Henry Collet, Esquire
( <i>Wide Bay</i> ).	
Collins, Charles,	Esquire ( <i>Bowen</i> ).
Conroy, Charles	William, Esquire
( <i>Maranoa</i> ).	
Cooper, Frank Arthur,	Esquire ( <i>Bremer</i> ).
Cooper, William,	Esquire ( <i>Rosewood</i> ).
Corser, Bernard	Henry, Esquire
( <i>Burnett</i> ).	
Costello, Edward,	Esquire ( <i>Carnarvon</i> ).
Coyne, Honourable	John Harry
( <i>Warrego</i> ).	
Dash, John,	Esquire ( <i>Mundingburra</i> ).
Deacon, William	Arthur, Esquire
( <i>Cunningham</i> ).	
Edwards, James	Braidwood, Esquire
( <i>Nanango</i> ).	
Elphinstone, Augustus	Cecil, Esquire
( <i>Oakey</i> ).	
Farrell, George	Pritchard, Esquire
( <i>Rockhampton</i> ).	
Ferricks, Myles	Aloysius, Esquire ( <i>South</i>
<i>Brisbane</i> ).	

Foley, Thomas Andrew, Esquire  
(*Leichhardt*).

Fry, James Porter, Esquire (*Kurilpa*).

Gilday, John Theophilus, Esquire  
(*Ithaca*).

Gillies, Honourable William Neal  
(*Eacham*).

Gledson, David Alexander, Esquire  
(*Ipswich*).

Hartley, Harold Leslie, Esquire (*Fitzroy*).

Huxham, Honourable John (*Buranda*).

Hynes, Maurice Patrick, Esquire  
(*Townsville*).

Jones, Honourable Alfred James  
(*Paddington*).

Kelso, William, Esquire (*Nundah*).

Kerr, James Stevingstone, Esquire  
(*Enoggera*).

King, Reginald MacDonnell, Esquire  
(*Logan*).

Kirwan, Michael Joseph, Esquire  
(*Brisbane*).

Land, Edward Martin, Esquire (*Balonne*).

Larcombe, Honourable James (*Keppel*).

Lloyd, William Field, Esquire (*Kelvin  
Grove*).

Logan, George Andrew, Esquire  
(*Lockyer*).

Maxwell, James Francis, Esquire  
(*Toowong*).

McCormack, Honourable William  
(*Cairns*).

Moore, Arthur Edward, Esquire  
(*Aubigny*).

Morgan, Godfrey, Esquire (*Murilla*).

Mullan, Honourable John (*Flinders*).

Nott, Frederick Lancelot, Esquire  
(*Stanley*).

Payne, John, Esquire (*Mitchell*).

Pease, Percy, Esquire (*Herbert*).

Peterson, James Christian, Esquire  
(*Vornanby*).

Pollock, George, Esquire (*Gregory*).

Riordan, David, Esquire (*Burke*).

Roberts, Thomas Robert, Esquire (*East  
Toowoomba*).

Ryan, Henry Joseph, Esquire (*Cook*).

Sizer, Hubert Ebenezer, Esquire  
(*Sandgate*).

Smith, Honourable William Forgan  
(*Mackay*).

Stopford, Honourable James (*Mount  
Morgan*).

Swayne, Edward Bowdich, Esquire  
(*Mirani*).

Taylor, Charles, Esquire (*Windsor*).

Theodore, Honourable Edward Granville  
(*Chillagoe*).

Vowles, William John, Esquire (*Dalby*).

Warren, Richard James, Esquire  
(*Murrumba*).

Weir, David, Esquire (*Maryborough*).

Wilson, Thomas, Esquire (*Fortitude  
Valley*).

Winstanley, Vernon, Esquire (*Queenton*).

Wright, Albert Henry, Esquire (*Bulimba*).

## ELECTION OF SPEAKER

Mr. WILSON (*Fortitude Valley*): Mr. Bernays, I have much pleasure in moving—

“That the hon. member for Maree, Mr. William Bertram, do take the chair of the House as Speaker.”

Mr. Bertram is not a stranger to this House; he is well known to almost every member of the Chamber.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear! and laughter.

Mr. WILSON: He has filled the position of Chairman of Committees for nearly three and a-half years, and also acted for a like period as Speaker, and, therefore, it is needless for me to dilate any further upon his fitness for the office of Speaker. Suffice it to say that the position of Speaker carries with it very high qualifications, and also requires a correct knowledge of our Standing Orders and of the practice governing parliamentary procedure. I am sure that Mr. Bertram possesses all the ability necessary for the position. He is also of sufficiently long standing in the House to fill the position. It is necessary that the gentleman who fills the position of Speaker should be a man of even temper, and I am sure that Mr. Bertram possesses that requirement. He has shown his ability as Speaker, and also as Chairman of Committees, to control the debates in a strictly impartial manner—(Opposition laughter)—and I am convinced that he will be able to carry out the duties of the office with credit to himself and honour to this Chamber.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. FERRICKS (*South Brisbane*): I have very much pleasure in seconding the motion moved by the hon. member for Fortitude Valley nominating the hon. member for Maree for the position of Speaker. It will be freely admitted, I think, that Mr. Bertram has long parliamentary experience, fairness, and ability, and his impartiality will be readily granted. Some criticism may have emanated inside and outside this House during his past term on account of the fact that he, as presiding officer of this Chamber, had seen fit, owing to the closeness of the numbers in divisions, to record his casting-vote in favour of the Government. While that may have been so, I think that any exception or objection which could be taken on that ground is entirely without foundation. Hon. members of the Opposition, who at times voiced that objection, must have realised, and will now admit, that, had the positions been reversed, and they had had a majority of one, with the Speaker in the chair, that Speaker would have taken exactly similar action to that taken by Mr. Bertram. (Opposition dissent.) I might mention that for a period of fourteen months in the Federal Parliament, when Mr. Elliot Johnson was the Speaker of a Government which had a majority of one, not only did Mr. Elliot Johnson not fail to give his casting-vote in favour of the Government, but he went out on the public hustings and justified his actions, not only in doing so, but in taking an active part in political propaganda in favour of the Government which had placed him in the position of Speaker. The time was—and we may be reminded of it—when the high and honourable position of Speaker—the highest in the gift of the House—was supposed to be given to one who would be so impartial and so politically or officially blind as not to see any parties or any party

distinctions in the House. The hope was expressed that that tradition should continue, and the practice in the British House of Commons was pointed to as an illustration in that connection. That might have been all very well before there were in the various Parliaments of the British-speaking world two well-defined lines of political thought in opposition to each other. It was all right in the days when the members of Parliament were virtually all of the one party, the sections of that party having differences without any fundamental distinctions.

Mr. COLLINS: It was a case of "Tweedledum and Tweedledee" in those days.

Mr. FERRICKS: I am of the firm conviction and opinion that now that there are in Great Britain two well-defined parties of political thought, the office of Speaker in the very near future will not be placed on that ground, which, to my view, virtually disfranchises the electors whom the Speaker represents. Mark my words, that change is coming in Great Britain. It is admitted in Australia, and must be admitted by hon. members opposite, that the position that obtains now is quite distinct from the position which obtained in the olden days. Consequently, no objection can be taken to the action of any Speaker in exercising his vote and expressing the sentiments of his constituency. I feel sure that, with his long political experience, the hon. member for Maree will, during his ensuing term, fill the high and honourable position of Speaker to the satisfaction of the House and hon. members generally.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BERTRAM (*Maree*): I highly esteem the great honour proposed to be conferred upon me, and I submit myself to the pleasure of the House.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The Speaker-elect was escorted to the Chair by the hon. member for Fortitude Valley (Mr. Wilson) and the hon. member for South Brisbane (Mr. Ferricks).

The SPEAKER, speaking from the dais, said: Hon. members, I am deeply sensible of the great honour that has been conferred upon me for the third time, and I am indeed gratified that I am being elected on this occasion without opposition.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SPEAKER: When I took the chair three years ago, I said that the chief qualifications necessary in a Speaker were courtesy, patience, firmness, and impartiality. My experience since then has confirmed the opinion that I then expressed, and I will endeavour to continue that attitude. I express the hope that hon. members will assist me to the best of their ability in conducting the deliberations of this Chamber with decorum. I will do my best faithfully to discharge the duties pertaining to my high office. I take this opportunity of thanking the proposer and the seconder of my nomination for their very kind references to myself.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*), who was received with Government cheers, said: I take the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, of congratulating you upon your re-election to the position of Speaker. The fact that the nomination was accepted by the House without contest indicates the feeling that hon. members have regarding

your qualities as Speaker. I think it is an endorsement of the ability and impartiality which you have displayed in the high office of Speaker, and I am sure it is satisfactory to yourself, as it is to all hon. members of the Chamber. I congratulate you on your re-election.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. TAYLOR (*Windsor*), who was received with Opposition cheers, said: Before offering my congratulations—though it is somewhat unusual—I would like to apologise for the absence of the hon. member for Toombul (Mr. Petrie), the father of the House. Mr. Petrie is seriously ill, and will not be able to take his place in this Chamber probably for some weeks, and I am sure that my statement as to his illness will be received with very great sympathy by all hon. members.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. TAYLOR: In congratulating you, Mr. Speaker, I certainly consider you have the necessary qualifications for the position of Speaker, but I cannot allow the remarks made by the proposer and seconder concerning your impartiality with regard to a number of decisions that were given by you during the last session of Parliament to pass without comment. The hon. member for South Brisbane tried to put forward some excuse for the Speaker giving party decisions.

Mr. HARTLEY: Not an excuse—only a justification.

Mr. TAYLOR: I understood the hon. member's remarks to mean that he was endeavouring to offer some justification, or excuse, or apology, or whatever you like to call it, for party decisions in this Chamber. I certainly think that when an hon. gentleman is elevated to the position of Speaker, he has to earn the confidence of the whole House.

Mr. GLEDSON: He has got it, too.

Mr. TAYLOR: Not only must he earn that confidence, but his decisions must not be on party lines. On several occasions during last session the Speaker might just as well have been sitting on the front Government benches as in the chair. I certainly think that, when an hon. member occupies that position, he is occupying a similar position to a judge in any of our courts, and his decision should be absolutely impartial; and whether the party in office depends on his decision or not, he has a right to give that decision in a fair and impartial way.

Mr. GLEDSON: Why contest his seat if that is the case?

Mr. TAYLOR: However, I have very much pleasure in congratulating you, Mr. Speaker, and I hope we shall not have a repetition of some of the scenes we had during the last Parliament. We, on this side, offer you our best help during your occupancy of the position, and I assure you that, while you conduct the business of this House in a fair and impartial manner, you will have the full support of hon. members on this side of the House.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*), who was received with Opposition cheers, said: I desire to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the position of Speaker of this House. I am not going to pretend that we on this side were altogether satisfied with all your decisions during last session.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: You will never be satisfied.

*Mr. Moore.]*

Mr. MOORE: There is no reason for being hypocritical, as I think we had reasonable grounds for that remark. I do wish to say, however, that, with the restricted Standing Orders under which we work to-day, we should be allowed a fair time on this side of the House in which to discuss all matters that come before us. Notwithstanding the fact that there may be a dictator on the other side of the House—(Government dissent)—with a large following, I place you above any dictatorial methods, and expect that, while you occupy the position of Speaker, we shall be given fair and reasonable consideration. If that be so, we will do our best to assist you in your work; but we do expect, in the conditions under which we are expected to work, that we shall be allowed the fullest discussion of measures that come before this Chamber.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. KIRWAN: Like they were in the Federal Parliament the other day.

Mr. MOORE: I can quite understand you being in your position as a party man, but I cannot understand a Speaker being a partisan, and I therefore ask that the fullest amount of time be granted to us. In that event, I can assure you that the fullest support of this side of the House will be given to you in the present Parliament.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*): If a Government member has to occupy the important position that you now occupy, speaking for myself, I would just as soon you occupied that position as anyone else. You have qualifications which appeal to our better instincts, and I hope that during the coming session they will be exercised by you to the fullest extent. During your recent election campaign in Maree, Mr. Speaker, you made reference to and deplored the fact that the same consideration was not given to the Speaker in Queensland as is given to that official in other parts of the world, particularly in Great Britain. Now, Sir, it depends entirely on yourself, and on the way you conduct the business of the House, as to whether the same privilege is to be granted to you as Speaker as applies to Speakers in other parts of the world. I have every confidence in you during the coming session, and I feel sure you will be relieved in not having to exercise a party vote as Speaker during this session. As such, you will receive the support of the Opposition to the fullest extent.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. GLEDSON: That is not due to the Opposition; it is due to the good sense of the electors.

The SPEAKER: I thank hon. members for the kindly sentiments expressed, and I can assure them that I will do my best to justify the confidence reposed in me.

#### SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I have ascertained that His Excellency will receive you at Government House to-morrow morning at half-past 10 o'clock. I therefore beg to move—

“That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 10 a.m. to-morrow.”

Question put and passed

The House adjourned at 12.45 p.m.

[*Mr. Moore.*]