

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 20 AUGUST 1940

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Legislative Assembly.

THIRD SESSION OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

Appointed to Meet

AT BRISBANE ON THE TWENTIETH DAY OF AUGUST, IN THE FOURTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE VI., IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1940.

TUESDAY, 20 AUGUST, 1940.

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

Pursuant to the proclamation by His Excellency the Governor, dated 5 July, 1940, appointing Parliament to meet this day for the despatch of business, the House met at 12 o'clock noon in the Legislative Assembly Chamber.

The Clerk of the Parliament read the proclamation.

GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

At noon His Excellency the Governor came to Parliament House, was announced by the Sergeant-at-Arms, received by Mr. Speaker (Hon. E. J. Hanson) at the bar, and accompanied to the dais.

Hon. members being seated, His Excellency read the following Opening Speech:—

“GENTLEMEN OF THE PARLIAMENT OF QUEENSLAND,—

“It gives me great pleasure to meet you at the opening of this, the third session of the twenty-eighth Parliament of Queensland.

“The British Empire is to-day facing the gravest crisis in its long history. I have travelled many thousands of miles since the outbreak of war, and it is heartening indeed, in these tragic days, to find in every town and shire in the State a firm and patriotic resolve to render service in every possible way.

“I am particularly proud, as the representative of His Majesty the King, of the overwhelming response of our young men to the call to arms, of our older men in returning to duty, and of the generous contributions of funds for war purposes. These and many other outstanding demonstrations of loyalty

have shown that Queensland shares, in a remarkable degree, the faith of the people of the Empire in the justice of our cause, and I have been deeply impressed by the devotion of all our people to the Empire in this, its hour of crisis.

“Immediately war broke out, my advisers offered to the Commonwealth Government the full co-operation of all State Departments, constructing authorities, and instrumentalities in the war effort. It is pleasing to know that the State has carried out promptly and efficiently, on behalf of the Commonwealth, such war-time duties and functions as have been entrusted to it.

“It is essential that the whole of the resources of the nation should be organised and used to the greatest possible advantage, in order that complete victory may be achieved by the British Commonwealth so that human freedom and civilisation shall be maintained. The future of this great country depends upon success in the war, and every sacrifice that may be necessary should be made in order that we shall retain Australia and hand on the torch of freedom to our successors. All must play their part so far as they are able; nothing less will suffice.

“Under the legislation passed last session, considerable progress has been achieved in the preparations to meet any emergency that may threaten the civil population of the State.

“Realising that the protection of its citizens is the first concern of a Government, my advisers are carefully considering the advisability of further legislative and administrative steps necessary to safeguard the welfare, order, and safety of the people of the State.

“The financial year 1939-1940 closed with a surplus of £15,755; receipts amounting to £20,755,504 and expenditure to £20,739,749.

“Under the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act passed in 1938, the Co-ordinator-General was able during the past year to arrange on an orderly basis the

various public works being carried on throughout the State. So successful has been this measure of control that it has been adopted on an Australia-wide basis by the Australian Loan Council. I am confident that in the war period and in the transition from a state of war to one of peace this scheme will prove of the utmost benefit to the people of Australia.

"Last month I had the privilege of opening for traffic the new highway across the Brisbane River. It is gratifying that this structure, which is an important link in the national highway from Coolangatta to Cooktown, and which reflects in so fitting a manner the capacity of our workmen and the skill of our engineers, should bear the name "Story Bridge" in honour of a public servant who has rendered such long and distinguished service to the Crown and is still doing so.

"I am pleased to know that the arrangements with the Imperial Government for the sale of our various products have proved of great benefit to the primary industries. During the past year the State has experienced a good season, and the prospects for the coming year are mainly favourable.

"The public service continues to render loyal and efficient service to the State. A large number of the younger members have joined the fighting services, and I am sure we all wish them and their comrades in the forces a safe and speedy return to their civil duties.

"The Estimates for this financial year are being prepared and will be submitted for your consideration at an early date. My advisers are giving close attention to the necessity for economy, while at the same time maintaining the essential services to the fullest possible extent.

"During the coming session you will be invited to give consideration to the following among other measures:—

Public Safety Bill.

State Development and Public Works Organisation Act Amendment Bill.

Wages Attachment Act Amendment Bill.

Friendly Societies Acts Amendment Bill.

Wills (Sailors, Soldiers, and Members of the Air Force) Bill.

Common Law Practice Act Amendment Bill.

Brands Acts Amendment Bill.

Diseases in Stock Acts and Other Acts Amendment Bill.

Water Acts and Another Act Amendment Bill.

Mining Acts Amendment Bill.

Nurses and Masseurs Registration Acts Amendment Bill.

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

His Excellency then left the Chamber.

Mr. SPEAKER left the chair at 12.5 p.m., resuming it at 2 p.m.

ELECTIONS TRIBUNAL.

JUDGE FOR 1940.

Mr. SPEAKER announced that in January last he received a letter from the then Chief Justice, Sir James Blair, intimating that the Hon. Mr. Justice H. D. Macrossan, S.P.J., would be the judge to preside at the sittings of the Elections Tribunal for the year 1940, and that he had received a further letter from the Chief Justice, the Hon. Mr. Justice Webb, informing him that owing to the death of the Hon. Mr. Justice H. D. Macrossan, C.J., the Hon. Mr. Justice N. W. Macrossan, S.P.J., would be the judge of the Supreme Court to preside at sittings of the Elections Tribunal for the remainder of the year 1940.

PANEL OF TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN.

Mr. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the requirements of Standing Order No. 13, I hereby nominate the following members to form the panel of Temporary Chairmen for the present session:—

William Alfred Brand, member for the electoral district of Isis;

Samuel John Brassington, member for the electoral district of Fortitude Valley;

Thomas Dunstan, member for the electoral district of Gympie;

Arthur Jones, member for the electoral district of Charters Towers;

Thomas Nimmo, member for the electoral district of Oxley.

RESIGNATION OF CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to report that I have received the following letter from Mr. J. O'Keefe, dated 17 May, 1940:—

"Parliament House,
"Brisbane.

"Dear Mr. Speaker,—

"I hereby tender my resignation of the position of Chairman of Committees of the Whole House.

"Yours sincerely,
"JOHN O'KEEFE.

"The Hon. the Speaker,

"Legislative Assembly,

"Parliament House,

"Brisbane."

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

CHANGES IN MINISTRY.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay): On 20 May last Messrs. Edward Joseph Walsh and John O'Keefe, members of the Legislative Assembly, were appointed to be members of the Executive Council of Queensland. On the same day proclamations were issued by the Lieutenant-Governor acting as deputy for and on behalf of His Excellency the Governor granting leave of absence for six months to the Hon. Percy

Pease, Secretary for Public Lands, and the Hon. John Mullan, Attorney-General, and authorising the Hon. Edward Joseph Walsh to act for Mr. Pease and the Hon. John O'Keefe to act for Mr. Mullan.

I lay on the table of the House copy of "Government Gazette" containing the relative notification and proclamations.

Whereupon the Premier laid on the table a copy of "Government Gazette" mentioned.

DEATHS IN AIR DISASTERS.

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay) (2.4 p.m.), by leave, without notice: It is with much regret that I move—

"1. That this House desires to express its deep sympathy with the relatives of—

Brigadier the Hon. Geoffrey Austin Street, M.C., Minister of State for the Army;

The Hon. Sir Henry Somer Gullett, K.C.M.G., Vice-President of the Commonwealth Executive Council;

The Hon. James Valentine Fairbairn, Minister of State for Air;

Major-General Sir Brudenell White, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., K.C.V.O., D.S.O., Chief of the Australian General Staff;

Lieutenant-Colonel F. Thornthwaite;

Mr. R. E. Elford;

Flight-Lieutenant R. E. Hitchcock;

Pilot-Officer R. F. Wiesener;

Corporal J. F. Palmer; and

Aircraftsman C. J. Crosdale—

in the tragic loss sustained by them in the recent air disaster at Canberra.

"2. That this House desires to express its deep sympathy with the relatives of the officers and crew of the Royal Australian Air Force plane, who lost their lives when the machine in which they were carrying out duties in the service of Australia was reported missing off the coast near Brisbane on Monday, 12 August, 1940.

"3. That Mr. Speaker be requested to communicate to the families of the deceased gentlemen the foregoing resolutions, together with an expression of the sympathy and sorrow of the Members of the Parliament of Queensland in the loss they have sustained."

There can be no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that these two tragic occurrences, happening on the same day, caused widespread consternation and sympathy among the people of Australia. All the men referred to were of very great service to Australia in the offices they held and died while rendering that service, and as such we in this Parliament, in common with the rest of the people of the State, mourn their loss.

General Brudenell White, Chief of the Australian General Staff, was one of the most distinguished soldiers that Australia has produced. He was loved by all who knew him. He never spared himself in the discharge of his duty. He was a gentleman by every

instinct, and a man from every point of view. Much of the improvement that has taken place in the defence organisation lately has been due to his appointment as Chief of the Australian General Staff in Australia. Therefore, we mourn his loss as one who can ill be spared under existing conditions.

The three Ministers referred to in the crash at Canberra were about to attend an important Cabinet meeting. There is something very poignant about the occurrence that touches our hearts. The plane seemed, I understand, to be going to make an excellent landing until almost the last minute, when something went wrong and everyone aboard the bomber was lost. These men were prominent members of the Commonwealth Government, held important portfolios, and carried out important duties. Their loss makes a very great gap indeed in the counsels of the Commonwealth. My sympathy goes out not only to their relatives, but also to the Prime Minister, whose colleagues they were as well as his personal friends. It is sad to lose colleagues, but it is inexpressibly sad to lose them under such tragically poignant conditions. I feel sure that I voice the opinion of every hon. member and everyone in this State in moving this motion of sympathy.

The aeroplane that was lost off the coast of Queensland was engaged at the time in reconnaissance work. No-one knows what happened. Those men, too, were carrying out their duty and were serving their country no less than if engaged in the battle line. They were fine young men—splendid types of young Australians. It brings home to us the effect that this war is having on the brightest and the best of our young Australians.

Even when people have lived to maturity or attained a ripe age it is sad indeed that they should pass; infinitely more poignant is the loss of a young life, one on the threshold of a career. Such men, Mr. Speaker, lose not only their lives but something more important—all they had ever hoped for. All that is gone. It may be some consolation to their sorrowing relatives to know that they gave their lives for their country and for that cause of human freedom for which the people of this country stand.

Mr. MAHER (West Moreton) (2.6 p.m.): It is an old saying that "The darkest hour is that before the dawn." There is no doubt that the British people have sustained blow after blow during the past few months that must test their courage, their resolution, and their determination. The fact that they have stood up to those blows is proof of their greatness. We get some understanding of the enormous losses that have been sustained overseas from the tragic happening in our own country that is the subject of this sad motion moved by the Honourable the Premier this afternoon relating to the terrible air accident that cast a gloom over the whole of Australia last week when it became known that a bomber had crashed at Canberra and 10 valuable lives were lost to the service of this country. Those men, as

the Premier stated, were serving their country in precisely the same way as if they were engaged in the battlefield. They were key men, singularly well-equipped for the tasks they were carrying out.

In Japan, under totalitarian conditions, a Minister of the Cabinet for the army must be a general, and the Minister of the Cabinet for the navy must be an admiral, but in our own country under our democratic form of government we had a brigadier exercising the high office of Minister for the Army, a man well-experienced in the last war and highly qualified to carry out the important office he held. In the person of the Minister for the Air we had a highly-skilled airman in the person of the late Mr. Fairbairn. Those men not only were elected representatives of the people, but they were also highly qualified to carry out the important tasks that had been allotted to them, and their loss at this time is particularly unfortunate for Australia, as also was the loss of that distinguished officer Major-General Sir Brudenell White, and of Lieutenant-Colonel Thornthwaite. Those men and the others who lost their lives will not be easy to replace, because they were experienced, highly-trained, skilful leaders in the military field.

The Opposition join wholeheartedly with the Premier in passing this motion of deep sympathy with their families in their time of great sorrow.

The Australian people, too, feel this loss very deeply. To the Prime Minister, who is beset with all the worries of Australia's war effort and who has to deal with many difficult situations, the loss of valuable colleagues is indeed a very great blow. He also has our sympathy at this time.

The Opposition also join in offering their sympathy to the relatives of those young men who went out off the Queensland coast in a bomber. These young men lost their lives in the discharge of their duty to this country. Our deepest sympathy goes out to their relatives and to those of their fellow Australians who are to-day offering their lives in the service of the Empire on the far-flung fields of battle.

Mr. RUSSELL (Hamilton) (2.17 p.m.): I wish to associate my colleagues and myself with the expressions of sympathy voiced by the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition. Last week was a very tragic one for Australia, inasmuch as on Monday some very fine young men were hurled to their death; on Tuesday we lost a great number of very fine Australians, men who gave their lives in the execution of their duty. To paraphrase a well-known line, "The path of duty leads but to the grave." All classes unite in expressing sorrow at this great loss to our country. We feel their death very deeply. There were those who were associated with our party, and we associate ourselves with the motion moved by the Premier.

Motion agreed to, hon. members standing in silence.

DEATH OF HON. J. M. HUNTER, HON. H. D. MACROSSAN, MR. C. J. RYAN, MR. E. W. ARCHER, MR. R. HERBERTSON, MR. R. J. WARREN, MR. T. J. DONOVAN, MR. R. J. CARROLL, AND MR. G. H. THOMPSON.

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay) (2.19 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"1. That this House desires to place on record its sense of the loss this State has sustained by the death of the Hon. John McEwan Hunter, a former member of the Parliament of Queensland and Minister of the Crown; the Hon. Hugh Denis Macrossan, a former member of the Parliament of Queensland and Chief Justice of the State; Mr. Cornelius James Ryan, Mr. Edward Walker Archer, Mr. Robert Herbertson, Mr. Richard Joseph Warren, Mr. Timothy John Donovan, Mr. Robert Joseph Carroll, and Mr. George Henry Thompson, former members of the Parliament of Queensland.

"2. That Mr. Speaker be requested to communicate to the families of the deceased gentlemen the above resolution, together with an expression of the sympathy and sorrow of the members of the Parliament of Queensland in the loss they have sustained."

All these gentlemen were members of this House at different times.

Mr. Hunter was a Minister of the Crown and later became Agent-General. For many years he was an honoured and respected member both of this House and of the general community. All those who knew him realise that in him the State had a sterling advocate, a gentleman who never hesitated to do what was right in any office that he held.

Mr. Macrossan was the hon. member for Windsor in this House for three years. Later he became a judge and then Chief Justice, holding the highest legal office in the State of which he was a native. He was a learned judge who administered justice impartially, and was an ornament to the bench. Everyone regrets his untimely demise, only five weeks after he was sworn in as Chief Justice.

Mr. Cornelius Ryan was the member for Eacham. Messrs. Archer, Herbertson, and Warren most of us also remember. Many of us here sat in the same Parliament as Messrs. Ryan and Warren, and remember them as men who carried out their duties to the State faithfully.

Messrs. Timothy John Donovan, Robert Joseph Carroll, and George Henry Thompson were members of the Legislative Council of Queensland. Whilst occupying those positions they carried out their work worthily, and in other walks filled with similar success distinguished offices in the life of the State. Mr. Carroll will be more remembered, however, by virtue of the fact that for many years, he was general secretary

of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, as well as general secretary of the Queensland Central Executive of the Australian Labour Party.

It is regrettable that as time goes on we seem to have more and more of these motions to move. Time is a great reaper, and all things lead finally to the grave. Those men lived, did their duty as they saw it, and served the people in the best way they knew.

Mr. MAHER (West Moreton) (2.24 p.m.): The Opposition regret the great loss of these ex-members of the Queensland Parliament in the period that has elapsed since last session closed. The names of some of them are familiar to us all; in their day they played their parts in the political history of this country as members of this Parliament. Only two of them were known to me personally—the late Chief Justice and the ex-member for Murrumba.

The late Chief Justice was a brilliant man, who, by virtue of his talents, made his way from the bottom rung of the ladder to the top. It speaks well for our democracy that men can thus rise from the ranks to the highest offices in the land. The late Mr. Warren was a member of this Parliament when I first entered it. He was a kindly-hearted gentleman and a solid and useful member of this Assembly. He had the courage of his convictions and represented his constituency with great satisfaction to his people. I was sorry to hear of his death, as he was not an old man by any means. The Opposition join with the Government in the expression of sympathy with the relatives of those whom I knew and the others mentioned in the motion moved by the Premier. We assure them that we, too, feel sorrow in the loss of fine men who played their parts worthily in the history of our State.

Mr. RUSSELL (Hamilton) (2.28 p.m.): On behalf of the party I represent I desire to say a word or two in support of this motion. We pay our respects to the memory of the deceased gentlemen, all of whom contributed to the welfare of this State, some in a much higher sphere than others, but wherever placed they did their duty according to their lights. I join with the Premier and Leader of the Opposition in agreeing to this motion of condolence.

Motion agreed to, hon. members standing in silence.

PAPERS.

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

Report of the Agent-General for Queensland for the year 1939.

Report of the Commissioner, Hamilton (1935) Election Commission.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council (19) of various dates, Regulations dated 21 March, 1940, and

By-laws dated 8 February and 21 March, 1940, under the Electric Light and Power Acts, the State Electricity Commission Act, and the Tramways Acts.

Order in Council, dated 1 December, 1939, under the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act of 1938.

Regulations, dated 29 February, 1940, under the Public Service Acts, 1922 to 1924.

Orders in Council, dated 1 December, 1939, and 8 August, 1940, under the Income (State Development) Tax Acts, 1938 to 1939.

Regulations, dated 31 January, 1940, under the Fish Supply Management Act of 1935.

Regulations under the following Acts:—

The Fertilisers Act of 1935.

The Fruit and Vegetables Acts, 1927 to 1935.

The Fruit Marketing Organisation Acts, 1923 to 1934.

The Milk Supply Act of 1938.

The Peanut Industry Protection and Preservation Act of 1939.

The Pest Destroyers Act of 1939.

The Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Acts, 1926 to 1939.

The Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Acts, 1915 to 1939.

The Sugar Experiment Stations Acts, 1900 to 1938.

The Veterinary Medicines Acts, 1933 to 1938.

Orders in Council under:—

The Agricultural Requirements Control and Conservation Act of 1939.

The Banana Industry Protection Acts, 1929 to 1937.

The Dairy Produce Acts, 1920 to 1939.

The Dairy Products Stabilisation Acts, 1933 to 1936.

The Diseases in Stock Acts, 1915 to 1936.

The Fauna Protection Act of 1937.

The Fruit Marketing Organisation Acts, 1923 to 1934.

The Milk Supply Act of 1938.

The Native Plants Protection Act of 1930.

The Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Acts, 1926 to 1939.

The Rural Development Co-ordination of Advances Act of 1938.

The Sugar Experiment Stations Acts, 1900 to 1938.

The Wheat Stabilisation Act of 1938.

Proclamations under:—

The Agricultural Requirements Control and Conservation Act of 1939.

The Diseases in Plants Acts, 1929 to 1937.

The Peanut Industry Protection and Preservation Act of 1939.

The Sugar Experiment Stations Acts, 1900 to 1938.

Regulation, dated 31 January, 1940, under the Explosives Act of 1906.

Regulation, dated 15 February, 1940, under the Motor Vehicles Insurance Acts, 1936 to 1939.

Regulations (4) under the Navigation Acts, 1876 to 1939.

Regulations, dated 8 and 29 February, 1940, under the Racecourses Acts, 1923 to 1936.

Regulations, dated 21 March, 1940, under the Statistical Returns Acts, 1896 to 1935.

Regulation, dated 3 July, 1940, under the Workers' Compensation Acts, 1916 to 1939.

Orders in Council under the Bureau of Industry Acts, 1932 to 1935.

Orders in Council under the Industries Assistance Acts, 1929 to 1933.

Order in Council under the Succession and Probate Duties Act of 1904.

Reports of the Committee appointed to direct and control the aerial geological and geophysical survey of Northern Australia for the periods ended 31 December, 1938, and 30 June, 1939.

Return of all moneys advanced and expended under the Mining Machinery Advances Act of 1906.

Amendment of Rules, dated 15 February, 1940, under the Coal Mining Acts, 1925 to 1939.

Amendments of Rules, dated 29 February, and 27 June, 1940, under the Mines Regulation Acts, 1910 to 1939.

Regulations, dated 14 December, 1939, under the Water Acts, 1926 to 1937.

Regulation, dated 21 December, 1939, under the Land Acts, 1910 to 1937.

Regulation, dated 18 January, 1940, under the Stock Routes Improvement and Animal and Vegetable Pests Destruction Acts, 1936 to 1938.

Proclamation, dated 18 January, 1940, under the Health Acts, 1937 to 1939.

Regulations under the Health Acts, 1937 to 1939—(a) Dated 29 February, 1940, relating to water supply in the Shire of Cloncurry; (b) dated 23 May, 1940, the Camp Regulations, 1940; (c) dated 8 August, 1940, the Barbers Shops Regulations of 1940.

Ordinances under the City of Brisbane Acts, 1924 to 1937.

Regulations, dated 18 July, 1940, under the Local Government Act of 1936.

Regulation, dated 22 February, 1940, under the Medical Act of 1939.

Rules, dated 26 April, 1940, under the Medical Act of 1939.

Proclamation, dated 6 December, 1939, under the Mental Hygiene Act of 1938.

Regulations under the Mental Hygiene Act of 1938.

Order in Council, dated 18 July, 1940, under the Mental Hygiene Act of 1938.

By-law, dated 5 July, 1940, under the Opticians Acts, 1917 to 1939.

Regulations and Order in Council under the State Transport Act of 1938, as follows:—Order in Council modifying section 3 and schedules II, and III.; General Regulations published in the "Government Gazette" on 16 February, 1940; Amendments to General Regulations published in "Government Gazette" on 20 April, 1940.

Fifty-fifth annual report of the Union Trustee Company of Australia, Limited.

Statements of various insurance companies under section 47 of the Life Assurance Companies Act of 1901.

Orders in Council under the Supreme Court Act of 1921.

Order in Council under the Purchasers of Homes Relief Acts, 1930 to 1932.

Order in Council under the Mortgagors Relief Acts, 1931 to 1932.

Order in Council under the Lessees' Relief Acts, 1931 to 1932.

Order in Council under the Financial Emergency Act of 1931, the Financial Emergency Relief Extension Act of 1932, and the Contracts of Sale of Land Act of 1933.

Order in Council under the Financial Emergency Act of 1931, the Financial Emergency Relief Extension Act of 1932, and the Law of Distress and Other Acts Amendment Act of 1934.

Order in Council under the Public Curator Acts, 1915 to 1938.

Order in Council approving rules made under the Queensland Law Society Acts, 1927 to 1939.

National Security (Fair Rents) Regulations made under the National Security Act of 1939 of the Commonwealth of Australia.

National Security (Fair Rents) Rules (Queensland) made under the National Security (Fair Rents) Regulations of the Commonwealth.

Proclamation under the Justices Act of 1886.

Proclamation under the Registration of Births Deaths and Marriages Acts, 1855 to 1867.

Regulation under the Public Curator Acts, 1915 to 1926.

Regulation under the Elections Acts, 1915 to 1936.

* Regulations under the Auctioneers and Commission Agents Acts, 1922 to 1936.

Regulations under the Trust Accounts Acts, 1923 to 1925.

Regulation under the Contracts of Sale of Land Act of 1933.

GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to report that His Excellency the 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 this Speech as read?

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

OPENING DAY.

Mr. COLLINS (Cook) (2.47 p.m.), who was received with Government cheers, said: I move—

“That the following Address be presented to the Governor in reply to the Speech delivered by His Excellency in opening this, the third session of the twenty-eighth Parliament of Queensland:—

“May it please Your Excellency,—

“We, His Majesty's loyal and dutiful subjects, the Members of the Legislature 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 earnest endeavour so to deal with them that our labours may tend to the advancement and prosperity of the State.”

At the opening of my remarks I thank His Excellency for the way in which he has travelled throughout the length and breadth of the State since Parliament met last. His Excellency is for ever moving about amongst the people, mingling with them and getting to know the environment in which they live. He is very popular wherever he goes. I have met him in Cooktown and in many other far northern towns, and I understand he has the honour of having visited Cooktown more than any other Governor of Queensland. He is always an ardent advocate for the development of new land, and his activity in recruiting and all war work has been outstanding. It is very pleasing to know that he is still enjoying good health, and can so ably continue to discharge his duties as Governor.

Almost a year has passed since hostilities began overseas. We are meeting to-day in the shadow of probably one of the greatest tragedies in history. Civilisation has never before been developed to its present extent, and our generation should be enjoying the benefits of culture and science and all that civilisation stands for. Unfortunately, however, we see the whole of our development being used to-day not to make conditions better or happier for mankind but for the destruction of mankind. We are facing a powerful, determined, relentless, and ruthless

enemy, who is desirous of imposing her will upon the other nations of Europe, nations that have done no wrong. They desire peace, but Germany is resolutely setting herself to control them and their actions, to determine what they shall do and how they shall be governed. She regards the British Empire as the greatest obstacle to her success.

The democracy for which we stand and for which we are fighting, and will continue to fight, consists in the right to rule ourselves and to determine for ourselves how we shall live and govern ourselves. It is founded upon the principles of liberty, justice, and freedom. Our forefathers fought, bled, and died for these principles and institutions. We are no less prepared than they were to do the things that they did in order to be able to hand on to future generations the freedom that we enjoyed until this tragedy started. We must carry on the war until we can feel that we can safely continue our own forms of government and live in freedom, until we can realise in our Empire these high ideals. The people of this country are ready to do whatever is necessary to fulfil her obligations. I believe that I am correct when I say that every man in Australia is willing to fall into line and give service wherever he can; he is waiting only to know how, when, and where.

Our soldiers who are fighting overseas are walking in the footsteps of the immortal Anzacs, and with undoubted credit following the example they set. We cannot help admiring the sterling courage of all of our men who are fighting for their country, whether on land or sea or in the air. We admire them for what they are doing in defence of their own country and for the Empire to which we belong. One cannot overstate the tremendous courage that these men must have. War to-day is far more deadly than any previous war in our history.

Mr. Maher: Do you think that?

Mr. COLLINS: War in the air is a dreadful thing. When men engage in combat in the air, as they are mostly doing at present, it is a case of do or die.

Mr. Maher: I think that the most deadly method of war is the old method.

Mr. COLLINS: I do not think there is anything worse than being hurled into the air by another aeroplane. It seems extremely deadly to me, especially as one has a ready-made funeral pyre when one hits the earth, because, unfortunately, the aeroplanes usually catch fire when they crash. It is, at any rate, sad to see all these dreadful things happening to-day, and I am sure that every man in this country, and in this Parliament, admires the sterling courage of all those who are giving their lives for the great cause.

I believe that, perhaps, a good deal more could be done in allowing the older men to take part in the war.

I believe that many of our young men might be replaced by older men in the essential war services. I am not for one minute suggesting that the older men should get soft or cushy jobs where there is no

danger, but I believe that a careful selection of our elder men could replace many of the fine young men who constitute the greatest asset this country has. However, this is a matter for those who are directing our war effort and I do not think anybody wishes to hinder them in prosecuting it to the best of their ability.

I must refer to the dreadful air tragedies that occurred recently at Canberra and on the Queensland coast. The accident at Canberra meant the loss to Australia of 10 of her finest men, men who held responsible positions in this country, and those who met their death in Queensland were also carrying out their duties on behalf of their country. Our hearts go out to their relatives. They gave their lives to their country and all we can do is to honour and revere their names.

The successful prosecution of the war is one of our most important problems. The legislative programme of this Parliament during the current session does not appear to be a heavy one; this State realises that all energies must be directed to that end and to carrying on the services of the nation that are necessary to it. We must make the greatest use of all our resources. I realise that the difficulties of the Federal Government to-day are many and it is far from my desire to do or say anything to embarrass the Prime Minister. We extend to him our sympathy in the recent tragic accident that carried off so many of his Cabinet Ministers. We appreciate the difficulties he is faced with in grappling with difficult problems under great pressure, with public opinion surging first this way and then that. Probably all people are honestly trying to do their best to help him, but it must be very difficult, even impossible, for a man placed as he is to please everybody. The Labour Party of Queensland and the Federal Labour Party of Australia desire to do everything possible to help Australia's war effort. We have aided Mr. Menzies in many ways. Mr. Curtin, our Federal leader, has been reasonable; he has been helpful to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister has freely acknowledged the help given to him by the Leader of the Opposition in the Federal Parliament. The Labour Party is determined to stand behind the defence of the Empire until freedom and national security have been secured.

At this stage it is appropriate that I should read the following resolution that was moved by our Premier and carried at a special conference of the Australian Labour Party in Melbourne in June last:—

“Having regard to the gravity of the world situation and the imminent danger to the Commonwealth of Australia, the Empire, and the Allies, this conference of the Australian Labour Party definitely declares as their policy—

1. Complete and indissoluble unity with the Allies in the war.
2. The entire resources of Australia (which include all productive and financial organisation) to be under the control of the Commonwealth Government

for national service in the urgent and adequate defence of Australia and the prosecution of the war.

3. That to secure maximum productive efforts, all idle employable labour be absorbed into industry.

4. Speeding up of our war and other services on a planned scale aiming at the highest efficiency and the most economic use of the resources at our command.

5. National training for defence in terms of the existing Defence Act to be maintained on the highest basis of efficiency, and provision for an adequate system of physical training throughout Australia. Complete participation in the Empire Air Force Scheme. Necessary provision for reinforcement of the A.I.F. divisions, the extent of European participation by volunteer army to be determined by circumstances as they arise, having regard to the paramount necessity of Australia's defence.

6. Full recognition of trade unions safeguarding industrial standards and the participation by Labour organisations in the successful organisation of the nation.

7. An excess war profits tax of 100 per cent.

“This conference is firmly convinced that Australia can be united on these principles, and calls to Australians to stand together in resisting aggression from any source, to bear willingly any burden that may be imposed in the interests of Australia's security, and to demonstrate to the Empire and its Allies that we shall not be found wanting in the struggle for human liberty.”

That is the clear and definite policy of the Australian Labour Party throughout the Commonwealth in relation to the war effort.

Mr. Nimmo: You are lucky that they have a policy.

Mr. COLLINS: The hon. member may have an opportunity at some future time of stating the policy of his party, if it has one. The resolution carried at the Australian Labour Party's special conference sets out in clear and unequivocal terms where the Labour Party stands. We are fighting for our freedom and for the right to govern our own people according to our lights, and we are determined to continue the fight until success is won. We are prepared to continue the struggle at all costs, even if it involves the sacrifice of our entire property and the whole of the manhood of the country. Can any nation do more?

Mr. Menzies has on many occasions acknowledged the assistance given him by Mr. Curtin, the Leader of the Federal Labour Party. He has also mentioned the fact that he has received more help from Mr. Curtin than from some members of his own Cabinet.

Mr. Nimmo: Unfortunately, look at the rabble Mr. Curtin has with him.

Mr. COLLINS: I agree with the hon. member that one of the things that must be eventually got rid of is the rabble behind Mr. Menzies. The Sydney "Bulletin," in a June issue, printed an article revealing its complete agreement with the war policy expressed by Mr. Curtin. While I do not always agree with what the "Bulletin" says, I concede that it has an Australian outlook, and that its criticisms are often sound. It argues from an Australian standpoint and on principles of liberty and security. It agrees that Mr. Curtin's attitude in connection with the war is in accordance with its own, and is based on democracy of the highest type.

Unfortunately, we see in the Press a continual cry that the Labour Party should join the Federal Government in a composite Ministry. There might be something in that cry—it sounds all right—but no unity exists in the Federal Ministry. Let us hark back to 1915, when we faced exactly the same set of conditions as we are facing to-day. The Federal Labour Party were then the Government of Australia. Was there any cry throughout the Tory Press that that Labour Government should take in the Tory elements in the Federal Parliament as partners in that Government? No! Nor was there any suggestion that the general election should be postponed until the end of the war. But to-day, when the position of the Federal Government is shaky and unstable, every effort is being made by the Tory Press to induce Labour to agree to forgo an election and join the Tory Government as full partners. It might be a good thing for them if they could bring about such a combination, but I do not think it would be any assistance at all to the nation at the present time. As I have said before, the present Federal Government are disunited and its elements are hostile to each other. Furthermore, it must not be forgotten that it has never faced the people. The Menzies Government came into being on the death of the ex-Prime Minister, the late Mr. Lyons. Mr. Menzies has never yet obtained the assent of the people to his Ministry. It is right that the people should give their assent as to who should govern them.

Mr. Russell: We accept the challenge and are going ahead.

Mr. COLLINS: A big effort is being made to prevent Mr. Menzies from accepting the challenge.

Mr. Russell: You go your hardest.

Mr. COLLINS: We intend to do that. I believe an election will clear the political atmosphere. The Country Party is very hostile to any proposal to hold an election. It must not be forgotten also that there is a provision in the Commonwealth Constitution to enable an election to be postponed. The consent of the British Parliament must be obtained, but I doubt whether that Parliament would agree to a postponement of the election under the present circumstances. There is nothing whatever, however, to compel the Federal Government to have an election before January next. We are prob-

ably witnessing the worst onslaught that can be made this year by the enemy on Britain.

Winter coming on, as it is, must close hostilities to a certain extent. If they think it is desirable there is nothing whatever to prevent the Menzies Government from continuing in office until the middle of winter in the northern hemisphere, when hostilities would not be so vicious as they are now. At the same time, I cannot see any good reason for the postponement.

Speaking of the unity that exists between the Country Party and the United Australia Party, I do not think I could do better than to quote an article that appeared in the "Courier-Mail" of 13 August. It reads—

"It is difficult to believe that the plan put forward at the Queensland Country Party conference for the constitution of a new Federal Government had the full consideration of delegates who approved it. The conference endorsed the principle of all-party co-operation in the nation's war effort and then voted for a scheme which would dilute the application of it with full-strength party spirit. It urged that the allocation of portfolios in a national Government should be strictly proportioned to the number of members of each party, that the selection of Ministers should be the prerogative of each party leader, that the status and functions of the Prime Minister should be reduced to those of a mere chairman of a 'united Cabinet,' and that only the House of Representatives should have the right to call for the resignation of a Minister.

"As a plan for robbing the national Government of all capacity for decision, vigour, and unity of direction nothing better could be devised. A Cabinet constructed on such a basis would have in effect four Prime Ministers if four parties participated. Each would have an appeal to the House in the event of a disagreement with his colleagues, and vital administrative action would be held up until such an appeal had been decided by debate and division. There would be no final executive responsibility anywhere. Ministers would be answerable only to their parties and their party leaders, and any attempt at censure in the House would set parties at loggerheads.

"It would be a calamity for Australia if a national Government were to be shackled by such a weight of party fetters."

That comment, by a leading Tory organisation, is very pertinent because there is no sign of unity whatever in that motion moved by the Country Party.

The "Telegraph" of 25 July, 1940, contained the following statement:—

"Political Storm Developing Over Election Issue.

"Mr. Cameron has threatened that if the Country Party agrees to any proposal

to extend the life of Parliament he will resign the leadership and will resign from the Ministry.''

That is another illustration of how united the Federal Government are.

Mr. Macdonald: Is this an Address in Reply or a Federal political speech?

Mr. COLLINS: This is the debate on the Address in Reply. I know it hurts hon. members opposite a good deal to have to sit and listen to an account of the deeds of their own party, but they have to take it.

Have the Commonwealth Government fulfilled all the desires of the Australian people in the prosecution of the war? We shall ask the people that. We need a maximum war effort; and in order to bring that about first of all we have to bring the whole of our available man-power to bear upon it.

Do we find that is so at present? Statistics show that to-day slightly fewer than 100,000 men are registered at the various Government labour bureaux throughout the Commonwealth as unemployed. These figures are taken from the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, for as recent a date as 21 May, 1940. It is known, too, that these figures do not give the maximum but the minimum number of unemployed. Queensland is probably the only State that keeps a strict registration of the number of the unemployed. There are 100,000 men idle in the Commonwealth at present. That being so, how can anybody say that this country is putting forth its maximum war effort? Surely not. It is well recognised that the greatest wealth of any nation is the man-power of that nation, and whereas to-day we are salvaging waste paper, rags, and bits of tin—saving them, preserving, and conserving them—no fewer than 100,000 men are living in subsidised idleness, unwanted poverty, and on unwanted charity. It is necessary that this man-power should be preserved and used, but the most that can be handed out to them by the present Federal Government is the dole. Is that making a maximum war effort?

Mr. Nimmo: There is the largest percentage in this State, too.

Mr. COLLINS: It is futile to talk like that.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. COLLINS: The hon. member knows that Queensland has the lowest number of unemployed, the shortest working day, and the highest basic wage. No doubt, that is one of those things that hurt him very much, but it is a fact that nobody can dispute. While the Commonwealth Government are crying out for a maximum war effort all these men are living in subsidised idleness. Surely something can be done that will absorb them?

Mr. Maher: That is the function of the State.

Mr. COLLINS: It is impossible for any one State in this Commonwealth to deal adequately with the position, and nobody

knows it better than the hon. gentleman himself. His colleague, the hon. member for Aubigny, when Premier of Queensland, stated that it was impossible for any one State to deal adequately with the unemployed, for the simple reason that the more that is done in this State the more does it draw men from other States. Moreover, Queensland is a member of the Loan Council. That is a very good thing, but it is that council, consisting of the Premiers of the States and two representatives of the Commonwealth, which determines what money shall be raised for allotment to the different States for development and dealing with unemployment. Under such conditions how can any one State set out to cure that evil on its own?

Let me point to the position in other democracies—first of all, to the mother Parliament of the British Commonwealth of Nations. The British Parliament assumes this responsibility. It may be said that is so because that is the only Parliament in Great Britain. I dispute that point, inasmuch as in that country local-governing authorities control many public services, such as education, health, and the Police Force. In Australia a great number of such services are controlled by the States. The British Parliament could very easily have handed over to the local authorities the unemployment problem, but did not do so. It was thought that that was not the function of such local authorities or lesser public bodies.

Then, take the Dominion of Canada. A commission has been investigating the problem of unemployment there for almost two years, and its main recommendation to the Dominion Government is that the Dominion Parliament is the only body that can tackle the problem there successfully. In the United States, where the conditions are somewhat similar so far as Federal and State Governments are concerned to that in Australia, Mr. Roosevelt, the President, has done a tremendous amount of work in an endeavour to solve this problem. I know that its solution is no easy task, and I am using this argument merely to show that it is the responsibility of the principal Parliament in the land to put our men to work successfully. There is something wrong with the foundations of a democracy that is incapable of doing that.

Mr. Maher: You are advocating unification, then?

Mr. COLLINS: I am advocating putting the whole of our man-power to work so that we may pursue our war effort with the maximum of efficiency. While totalitarian countries have been pressing every man into useful service and probably built up the most magnificent fighting force the world has ever seen, apparently the Federal Government are satisfied to carry on salvaging everything but our man-power. We have an army of unemployed that is almost as big as the army we have in khaki. If that state of affairs is to continue what can the future hold for us? We have a certain number of men enlisted in the armed forces, a certain number engaged in war industries, the whole

of our primary and secondary industries carrying on in the usual way, and no shortage of labour. Surely greater effort must be put forward by the Federal Government to solve this all-important problem in order that we may do what we should be able to do—successfully prosecute this war?

Queensland has done magnificent work in dealing with unemployment. As I stated a while ago in reply to an interjection, we have the smallest number of unemployed in the Commonwealth and the shortest working hours, but that is costing us a considerable amount of money. In the last 20 years it has cost this State no less than £27,000,000 to handle the unemployment problem. That is surely a staggering sum when we consider that up to date £24,000,000 has been spent on main roads work and an even greater sum in subsidising the unfortunate man who is unable to get a job in a new country with a vast rich State like this.

The Federal Government have done a laudable thing in appointing a Co-ordinator-General of Public Works, thus following what Queensland has had in operation for over two years. The system is good, and I believe that with greater access to moneys from the Loan Council, greater unity between States, and the acceptance of greater responsibility by the Federal Government, a great deal more than we are doing now could be done.

During the last 12 months, when we should have been conserving overseas credits and spending money in the purchase of machines for the manufacture of guns, ammunition, ships, and all those things that are necessary to our war effort, we find that imports from overseas last year reached a record high figure. The position is analysed in a statement contained in the "Courier-Mail" of 13 August. It reads—

"Compared with the previous year, they bought £500,000 more tea, £375,000 more whisky, £450,000 more carpets and floor coverings; not forgetting cotton and linen goods, worth £2,500,000 more, silk and artificial silk £1,400,000 more, petrol £2,500,000 more, and paper and stationery £1,250,000 more."

Those imports were made, Mr. Speaker, at a time when we should have been conserving all funds. Apparently we thought more about importing whisky and carpets than about importing machines for men to work. These imports were allowed by a Government who are clamouring for an increase in the length of their life. No wonder they clamour! It will be surprising if, with their record, the people of Australia give them that fresh lease of life they are so eagerly seeking.

(Time expired.)

Mr. DUGGAN (Toowoomba) (3.27 p.m.): I am conscious of the great honour and privilege conferred upon me in my selection for the duty of seconding the motion so ably moved by the hon. member for Cook. The opportunity now afforded me of asking for a unanimous reaffirmation of our loyalty

to the Throne also provides me with a suitable opportunity to refute the sinister and subtle propaganda disseminated throughout Australia that a section of the Labour movement is disloyal and the whole of it lukewarm in support of the Commonwealth's war effort. To meet the changing conditions brought about by the war the Labour Party, in common with all other political organisations, has been impelled to examine its policy, particularly that part of it relating to defence. At a recently convened and properly constituted convention, the Labour Party of Australia reaffirmed its pledge of indissoluble unity with the Allies in the war and further declared that it would do everything possible to maintain Australia as an integral part of the British Commonwealth of Nations. The Labour Party has engaged in constructive criticism of the Federal Government's policy, not because it believes that the cost of giving effect to this policy is too great, not because it does not feel it is able to rise to the occasion, but because it thinks, in view of the fact that the Government have received tremendous emergency powers unprecedented in the history of this nation, that the results achieved have been inadequate. The political organisation of which I am a member is not only able successfully to govern in times of peace but is anxious to have the opportunity of applying the natural and scientific resources of this country to obtaining a maximum war effort.

Representatives of the Labour movement are convinced that the post-war period will introduce an era of great economic changes; no-one can prophesy with accuracy what form these changes will take, but we know that as sure as night follows day an enemy victory in this conflict, with a consequential growth of totalitarian doctrine, will prevent a wider spread of Labour organisation in this country. The consolidation of all those things Labour has fought for and won will be impossible under a regime that believes in the pernicious and false philosophy that the citizens exist for the State instead of the State for the citizens. Our present political system of administration gives us as a political organisation the unfettered right to advocate and obtain measures of social justice and financial and economic independence for our wage-earners, things that would be neither permissible nor realisable under a system of ruthless Nazi-ism if an enemy victory was the result of the present world conflict. The Labour movement, therefore, has very high stakes in the conflict and we regard them as so precious that we are willing to make the utmost effort to retain them.

It will be remembered that when war was declared 12 months ago the announcement was received with confidence and stoical calm by members of the community. Subsequent events have proved that confidence in a decisive Allied victory was largely the result of wishful thinking. Irreparable damage was done by military and naval writers, arm-chair theorists, and a plethora of wireless commentators who prophesied that

because of the greater economic resources of Great Britain and France they would be able to win the war. The same people also stressed the strategic advantages accruing to the Allies by adopting defensive measures, in preference to offensive action. They proclaimed to the world that the struggle would develop into a war of economic attrition. It was said that the Allied blockade would be so effective in preventing essential raw materials from going to Germany that that nation would be quickly brought to her knees. For those reasons it was asserted that because of sheer economic necessity Germany would be obliged to launch a military blow to prevent this tightening stranglehold.

The same prophets declared with assurance and calm that because Germany was unable to marshal a sufficient superiority in men and materials it could not achieve a military victory, that the tremendous increase in the nature and volume of fire-power since the last war and the erection of seemingly impregnable concrete fortifications were invulnerable barriers to the success of a German attack.

Alas, the mighty German juggernaut rolled into action, and with all the rapidity, efficiency, ferocity, and ruthlessness of which the Germans are capable swiftly swept through the Low Countries, and within a few days, to the consternation of the world, scored a humiliatingly easy victory over France. The sudden and dramatic capitulation of this once great and powerful democracy removed from Europe one of the last bulwarks against Fascism. For a time at least no longer will there be publicly heard in that great Republic the oratory of men proclaiming, with fervour and passion, the words "Liberty, equality and fraternity." I believe that I am expressing the fervent hope of all when I say that it will not be long before that great Republic, that has contributed so much to the culture of civilisation, will be permitted again to take its place amongst the nations of the world as a free and unfettered democracy. This tragic disaster now faces but one country, that of Great Britain, which is left to resist the fierce barbarism that is now seeking to blot out the landscape of the Christian world with a ferocious, pagan, political ideology.

After that lengthy but necessary preamble I come to a point in His Excellency's Speech in which he declares that the British Empire is now facing the greatest crisis in its history. What role are we, the members of the Queensland Parliament, in this, the third session of the 28th Parliament, expected, or are capable of playing in the final and crucial stages of the war? It will be remembered that on the outbreak of war the Queensland Government offered the Federal authorities full co-operation and the full co-operation of all State departments in the war effort, but in my considered opinion the Federal authorities have declined to make the best and proper use of the State instrumentalities that have been offered to them in order that the maximum war effort might be achieved.

The formulation and conduct of a war policy is, of course, the legislative prerogative of the Federal Government, but because it is a Commonwealth responsibility it does not follow that it is either necessary or desirable that the States should surrender their constitutional powers or cease to interest themselves in the problems of government, particularly the problems of social justice. There are too many people in the community who accept without question the validity of the claim that the State should take a legislative holiday and substantially remit certain taxation in order that the Commonwealth authority should have a larger field to gather taxation for defence requirements. Surely the sacrifice that the community is asked to discharge is not merely transferring from the State authority to the Federal authority its total annual tax bill, because if war entails sacrifices it must mean that those people who are asking that the States remit certain taxation are desirous that social services should be jettisoned in order that their private and selfish interests should be preserved. It is a mistake to imagine that we can postpone or discard measures of social justice, or unduly curtail civil liberties in order to concentrate solely on military defence, because the retention of those liberties are the only things that give armament expenditure its justification. If to get efficiency we have to "out-Nazi" the Nazis, it seems illogical to waste time and effort in fighting a pernicious system which we propose to copy and establish in this country. That is logical and all those who argue that way should argue also that we should depart from our notions of social justice, but I am not one who advocates that it is necessary that these things should be done in order to achieve victory. Our responsibility surely is to assist the people to form a sane, balanced, and intelligent opinion in regard to the problems requiring solution.

In times of crisis such as we are experiencing at present some people become enveloped in a wave of war hysteria. The public men who, when speaking at "Win-the-war" rallies and similar gatherings, mouth platitudinous and rhetorical phrases frequently evoke the loudest applause. Even responsible newspapers seek to cover national efficiency with the cloak of oratory, for has not one of the great Australian dailies deplored the fact that the Prime Minister, Mr. Menzies, either will not or cannot, in his various addresses to the people, make a more impassioned emotional appeal for support? I do not wish to be misunderstood on this point. No-one appreciates more than I the incalculable value of speeches such as those delivered from time to time by men such as Mr. Winston Churchill, Cardinal Hinsley, and that great American, Mr. Roosevelt, and the tonic effect those speeches have on the morale of the people. My point is that what is wanted and what the great majority of the public are looking for is a plain, truthful statement of fact revealing worthy achievements and the offering of

a vigorous, virile, and constructive programme of action. Flights of oratory are necessary, but they must be complementary to national effort and not offered as a substitute for them. The collapse in morale and subsequent disintegration of the French people could probably have been avoided if their brave soldiers were offered sufficient war supplies instead of words with which to fight the enemy. That collapse was in no small measure due to the inefficiency of their national leaders.

A faithful discharge of our responsibilities surely embraces the obligation of helping to maintain the morale of our civilian population. This cannot be done if we inadequately utilise our national resources.

The transformation of our economy from a peace to a war basis of economics has inflicted substantial economic casualties. As the Federal Government accept without question the direct responsibility of providing for those who suffer and die in the discharge of their defence obligations, it follows that the States, until the Federal authorities are willing to do so, must accept the obligation of caring for the casualties caused by dislocation in the economic system.

The most obvious feature of war economy in the field of industry, trade, and finance is the redistribution of productive resources to meet the changes in demand for goods and services that war brings. It should be noted that war involves an absolute increase in the effective demand for goods and services. The first step is the emergence of new wants for military services and equipment on a large scale with very little reduction in old wants to offset the new.

Since Queensland is essentially a primary-producing State, the problem of adaptation to changing economic conditions resulting from the war is a comparatively simple one, provided the associated problem of arranging sufficient shipping to carry our exports overseas can be arranged—provided the shipping of our exports is able to proceed smoothly. While British contracts partially solve our problem of finding an export market, it must be remembered that in a trade sense all our eggs are in the one basket. Interruption to shipping lines, insufficient storage accommodation both here and in England, with its consequent deterioration in food values, necessarily impede our capacity to achieve and maintain maximum primary production. Because of these and many other difficulties, British authorities have been obliged to impose restrictions on the export from Australia of certain commodities. It is true that an opportunity still exists to increase the export of certain other primary products, this probably compensating for the loss of export of other primary products.

External trade problems caused by the war being matters largely beyond our control, although of vital importance, we have no alternative but to accept the position as philosophically as possible as far as European markets are concerned. For years public policy in Queensland, because certain geo-

graphical conditions and the absence of closely settled areas of population militate against the establishment of large secondary industries, has been particularly directed towards an increase in the quality and volume of primary products for internal consumption as well as export. We have been called upon, in order to meet the increased production from other nations, to build up the quality of our goods for export, and considerable sums have been spent for the building of roads to provide better and quicker transport. We have also engaged in a programme of reforestation that has materially aided in the development of the State. All these things are necessary if Queensland is to maintain its place as a living export State.

To achieve these results it has been necessary each year to obtain substantial sums from the Loan Council. I say any undue interruption of this flow of money will not only arrest national development but will prevent us from giving free expression to a national war effort in this State.

Mr. Nimmo: It is the best industry you have got.

Mr. DUGGAN: What is?

Mr. Nimmo: The flow of loan money.

Mr. DUGGAN: I think it has been put to better advantage in Queensland than in any other State in the Commonwealth.

The efficient conduct of war policy consists of the provision of sufficient men and war materials at the lowest possible cost in forgone civil production. It is true that the hands of Governments should not be tied by setting up an arbitrary limit that must not be exceeded. There are economists who contend that it would be better not to spend more than a certain percentage of our national income on defence requirements; but it would be stupid to try to lay down a limit in the defence of our national production if the whole of it is being jeopardised because of lack of funds.

It is also true that if any economy is working in peace time at maximum efficiency it will be found that war needs will cause considerable inconvenience to the population as well as bring about a lowering of the standard of living. Germany may be cited as an example. Since Hitler came to power in Germany the industry of that country has been working at full pressure, and, because of forced-labour conditions, unemployment has been eradicated. When the demands of the war machine became more oppressive it was obvious that there must be some decline in the consumers' demands, and that is why Reich-Marshal Goering exhorted the German people to produce guns before butter. The same applies in all countries in which industries are working at maximum efficiency. We in this country are in a far different position. We have never achieved the maximum effort as far as production and utilisation of idle resources is concerned, nor is it likely that this will ever be achieved in Australia under peace conditions, at least while we retain the

framework of our present economic system, that of capitalism. The extraordinary emergency powers willingly conferred upon the Federal Government a few weeks ago provide them, however, with all the necessary legislative authority to evolve within the framework of our democratic system a policy that will permit of a maximum war effort and a foundation upon which to build for a better future when peace is achieved.

It must not be assumed from the foregoing remarks that I subscribe to the view that effective Government intervention will neutralise the tremendous disturbances caused by war and thus bring about a return to normality, but I do assert with all the emphasis I can command that failure to appreciate the magnitude and importance of dealing with the unemployment problem will lessen the effectiveness of our national war effort. The maintenance of civilian morale is not dependent on military successes alone. A collapse or even partial dislocation of economic effort will adversely affect our contribution to military victory. Unfortunately, in this country there is too great a tendency to minimise the magnitude and seriousness of the unemployment problem. Even such a reputable economist as Mr. T. L. Swan, of the Sydney University, in an article in the current issue of the "Economic Record," states that at 30 June last probably not more than 50,000 persons were unemployed in Australia. This is a very gross mis-statement of the position. I do not say that Mr. Swan is guilty of a wilful misuse of statistics, because the premises upon which he based his conclusions no doubt were official records supplied him.

Mr. Moore: That takes in everything. They include the sick and everything.

The Premier: He evidently has classified them.

Mr. DUGGAN: The classification has been arranged on the figures available 12 months ago. It was assumed that then there were approximately 150,000 unemployed people in Australia. Allowing for an increase of 90,000 in employment in Victoria and New South Wales, and proportionate increases in other States, plus the increase in working population, less those in camp and engaged in other military duties, there should be left approximately 50,000 people out of work. That is his reasoning.

Unfortunately, there are no accurate methods available by which the true incidence of unemployment in the Commonwealth may be measured. Systems of statistical compilation vary from State to State, and, furthermore, thousands of men for various reasons do not register at labour bureaus.

Measures recently taken, as well as those contemplated, to conserve foreign exchange have caused and will cause widespread unemployment. The majority of the people involved in these measures are unlikely to register officially the fact that they are unemployed. In any case, the problem is not one for academic statistical discussion. The correct attitude to adopt is to remember that behind

every figure relating to unemployment lies flesh and blood, and until there is a recognition of that I do not think the problem of unemployment will be faced by responsible authorities in the Federal Parliament. If the problem is as important as I contend, it is surely necessary that we should consider what steps can and should be taken to improve the position.

I mentioned earlier that existing war demands would not adversely affect consumer wants in this country to the same extent as in Germany, because we have not yet fully used idle resources that are available.

It is true that many highly skilled workmen who cannot readily be replaced have joined the colours. Of course, it would be folly to argue that the 50,000 men who joined the defence forces could have their places immediately taken by the transfer of that number of men from the lists of unemployed men who are available, but the information disclosed when the National Register cards were returned should provide the authorities with a comprehensive census of the manpower position in Australia. Admittedly, this survey would have been considerably upset by the events that have taken place since the census was taken, and I believe that if this is so State instrumentalities could be used in that I am sure the Premier of this State and the appropriate Minister would be happy to place the resources and facilities of the Department of Labour and Industry at the disposal of the Federal authorities in order that a proper and effective census of the idle man-power in this country might be taken. I believe when that information was collected it would be possible to appreciate fully the magnitude of this problem of idle human resources.

More effective Government action could do much to improve the shortage of skilled and semi-skilled tradesmen by considerably expanding facilities for technical training. The formation and adoption of a sane and sensible policy of economic development is essential, although I fully concede the merit of giving priority to defence contracts. Those works could and should absorb large numbers of unskilled labour in the Commonwealth. It would have an advantage in that the morale of the people would be improved and it would be a further benefit in that the increased circulation of money would provide the Commonwealth Treasurer with an opportunity for increasing the revenues to the Government.

I say that if the only thing that prevents the adoption of this policy in Australia is that we must continue to observe the laws of financial orthodoxy then the sooner we discharge this theory of conforming to financial orthodoxy the better it will be for the Commonwealth of Australia. Australia is one of the few countries that have refused to make important changes in their finance and currency, and I believe that it is essential that something be done if we are going to get our financial system to function in the

interests of the nation and the future salvation of Australia.

Mr. Maher: What do you mean by "getting it to function"?

Mr. DUGGAN: I say, for instance, that the British Government have, by their Exchange Equalisation Account, been able to arrange finance for the buying of imports and to provide enough money to pay for the equipment and maintenance of their armies. As a matter of fact, so complicated has the thing become, and apparently so great is the use that has been made of the flexibility of the financial structure in Great Britain, that they have refused to reveal to the general public the extent of the fiduciary issue or the Exchange Equalisation Account. No action on those lines has been taken in this country. As a matter of fact, for many years I have become absolutely sick of hearing that Japan, Italy, and Germany, all of which are supposed to have departed from orthodox finance, would be bankrupt in a few months. There is no indication that those countries are approaching the point of bankruptcy.

Mr. Moore: But they have robbed the whole of their citizens who lent them the money.

Mr. DUGGAN: Probably they have, but that does not alter the position, because Great Britain itself, by its moratorium legislation, is now relieved of the obligation of making payments to creditor countries. As a matter of fact, Great Britain refuses to-day to sell foreign assets because, as one writer in an economic journal that I read recently said, it would be more dangerous to sell a foreign asset than it would be to raise a loan from America, because if the worst happened Great Britain could always default.

Mr. Moore: She is paying her own debts. Germany has not yet reached that stage.

Mr. DUGGAN: Quite a number of war debts to the United States are still outstanding. I freely admit that certain debtor countries did not meet their obligations to Great Britain, and because of that Great Britain was obliged to ask a moratorium for war debts.

The two chief functions of a government are to provide for the defence of life and property against external attack, and maintain the economic and social wellbeing of the people. Whilst the latter obligation might be discharged by devising suitable domestic policies, in the final analysis standards of living, the retention of property and possessions, and the right of self-determination are dependent upon our capacity to retain and expand our overseas export trade, and to conduct a foreign policy in such a way that potential aggressors will not needlessly be provoked.

The formulation of a foreign policy—even in times of peace—is always a matter requiring great care and skill. During war, and particularly during the current one, greater care and skill are demanded of those charged with the duty of carrying out

this heavy national responsibility. Although Australia's participation in the war on the side of Great Britain was prompted by a desire to deflect the spread of vicious Nazi philosophy, other factors influencing our decision were that we felt bound by the ties of kinship and common origin to give every possible aid to our Mother Country. As a nation we showed that we were ready to shoulder the responsibilities as well as accept the privileges that membership of the British Commonwealth of Nations entailed.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. DUGGAN: Whilst an overwhelming majority of our people are determined to discharge faithfully all present and future obligations against our enemies, I think that a considerable body of public opinion in Australia is inclined to the view that as a self-governing dominion we should exercise the right of adopting, if necessary, an independent line if the status quo in the Pacific is interfered with. The new technique of war makes it difficult to ascertain those places to which the war might spread, and what additional nations will become involved. It behoves us to take every possible step compatible with national pride and prestige to prevent the war from spreading to our shores.

The fall of France and the increased Axis influence have caused many people to speculate regarding the future of Japan. The apprehension roused in many quarters prompted Mr. R. L. Robinson, editor of the "Pacific Monthly," to express his views in that journal recently as follows:—

"Japan clearly means the seas to the southward of Japan and south-eastern Asia, wherein lie the Philippines, the East Indies, and her own mandated islands, and not what we mean by the 'South Seas' used often by Japanese publicists, but always in reference to what we call the north-west Pacific, and never in relation to the South Pacific or any other part of the Pacific.

"Foreign Minister Matsuoka didn't mention 'South Seas' in his statement of the Konoye Government's foreign policy. He gave as Japan's final aim 'the establishment of stability in the zone embracing Japan, Manchukuo, and China, also French Indo-China and N.E.I.'"

I am one of those who question the wisdom and the foresight of the then British Government in terminating the Anglo-Japanese alliance. For 21 years, until the abrogation of the treaty in August, 1923, this alliance had been the most stable influence in the far-Eastern position, and a cardinal factor in British and Japanese policy. It seems to be forgotten in many quarters that during the last war Japan fulfilled to the very letter every obligation she contracted. It is officially recorded that the Japanese Navy convoyed 788 Allied vessels during the period of that war.

Past and present Federal Administrations have in many respects ignored the factual

realities of our geographical position. Immediate corrective measures must be taken to remedy their mistakes. The appointment of Sir John Latham as the first Minister Plenipotentiary to Japan, although belated, is the first of certain essential acts.

I applaud that action, my only regret being that it was not taken simultaneously with the appointment of Mr. Casey to Washington. The Federal Government might give further evidence of their desire to be on friendly terms with Japan by obtaining from the British Parliament authority to release certain wool to Japan—to permit that country to take her normal imports of wool from us.

For years the exchange of goods has been interrupted by the pernicious doctrines of economic nationalism. The difficulty of finding markets caused governments to spend large sums of money on the appointment of trade commissioners to increase our trade. It seems to me to be a foolish policy to take any action to destroy our prospects of living on favourable trade and political terms with a neighbouring country like Japan. For years we had a substantial trade balance in favour of this country. Unfortunately, when trade relations with Japan were proceeding smoothly, there came, like a bolt from the blue, a declaration by a Minister in the Lyons Government, that Australia was about to embark upon a trade-diversion policy, which was not referred either to Parliament or to the Tariff Board before its promulgation. This action was definitely discriminatory in character, and was rightly interpreted by the Japanese as being provocative. Retaliatory action was taken by them. Australian policy in this matter caused harmful commercial and political relations with a neighbour with whom it is mutually desirable to be on good terms. Consequently, Japan refused to buy a certain proportion of our wool and other primary products that we had exported to that country in previous years. I am pleased with the appointment of Sir John Latham, because I realise it is a first and necessary step in promoting better trade relations with Japan. (Hear, hear!)

It may be said that my statement that Japan is not buying Australian wool in the same volume as hitherto has no authoritative basis, but my information is obtained from a recent announcement in the leading Japanese commercial newspaper, "Chugai Shogyo Shimpō," which said that the British Government had banned the export of Australian and Maoriland wool to Japan. This paper also declared that the action was clearly meant as economic pressure with a political motive. If the facts are as I have given them, then immediate action should be taken to request the responsible British control organisation to release to Japan her normal wool requirements for domestic consumption.

Failure to propound suitable policies dealing with the problems of the post-war era would be fatal. We do not wish to achieve a military victory if, as has been remarked by distinguished leaders from time to time, we should lose the peace. We must create conditions now so that upon the attainment

of victory this country will not be drawn into the vortex of social revolution. Now is not the time to judge of the causes of the war; rather must we consider the consequences of the war. Although parliamentary and democratic government has failed in many countries, it must not fail here. The salvage of democracy can be effected if people awakened from their inertia and throw off their spirit of indifference. I believe the people of Australia will rally round a leader who will throw all his energies, all his courage, and all his strength into the battle for democracy. Democracy can, and will, demonstrate a capacity to function in a crisis if we retain faith in ourselves and faith in the justice of our cause. I am confident that when the history of these sad but stirring times is written, it will be recorded that Australia emerged from the crisis with its material resources intact and, above all, the spirit of its people unbroken. (Hear, hear.) When peace is won, a true and complete form of democratic organisation must be set up and adhered to, a system that will bring about the realisation of our highest aims and aspirations.

In seconding the motion, I am certain that we are all conscious of our heavy responsibilities, and will act accordingly when the various Bills are presented for our consideration. These responsibilities and the inexorable march of events prompt me to conclude with a relevant quotation of Ralph Waldo Emerson—

"On, bravely through the sunshine and showers.

Time hath its work to do, and we have ours."

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Debate, on motion of Mr. Maher, adjourned.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay): I move—

Time hath its work to do, and we have until 10 o'clock a.m. to-morrow."

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 4.7 p.m.