

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 28 JULY 1926

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PRESENTATION OF SPEAKER.

The SPEAKER (Hon. W. Bertram, *Maree*) took the chair at 10 o'clock, and said: I shall now proceed to Government House, there to present myself to His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor.

The Speaker then left the chair.

On the House resuming at three minutes to 12 o'clock,

The SPEAKER said: I have to report that I have this day presented myself to His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor as the member chosen to fill the high and honourable office of Speaker, and that His Excellency was pleased to congratulate me upon my election.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR'S
OPENING SPEECH.

At noon His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor came in State to Parliament House, was announced by the Sergeant-at-Arms, and received by the Speaker (Hon. W. Bertram) at the bar.

The members of the Assembly being seated,

His Excellency read the following Opening Speech:—

"GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, —I have called you together for the consideration of important public business.

"On the occasion of the last opening of Parliament, some twelve months ago, the then Governor, Sir Matthew Nathan, expressed his regret at leaving the State where he had spent many pleasant years. It is appropriate at this, the first opportunity since His Excellency's departure, to acknowledge his expressions of gratitude for the treatment he received here, and at the same time to set on record the appreciation of my Government of the devoted service Sir Matthew Nathan rendered to Queensland during his term of office. Sir Matthew left this State on the 26th October last year, and with the concurrence of my advisers was granted five months' leave of absence on half pay by the Imperial Government. Up to this date no advice has been received regarding the appointment of his successor.

"It is within the knowledge of this Assembly that in August, 1925, a memorial was addressed to His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Dominions, signed by the Premiers of five of the Australian States on behalf of their respective Governments, asking that all vacancies thereafter occurring in the office of State Governor should be filled by Australian citizens.

"A reply to these representations has been received by my advisers, in which it is pointed out that the ultimate decision in this matter rested with the people of Australia, and indicating that in the opinion of His Majesty's Government there was no assurance that, if the proposal were now agreed to, the decision would be accepted as a definitive settlement of the question.

"The transactions at the Treasury for the year ended 30th June last resulted in a deficit of £554,685. Up to the end of December the prospects of closing the financial year with a surplus seemed very favourable, but the disastrous drought from then

on made itself felt to such an extent that the position of the railway finances was entirely changed.

"At a Conference of Commonwealth and State Ministers held in Melbourne in May last, the financial relations between the States and Commonwealth were discussed. The Commonwealth Government submitted proposals whereby the field of taxation of incomes of individuals would be evacuated in return for the discontinuance of the capitation grants now made to the States. The States unanimously rejected the proposals on the ground principally that they had an inalienable right to a share of the Customs and Excise revenue raised by the Commonwealth. Subsequently the Commonwealth Government substituted amended proposals in which that Government were to discontinue levying land tax, estate duties, entertainment tax, and 40 per cent. of the income tax on individuals and companies. These proposals also provided for grants to certain States for one year. The States rejected the amended proposals, and maintained that the reasons advanced by the Commonwealth for discontinuing the capitation payments were unconvincing, and they still contended that the States had a moral, if not a legal, right to those payments. The Commonwealth Government, apparently, intends forcing on the States its latest proposals. For the current year, however, it is proposed to pay the States the equivalent of the per capita grants, and to continue in the fields of taxation which the Commonwealth Government is to vacate next year.

"It should be unnecessary to state that the effect of the Commonwealth Government's proposals will be to dislocate seriously the finances of the States, and this will involve the recasting of their taxation laws.

"The yield of sugar for the year was the largest ever produced. The total Australian manufacture was 505,000 tons, of which the State of Queensland was responsible for 473,000 tons. This yield was due partly to the season and also to the expansion that has taken place in the industry during the last five years. The area under cane is now over 280,000 acres, cultivated by more than 6,000 growers.

"The total yield of sugar was in excess of the Australian consumption, and some 200,000 tons were exported at a reduced price. This led to the price for cane being lower than in the immediately preceding years.

"In addition to the Sugar Board, the Legislature has made provision for the establishment of a Cane Growers Council to represent the industry. This body is elected by the suppliers to every mill in Queensland, and will give the suppliers control of their own affairs and authority to fix their own levies.

"During the past year the Tully River Mill—the largest sugar mill in Australia—was completed by the Government and commenced actual operations. The machinery of this mill is almost entirely of Queensland manufacture. Already a flourishing township is in existence, and a large population settled on land which was hitherto covered with dense tropical jungle. In addition to the expenditure on this mill, a million pounds has been expended during the past five years in increasing the capacity and efficiency of other mills in Queensland.

"My advisers fully realise the importance of the proposals for the establishment of a power alcohol industry in this State, and some time since entered into an arrangement with the Distillers Company Limited, the International Sugar and Alcohol Company, Limited, and the Plane Creek Central Mill Limited, for the erection of a distillery at Sarina for the manufacture of power alcohol from molasses and starch-bearing plants such as cassava. The erection of the plant at Plane Creek is now well under way, and operations are expected to commence about the beginning of next year. Negotiations have also been finalised, it is understood, for the erection of distilleries at Cairns and, later on, at Townsville.

"Further assistance to canegrowers is being provided by the appointment of pathologists and entomologists to assist in the combating of cane pests and diseases. Students are being trained by the Government at the Queensland University, while others are being trained abroad.

"The dairying industry has made satisfactory progress throughout the State, and the opening for settlement of Crown lands in the Upper Burnett and Dawson Valley will result in the creation of important dairying centres in those districts.

"Noteworthy advance has been made in modern methods of production, and all butter manufactured within the State is the product of pasteurised cream, while pasteurisation of milk in the cheesemaking industry is being gradually adopted. The adoption of the "Kangaroo" brand for all high-grade butter exported from the Australian States has had a beneficial effect on the prices realised by our butter on the London market.

"The Hamilton Cold Stores were put into operation during the present season. The provision made for the storage of dairy products is both beneficial and sanitary, while the facilities for loading from the cold storage rooms into the ships' holds guard against variation of temperature. When visiting this port, the oversea liners of all shipping companies, without exception, have berthed at the Hamilton wharf. The splendid facilities at the disposal of shipping have been favourably commented on by shipping masters, and it is expected that these facilities will be availed of to a greater extent in the near future by all oversea boats.

"The wheat industry, controlled as it is by the growers themselves under the provisions of the Wheat Pool Act, is showing a healthy development. Modern machinery and appliances are being used, and an increase is to be noted in the area prepared for cropping. This year excellent rains for planting were experienced in the Maranoa district, but the falls were rather light elsewhere.

"The cotton season now drawing to a close has unfortunately experienced climatic conditions which, on the whole, must be regarded as the worst since the inauguration of the system of Government guaranteed advances. Not only were the conditions in the spring unfavourable to securing a good strike, but a severe drought in the latter half of the season considerably reduced the yields in most sections. The results obtained under such conditions, however, have convinced the farmers that, with proper methods of cultivation, the remarkable drought-resisting qualities of the cotton plant will enable a profitable crop to be obtained when other agricultural crops have failed.

"The 31st July, 1926, marks the termination of the agreement between the Government and the British Australian Cotton Association, Limited. The immediate outcome of this has been the establishment of a cotton pool and a board elected by the growers to administer all matters in connection with the marketing of the Queensland cotton crop.

"My advisers have endeavoured to establish the industry on the soundest principles, and at the expiration of the agreement believe that under a proper system of development there is a definite future for cotton-growing in Queensland.

"The conditions in Queensland in regard to the pastoral industry, generally speaking, are not good. The closing of the stock routes because of the drought has materially affected travelling stock in the North and Central districts, and it is difficult to send stock on agistment to the more fortunate places in the State.

"Owing to the operations of the various meatworks, prices for cattle are now comparatively high, and show a better return than for a considerable time. On account of the drought, stock supplies are very short, and only 20 per cent. are available for export.

"The various units under the agricultural organisation scheme continue to function actively. The organisation has been placed on a sectional basis, bodies having been set up for each section of the agricultural industry to deal with problems arising therein.

"The Government has continued to give assistance to marketing boards by means of guarantees for overdrafts obtained from banking institutions, as without this assistance it would have been impossible for the boards in question to have carried out their functions. There is, however, an indication that private financial institutions are beginning to view with favour the financing of Queensland marketing boards on an ordinary business basis and on the security of the product, without State Government guarantees.

"The Director of the Council of Agriculture recently made a computation of the gain to producers during the last two years by organised marketing, and assessed the figure at a minimum of half a million pounds sterling.

"The campaign against the prickly-pear pest, which was commenced two years ago, is already showing satisfactory results. In almost every infested district there is evidence of extensive areas of scattered pear having been eradicated, and there are good grounds for expecting that future years will show a steadily decreasing area under the domination of this pest instead of a yearly increasing acreage as hitherto.

"Another satisfactory feature of the Government's administration of prickly-pear lands is the increased stimulus that has been given to settlement in the pear belt. During the past twelve months an additional area of over 4,000,000 acres of infested land has been selected or leased under permanent tenures, with reasonable clearing conditions attached.

"The Land Appeal Court on the 18th February, 1926, determined the compensation payable on account of the resumption of the

Mount Abundance freehold lands, comprising 154,063 acres, at £261,213. The total compensation awarded, inclusive of costs allowed, amounted to £266,963. It is the intention of my advisers to make these lands available for selection as settlement farm leases, to be used mainly for wheat and sheep farming combined, as soon as the Crown is entitled to possession in the early part of 1927. In the meantime, all necessary preliminary work is proceeding. As the question of water supply will be an important factor in the successful settlement of this country, it has been decided to sink a series of sub-artesian bores in widely separated parts as a test to afford some indication to incoming selectors as to the possibility of securing subterranean water on their selections at a reasonably economical cost.

"The operations of the Provisional Forestry Board were continued during the year 1925, and resulted in gross receipts from all sources totalling £596,000. The expenditure of the board, including costs of logging, sleeper and girder getting, and State saw-milling, amounted to £405,000.

"Experiments are being initiated in Western forests with respect to the association of forestry and grazing, with the object of developing the dual utilities of the State forests of South-Western Queensland, upon which money is now being expended in regeneration operations and in prickly-pear destruction.

"There are now reserved in Queensland 5,100,232 acres of forest reservation, of which 1,779,347 acres are permanently proclaimed State forests. It is calculated that to provide the timber needs of the increasing population of Queensland, a total permanent State forest reservation of 6,000,000 acres must be not only proclaimed, but organised and developed to full bearing in timber, by both treatment of natural stands, to the extent of 15,000 acres per annum, and by the establishment of artificial stands, to the extent of 5,000 acres per annum, as against the 4,000 acres and 500 acres a year now being dealt with.

"Work is actively proceeding on the Dawson Valley Irrigation Scheme, and the first section of 33,000 acres will be ready for selection by September. The railway is now within 13 miles of the central town of Theodore, and it is expected that it will be in the vicinity of the town by December next. Operations have been in progress on the 54 miles of construction road from Juandah to the Nathan Dam site, and this should be ready for heavy traffic by the end of this year, when a commencement will be made on assembling the construction material at the dam.

"The Inkerman Irrigation Area continues to show an improvement in running costs, and further additions are being made to the plant to ensure the stability and continuity of the irrigation services in that area.

"The Water Bill, which passed its first reading last session of Parliament, will be proceeded with at an early date, as the reforms embodied in the Bill are essential to the development and organised control of water conservation in the State.

"Legislation will be required to ratify the arrangements made between the Commonwealth and State Governments in connection with the Federal Aid Roads Grant. Under this arrangement the Commonwealth Government will make available annually a sum of

£376,000 for road construction, to be subsidised by this State to the extent of £282,000 per annum. Greater progress has been made in construction, including bridges, during the past year than in any previous year, thus greatly increasing transport facilities and materially reducing the cost of same to the community. Two of the most important works carried out during the year under the Main Roads Act have been the road from the Atherton Tableland to the coast, and the interstate road between Queensland and New South Wales, crossing the border at Mount Lindesay. The opening of the former road is an important event in the road-making history of North Queensland.

"The Mount Isa silver-lead field is attracting more than ordinary interest, and since the parent company (Mount Isa Mines Limited) took over the leases of the Proprietary Company good progress has been made in exploring and developing the rich field, and as the outlook for lead is particularly encouraging the company is hopeful as to the future.

"The coal section of the mining industry is in a favourable position. The total quantity of coal raised in the State during 1925 was 1,179,661 tons, valued at £1,042,816, as compared with 1,123,117 tons, valued at £935,542, won during 1924. The State coal production is greater than local requirements, and efforts are being made to secure an overseas trade. Recent shipments from Bowen have been eminently satisfactory and give rise to the belief that such a trade will be firmly established in the near future. The separation of our coal mining laws from those of metalliferous mining is now an accomplished fact.

"The activities of the Education Department continue to expand, especially in the direction of giving greater opportunities to children situated in the more inaccessible parts of the State. With a view especially to staffing country schools with capable teachers, the minimum standard of education required of those seeking admission to the department has been raised, and increased provision is being made for the training of teachers in the Teachers' College.

"The system of medical and dental inspection is being reorganised to secure increased range and increased efficiency. To make provision for dental treatment in schools in country centres off the railway line, a specially designed motor car, fitted up as a dental clinic, is under construction, and it is hoped in due course to have a railway car fitted out as a clinic to operate in conjunction with the travelling domestic science and manual training schools.

"Rural schools and classes for vocational training continue to be established in suitable centres, and by taking advantage of railways and other means of transit this form of education is very widely extended.

"The liberal legislation provided to enable persons of limited means to acquire their own homes continues to meet with popular favour. During the financial year just closed, 1,652 persons applied for the benefits of such legislation, and 1,120 houses were completed, many others being under construction at the close of the year.

"Every trade which calls for manual dexterity and technical training is now covered by the Apprenticeship Act. Technical training of apprentices is being given special attention, and provision has been

made to provide as far as possible the necessary classes for all apprentices in skilled trades. Recent investigations have shown that Queensland may justly claim that she leads the rest of Australia in legislation having for its object the direction and control of apprentices.

"There are now open for traffic 6,374 miles of railway, or 125 miles more than at 30th June last year, and, in addition, there are 311 miles now under construction.

"The construction of the Queensland portion (South Brisbane to Richmond Gap) of the 4 feet 8½ inches gauge railway from South Brisbane to Grafton is being carried on in three separate sections. One section (between South Brisbane and Rocklea) is being constructed by day labour, and two sections under contract with the Federal Government. Good progress is being made with the Queensland portion. The contract section commences at a point 1 mile beyond Rocklea, and, to expedite construction, is subdivided into three, each subsection having a resident engineer and staff.

"The effect of the drought was reflected in the working expenditure, which was considerably in excess of the estimate prepared at the beginning of the year. The conveyance of starving stock from drought-stricken areas to relief country, in many instances very long distances, and the conveyance of fodder, a large portion of which came from Southern States, imposed a very heavy tax on the resources of the Railway Department. In order to give the quickest transit possible to both these classes of traffic, considerable overtime at penalty rates had to be incurred, thereby adding to the working costs without any advance in rates. On the contrary, large concessions in freight on both starving stock and fodder were, and still are, operating.

"The increase in rates and fares this financial year will not fully meet the charge for interest on railway capital, and the users of the system will still be relieved of a large portion of the shortage. In other States the major portion, if not the whole, of the increased cost of working has been met by increasing the rates and fares.

"The strictest economy in working costs, consistent with efficiency and safety, will be observed throughout the year, but there are a number of necessary works on open lines which must be attended to, and it is essential that the maintenance of lines and rolling-stock be kept up to a proper standard of efficiency.

"The public services of the State continue to be administered impartially and zealously. Adjustments in salaries and wages of Government employees, rendered necessary by the passing of the Basic Wage Act of 1925, were effected mostly by conferences between the Public Service Commissioner and representatives of the unions concerned. In the few cases in which agreements could not be reached, the Board of Trade and Arbitration gave determinations. The arrangements made to conform to the 44-hour week are working satisfactorily.

"Among other proposals which will be brought before Parliament, you will be asked to consider the following:—

- A Bill to amend the Audit Acts;
- A Bill to amend the Land Tax Acts;
- A Bill to amend the Income Tax Acts;
- A Bill to amend the Succession and Probate Duties Acts;

- A Government Loan Bill;
- A Dangerous Goods Bill;
- An Entertainment Tax Bill;
- A Bill to amend the Cotton Industry Acts;
- A Bill to amend the Diseases in Plants Acts;
- A Bill to consolidate and amend the Primary Producers' Organisation Acts and the Primary Products Pools Acts;
- A Bill to amend the Primary Producers' Co-operative Associations Act;
- A Land Act Amendment Bill;
- A Prickly-pear Land Act Amendment Bill;
- A Bill to cover the arrangement with the Commonwealth Government under the Federal Aid Roads Scheme;
- A Water Bill;
- An amendment of the State Children Act, providing for Widows' Pensions, etc.;
- A Bill dealing with Police Superannuation;
- A Bill to amend the Public Service Superannuation Act of 1912 in certain particulars;
- A Workers' Compensation Act Amendment Bill;
- A Constitution (Officials in Parliament Act) Amendment Bill;
- A Railway Act Amendment Bill.

"To these and other matters which may be brought before you I invite your earnest consideration, and I pray that the blessings of Divine Providence may attend your labours."

His Excellency then left the Chamber.

The SPEAKER left the chair at 12.28 p.m., resuming at 3.50 p.m.

COMMISSION TO ADMINISTER OATH.

The SPEAKER said: I have to inform the House that His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor has been pleased to issue a Commission under the public seal of the State empowering me to administer the oath or affirmation of allegiance to such members as may hereafter present themselves to be sworn, which I now direct the Clerk to read to the House.

Commission thereupon read by the Clerk.

ELECTIONS TRIBUNAL.

JUDGE FOR 1926.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a letter from His Honour the Chief Justice intimating that he would be the Judge to preside at the sittings of the Elections Tribunal for the year 1926.

PANEL OF TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN.

The SPEAKER: Pursuant to the requirements of Standing Order No. 15, I hereby nominate the following members to form the panel of Temporary Chairmen during the present session:—

- Frank Arthur Cooper, member for the electoral district of Bremer;
- Frederick Lancelot Nott, member for the electoral district of Stanley;

- David Riordan, member for the electoral district of Burke;
- Harry Frederick Walker, member for the electoral district of Cooroora;
- David Weir, member for the electoral district of Maryborough.

PAPERS PRINTED DURING RECESS.

The SPEAKER: I have to report that the following papers were ordered to be printed and circulated during recess:—

- Return of all the schools in operation on the 30th June, 1925, with the attendance of pupils and the status and emoluments of the teachers employed.
- Twenty-fifth annual report of the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations.
- Report of the committee appointed to inquire into the causes and extent of unemployment in the calling of water-side workers in the various ports of Queensland, and into other matters incidental thereto.

BY-ELECTIONS DURING RECESS.

CHILLAGOE AND EACHAM.

The SPEAKER: I have to inform the House, for the purposes of record, that, following upon vacancies in the representation of Chillagoe and Eacham in the last Parliament, caused by the resignations of Edward Granville Theodore and William Neal Gillies, respectively, writs were issued for the election of members to fill the aforesaid vacancies, and they were duly returned with the names of John O'Keefe and Cornelius James Ryan, respectively, endorsed thereon.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PAPERS.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

- Regulation under the Fish Supply Act of 1916.
- Regulation under the Explosives Act of 1906.
- The Animals and Birds Acts.
- The Fruit Marketing Organisation Acts.
- The Primary Producers' Organisation Acts.
- The Wheat Pool Acts.
- The Dairy Produce Act.
- The Diseases in Plants Acts.
- The Cotton Industry Acts.
- The Fruit Cases Acts.
- The Sugar Experiment Stations Acts.
- The Slaughtering Act.
- The Primary Producers' Co-operative Associations Act.
- Regulations under the Elections Acts, 1915 to 1925.
- Orders in Council under the Jury Act Amendment Act of 1923.
- Regulations under the Trust Accounts Acts, 1923 to 1925.
- Regulation under the Auctioneers and Commission Agents Acts, 1922 to 1924.
- Regulation under the Raccourses Act of 1923.
- Rules of Court under the Supreme Court Act of 1921.
- Orders in Council under the Supreme Court Act of 1921.
- Regulations under the Magistrates Courts Act of 1921.

Statements of insurance companies deposited in the office of the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies during the year 1925, in accordance with the provisions of section 47 of the Life Assurance Companies Act of 1901.

Regulations under the Land Acts, 1910 to 1925.

The following papers were laid on the table, and ordered to be printed:—

Despatches conveying His Majesty's assent to Acts passed during the session of 1925.

The report of the Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board for the year 1925.

Order in Council under the Inspection of Machinery Acts, 1915-1925.

Orders in Council, Regulations, and Rules of Court under the Industrial Arbitration Acts, 1916-1925.

Orders in Council under the Electrical Workers Act of 1923.

Orders in Council and Regulations under the Weights and Measures Act of 1924.

Amended regulation under the Factories and Shops Acts, 1900-1922.

Additional regulations under the Workers' Homes Acts, 1919 to 1925.

Regulation under the Apprenticeship Act of 1924.

Regulations and Rules under the Unemployed Workers Insurance Act of 1922.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*): I desire the permission of the House to make a personal explanation.

Mr. McLACHLAN: What, so soon?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It will take a lot of explaining.

The SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the hon. member be allowed to make a personal explanation?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*): An unfortunate accident happened this morning while His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor was delivering his Speech. The microphone which was installed here—

The SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Mr. KELSO: I wish to explain that I had nothing to do with it. (Loud laughter.)

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: You looked guilty.

The SPEAKER: Order! If the hon. member for Nundah abuses the privileges of the House and indulges in such tactics, he will probably not be permitted to make an explanation on the next occasion.

THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

The SPEAKER: I have to report that His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor this day delivered to Parliament an Opening Speech, of which for greater accuracy I have obtained a copy. I presume hon. members will take the Speech as read.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

[*Mr. Kelso.*

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

Mr. HANLON (*Ithaca*) (who was received with Government cheers) said: I beg to move—

That the following Address be presented to the Lieutenant-Governor in reply to the Speech delivered by His Excellency in opening this the first session of the twenty-fourth Parliament of Queensland:—

“ May it please Your Excellency,—

“ We, His Majesty's loyal and dutiful subjects, the members of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland, in Parliament assembled, desire to assure Your Excellency of our continued loyalty and affection towards the Throne and Person of Our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to tender our thanks to Your Excellency for the Speech with which you have been pleased to open the present session.

“ The various measures to which Your Excellency has referred, and all other matters that may be brought before us, will receive our most careful consideration, and it shall be our most earnest endeavour so to deal with them that our labours may tend to the advancement and prosperity of the State.”

My first duty, Mr. Speaker, is to tender my personal congratulations to you upon your re-election unopposed to the high office of Speaker of this Assembly. Coming here as a brand new member of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland, it is pleasing indeed to find the Assembly presided over by one with whom I have had long association in the political and industrial movements, and one also who has served so long and so well in the high position of Speaker of this House. (Hear, hear!)

Referring to the question of the appointment of Australian citizens to the positions of State Governors, His Excellency, in his Speech, paid a tribute to the services rendered by Sir Matthew Nathan to the State of Queensland during the time he was Governor of this State. As a private citizen I heard Sir Matthew speak at various public functions, and, of course, have read extensively from his speeches published in the Press. There is no doubt that Sir Matthew was an exceptionally painstaking Governor, and as Governor of this State he devoted an enormous amount of time to the preparation of his speeches. If we are to believe the statements made by older members of this House than I, and by the Press of Queensland, he was evidently the most successful and best Governor that Queensland has had the good fortune to have. However, I have no hesitation in expressing the opinion that many equally able and painstaking gentlemen could be found in Queensland to fill that office, and gentlemen who would fill it as capably as the previous holder.

The situation in Australia at the present time is that five of the State Parliaments are desirous of the cessation of the appointment of Imperial Governors in the States; but I can see no reason why we should burden ourselves with the office of Governor, whether the Governor be local or imported. At the recent Southport Labour Convention the organised workers of Queensland decided that the position of Governor of Queensland should be abolished, and this Government was elected with that plank in its platform. I understand that one of the most important

points raised in opposition to the appointment of local Governors, or the abolition of the office altogether, is that it is necessary to preserve the link between the people of this State and the Imperial Government. If that is necessary, I believe that the Governor-General of the Commonwealth could very well exercise the function of being a link between the people of this State and the Imperial authorities. I believe that, although the Governor-General has duties pertaining to his own office to perform, the duty of being a link between the people of Australia and the Crown of England would not cause him to work too much overtime. I hope that before this Parliament expires the way will be clear—not for the appointment of local Governors, but for the total abolition of an office which I consider to be absolutely unnecessary. The present Government have simplified government in Queensland considerably. The abolition of the Upper House was a step in the direction of simplifying government, and I think the step of abolishing the position of State Governor would further simplify the system of government in Queensland, and be a saving of considerable expense to the State.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The Chief Justice could very well carry out the duties of the office.

Mr. HANLON: As the Minister says, the Chief Justice could very well carry out the duties pertaining to the office. We had the spectacle this morning during the ceremony performed by the Lieutenant-Governor of no less than three judges being present, so that the argument cannot be advanced that the Chief Justice would not have had sufficient time to perform that function.

I wish to compliment the Government upon the splendid edifice they have built up in the Department of Public Instruction. That department is to me the most important department of the Government. There is no doubt that the standard of education given to our scholars in the State schools is going to be reflected in the standard of efficiency of the workers of Queensland in a few years hence; consequently all our endeavours should be bent in the direction of raising and improving the standard of education in our State schools. The present Government have done much to raise that standard, but I am glad to notice from the Speech delivered by the Lieutenant-Governor that the Government are not going to rest upon laurels already won, they are not going to rest upon present achievements, but are going to spur the department to further reforms and improvements in regard to the improved training of teachers.

[4 p.m.] The establishment of the training college for teachers, in conjunction with the higher standard set by the Department of Public Instruction, augurs well for the future educational standard of Queensland citizens. Education is of particular interest to me, as one of those who as a State scholar secured a very limited education indeed. As a boy I was beyond the reach of State schools in the days when the educational activities of the State consisted in sending round an itinerant teacher for a certain number of days. In very many cases there were no State schools, and I, in common with many thousands of other young Queenslanders, wasted several years that might have been spent in study. The present Government have improved the situation in that respect considerably, in particular by

the establishment four years ago of the correspondence classes, by which the department has brought education within the reach of the most isolated children in the State.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. HANLON: Those classes started off just about four years ago with an enrolment of twenty-two pupils, and to-day, I understand, the enrolment numbers 2,800. That is a wonderful achievement in such a short time. If we wish to estimate the efficiency of the correspondence classes, we need only remember that at the last scholarship examinations thirteen candidates from these classes sat, and twelve secured scholarships. That is a splendid achievement, and naturally the 2,800 children who are reached by that educational system will have an important influence on the standard of efficiency of the future generation.

Another notable improvement has been the modernising of the methods of instruction. School life has been made more attractive than it was. A few years ago the majority of school children were in active rebellion against the monotony and unattractiveness of school life. To-day the average scholar desires to go to school; he does not wish to stay away. Whereas at one time a goodly number of these pupils were to be found on the river bank and elsewhere chasing birds with a sling or something of that kind, now the average attendance is remarkably high. The average child, at any rate, wishes to attend school. At one time we studied the prehistoric Royal Reader, but that has been supplanted by the adoption of modern Australian school books, and children in Queensland schools to-day do not, as they did in my time, stand out in the yard of a State school and read out from the Royal Reader every day at 12 o'clock that, if they lift their faces to the sun, they are looking towards the south, and if they cock their eyes over the weather vane on the roof they are looking towards the north. The children in those times could rattle off the name of almost every village and town in Europe, but their knowledge of Australian history and geography was limited to the facts that we had a Great Dividing Range, a Great Sandy Desert, and a Great Australian Bight.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: You are quite right.

Mr. HANLON: We knew the full christian names of the wives of Henry VIII. and the date of the landing in England of William the Conqueror, and we were also told that Captain Cook discovered Australia. We have done away with that system. To-day our school children get a thoroughly modern education from the Australian viewpoint. Their geography is mainly the geography of their own country, and they are taught about the industrial life of their own country, and so upon leaving school they are better fitted to be citizens of the Commonwealth of Australia. Not only have the Government extended their beneficial care to the children during school hours, but even after the completion of their State school education they have assisted children through their apprenticeship in the various trades, and ceased interest only when the children were able to go forth into the world and earn a living as skilled artisans. This year 1,660 odd children were successful in passing the State scholarship examination. When we take into consideration the population of the State of Queensland, it is remarkable that so many

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children should pass from the State primary schools to the secondary schools by passing the State scholarship examinations. It speaks well for the future of the working people of Queensland when we see such a large number of children excelling in scholarship work. There is no doubt that the efforts of the Department of Public Instruction constitute one of the brightest achievements of the Labour Government during its term of office, and I trust that the department will be spurred on to further activity, and that as each year goes by we shall note marked improvement in our educational services and in the standard of our teachers, and an improvement in the education of the children attending our State schools.

One very pleasing Bill promised in the Speech delivered by the Lieutenant-Governor is a Bill to amend the State Children Act to provide for widows and orphans' pensions, etc. The humanitarian record of this Government stands unique, certainly within the Commonwealth, and I very much doubt if the ten years' record of this Government can be equalled in this matter in any part of the world. The care extended to State children has been in advance of what has been done in most of the other States, but there has always been an idea lurking at the back of the minds of the workers that a little bit more could be done, and no doubt a little bit more will be done in the promised Bill. One of the hardships inflicted upon State children under the present system is that in many cases they are compulsorily separated from their mothers. We know that that does not make for the best interests of the child, and we pride ourselves on considering the interests and the welfare of our children in Queensland. The orphans and widows' pensions will undoubtedly allow mothers to retain control of their young children. Sometimes a widow is left with a large family, in many cases the children being very young, and in such cases the State comes to her aid and allows her the sum of 10s. per week for each child, and in this way the State to some extent accepts the care and responsibility of the children. That is of some assistance; but no mother likes to live upon the allowance granted to her children by the State. In the eyes of some mothers it appears as though they are taking the bread from their children's mouths. Unless a widow is left provided for by her husband—unfortunately, the great majority of them are not—a widow has to seek employment almost immediately on the death of the bread-winner. In cases where workers meet their death during their occupations there is some provision for their dependants, but a big percentage of workers of Queensland die from illness or as the result of accident received outside of their occupation; and unless they have taken the precaution to insure their lives, very little provision is made for their dependants. A widow very often has to go to work immediately on the death of her husband, and if she is the mother of young children, she must place the children in the care of some person while she is at her employment. Very often the children are left to the care of some relative, such as a grandmother or an aunt, and in many cases they are left to the care of friends.

During the time that the mother is away at work her children are probably looked after to the best of the ability of the people in whose charge they are left for the moment, but there is no doubt that they are being

robbed of the birthright of every child that is the care and attention of their own mother. There are quite sufficient children in Queensland who are deprived of that care and affection through the death of their mothers without children whose mothers are living being deprived of their maternal care. I trust that the pension to be paid will be as generous as the Cabinet can afford, and that it will at least be sufficiently generous to allow mothers of young children to retain the personal care and attention of those children.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. HANLON: Another Bill promised which interests me considerably is one to amend the Workers' Compensation Act. The Government were returned from the recent elections pledged to increase the payments made under that Act. We know that under the present system of payments the maximum payment for an injured worker with a family is £2 per week for the period during which he is laid up. That is certainly an improvement upon the time when an injured worker laid idle by accident in the course of his employment received no compensation whatever; nevertheless, there is a big margin for improvement on the present system. The time that a worker is laid up by accident is generally one when the expenses of the household increases. In many cases medical attendance has to be paid for, and we know in such cases that a mother or wife very often tempts the appetite of the invalid by purchasing more dainty and luxurious food than is generally the case. Consequently, the expenses in maintaining the household during the time when a worker is laid up through accident or injury are increased. In face of those facts, his income is reduced by more than 50 per cent, and that reduction does not tend to assist the mother or wife to keep her housekeeping accounts in credit. We in Queensland pride ourselves not only upon our high wages, but upon our high basic wage and high standard of living; but the fact must not be lost sight of that immediately wages are reduced through accident the high standard of living in that household begins to fade, and women are compelled, not only to deprive themselves, but their children, of the little necessities which, no doubt, were in the old days called luxuries. I trust, therefore, that the increased payment under the Act will be raised to at least the level of the basic wage.

Apart from the payments made during the period a worker is laid aside by accident, there is still another factor to consider in connection with this matter. Very often injured workers suffer from some permanent disability. If we read down the scale of payments made to workers suffering permanent disability, we find that they range from £750 downwards. Those figures look very imposing, but they are not so favourable when the fate of the injured worker is considered. I am not now concerning myself greatly with the case of a worker who suffers some minor disability, such as the loss of a finger or a toe, as he is enabled after a short period to return to his job, and, even though he may be a little out of pocket at the time, he is enabled after a few months' regular work to make up the leeway. I am now concerning myself chiefly about the fate of the worker who suffers some major disablement, and who by reason thereof is unable to follow his usual occupation.

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Take the case of a man losing both his legs through an accident. The compensation in that case is the maximum—£750. In the case of a man meeting such a serious accident as to necessitate the amputation of both legs that accident would generally be of such a nature that the man would be confined to his bed for a very lengthy period, and even after reaching the stage of convalescence which would enable him to leave his bed and move around a little it would be impossible for him to do any actual work or any amount of walking until the stumps of the legs were sufficiently hardened to enable him to get about on artificial limbs. As a consequence there would be a long interval during which his household would be compelled to exist on the sum of £2 12s. per week, and during that time, as I previously pointed out, the household expenses would be higher, and when he came to collect the compensation payable to him, those weekly payments would be subtracted from the total. In addition, he would probably have medical bills to meet, and he would be a very fortunate worker indeed, suffering such a disability, who would have over £500 left to him as compensation when he was fit to seek work. The procuring of artificial limbs would run him into something like £80, and there would be other necessary expenses, so that by the time he was able to resume any sort of occupation he would not have too much money in hand. In most of such cases the workers are purchasing homes on a time payment system—either workers' dwellings or homes purchased through agents. The most likely thing the worker would do would be to endeavour to secure the roof over his head by paying off the balance due on the home. In such a case he would be left seeking work suffering from the loss of limbs, probably untrained for any specific occupation which would enable him to earn any money to assure him a competent livelihood, and he would be practically penniless. That is not an attractive state of affairs, and we should try to do a little to remedy the position.

In trying to remedy the position we come to the question of the employment in industry of all seriously disabled men. All those people who suffer serious disablement are victims of industry, and I do not think it would be an unfair tax upon the industry of the State if industry were compelled to provide some employment for those people. It might be said that a system of pensions could be provided, but I do not aim altogether at a pension system. I do not believe the effect of a pension system would be so good—financially or morally—upon the worker and his family as the financial independence which could be bestowed by suitable employment which would enable him to hold out his hand for his wages, as does any other worker. In recent years the question of employing disabled men in industry has received a good deal of attention. At the conclusion of the European war the various European countries and America were faced with the task of replacing in industry something like 9,000,000 disabled men. Of course, some of those men suffered minor disablement and were easily replaced. In Australia we had something like 76,000 disabled men to replace in industry, and that included minor disabled men. There are several hundred men in Queensland to-day suffering from permanent serious disablement, and who are not in receipt of pensions other than the invalid pension, which is a poor substitute for a livelihood; and I think it is within

the bounds of the ability of this Parliament so to legislate as to place those men at some remunerative occupation. Several methods have been tried in other countries. In England they formed a voluntary organisation to arrange for the absorption of limbless soldiers, and that gives us a foundation upon which to work.

It was estimated that there were 900,000 disabled ex-service men in England, representing something like 5 per cent. of the total wage earners in that country. The scheme adopted was to endeavour to get all private employers to place 5 per cent. of injured ex-service men upon their staffs. This scheme was so successful that after it had been in operation for four years only 80,000 men out of the 900,000 were left unemployed, and those 80,000, to a great extent, were men whose disabilities were so great that it was impossible to find any occupation for them.

Other countries in Europe have also done something in this regard. Germany, for instance, went further than England. That country passed legislation which made it compulsory for all private employers and all public bodies to employ a certain percentage of disabled ex-service men, and subsequently not only ex-service disabled men but men who had been disabled in industry, no matter what was the cause of their injury, were included in the total of disabled men, and legislation was passed which made it compulsory for private employers to employ a certain percentage of them. In the later Act public bodies were excluded, as it was found that they had already employed more than their share. Austria and Italy followed on somewhat similar lines. France, it was found, was faced with a very serious problem, and several Bills were introduced in the French Chamber year after year, providing for the compulsory employment of disabled ex-service men; but year after year they were not gone on with on account of the Government of the day not having the courage to fight the opposition of the private employer. Governments in Australia cannot be accused of being afraid to oppose the will of private employers if they feel it necessary.

In the interests of the disabled workers in Queensland, I think the time has arrived when the Government should endeavour to place these people in remunerative occupations. One scheme suggested is to establish an organising body which would endeavour to secure the voluntary co-operation of the employers. Another scheme would be the compulsory employment of disabled men; and a further one would be the reserving for disabled men of any occupation, whether private or public, which is capable of being performed by seriously disabled men. Any of these measures would meet the case, and then disabled men would be able to retain their self-respect. In pointing out these things I wish to say that nothing but praise can be given to the administration of the Workers' Compensation Act. That Act has been administered most sympathetically, and every endeavour has been made to meet the demands of those who have suffered any injury in the course of their work. In criticising the Act as it stands I am aiming at securing something further. War measures have been passed. In 1919 Pennsylvania, in the United States of America, introduced legislation providing for the employment of all industrially disabled workers and also workers suffering from any

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permanent physical disability, and a Bureau of Rehabilitation was established. This bureau was empowered to organise vocational schools. In Australia already we have vocational training schools, which have been used to train limbless soldiers to enable them to resume their ordinary occupations. This bureau in Pennsylvania was given the power to form vocational classes, and, if necessary, to apprentice temporarily disabled workers to any private employer where appropriate at the expense of the State, in order that they might be taught some suitable occupation. The Bill which was introduced there provided that the bureau should have extensive powers, such as visiting the homes of families of disabled workers to see if it were necessary to give monetary assistance to the families and dependants of disabled workers, and it was also empowered to spend money in the training of disabled men in any way thought proper. Nothing was compulsory. It was a voluntary organisation in the first place, and received legislative sanction in so far as expenses incurred by the bureau were borne by the State of Pennsylvania. If our Workers' Compensation Act could be amended in that direction, I think the Act would be the most modern in the world. It would then be indeed an Act worthy of the traditions that the Government have established, and one which would add further laurels to the humanitarian legislation which they have placed upon the statute-book of Queensland, and would be another evidence that the Government exist all the time in the interests of the workers of the State.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. O'KEEFE (*Chillagoe*): I beg to second the resolution so ably moved by the hon. member for Ithaca. I wish to congratulate him on being elected to this House, and I am sure that before he has been here many months he will be able to take his place with the best debaters in the Chamber. I desire also to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on being elected once again to the Speaker's chair, and also the Premier and Ministers on being elected once again by their party, which shows that the faith which the party has had in them in the past has been well justified.

I listened with interest to the Speech of His Excellency, and as that Speech pertains to many of the industries in the Chillagoe electorate, I have naturally taken an interest in what His Excellency had to say in regard to the programme that will be submitted to the members of this Chamber during the course of this Parliament.

Before the redistribution of seats some few years back the Chillagoe electorate, which I have the honour to represent, was what was termed by many members in this Chamber a mining electorate, but now that has changed. Since the redistribution the Chillagoe electorate covers many industries, including mining, dairying, maize-growing, timber-getting, pig-raising, and others of varied importance. I wish to thank the Government for the great assistance they have given these industries since the advent of the Labour party to office in 1915.

I notice that a Bill is foreshadowed to bring about a maize pool in Queensland and also the manufacture of maize products. I am very much interested in this proposed Bill, because on the Atherton Tableland, the lower portion of the Chillagoe electorate,

much maize is being grown, and unless we have something of this description I am satisfied that that industry cannot progress, because maize-growing in North Queensland is not profitable unless substantial protection is given. We have had much protection in regard to the establishment of a maize pool there; but without a pool throughout the whole of Queensland, it will have no great effect. I would like to draw the attention of the people who are maize-growing in the southern portion of Queensland to the great benefits they will derive if they take the advice of those people who are "in the know" in regard to what the maize pool has done for North Queensland, and help to get the maize pool established throughout Queensland. I would draw attention to the price received by the maize-growers of North Queensland this year for the 1925 crop. The price received was £8 per ton, and I understand that the manager of the board intimated about five weeks ago that another 6s. is coming to the growers as a final payment, making the price £8 6s. per ton, against which I understand that the southern growers, where there is no pool in existence, only receive £6 per ton.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. O'KEEFE: People who are interested in this particular industry can come down to the South and buy maize at £6 a ton as against the £8 6s. a ton which the maize-growers in the North get, and [4.30 p.m.] can take that maize up to Cairns and even into the surrounding districts where maize is grown, and get £2 more per ton from the consumers than the consumers pay for the locally-grown maize.

Mr. MOORE: Because it is better maize.

Mr. O'KEEFE: I quite admit that maize grown in the South is a little better than that grown in the North, for the simple reason that in the South they have not the rainfall which we have on the Tableland, but at the same time I want to point out that they are not giving the maize-growers a fair deal when they buy maize at £6 a ton and take it up there and compete with the growers who are receiving £8 6s. a ton. It also shows that, if the growers in the North can get £8 6s. a ton, the people in the South can pay a higher price than £6, thus proving that the growers in the South should also have a pool. I hope that the Government will put through this session a Bill which will make that possible, thereby assisting all those who are making their living by growing maize. There is a certain amount of discontent amongst the growers, even on the Atherton Tableland, where there is a maize board, but that discontent is brought about mostly by the activities of those persons in the North who for some years past have been handling the maize-growers' crop. They have gone to the people up there, more especially during the by-election, and have advocated the breaking up of the pool. They got many of the growers to believe there was something in their contention, but I am glad to say that a lot of that discontent has now vanished, although I still think that it is advisable for the Government to send an expert up there to go into the ways and means of financing the maize pool in order to prove to the growers that they are getting the best possible deal from the board. I personally firmly believe that the board has given them the best possible deal, but I admit that discontent does exist to a certain

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degree, and it would be beneficial to the growers and to the consumers themselves if the course I suggest were followed. I have had the opportunity of talking to the chairman of the board, and I believe that they would welcome an inquiry by the Government as to their finances with a view to bringing about a better feeling amongst the growers than exists at present. It would be more satisfactory, too, if the inquiry were held openly, so that the men concerned could hear the evidence produced and so be more easily satisfied that maize-growing can be made a profitable concern.

I would also like to point out that in the Ravenshoe district an attempt is being made to establish the dairying industry. At the end of this month a butter factory is being opened there, and I take this opportunity of urging the Minister for Public Lands to make available whatever land has been already denuded of its timber, so that people can select it and thereby become dairy farmers, and so help the factory. Without some additions to the numbers of dairymen there we cannot expect to have much success with the factory which is to be established within a few days. I would also like the Minister to assist in whatever way possible in the building of the pioneer road across what is known as Longlands Gap, in which the local authorities around Eacham and Herberton and the selectors are keenly interested. I have endeavoured to get the Main Roads Board interested, but I find that the board cannot take a part in such a job, and I am now seeking to get the support of the shire council in a movement which will open up that area.

I hope the Minister will extend every possible assistance in the direction of having the upper and lower Tableland opened, thus stimulating the dairying industry in that area, and at the same time giving the dairymen the facility of a road by which they can convey their cream to the Ravenshoe butter factory.

The hon. member for Ithaca dealt very extensively with our educational system. I do not desire to touch on that matter to any very great extent, but on behalf of the people of the Chillagoe electorate I desire to express to the Secretary for Public Instruction their appreciation of the system of travelling schools permitting of education in domestic science and manual training. Those travelling mediums of education have been very much appreciated by the people of the North. During my last visit to North Queensland I received many requests asking that the Government extend their educational facilities in the North by the establishment of a permanent school at Herberton. Herberton is a town which is admirably suited for a school. At the present time there are several high schools of different denominations there, but if the department were to establish a permanent primary school in that town, it would be well attended by the children of Herberton, Ravenshoe, Tumoulin, Kaban, Irvinebank, and Stannary Hills. Herberton is very easily accessible from all those places by motor service. The people of those districts are keenly anxious that the department should construct this school, which would have a beneficial effect on the children, the district, and the State as a whole.

I hope the Minister will be able to see his way clear to introduce what I might call a

national health Bill—a Bill to assist the working class during periods of illness. A working man in common with every other individual in the community must seek medical attention during times of illness, and often he has to lie in a hospital or at home losing very valuable time and a considerable amount of wages, thereby inflicting serious hardship on himself and his family. I would suggest that the Bill be financed on the basis similar to that set out in the Unemployed Workers' Insurance Act, which provides that the Government shall contribute one-third, the employer one-third, and the employee one-third. Such legislation would render a considerable amount of assistance to the individual, would be of great benefit to the State, and would reflect a considerable amount of credit on the Government.

Mention is made in the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech of better provision for men in the mining industry suffering from miners' phthisis. When one considers what was done for these unfortunates by past Governments, one must confess that at present they are being decently cared for, but I hold that there is still plenty of room for improvement. I suggest that the regulations be relaxed somewhat, so that an applicant will not be compelled to wait long periods for the compensation that he sorely needs. I have in mind a case of a miner at Herberton who made application last October, but because of the stringency of the regulations—perhaps it is necessary to have stringent regulations—he has had considerable difficulty in obtaining what are his rights. There should be some scheme by which the police magistrate in the town could inquire into certain cases and exercise his discretion, enabling the afflicted worker to receive assistance without any undue delay.

As member for the Chillagoe electorate, I would like to have a little to say on the mining industry. I deplore the action of the Government in closing down the mines at Mungana, thereby throwing a lot of miners out of work, in addition to compelling many of them with families to break up their homes and seek new homes elsewhere.

According to the Secretary for Mines, the mines are not of a payable nature. In that respect I differ with the Minister. I have been a mining man for many years, and, with the practical experience I have gained of mining in the district, I am satisfied they could be worked for some years to come and be made to pay. That is, however, a matter which I shall have the opportunity of referring to at a later date, when I will put before this House information as to how those mines could be made to pay. It is not my wish to take advantage of my seconding the Address in Reply to air any grievance. I will content myself for the present with stating that those mines should not have been closed. There are sufficient ore-bodies in existence to enable them to be worked, but on account of the financial position of the State the Government have decided to cease operating them. I venture to say that, had a zinc treatment plant been installed at the Chillagoe works, sufficient zinc would have been saved to pay the wages sheet of the whole cost of mining and smelting. There is a lot of zinc in that district—thousands and thousands of tons—which at the present time is being cast out on the slack heap. We have had its payable nature demonstrated by an individual who has sent a quantity to Belgium and showed a profit.

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Mr. KELSO: That is an example of what private enterprise can do.

Mr. O'KEEFE: Whether it was State or private enterprise, the State should be prepared to expend public money to erect a plant of that description at Chillagoe, thereby saving that particular mineral and giving the people there an opportunity to live.

Mr. CLAYTON: Give the hon. member for Warrego a chance to float a company.

Mr. O'KEEFE: I do not think that the hon. members opposite could float anything.

I suggest that the Secretary for Mines should go into the matter of assisting prospectors to a larger degree than is done at present. I know that the Minister is sympathetic to the mining industry, and that he has given us a great deal of assistance. Nevertheless, the industry is declining, and capital is required to put into it with the object of enabling it to carry on. The mining industry has been of great assistance to the State in years past. I suggest to the Minister that he should assist prospectors on lines similar to what is done in Western Australia at the present time. There prospectors are assisted by the payment of sustenance to the extent of £1 to £1 10s. per week, according to the district intended to be prospected, in addition to being supplied with tools, horses, and, if necessary, camels. I have the whole of the papers before me, and I intend to hand them to the Secretary for Mines during the course of the next few days.

We have in Queensland, especially North Queensland, a very large tin area. For many years in days gone past tin mining was a very profitable industry in the Irvinebank district, where I have lived for a number of years. At present there is a very fine tin concentration plant there, and I am sorry to say it is worked only for about thirty weeks during the year. Properly assisted by the Department of Mines, that plant could be worked continuously throughout the twelve months, especially in view of the present price of tin, and it is admitted by hon. members of the Ministry that tin is going to keep at a fair price for a number of years to come. The Government are interested in one of the greatest tin mines to be found in Australia—as a matter of fact, it is the deepest tin mine in Australia—the Vulcan Tin Mine, at Irvinebank. They are interested to the extent of a few thousand pounds which were loaned to the company a few years ago. The company are not now working that mine—not because they think it is not worthy to be worked, but because the shareholders are spread all around Australia, and perhaps some are outside Australia, and it is very difficult for the secretary of the company to get in touch with them. I consider the Government should give the company a certain time in which to resume operations, and if they fail to do so, they should be instructed to get out. The mine could then be taken over by the Government, who hold a mortgage for a few thousand pounds loaned to the company, and a number of hands could be employed there. I am quite satisfied they would get sufficient ore to afford great relief to the district and ensure the adequate working of the machinery installed.

I do not intend at this juncture to keep the House waiting any longer on the Address in Reply. I wish to thank you, Mr. Speaker,

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and the hon. members of the House for the courtesy they have shown me during the course of my address.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Question put and passed.

The resumption of the debate was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER: I beg to move—

“That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 3 p.m. to-morrow.”

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at 4.48 p.m.