

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 2 AUGUST 1944

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

and honourable office of Speaker of this House, and that His Excellency was pleased to congratulate me upon my election.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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 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,—

“Since I last addressed this House, events of first importance have happened in every theatre of war, and, with quiet confidence, we can look forward to the immediate future.

“When opening Parliament four years ago, I said that the British Empire was faced with the gravest crisis in its long history. I expressed my pride, as representative of His Majesty The King, in the response of our young men to the call to arms, and in that of our older men in their return to duty. To-day, looking back over the past years, I feel still more proud because of the very gallant deeds of Australians and of our lads from Queensland, so many of whom have given their lives for us. I would now add our admiration for the self-sacrificing work of the women of this State, both in the Services and in civil life, who, under most difficult circumstances, have rendered faithful and loyal services to the Empire, and to all who are fighting for us.

“The thoughts of all must remind us daily of the continued courage and endurance of the men and women in Great Britain over nearly five years of war. We, on this side of the world, must be, and are, prepared to endure greater sacrifices, if need be, to help the efforts of our gallant Allies, and our own Forces, both in the South Pacific theatre of operations and in the West, efforts which give us hope that we see ahead the dawn of victory over all the evil which would have come to us, but for that far-sighted leadership and unselfish courage which will live so long as History is written.

“I have travelled much since I last addressed you. I have seen for myself the whole-hearted co-operation of the Civil Authorities of this State with the Services. Queensland is playing an ever increasingly important part in the war in the Pacific, which, necessarily, calls for much self sacrifice and co-operative effort on the part of the civil population, in every part of the State, particularly in the North.

“Such effort, however, has been and is being willingly made by public authorities and private individuals alike. I feel sure that even if, as is possible, greater demands are made on all, the response will be as generous and ready as has been the case up to the present.

“The transactions of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the financial year ending on the 30th June, 1944, resulted in a surplus (taking round figures) of £114,000, as compared with the Budget estimate of £69,000.

WEDNESDAY, 2 AUGUST, 1944:

PRESENTATION OF MR. SPEAKER.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. S. J. Brassington, Fortitude Valley) took the chair at 9.45 a.m., and said: Under Standing Order No. 8, I shall now proceed to Government House, there to present myself to His Excellency the Governor as the member chosen to fill the high and honourable office of Speaker, and I invite such hon. members as care to do so to accompany me.

Mr. SPEAKER then left the chair.

The House resuming at three minutes to 12 o'clock,

Mr. SPEAKER said: I have to report that I have this day presented myself to His Excellency the Governor, at Government House, as the member chosen to fill the high

"The receipts for the year included revenue to the amount of £16,116,406 from the Railway Department.

"Expenditure from Loan Fund totalled £1,773,351. The amount received from repayments and domestic raisings more than provided for the year's requirements, and it was not necessary to obtain any allocation from public loan issues, or advances from the Commonwealth Treasury.

"My Advisers have uniformly pursued their policy of full co-operation with the Commonwealth Government in the prosecution of the war, and in the promotion of the well-being of the people.

"While the prosecution of the war is of paramount importance, much attention is being given to plans in preparation for the difficulties which will surely arise in the post-war period.

"The possibilities of development in this State are very great, and the experience gained in the hard school of war is being applied in the work of the departments directly concerned with the tasks of rehabilitation and construction.

"My Advisers are pleased to announce the adoption of a new scheme for subsidising many types of the works of the various local bodies. Under the new subsidy scheme, rates ranging from 15 per cent. up to a maximum of 50 per cent. on capital cost (or the equivalent in annual interest and redemption charges) will be available for approved capital works. The existing subsidy scheme of 50 per cent. for mosquito eradication and malarial control will be continued.

"A variable schedule of rates has been designed to ensure that the new subsidy proposals will provide the greatest possible measure of assistance to the most essential public utilities, including the acceptance of a new principle of subsidising certain electrical works, such as extensions into the rural areas and the inter-connection of power systems between widely separated areas. New subsidy proposals in regard to water conservation and irrigation schemes have been adopted under which, in the case of head works construction, the State will bear from 50 to 100 per cent. of the cost, and in the case of local weirs from 25 to 50 per cent. of the cost.

"Plans provide for the commencement, under the State-sponsored scheme, of 4,360 houses in the first post-war year. Under the War Housing Scheme, now in operation, it is hoped that at least 1,000 houses will be built during the financial year 1944-45, subject to labour and materials being available.

"The implementation of these housing schemes necessitates the remodelling of the State's existing legislation, and a comprehensive measure to establish a State Housing Commission will be submitted for your consideration during the Session.

"The State Electricity Commission is preparing plans for the very large and important part which electricity must and will play in the post-war period, and it is proposed to introduce legislation to enable the carrying out of a properly planned and com-

prehensive programme of electrical development throughout the State.

"A Bureau of Investigation has been constituted, under the Land and Water Resources Development Act, and is proceeding with its investigations, the immediate purpose of which is to prepare for the anticipated heavy demand for land after the war. The construction of a very considerable number of weirs in the watercourses of the State and the provision of subsidiary waterworks are contemplated under the general plan.

"Advance allocations of finance have been approved for water conservation and irrigation projects. Such works, after construction by the State, will be administered by Irrigation and Water Supply Boards constituted under the Land and Water Resources Development Act of 1943, a proportion of the cost being chargeable to the boards as a loan.

"It has been necessary, as an indispensable preliminary to forward planning, to assess for a number of years ahead, the probable amount of funds to be available annually for public works, together with a preliminary allocation between various purposes of these estimated financial resources, to serve as targets within which schemes may be surveyed and planned with some certainty of final construction.

"As a result of this survey it is anticipated that an adequate amount will be available for expenditure on works and development in the first five post-war years, including some £6 million for maintenance and renewal of railways, roads, and other public assets to which it has not been possible to devote the required attention during the war.

"Reserve Funds under 'The Post War Reconstruction and Development Trust Fund Act' have been established, so that at the termination of the war, or even before, if found necessary, and as labour and materials become available, there may be immediate implementation of the programme. At the 30th June, 1944, £8,420,000 stood to the credit of the Fund.

"Queensland continues to have a remarkably low incidence of disease despite the many and difficult health problems arising from war conditions.

"The proposals submitted by the Commonwealth Government at the recent Conference of Commonwealth and State Ministers regarding, among others, finance for hospitals, are receiving careful attention.

"The Hospital and Social Services have rendered excellent service to the people through the untiring efforts of the members of their medical, nursing, and domestic staffs who, in very many cases, have worked under extreme difficulties arising from staff shortages. In May of this year my Advisers decided to abolish local authority precepts for the upkeep of hospitals, and legislation to give effect to that decision will be submitted to you in this Session of Parliament.

"It has been the aim of the Government to see that a high standard of amenities is provided in factories and working establishments, and it has insisted upon the provision of mess rooms, lockers, and changing-rooms,

showers, ventilation, sanitation, and facilities for cleansing, and general hygiene. More especially has this been done where women are employed. In this connection 140 applications for building permits have been handled on behalf of the Industrial Welfare Division.

"The demand upon our Railways during 1943-44 again called for the maximum effort of all concerned. Although there was a slight reduction in goods and livestock traffic, passenger traffic showed a remarkable increase. The capable manner in which the business was handled by all sections of the staff, despite many handicaps, has merited and received the highest commendation.

"Freights and fares were further reduced by 5 per cent. as from 1st August, 1943, and it is estimated that this represented a saving of £755,000 to the Department's customers in 1943-44. Coupled with the reduction of 5 per cent. as from 1st March, 1943, the loss of revenue from these reductions is calculated at £1,620,000 during the year under review.

"The question of Transport is receiving close attention. While, undoubtedly, there will be much expansion in other forms of transport, goods carriage on road, rail, and sea will long continue to predominate.

"Rail and road transport are collaterals, consequently there should be close co-ordination of these sections, in the interests of efficiency, economy, and community service.

"In respect of arrangements for passenger traffic by road and auxiliary means, my Advisers favour a measure of decentralised management in matters of purely local concern, subject to general supervision and control by the central authority.

"My Advisers directed the State Transport Commission to make a special investigation of public transport facilities in the metropolitan area for the twofold purpose of future transport-planning and the evolving of some form of immediate relief. The investigation revealed that permanent transport-zoning and large-scale traffic-reconstruction programmes were affected by several important factors. Among these were:—Decisions as to future town planning of Greater Brisbane; measures to be taken for the relief of traffic congestion at the northern approaches to Victoria Bridge and prospective governmental building and reconstruction schemes in the adjoining area; elimination of traffic congestion at Petrie's Bight and other bottlenecks.

"As it is apparent that factors such as those outlined must have a very definite influence upon sound traffic-zoning and as vital community interests are involved, my Advisers propose to maintain close consultation with the various authorities concerned with a view to arranging co-operative planning and subsequent programmes of action.

"The revenue of the Lands Department last financial year amounted to £1,546,909—an increase of £12,224 on the previous year's total, being the second highest since 1920-21.

"Remission or suspension of rents of Crown lands, covering a total of 2,015 hold-

ings, with an annual rental value of £36,015, has been granted to 1,494 tenants for the period of their service with the armed forces. In addition, the lessees are relieved of the performance of certain conditions attaching to the leases.

"While man-power shortage has affected the reforestation programme, my Advisers report considerable activity, during the year, in the supply of timber directly and indirectly required for war purposes.

"In the pastoral areas, seasonal conditions were generally good, as a result of exceptionally wet spring and early summer. In the south-western district, however, prolonged seasonal adversity gave rise to considerable anxiety.

"Values of all classes of livestock remained at the ceiling rates throughout the year as the result of the stabilisation of beef, mutton, and pig meat prices. For stock owners generally, the present economic outlook is very satisfactory.

"Stud sheep breeding establishments are increasing in number, and their beneficial influence is already becoming evident in Merino, British, and Corriedale flocks. The quality of young pure-bred stock, now being raised, gives every confidence in the future of sheep breeding in Queensland.

"Wool appraised was slightly lower in quantity than the preceding year's total of more than 650,000 bales, the highest in the history of Queensland.

"The season from October, 1943, to February, 1944, was one of the most favourable on record throughout the main farming and dairying districts.

"There has been a pronounced increase in general vegetable production, especially in the northern districts, where increased population provides a ready market.

"The good season combined with relatively high market returns ensured another very successful financial year for producers of fruit and vegetables, in consequence of which, many of them have wisely freed their properties of encumbrance and now face the future with a greater degree of confidence.

"The sugar production of 486,000 tons in 1943 was the lowest annual tonnage since 1927. It was 119,000 tons less than that of 1942 and about 100,000 tons below the 1943 target for the State. The causes of this low production were mainly insufficient fertiliser and tractors, and inadequate labour for both cultivation and harvesting. Following representation to the Prime Minister, my Advisers were informed that the Commonwealth Government decided to include sugar cane production as a first priority crop which should ensure better consideration in the future.

"Although beset with the most perplexing problems, the dairy industry attained an output greater than that of the highest of pre-war years and maintained high standards of quality. Seasonal conditions

were generally satisfactory. Returns to producers were the second highest in the history of the industry in this State.

"To stimulate greater production, especially in view of wartime needs, the Government is developing a plan by which machinery for tillage and harvesting of fodder crops is being purchased and resold on appropriate terms to approved farmers.

"Food production must continue to play an increasingly important part in Australia's war effort and Queensland, in common with other States of the Commonwealth, is making and must continue to make a substantial contribution to Allied food supplies. A high volume of food production will also be necessary in the post-war period to enable us to fulfil our obligation to assist in feeding the peoples of the liberated countries. My Advisers are co-operating wholeheartedly with the Government of the Commonwealth in its efforts to meet local civilian, Service, and overseas demands.

"Manpower difficulties and shortages of essential supplies, because of the prior demands of war, have added to the problems of primary producers, but, in the main, they have borne the burden cheerfully and made the best of what has been available.

"The Prime Minister's assurance of a re-allocation of manpower should give satisfaction, as food production has a high priority.

"Loan facilities to farmers and other primary producers were greatly extended by the Co-ordination of Rural Advances and Agricultural Bank Act which became law in November last year. In 1943-44 the advances granted amounted to £278,835, against only £96,079 advanced in 1942-43.

"The National Education Co-ordination and University of Queensland Act, passed in the Session of 1941, was proclaimed in force during the year. This Act, coupled with the Libraries Act passed last year, concerning which preparatory work is in train prior to its proclamation, will further aid the spread of education among the citizens of the State.

"It was expected that the University would have been in occupation of the first section of the buildings at St. Lucia at the beginning of 1943, but the buildings were requisitioned by the Commonwealth Government for war service uses. In view of the urgent need for providing greater accommodation not only for the University, but for the Central Technical College, my Advisers are endeavouring to induce the Commonwealth authorities to relinquish the buildings so that they may be utilised as soon as possible for the special purposes for which they were designed.

"Preparations for the projected extension of the school-leaving age, with its increased school enrolment and developed curriculum, have been continued throughout the year. Sites for new school buildings are being selected. In the country, areas in which central schools can, without undue inconvenience, be established, are being located.

"The Queensland Government is co-operating with the Commonwealth Government in a Training Scheme for discharged

soldiers. A State Regional Committee has been constituted and a Senior Investigation Officer appointed. This Committee will assist generally the Education Department and the University to carry out the Commonwealth Re-construction Training Scheme in an expeditious and efficient manner.

"It is proposed to arrange for the re-classification of the whole of the teaching staff.

"The State Government Insurance Office continues to carry on its obligation under 'The Workers' Compensation Acts, 1916 to 1943,' and the necessary insurance services under its Life Contracts to members of the Forces, and their dependants. The Office is accorded substantial support by the insuring public in Fire and General Insurance.

"A measure further to liberalise benefits to injured workers will be submitted for consideration during the Session.

"During the past year the Department of Public Works attained a new peak in the total of construction work carried out by it, and this was due to the large amount of work undertaken on behalf of the Allied Works Council for the Fighting Forces.

"Expenditure by the Main Roads Commission during the year reached a record figure of £13,720,000, of which approximately £12,000,000 was spent on Defence Works for the Commonwealth Government.

"Although the shortage of labour and plant precluded the carrying out of as much maintenance work as was necessary in certain districts, the actual total expenditure on maintenance and repairs last year amounted to £430,000, which was higher than that of any previous year.

"In the Mining Industry, activities have been directed to the production of metals and minerals necessary under present conditions. My Advisers report that coal production established a new record last year, when almost one-third more coal was produced than in the year 1940. The absence of industrial troubles has contributed largely to the attainment of the large output, which, however, is still insufficient to meet increased demands. Certain survey and drilling investigations are being conducted, and oil shale investigations have been made in various areas of the State.

"There are now almost six thousand Crown employees absent from their State duties either on service with the Fighting Forces or on special duty in Commonwealth Government Departments.

"My advisers consider that the time has arrived for a review of the classifications of positions in the public service not only to retain the services of highly trained and efficient officers, but also to attract the most suitable appointees for service in Government departments. Action is now in train for a complete review of service salary classifications, which will be made in conjunction with claims which the Public Service Unions have lodged in the Industrial Court. A review of the Public Service Superannuation

Scheme and its benefits is also being undertaken by the Government.

"The Estimates for the current financial year are in course of preparation and will be submitted to you as early as possible. These Estimates will be found to have been prepared not only with due regard to economy but with full regard to the essential requirements of the State.

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

1. Audit Bill.
2. Co-ordination of Rural Advances and Agricultural Bank Acts Amendment Bill.
3. Electrical Workers Acts Amendment Bill.
4. Factories and Shops Bill.
5. Health Acts Amendment Bill.
6. Health Education Council Bill.
7. Hospitals Acts Amendment Bill.
8. State Electricity Commission and Electric Light and Power Acts Amendment Bill.
9. Stock Routes Improvement and Animal and Vegetable Pests Destruction Act Amendment Bill.
10. Valuation of Land Bill.
11. Workers' Compensation Acts Amendment Bill.

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

His Excellency then left the Chamber.

Mr. SPEAKER left the chair at 12.23 p.m., resuming it at 2.15 p.m.

COMMISSION TO ADMINISTER OATH.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to inform the House that His Excellency 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.

MEMBER SWORN.

MR. T. DUNSTAN.

Mr. Thomas Dunstan, having taken the oath of allegiance and subscribed the roll, took his seat as member for the electoral district of Gympie.

ELECTIONS TRIBUNAL.

JUDGE FOR 1944.

Mr. SPEAKER announced the receipt of a letter from His Honour the Chief Justice intimating that His Honour Mr. Justice Philp would be the judge to preside at the sittings of the Elections Tribunal for the year 1944.

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—

- Eric Paul Decker, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Sandgate;
- George Henry Devries, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Gregory;
- John Edmund Duggan, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Toowoomba;
- Thomas Dunstan, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Gympie.
- Duncan Macdonald, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Stanley.

DIFFERENTIAL CEILING PRICES FOR PRIMARY PRODUCTS.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to report that a letter was received from the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth, dated 5 November, 1943, acknowledging the resolution passed by the House on October 8 last in regard to primary products and differential ceiling prices determinations.

I place the letter on the table for the information of hon. members.

PAPERS PRINTED DURING RECESS.

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

- Tenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Industry for 1942-43.
- Report of the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works for 1942-43.
- Fifty-eighth Report of the Registrar of Friendly Societies, Building Societies, and Industrial and Provident Societies.

MATRIMONIAL CAUSES ACTS FURTHER AMENDMENT BILL.

Royal Assent reported by Mr. Speaker.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

Hon. F. A. COOPER (Bremer—Premier) (2.22 p.m.): I have the greatest possible pleasure in announcing that on 27 April 1944 His Excellency the Governor made the following appointments:—

- The Honourable Frank Arthur Cooper to be Premier and Chief Secretary of Queensland;
- The Honourable Edward Michael Hanlon to be Treasurer of Queensland;
- The Honourable Thomas Andrew Foley to be Secretary for Health and Home Affairs of Queensland;
- The Honourable Henry Adam Bruce to be Secretary for Public Works of Queensland;
- The Honourable Arthur Jones to be Secretary for Public Lands of Queensland;

The Honourable David Alexander Gledson to be Attorney-General of Queensland;

The Honourable James Larcombe to be Secretary for Public Instruction of Queensland;

The Honourable Edward Joseph Walsh to be Minister for Transport of Queensland;

The Honourable Vincent Clair Gair to be Secretary for Labour and Employment and Secretary for Mines of Queensland; and

The Honourable Thomas Lewis Williams to be Secretary for Agriculture and Stock of Queensland.

I lay on the table a copy of "Government Gazette Extraordinary" containing the relevant notifications.

DEATH OF MR. W. A. DEACON.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to report that, during the recess, a letter was received from the Registrar-General enclosing a certified copy of the registration of the death, on December 25, 1943, of William Arthur Deacon, Esquire, lately serving in the Legislative Assembly as member for the electoral district of Cunningham.

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE.

Hon. F. A. COOPER (Bremer—Premier) (2.23 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 William Arthur Deacon, Esquire, lately member for the electoral district of Cunningham, and a former Minister of the Crown.

"2. That Mr. Speaker be requested to convey to the widow and family of the deceased gentleman 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."

Mr. Deacon entered this Parliament some 23 years ago, consequently I was associated with him during the whole term of his membership of this House. Those who remember Mr. Deacon when he came into the House will have a vivid recollection of him—he was definitely new, I can say without offence he was raw, really he was your true neophyte. He was a man who seemed to have been thrown into an environment to which he would never become accustomed. In that, of course, we were mistaken—we all make mistakes. He was an extremely nervous man and the greatest fight he put up in this House, I believe, was his fight to overcome his nervousness. It was a successful fight and it was one that those of us who understood it watched with the keenest of interest.

Mr. Deacon became a very keen debater. He was more than that; he was a very close friend of many members on both sides, and I believe he realised the statement made by somebody or another years ago—that life indeed was altogether too short to enable us to

be as pleasant as we should like to be to the people who journey life's road with us. He was at all times courteous; he was at all times gracious. During the time he administered the Department of Public Lands—I had practically nothing to do with that department—I understand from members who had that he was ever ready to give every help and assistance a Minister is able to give in his department.

We all regret Mr. Deacon's passing. He suffered considerably towards the end of his life, none the less we were sorry to know the call had been made to him. He was a good parliamentarian, an earnest man, and keen in the work he had to do. I think it could very well be said of him as was said very many years ago by a poet whose name I have forgotten for the moment—

"Fierce for the right, he bore his part
In strife with many a valiant blow;
But laughter winged his pointed dart
And kindness tempered every blow."

I desire to express my sincere sympathy with his relatives.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba—Leader of the Opposition) (2.26 p.m.): In seconding the motion, I wish to associate the Opposition to the full with this expression of sympathy and condolence for the relatives of the late Mr. Deacon. Mr. Deacon was a man whom every member of this Chamber learned to love and respect. He was a loyal colleague and one who gave great service to this State. He had a kindly disposition and a keen sense of humour, he was ever ready to help anyone in the House in any problem in which he might ask him to do so. I remember vividly the assistance Mr. Deacon gave me when I first came into the House. He was very helpful indeed.

I might also say that Mr. Deacon was one of the biggest surprises that I found in this House. I did not realise from conversation with him the valuable debater that he was and the keen mind he displayed in tackling the various problems that came before the House. He has undoubtedly left a mark on the history of Queensland, and the name of Deacon will always be remembered in the history of this State, particularly in regard to his association with the Department of Public Lands, where he did a great work during an extremely difficult period. That is true particularly to his keen appreciation of the need of reforestation in this State. His opportunity to show it in a practical way came at a time when we needed interest in reforestation in Queensland. He undoubtedly left a mark in the history of the Department of Public Lands in reforestation and similar development of the State.

Mr. Deacon was a very hard worker in the interests of his constituents. The value they placed on his services is evidenced in the long list of successes he had at the elections he contested and the many times he was returned unopposed.

We indeed sorrow at the loss of such a friend and colleague as the late William

Deacon. I join the Premier in expressing to his sorrowing wife and family our deepest sympathy and condolence in their great loss.

Motion agreed to, hon. members standing in silence.

DEATH OF MR. C. W. CONROY.

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE.

Hon. F. A. COOPER (Bremer—Premier) (2.30 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

“1. That this House desires to place on record its appreciation of the services rendered to this State by the late Charles William Conroy, Esquire, a former member of the Parliament of Queensland.

“2. That Mr. Speaker be requested to convey to the widow and family of the deceased gentleman 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.”

Mr. Conroy was elected to represent the Maranoa electorate in the 22nd Parliament at the general election of 9 October 1920 and represented that electorate continuously through the 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th and 29th Parliaments. He died quite recently, on 28 July 1944. It was on the last or second last day of the last session of the last Parliament that Mr. Conroy intimated to me that he would not contest Maranoa again. He informed me that he had considered all the circumstances and that his health was such that he felt it would not be fair, not particularly to himself but to his constituents, to contest Maranoa. I thought that was characteristic of him, to put his work first and himself in the second place. Mr. Conroy had certain outstanding characteristics. It is not given to every man to make an impression in the public gallery. Many of us have known men in public life who have been somewhat on the retiring side but when it came to the internal or committee work they have been towers of strength and proved themselves to be men with a keen desire to do the whole job and do it thoroughly. Such men amaze us with the amount of work they do in that way. The late Mr. Conroy was of that type. He was a man who did his work for his constituency thoroughly. He was a great party man and I use that expression not as meaning that he was a zealot in the interests of the party to which he belonged but that he was a man who gave much time and attention to its work. He disclosed to us another characteristic also—he was a patient man. Somebody has said that patience is an admirable virtue that most believe in but very few practice. We can say of Mr. Conroy that he was a patient man. He bided the time when things could rightly be done. He was a very steadfast, very true and sincere man and members on this side of the House at any rate know that he had in ample degree the quality of allegiance to the Government and allegiance to those things in which he steadfastly and earnestly believed. He did his work thoroughly and well, not only in this House but in his

constituency, and as hon. members know, the work of a member of Parliament is possibly more in his constituency than in this House. Mr. Conroy gave close and unflinching attention to all the requirements and the interests of the community in the electorate he represented for so many years. We miss him very much indeed and I express my sympathy and the sympathy of the House to his wife and his relatives in their great sorrow.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba—Leader of the Opposition) (2.35 p.m.): It is with sorrow that I second the motion moved by the Premier. Mr. Conroy was a gentleman who was entirely respected by all members in this House and he had many friends on both sides. During the long period that he was a member of Parliament he gave great service to the State and to his constituents. I realised that particularly during the last election campaign when I toured the Maranoa, which had been represented for many years by the late Mr. Conroy. Wherever I went, not only among those who had supported the same politics as Mr. Conroy but all sections of the community, I found evidence of the universal respect in which he was held and heard regrets that he was not nominating again for the electorate and also particularly that it was his failing health that prevented him from doing so. Such a feeling could be merited only by good service to the community and undoubtedly Mr. Conroy gave that service. His relatives can be proud of the record he gained during the time he was a member of this Parliament and I am sure we all join the Premier in expressing sympathy for his relatives in their sad loss.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to, hon. members standing in silence.

DEATH OF MR. C. TAYLOR AND

MR. D. F. DENHAM.

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE.

Hon. F. A. COOPER (Bremer—Premier) (2.37 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

“1. That this House desires to place on record its appreciation of the services rendered to this State by the late Charles Taylor, Esquire, a former member of the Parliament of Queensland and Speaker of the House, and the Honourable Digby Frank Denham, a former member of the Parliament of Queensland, Minister of the Crown and Premier of Queensland.

“2. That Mr. Speaker be requested to convey to the relatives 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.”

The late Mr. Charles Taylor was elected for Windsor on 16 March 1918 to the 21st Parliament and represented that electorate until the end of the 26th Parliament in April, 1935. He therefore sat in six Parliaments. He died

on 27 April 1944. He was Speaker of the Parliament from 30 August 1929 to 11 June 1932.

The Hon. D. F. Denham came to Parliament as the hon. member for Oxley at the by-election held on 3 July 1902 during the currency of the twelfth Parliament. He represented that electorate until the end of the 19th Parliament in April 1915, when his Government were defeated at the polls. He died on 10 May 1944.

Mr. Denham held the following offices—Home Secretary and Secretary for Agriculture and Stock from 17 September 1903 to 27 April 1904, Secretary for Agriculture and Stock and Secretary for Public Works from 27 April 1904 to 19 January 1906, Secretary for Agriculture and Stock and Secretary for Railways from 19 January 1906 to 4 February 1907, Home Secretary from 19 November 1907 to 18 February 1908, Secretary for Public Lands from 29 October 1908 to 7 February 1911, Premier and Chief Secretary from 7 February 1911 to 1 June 1915.

The late Mr. Taylor was known to me, he having come into the House a little time after I did. He was a gentleman who made a definite impression on this House. I noticed particularly that he was a very methodical man indeed. As most hon. members will know, almost every piece of legislation that comes before the House may contain a clause or part of a clause that may be looked upon as a weakness, and it may be a weakness that may not be noticed by everybody. I could always be sure that if there was a weakness in any piece of legislation that was brought before this House Mr. Taylor, both when he sat on the back benches of the Opposition and when he sat on the front bench as Leader of the Opposition, would pick out what might be considered to be that weakness. And that was not haphazard work; it was because he examined thoroughly everything that came before the House. Mr. Taylor was a particularly fair man. He desired, I believe, to do what he considered to be the best in every situation. He was not the "win, tie, or wrangle" type at all. He did as he believed he should do. I am sure that those of us who were present in the House will not forget the occasion when as Speaker of the House he gave a ruling to which objection was taken. Of course, the House supported the Speaker in his ruling. But Mr. Speaker Taylor was not satisfied with the ruling although, naturally, he had been advised in it by the then Clerk of Parliament, Mr. Bernays. Having some doubt of the question, he referred the matter to a barrister and received counsel's opinion to the effect that his ruling was in conformity with the Standing Orders. He was still doubtful on the point, so he wrote to the House of Commons and set out the whole case. He received a reply from the House of Commons that his ruling was wrong, and he took the very first opportunity on the next morning after he had received the letter from the House of Commons to announce to the House that the ruling that he had given on that occasion was not in conformity with the Standing Orders as

they were interpreted by the Clerk of the House of Commons. I mention that as an example of Mr. Taylor's thoroughness and earnestness in doing the right thing, as well as of his desire to be fair on all occasions.

Mr. Taylor was a man of note in this State, a man who did much in a public way. We missed him after he left the House. He lived a life that was full of work, a life of which any of us might be proud. I know that we all desire to extend to his relatives our sincere sympathies with them in their loss.

I had not the pleasure of knowing Mr. Denham as an hon. member of this House although on occasions I had discussions with the late Mr. T. J. Ryan, Mr. Theodore, Mr. McCormack, and Mr. Larcombe, who were hon. members of the House when Mr. Denham was here. I have gathered from those gentlemen and from other sources that Mr. Denham was a very conscientious man. Not only was he conscientious but he was a particularly hard worker. He delved deeply, he searched regularly, and he was ever an inquiring man who gathered information. He was an extremely keen debater, and because of his studious habits and his hard work he delivered no speech in this House that was not full of information and guidance on the subjects about which he knew very much indeed. He was unquestionably a success as Minister in the departments that he administered. His conscientiousness, his uprightness, his straightforwardness, his zeal for work enabled him to do the things he believed to be right, and he did them sincerely, honestly and well. He lived a very full life. He lived to a very ripe age. The State is richer because he lived in it and worked for it and it is poorer because he has gone from us.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba—Leader of the Opposition) (2.44 p.m.): The Opposition wish to be associated with the Premier in this motion of sympathy with the relatives of those two great Queenslanders, Messrs. Taylor and Denham. Both those hon. gentleman had proud records of long and meritorious service to this State. Undoubtedly their names will be written in the history of Queensland as they were so closely associated with its development.

Mr. Taylor was a member of this House when I first entered it. He was a great help to a number of young members who came into the House. Indeed, his kindly nature and his helpfulness were appreciated by us all. That appreciation is a good indication of his character.

In addition to his work in this House, Mr. Taylor took a keen interest in public organisations in this State, notably the Royal National Association with which he was long associated. For very many years there was never a Royal Show at which the late Mr. Charles Taylor was not in charge of some section and in that sphere alone he did a great job for Queensland.

I had not the privilege of knowing the late Mr. Digby Denham during the time he was associated with politics in this State but upon looking up his political history I find that he has a great record of achievement and that he was very intimately associated with the development of the State throughout the period that he was a Minister of the Crown and Premier of Queensland. The example that he set to the younger men coming on in the community is one that could be well followed, as undoubtedly he did not spare himself to further the interests of this great State.

The Opposition desire to associate themselves with the Premier in conveying their sympathy to the relatives of these two outstanding men who gave great service to Parliament and the State. I second the motion.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to, hon. members standing in silence.

PAPERS.

The following paper was laid on the table and ordered to be printed—

Report of the Agent-General for Queensland for the year 1943.

The following papers were laid on the table—

Report of the Royal Commission on Cotton Growing (Burdekin District).

Preliminary Report of the Royal Commission on Fruit and Vegetables.

Order in Council, dated 16 March, 1944, under the State Development and Public Works Organisation Acts, 1938 to 1940.

Regulation, dated 18 May, 1944, under the Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Acts, 1915 to 1941.

Orders in Council, dated 16 December, 1943, 20 April, 1944 (2), and 25 May, 1944, under the Electric Light and Power Acts, 1896 to 1939.

Regulations under the Public Safety Act of 1940, dated 25 November, 1943, 2 December, 1943, 9 December, 1943, 10 February, 1944, 23 March, 1944, 13 April, 1944, 18 May, 1944, 1 June, 1944, and 8 June, 1944.

Amendment of Regulation under the Public Safety Act of 1940, dated 18 May, 1944.

Directions by the Council of Public Safety under the Public Safety Act of 1940, dated 25 November, 1943, 30 November, 1943, 9 December, 1943, 1 February, 1944, 10 February, 1944, 22 February, 1944, 2 March, 1944, 29 March, 1944, 18 May, 1944, 1 June, 1944, and 8 June, 1944.

Orders in Council (3), dated 9 December, 1943, 27 January and 6 July, 1944, under the Co-ordination of Rural Advances and Agricultural Bank Acts, 1938 to 1943.

Orders in Council (3), dated 3 February, 18 May, 29 June, and 13 July, 1944,

under the Financial Arrangements and Developmental Aid Act of 1942.

Orders in Council (3), dated 20 April, 30 May, and 9 June, 1944, under the Industries Assistance Acts, 1929 to 1933.

Orders in Council (6), dated 13 January, 30 March, 27 April, 25 May, 29 June, and 6 July, 1944, under the Post-war Reconstruction and Development Trust Fund Act of 1943.

Order in Council, dated 10 February, 1944, under the South Johnstone, Gin Gin, North Eton, and Mount Bauple Sugar Works Acts, 1927 to 1937.

Order in Council, dated 30 March, 1944, under the Succession and Probate Duties Act of 1904.

Regulation, dated 14 October, 1943, under the Stamp Acts, 1894 to 1942.

Regulation, dated 23 March, 1944, under the Workers' Compensation Acts, 1916 to 1943.

Rule under the Police Act of 1937, dated 18 November, 1943.

Regulations under the Health Acts, 1937 to 1943, entitled the Plague Prevention Regulations of 1944.

Order in Council under the Health Acts, 1937 to 1943, dated 2 March, 1944.

Regulations under the Health Acts, 1937 to 1943, entitled the Scarlet Fever Regulations, 1944.

Regulations under the Health Acts, 1937 to 1943, entitled the Typhoid Fever Regulations, 1944.

Regulations under the Health Acts, 1937 to 1943, dated 16 June, 1944.

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

Regulation, dated 4 November, 1943, under the Unemployed Workers' Insurance Acts, 1922 to 1936.

Order in Council, dated 4 November, 1943, under the Employment Exchanges Acts, 1915 to 1941.

Regulations, dated 4 and 11 November, 1943, under the Employment Exchanges Acts, 1915 to 1941.

Order in Council, dated 25 May, 1944, under the Employment Exchanges Acts, 1915 to 1941.

Regulations, dated 8 June, 1944, under the Fish Supply Management Acts, 1935 to 1941.

Proclamations under the Liquor Acts, 1912 to 1941.

Orders in Council under the Liquor Acts, 1912 to 1941.

Order in Council under the Companies Acts, 1931 to 1942.

Order in Council under the Money Lenders Acts, 1916 to 1934.

Orders in Council under the Supreme Court Act of 1921.

Regulations under the Elections Acts, 1915 to 1943.

Proclamations under the Prisons Act, 1890.

National Security (Landlord and Tenant Rules (Queensland).

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

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

The balance-sheet of The Union Trustee Company of Australia Limited for the year ended 29 February, 1944.

Orders in Council, dated 11 May and 1 June, 1944, under the Stock Routes Improvement and Animal and Vegetable Pests Destruction Acts, 1936 to 1938.

Proclamations under—

The Diseases in Plants Acts, 1929 to 1937.

The Sugar Experiment Stations Acts, 1900 to 1941.

The Wheat Pool Acts, 1920 to 1930.

Orders in Council under—

The Dairy Products Stabilisation Acts, 1933 to 1936.

The Fauna Protection Act of 1937.

The Milk Supply Act of 1938.

The Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Acts, 1926 to 1941.

Regulations under—

The Burdekin River Trust Act of 1940.

The Dairy Produce Acts, 1920 to 1941.

The Diseases in Plants Acts, 1929 to 1937.

The Fruit Marketing Organisation Acts, 1923 to 1941.

The Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Acts, 1926 to 1941.

Order in Council, dated 9 December, 1943, under the University of Queensland Acts, 1909 to 1941.

LEADERSHIP OF OPPOSITION.

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba) (3.7 p.m.) by leave: I desire to inform the House that I have been appointed Leader of the Opposition; **Mr. Brand**, Deputy Leader; and **Mr. Edwards**, Whip.

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?

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

OPENING DAY.

Mr. INGRAM (Keppel) (3.21 p.m.), who was received with Government cheers, said: I move—

“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.

“We join with Your Excellency in expressing heartfelt gratitude to the men of our fighting Services for their gallant efforts on all fronts and to our Allies for their courageous spirit in all theatres of war. We learned, with pleasure, of the successful launching of the great military enterprise on the western front in Europe and of the splendid progress in the war in the Pacific, and in expressing our appreciation of these feats of arms we pledge ourselves to do our utmost to hasten the hour of decisive victory and the coming of peace.”

In the first place, I wish to congratulate His Excellency on his address to the House. His Excellency has been for a long time with us, and we have always admired his untiring zeal and efforts towards the progress and development of this State.

I should like to congratulate you also, Mr. Speaker, on your appointment to your high office. I am confident that you will ably maintain the traditions of your high position and preside over the deliberations of this House with credit to yourself, to the House and to the community.

I am deeply sensible of the honour accorded to me today, of being invited to move the adoption of the Address in Reply. I know also that it is a compliment to the people of the electorate I have the honour to represent. It is indeed a tribute to the sound, sane, and beneficial legislation and administration of the Labour Government, who have held office continuously since 1932, that my electorate has sent me here to support a continuance of its progressive developmental programme.

We still meet under the shadow of a war that is being waged with ferocity on many fronts of the globe. We however express our thankfulness and gratitude to the unified effort of Great Britain, the Dominions, the U.S. of America and Russia, which has placed the position of the war greatly in our favour; but while the dawn of victory is becoming clearer there is still much to be done and no halt to our co-operative effort is allowable. I join with His Excellency in expressing our

grateful thanks to Australia's fighting forces and to those of the Empire and her Allies for their dauntless service in the cause of freedom, and also in his praise of those who on the home front have striven by self-sacrifice and co-operative effort to keep production at a high level and the wheels of industry turning at high pressure. I note that the Government will continue to pursue their policy of full co-operation with the Commonwealth in prosecuting the war to a successful conclusion and at the same time caring for the well-being of our citizens.

Co-operative planning both in war and in post-war reconstruction is an essential factor in any sound constructive policy. At the outset, I may stress that the Labour Government early recognised the necessity for planned organisation and the legislation passed in 1938 provided for an orderly system of public works and constructional utilities and thereby laid the foundation of a system not only of Governmental but of semi-governmental works on a definitely planned basis. This ensured a general survey of the works programme of the State, avoided over-lapping, and equalised the spread of employment throughout the State. Running parallel to this Act was the Co-ordination of Employment Facilities Act, co-ordinating employment-placing agencies and declaring the Government's intention to put into effect as far as possible the right to work.

Of great interest not only to the rural electorate I have the honour to represent but to the State, is the attention the Government are paying and will continue to pay to land settlement and development, particularly in respect of water and fodder conservation. Careful foresight is being shown by the building up of a fund, called the Post-war Reconstruction and Development Trust Fund, when revenue is buoyant, so that there will be no difficulty in putting in hand land and water developmental works as well as to meet necessary expenditure for railways and roads and other public utilities when opportunity offers.

A measure of particular interest to rural development was that passed last year called the Land and Water Resources Development Act, and I note with satisfaction that the bureau appointed under it is proceeding with its investigations. The new financial arrangements regarding water facilities referred to in His Excellency's speech are also to be commended.

In this connection I particularly wish to mention a matter that concerns not only my electorate but the whole of the Dawson and Callide Valley areas. A considerable time ago the late Dr. Bradfield made thorough investigations into the construction of a huge dam on the Dee River 20-odd miles from Mt. Morgan which in his opinion would be economic. It would serve millions of acres of land for agricultural and other purposes and I should like the Government in the near future to make a thorough investigation of that project to see if it cannot be put into operation. Hon. members may know what I or anyone who has grown a fair amount of cotton knows, that cotton when irrigated bears

four times the quantity it bears when grown under erratic weather conditions. Therefore I appeal to the Government to give this matter very serious consideration.

Another measure that I am sure will be welcome to the man on the land is the Act passed last session dealing with the Agricultural Bank, which already is being put into operation. The broadening of the Bank envisaged in that measure so that some degree of decentralisation may be possible, will be of immense service to the farmer and the man on the land generally. This Act greatly extends the maximum amount that may be advanced and adds new objects for obtaining advances such as growing, cultivating and harvesting crops and the installation of irrigation plants. I note too that other amendments will be made in the law, no doubt by further aiding the producer in his financial affairs. In this connection I must give credit to the Labour Government for their attention over many years to the primary producer. It was Labour that first passed the Primary Producers' Organisation Act, the Wheat Industry Act, and the Fruit Marketing Organisation Act, and thus gave the primary producer a distinct voice in the marketing of his produce and did much to bring about stabilisation in our rural industries.

Much criticism has been levelled against Labour Governments in the past and is still being levelled against them for alleged lack of assistance to the primary producer. Let me assure hon. members this is not so. No Government in the world gave greater consideration to the primary producer than the Queensland Labour Government. No Government ever tackled the problems of agriculture so boldly and successfully as Labour. Labour has been guided by the following principles:—

- (1) Agriculture must be made remunerative to those engaged in it;
- (2) The industry must be greatly extended because primary production is the mainstay of Queensland's prosperity;
- (3) The conditions of life of all country dwellers must be made attractive.

Queensland, as a result of Labour's policy, has the most advanced democratic and effective co-operative agricultural legislation in the world.

Labour convened a conference of primary producers on 24 March 1922 to launch a scheme of organisation for the protection of the farming community. The delegates adopted the scheme outlined by the then Premier and the Primary Producers' Organisation Act was introduced in 1922, which for the first time in history gave primary producers control over their own affairs. The Labour Government spent £26,000 a year for the first two years financing the primary producers' organisation to enable the farmers to have an organisation of their own and give them a better chance of carrying on their affairs and getting a better price. I am sorry to say they never took the opportunity of organising as they should have done.

We have heard a great deal of talk to the effect that sugar and other primary

commodities were favoured by Tory Governments in the past. Permit me to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that no government have looked after the interests of the farmers in these matters as have the present Government of this State. The following table shows the vast increases in production in agriculture, dairying, the poultry industry and bee-keeping:—

Year.	Agriculture.	Dairying, Poultry, and Bee-keeping.	Total.
1921 ..	£ 10,515,000	£ 8,706,000	£ 19,221,000
1923 ..	10,106,000	6,000,000	16,106,000
1931-32 ..	12,191,000	6,738,000	18,924,000
1938-39 ..	15,364,000	12,286,000	27,800,000
1939-40 ..	18,086,000	12,172,000	30,258,000

Butter produced for 1922 was 53,785,599 lb.; for year ended 30 June 1941 it was 117,081,269 lb. Cheese produced for 1922 was 10,560,316 lb.; for year ended 30 June 1941 it was 11,731,976 lb.

Those figures speak for themselves and in the country today the people, the farmers particularly, know full well that a Labour Government are the only Government who would give them decent legislation and a chance of living. It was a Labour Government who assisted the sugar industry by legislation when the Central Sugar-Cane Prices Board was instituted. I notice that production in the industry last year was low, mainly because of insufficient fertiliser and the want of manpower in cultivation and harvesting but the representatives of the Commonwealth Government and the State Government have decided to improve production by giving the industry a No. 1 priority. I am sure that hon. members hope that the future prosperity of this industry will thus be secured. It has always been my view that a prosperous and contented agricultural and rural community is necessary to the establishment of a stable and prosperous State. Labour Governments in the past and the present Government have given and will continue to use every effort to have a properly organised food policy as the spearhead for agricultural and general economic prosperity. The exigencies of war have brought sharply into view the necessity for an advanced agricultural policy. It is absolutely necessary that an extensive food front should be set up to ensure foodstuffs for the people of Great Britain and to ensure also that Queensland as a unit in the British Commonwealth of Nations shall at least discharge her part of the responsibility of helping to feed the liberated countries.

The policy of extending electrification into rural areas and the inter-connection of power systems at widely separated points will not only assist production by the man on the land but will give to him the amenities that are enjoyed by people living in the towns and cities. The result will be a wonderful advance in the conditions of our country people; it will give them something worth living for. I hope the time is not far distant when we shall see electricity

undertakings established throughout Central Queensland. On our sea shores for example there are beautiful spots for holiday resorts but when intending holidaymakers get there they find nothing but darkness and gloom. I appreciate immensely what the Government are endeavouring to do in this direction and I am certain that if anything can be done it will be done by a Labour Government of Queensland.

In my view a policy of extensive land settlement and development is a major factor in the future welfare of the State and as trustees of the State we as a people are in duty bound to see to it that our lands are used to their fullest extent and advantage, that land capable of production shall not remain idle or be indifferently developed. Everything possible should be done to increase the rural population and improve their living conditions. We should above all things see to it that our vast heritage is used to its fullest extent. In this respect it has been a very sore point with me for a considerable number of years that throughout Queensland are those who hold vast acreages of land but are not using them in any way. In my electorate on the other hand are farmers with families holding perhaps 200-odd acres, who are desirous of extending their areas sufficiently to enable their sons and daughters to go into farming but cannot do so for the simple reason that a few have thousands of acres but are not using them for production. For this reason I congratulate the Government on their intention to bring in this legislation.

Turning to domestic affairs, I am pleased to notice that health and hospital services are to have further legislative attention. A factor in the prosperity of this State has always been the great consideration given by the Labour Government to the health and hospital services of the people, both in thought and deed. The policy of close co-operation between the local authorities and health authorities is an excellent one, as is the co-operation between the Commonwealth and the State Governments. It is gratifying to note that despite the problems of war the health of the people of Queensland is reflected in the low incidence of disease. Hon. members will remember that last year the share of the local authorities in the cost of hospital services was reduced from 40 per cent. to 25 per cent. A further benefit to local authorities has been conferred by the abolition of the precept altogether. This act of the Government will give to cities, towns and shire councils something approximating £400,000 to devote to the care of the streets in the cities and towns and better roads for the farmers in the country.

This is a great act on the part of the Labour Government. I remember the time in 1929 when the Moore Party obtained the reins of office by a promise that they were going to do away with local-authority precepts. When they assumed office they had not the courage to take this step—although they condemned the Labour Government from start to finish they simply carried on the old vicious

scheme. It took a Labour Government to scheme. It took a Labour Government to abolish those precepts and I am pleased that Government.

Mr. Muller: By accident.

Mr. INGRAM: Not by accident at all. The Labour Government have done a magnificent job in connection with hospitals. Between 1915 and 1929 the hospitals throughout the State made tremendous progress but between 1929 and 1932 they remained stationary. I was with a hospital for many years, and secretary of one for 9 years until I was elected to this Parliament, and I remember the time in 1929 when every Labour representative on that hospital committee was sacked by the Tory Government—with the result that nothing was done in the Mount Morgan hospital. The only Labour representative who was retained on the Committee was Mr. J. Carmody, the president of the Mount Morgan branch of the Australian Labour Party, and he was kept there in order to show the Tory Committee how to administer the institution. Immediately after the 1932 elections Labour representatives were re-appointed to the committee and the result has been that the hospital is now flourishing.

All hospitals throughout the State are in an extremely favourable position as a result of the sound administration of Labour committees. I remember the time when our institution at Mount Morgan was in debt to the extent of hundreds of pounds. Today, as a result of the sympathetic policy of the Labour Government, that hospital is in credit to the extent of several thousand pounds. The credit for that is due to the department that was administered until recently by the Hon. E. M. Hanlon. At present it is being administered by the Hon. T. A. Foley and I am confident that he will carry on the good work of these institutions through the State.

Not only have the Labour Government done this for hospitals in the cities but they have catered for the sick and suffering in the back blocks, something that no other Government ever did. Moreover, not only have our hospitals cared for the sick and suffering, but they have also given great consideration to persons handicapped by bad eyesight. This has been done by engaging experienced optometrists to travel through the State and provide free spectacles for those old people who cannot afford to pay for them. That again is something that was never attempted by any anti-Labour Government.

In 1918 a Labour Government established the maternal and child-welfare service. In March of that year there were four baby clinics in the metropolitan area of Brisbane. In 1926 there were 14 and by 1943 that number had grown to 167. The total yearly attendance rose from 69,226 to 271,137 and the total maintenance cost of the service today is £337,978.

The value to the community of adequate health service, efficient sewerage and drainage, clean water supply, sound and adequate disease-prevention measures and hospital services cannot be estimated in terms of

money. I might add, too, that the university co-operates in the field of research and instruction and both the Commonwealth and State have co-ordinated plans for continuing the training of personnel for the prevention of the possible spread of malaria. It was the Labour Government's foresight in establishing within the university the faculties of medicine and dentistry that has enabled the State to train its own practitioners within the State.

I am pleased to see that education also is receiving attention and I am sure that when such measures as the National Education Act and the Libraries Act are in full operation many educational advantages will accrue to the people of this state, especially those in rural areas where opportunities for using libraries and other amenities are not now so readily available.

I am pleased to note also that sites are being selected for new schools.

I am delighted to know that new school sites are being selected but I should like the Government to give serious consideration to the provision of additional accommodation at the schools already erected, especially in my electorate where the population is on the increase and where in view of the proposal to raise the school-leaving age additional accommodation will be necessary. I do not blame the present Government for the shortage of accommodation at the present time. I lay that blame at the door of the ex-member for Keppel who never gave any consideration to his electorate whatever.

Mr. Edwards: He was a soldier too.

Mr. INGRAM: Long before he became a soldier he did not look after the interests of his electorate.

Mr. Edwards: He was a soldier just the same.

Mr. INGRAM: Queensland, I am sure, is proud of its industrial legislation and its policy of conciliation and arbitration under its arbitration laws is one of the most up-to-date and comprehensive in the Empire. The Labour Party asserts that its policy of conciliation and arbitration is a sound basic measure of social security. Its success is exemplified, as indicated in His Excellency's speech, by the absence of industrial troubles in the mining, especially the coal-mining industry and the contributions it has made to the war effort by its large output of coal, a commodity vital in these times of war and difficulties. I have had a vast experience as an industrial worker on roads, railways and elsewhere and I can say that there has been very little industrial disturbance in industry since Labour assumed control in this State. A great deal has been said on the subject of strikes and the blame for them is always laid at the door of the workers but I know for a fact that all the fault does not lie with them but that most of it arises from pin-pricking on the part of the managers and the bosses. That is so at the Lake's Creek meatworks. Is it any wonder that the bosses there readily agreed to an increase of 7s. 6d. a week in the wages of the men? Why did they do that?

It has been said that it was to avoid absenteeism, but it was nothing of the sort. It was done so that the men would not have an urge to go out-back to work. At the present time, immediately a man leaves the meat floor at those works to go to the E.C. the foreman takes out his watch and checks the time he is away. That is part of the pin-pricking on the part of the bosses to which I refer and it is this sort of thing that is causing a certain amount of industrial disturbance.

Mr. Edwards: Imagination!

Mr. INGRAM: I know that what I say is a fact.

Turning to housing, I admit that while the State Advances Corporation has done excellent work in the past and has enabled the citizens of the State to become the owners of their own dwellings, war no doubt has curbed its efforts. I am sure that the State scheme, coupled with the Federal War Housing Scheme, will be instrumental in further aiding our people to obtain their own homes, which I always hold is conducive to good citizenship.

I have been associated with the industrial movement for the past 34 years and I have never wavered one iota in my allegiance for that cause. I can recall the days when it was considered a crime to be a member of an industrial organisation or to wear Labour's colours. I have worked in the railway cuttings where it was the practice for the bosses under Tory Governments to carry a handful of pebbles to be thrown at the workers when it was thought they were slackening in their work. We were never allowed to straighten our backs. Those were the bad old days. What is more, we even had to buy our own picks and shovels before we could get a job. Those are the conditions that I had to contend with in my time. When the Moore Government were returned to power in 1929 the people were promised everything but I was compelled to maintain my wife and 6 children on 33s. a week and my eldest son was unable to get a job but was given the miserable pittance of 10s. every 3 months with which to feed and clothe himself. The people of this country, not only the workers but the farmers, too, have awakened to the beneficence of a Labour Government who will never be defeated at the polls again.

We assemble for the first time after a general election. At this election, the people gave to the Labour Government a renewal of their confidence and a mandate to carry on their good work as envisaged by their policy of progress, development and social and humanitarian welfare. We are sensible of the great responsibility that has been placed on the Government I have the honour to support. The times are strenuous and demand the maximum of sacrifice and honest endeavour, but Labour will not be found wanting.

Judging by the many matters outlined in His Excellency's speech, it would appear that a strenuous session lies ahead and I am sure that during our meetings here we shall all accomplish much for the lasting good of the State and its people.

I have much pleasure in moving the adoption of the Address in Reply.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. GUNN (Wynnum) (3.45 p.m.): I second the motion so ably moved by the hon. member for Keppel and I congratulate him on his thoughtful speech. I realise the great honour conferred on me and the electors of Wynnum in asking me to second the motion.

I express my gratitude to all those men and women who have played their part in making our nation secure, as indicated by His Excellency. I pay tribute especially to the wonderful achievements of our men and women in the fighting forces, who have gallantly upheld the prestige of Australia. I pay tribute also to the achievements of our great Allies—to the thousands of Americans who have left their homes and come to our aid in our most critical hour, when for the first time in 150 years of our existence as a free nation we were threatened by a ruthless enemy. The work that has been done by the military forces has been backed up by a vast army of industrial workers, men and women who for the past 4½ years have worked loyally and well to turn out the sinews of war with the material we have available so that we may be closer to the day of victory. Today the news is brighter in every respect on all fronts, and we pray that this dreadful conflict will come to an early conclusion, and that our sons and daughters will return to enjoy the fruits of victory for which they have so nobly fought. On this occasion we shall see that they return to a grateful country fully appreciative of the valuable services and sacrifices they have rendered. On this occasion we hope that they will not be given the worn-out promises the Tory parties made at the end of the last war. Action is required, not idle words. These men and women deserve the right to take their place in industry or in any calling they wish to follow. They will on this occasion demand a "fair go," and rightly so, because they have fought for it. I realise that the repatriation of the forces is a Commonwealth matter, but we as members of Parliament can and will do everything possible to see that they receive their just reward for their magnificent service.

We can help in many ways. The Queensland Labour Government and the Federal Labour Government will not permit a return of the chaotic conditions that prevailed at the end of the last war. This Government, in co-operation with the Curtin Labour Government, will not tolerate them. In 1918, the Tory Government of the day did not make any provision for the demobilisation of the troops. A discharge was handed to every member and he was turned adrift into a very cold world. We found out that private enterprise at that time did not, any more than it can today, control the employment of these men. When the referendum is carried I feel sure the troops will come back to a country governed by Labour, which will see they are not turned adrift. We feel sure that under the scheme the Labour Government has enacted—I refer to the Federal Repatriation Act—facilities will be given to the men and women of the forces to share in the improved work of the community. Today unlimited amounts of

money can be found for the work of destruction, therefore no adequate excuse can be found by members of Parliament or anybody else for any failure to make available the finance needed for reconstruction, so that the people of this great Commonwealth will have a sense of security for the future.

You will remember, Mr. Speaker, and no doubt other hon. members will remember, the troubled days of 1929 to 1932 when 29 per cent. of the people were on the dole. This depression was caused by the manipulation of finance by vested interests—call it what you like. But those days have gone, and combines and monopolies with them. Such conditions will not be tolerated after the war. Unemployment will not recur when the "Yes" vote is carried.

The Queensland Labour Government, of which I have the honour to be a supporter, have in the past fought and will in the future continue to fight for the highest standards of living for the people of the State. The people have no wish for a return of the dreadful experiences of 1929 to 1932. Post-war problems will be many and difficult but I am pleased to see in His Excellency's speech that measures will be taken to meet the situation and that housing will be first and foremost. The Government will commence a building programme and when this Government build houses they will build houses and not flats. At present housing conditions are causing a great deal of discomfort and hardship to many of our people. All sections of the community, in both city and country, hope that in the near future some of the discomforts will be overcome by the fact that the State will start its building programme. There are plans for the commencement of a State-sponsored scheme of 4,360 homes in the first post-war year under the War Housing Scheme now in operation and it is hoped that at least 1,000 houses will be erected during the financial year 1944-45, provided materials and labour are available. I commend the Government for their foresight. Over the past years building has faced many restrictions and many people are probably living like rabbits. In any scheme of social service we must be certain that when reforms are introduced educational, health and housing facilities such as the worker has a right to expect are given to him. This will ensure a bigger and better Commonwealth and I trust that after the referendum when a "yes" vote will be cast we shall be able to build it without restriction.

I am pleased to find from His Excellency's speech that the finances of the State are buoyant and that £3,120,000 is set aside in the Post-war Reconstruction and Development Fund for certain works.

The revenue of the Department of Public Lands last year amounted to £1,546,909. All departments in fact show very healthy financial surpluses. That is entirely due to the sound legislation and administration of the Labour Government.

At this juncture I pay tribute to the Government led by the Hon. F. A. Cooper

for their magnificent war effort in this terrible holocaust. The Government have co-operated with the Commonwealth Government and have given of their best. By so doing they have no doubt saved Queensland from the horrors of war in those critical days that are now past. The Queensland Government have proved beyond doubt that they can be relied on in an emergency or crisis. They did this during the time of the so-called invasion scare. They did not run to funk holes. It was the Federal Government led by Mr. Menzies who did that. The Queensland Labour Government stood their ground and carried on.

The social and industrial reforms begun in the past will ever remain a proud record for the Queensland Labour Government and I look forward to even greater achievements for the benefit of the workers of this State. During this session we shall be called on to give consideration to many measures vital to the State. I am sure that it will be a very busy session and will no doubt receive from members great attention and keen and clean debate. If so, the measures of which I speak, will be enacted.

I had the opportunity of accompanying the Attorney-General on a tour of inspection in the North and I was impressed with the prosperity of the country over which I passed. I saw many good roads, some of which were constructed for purposes of defence, but no doubt will be very useful in the post-war period. The fertility of the soil also impressed me and I should like to see much of the land much more closely settled. I look forward to the Commonwealth Government's acquiring much of that land for the settling of soldiers. We must not have the mistakes of the past, such as those made at Beerburum.

I had the opportunity also of visiting many of the shearing sheds when shearing operations were in full progress. The shearers are doing a magnificent job but their housing conditions are not what they should be and I look forward to great improvement in them after the war.

The expenditure on main roads during the year reached the record figure of £13,720,000, of which approximately £12,000,000 was spent on defence roads. Those roads over which I had the pleasure of travelling are excellent. No doubt they will be the means of opening much of the country in the far North, and I hope that when it is opened it will be thrown open to small farmers in order to encourage closer settlement.

I was also impressed with the hospitals, schools and Government buildings generally. The hospitals are a credit to the Government. Although they may be short-staffed at present through war conditions, they are doing wonderful work and by their establishment the Labour Government have proved beyond all doubt that they have at heart the interests of the country people just as much as those of the city residents. The schools we inspected were in excellent condition. The children looked anything but under-nourished. They were all fit and well, and here again

the Government are to be complimented on keeping up adequate supplies of necessary foodstuffs for those youngsters.

The children receive also excellent medical and dental attention. I visited the child-welfare car at one Northern railway station and was highly impressed with the way in which it was equipped. The nurse told me that patients living as far as 100 miles from a railway line come to her car for attention. I look forward to seeing more of these cars available in the very near future.

I wish now to submit some figures in connection with treatment given by the Brisbane General Hospital during the past year. They are:—

	1944.
Number of patients treated	34,783
Aggregate days of patients in hospital..	506,713
Daily average of occupied beds	1,331.68
Operations performed	13,108
Outpatients—	
Daily average attendances	804
Items dispensed	422,360
	(average 1,100 per day)
Average daily X-ray patients	94
	(46,400 exposures)
Births	4,718
	(1 every 2 hours)
Meals per day	5,800
Laundry—	
Number of pieces washed per annum	7 1/3 million

It is interesting to compare the present figures with those of the year 1924-25 when the Brisbane and South Coast Hospitals Board was first established. The following gives the comparative figures for the respective years.

	1923-24.	1943-44.	Increase.
Inpatients—			
Number of admissions	6,880	22,139	15,250
Outpatients—			
New cases	9,944	23,115	13,171

The Department of Health and Home Affairs is now controlled by the Hon. T. A. Foley who has succeeded the Hon. E. M. Hanlon.

The department, which is fortunate in having the hon. gentleman as its Ministerial head, could justly be called "The Department of Humanity." It deals with the sick, the mentally ill, the indigent, the pensioner, the Police Department (which administers the function of preserving public safety), the provision of hospitals, dental clinics, baby clinics, ante-natal clinics, orphanages, aged people's homes, and since the outbreak of war has had the added responsibility of civil defence.

Naturally, these services, which are provided by the State and which assist in maintaining the health, happiness and contentment of every section of the community, rich and poor, at the highest possible level, show exactly what progress has been made during the years of Labour's reign. The department preserves public health, standing firm against exploiting by those unscrupulous people who might vend unsafe specifics to the public or corrupt health with poisonous preparations on fruit. It is responsible for the care of the State Children, acting as foster mother and father to those

helpless children whom life has left without parents of their own and who are best looked after under the care of the State. Aged people turn to the department for a home in the sunset of their lives and that trust is not misplaced.

The department is Labour's first line of defence in public health, with its practical application of the rule that "Prevention is better than cure." As would be expected after the Labour Government had taken over the reins of Government from the Opposition, there have been rapid and effective improvements and these will continue. The progress of hospital construction has been very marked since Labour took control in 1932 and assistance by way of special grant to hospital authorities has amounted to over £320,000. During this period, over £1,000,000 has been granted for general and maternity-hospital works.

Public hospitals were once regarded as places for people who were too poor to get anything better. Today people of all classes use our hospitals. Healthy teeth make the difference between healthy and indifferent child lives. The Department of Health and Home Affairs has provided a noteworthy service in the improved dental clinics and children are now growing up with healthy mouths and much sickness in their later life is thereby prevented.

To ensure that an optical service would be available in country districts, the Government made arrangements whereby a fully trained expert optometrist visits country hospitals to care for patients who cannot afford private charges. Approximately 4,000 people have been helped since the service started and the cost of all spectacles supplied is borne by the Department. This service alone has been a godsend to the old pioneers of our great inland.

The Government have founded the Queensland Radium Institute to deal with the scourge of cancer. Treatment delayed by hoping for the best or by want of money has caused many lives to be lost. Now treatment will be under the control of a board of experts and will be absolutely free to all. Transport to hospital also will be free and the best medical skill and equipment of the State will be at the service of all, and sufferers will not be impoverished by fares. In 1932 when Labour came into power, ambulance brigades were in a parlous position. Cars and equipment were run down and it was the Labour Government who increased the subsidy to ambulance brigades and established a fund to enable them to purchase cars for cash and repay to the fund free of interest. To-day every part of this great State has an ambulance service to meet sickness or accidents.

The great health provisions of medicine, pharmacy, dentistry and optometry are controlled by a board and all the available knowledge is brought to bear on these problems by members specially selected for their suitability.

The present Government have never turned a deaf ear to any worthy call for assistance and the Department of Health has given

thousands of pounds to charitable institutions and so assisted boys' homes, aboriginal missions, medical services, creches, playground associations, homes for the aged, crippled children and worthy organisations engaged in charitable work throughout the country. The sum of £2,300 goes to these societies from revenue alone. In addition, people who have the misfortune to lose a limb and who are in straitened circumstances have been helped by this Department to buy one. This is an instance of Labour's policy: "Always on the side of the unfortunate."

The Department of Health has so efficiently tackled the problem of venereal disease that no effort has been spared to reclaim victims of this social scourge or to insist that suspects or carriers are segregated for treatment and by this means Queensland has been placed ahead of other States. The department has appointed a lady welfare officer whose duty it is to keep in constant contact with people who unfortunately suffer from it and find them suitable work, and also to obtain respectable accommodation for those without homes.

The State Laboratory, attached to the Home Department, has been built up until it is one of the finest in Australia, staffed by skilled professional men and women. Their study of all diseases is still going on and I learn from the Minister that he expects great expansion of this work in the post-war period.

The Home Department is responsible for the care of the Australian native. It is Labour's policy to render every assistance to maintain desirable standards, to sustain the several aboriginal missions, and to protect the natives against misuse and exploitation. A battalion of aboriginal infantry is serving with the armed forces—a tribute to the policy under which these people have grown up. No other State has done so much for its native people.

The Home Department was entrusted with the vital task of organising the Queensland civilian defences. The service was planned before the war started. Speedy and efficient measures gave the State's citizens maximum protection and so enthusiastic was the organisation that over 60,000 volunteers have given every town on the coast a service unequalled in any other State.

It can be seen that the Labour Government will continue to maintain and extend health services and child-welfare policy of the State. Although overshadowed by the conditions of war, the normal work of the Department of Health and Home Affairs has not been neglected. Additional activity as guardian of food supplies and the application of science in protecting the public by testing the purity of foods has been noticeable, as also have been increased safety methods in traffic control. Sustained efforts in an endeavour to overcome Weil's disease have been made by the experts.

The administrative action outlined above has resulted from the legislation of recent years, including the following Acts:—

Liquor Acts Amendment Act, 1935.
Police Act of 1937.

Prisoners Parole Act of 1937.
Mental Hygiene Act of 1938.
Backward Persons Act of 1938.
Medical Acts, 1939-40.
Aboriginals Protection and Preservation Act of 1939.
Torres Strait Islanders Act of 1939.
Public Safety Act of 1940.
Cinematograph Films Hiring Agreement Act of 1940.

Maternal and child welfare has not been neglected. The work shows steady increase during 1943-44. The total attendance was 308,424, an increase of 31,009 on year 1942-43. At end of June, 1940 the clinics, including sub-centres, numbered 167.

Clinics are free, and mothers are encouraged to avail themselves of their services. Notifications of births that occur in an area served by a maternal and child-welfare centre must be furnished to the district registrar within 72 hours; these notifications then are submitted to the nurse in charge of clinic, who gets in touch with the mother to advise her as to correct feeding and care of her infant.

We have been fortunate in having one of those clinics established in Wynnum and the people there appreciate the action of the Labour Government. Wynnum was misrepresented during the past few years by a Tory member, therefore I am not quite sure that the House has heard the name of the Wynnum electorate—a most important part of Queensland—mentioned a great deal in this House. Wynnum is a large electorate—the second largest in Queensland—and has a population of some 16,000, and our one and only request at present is for a hospital. We have baby clinics and dental clinics and an out-patients' medical service that is doing a great work, but we feel that a hospital should be established in that centre in order to save unnecessary travel for the people who are very ill. I look forward to the time when the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs will see that Wynnum has a first-class, up-to-date hospital, with a modern maternity ward. The district warrants a hospital and I hope it will get it in the near future.

Another pressing problem is the establishment of a kindergarten in that area. For years we have been trying to have one established, but up to the present nothing has happened. I have approached the Secretary for Public Instruction for the establishment of one. I take this opportunity of thanking the Minister for his interest in my representations. He has already taken action to obtain land for this purpose.

In regard to post-war works I should like the Government to give consideration to the building of a bridge over Lota Creek. Such a bridge would open up a fine frontage to the sea, which would lend itself to the development of the building programme the Government have in view and would also make a tourist run from Brisbane to Cleveland.

Another important matter the Government are taking into consideration is the dredging

of Wynnum Creek, which has been a nightmare to the men in the fishing industry. The fishermen have to come back to the creek and they are unable to get in to unload.

I assure hon. members that during the next few years they will hear that Wynnum is on the map.

I have great pleasure in seconding the adoption of the Address in Reply.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Debate, on motion of Mr. Nicklin, adjourned.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

Mr. SPEAKER: Before the House adjourns I desire to inform members that because of the numerous questions asked today it may not be possible for the various departments to which they have been passed on to have the necessary information available by tomorrow morning and should answers not be forthcoming hon. members will know that it is because of the large number of questions and shortages of staff in the departments.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

Hon. F. A. COOPER (Bremer—Premier):
I move—

“That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 10.30 a.m. tomorrow.”

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 4.34 p.m.
