

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**WEDNESDAY, 6 AUGUST 1947**

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## 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.

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

“GENTLEMEN OF THE PARLIAMENT OF QUEENSLAND—

“It affords me great pleasure to meet you at the Opening of this the First Session of the Thirty-first Parliament of Queensland.

“I desire to express my grateful thanks to His Majesty the King for the great honour he has conferred on me in appointing me as Governor of this State. As the first native born Governor of Queensland, I hope I shall prove to be a worthy representative of His Majesty the King.

“On a recent tour, my first of this great State, I was afforded the opportunity of seeing much of the country and of meeting many of its people. I learned much of the hardships and difficulties with which they have to contend, and was most impressed by the courage and cheerfulness with which these difficulties are being overcome.

“I saw the magnificent work that has been done, and is still being done, for the betterment of this great State. I found also that the loyalty to the Throne and Person of His Majesty the King is just as strong, if not stronger, than it has ever been before. This was exemplified in the large number of personal expressions of loyalty I received, and the ready response of the people of Queensland to help Britain with food and clothing in these her dark days.

“Since the opening of the last Session of Parliament, we have been honoured by a visit from Field Marshal the Viscount Montgomery of Alamein, Chief of the Imperial General Staff. The visit of the Field Marshal was heartily welcomed by our people, not only because it enabled them to pay tribute to his great services as a leader and a soldier, but because it gave him an opportunity to meet again men of the Ninth Division of the Second A.I.F. who fought under his command in North Africa.

“The war ended nearly two years ago. In that time substantial progress has been made towards a normal peacetime economy and with a comparative absence of major disturbance.

“Our difficulties are by no means over, but indications are that, in the next three years, the production of new wealth will be enormously increased.

“My Advisers look upon it as their bounden duty to push on rapidly with the settlement and development of Queensland, and invite the co-operation of all in pursuit of that objective.

“Every effort is being made to increase the population of this State. The joint Commonwealth and State migration plans are now in operation and the first migrants from Britain have already reached Queensland.

**WEDNESDAY, 6 AUGUST, 1947.**

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. S. J. Brassington—Fortitude Valley) took the chair at 11.57 a.m.

PRESENTATION OF Mr. SPEAKER.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. S. J. Brassington, Fortitude Valley): I have to report that yesterday I presented myself to His Excellency the Governor at Government House, as the member chosen to fill the high and honourable office of Speaker of this House, and that His Excellency was pleased to congratulate me upon my election.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

"Concurrently with this policy, my Advisers have devoted much time and thought to what may be called a 'Ten Years' Plan' for the development of Queensland.

"My advisers consider that the first essential of the Plan is to increase water supplies, so that primary industry may be freed from the menace of drought as far as is practicable. The second essential is that there shall be ample supplies of cheap, convenient electrical energy. The third essential is that there shall be sufficient labour for all requirements, and, finally, that transport will be such that products may be marketed economically and rapidly and that the needs of our people may be met by air, road, rail, and sea transport.

"Unremitting effort, therefore, is being applied to schemes of irrigation development, to schemes of water supply and water conservation, and to other means by which we shall increase production and national wealth.

"The Bureau of Investigation has actively pursued its investigations and the only limiting factor in the construction of water schemes will be the availability of manpower and materials. The Department of Irrigation has been reorganised and a Commissioner appointed with wide experience of methods used successfully in other parts of the world.

"The State Electricity Commission has in hand projects for large electricity extensions. The State has been divided into a number of regions of electricity supply and each region will have a central generating source. Assistance, by way of subsidies of up to one-third of the cost of electric schemes and up to one-half of the cost of electric works in Western Queensland, has been approved or granted.

"Under the Transport Facilities Act passed in the last Parliament, a new method of expanding our transport facilities was laid down, and the orderly expansion of air, road, rail, and sea transport is to be promoted under the new Act.

"The Commissioner for Transport has instituted a State-wide review of all passenger and goods carrying services, in order to determine the increased services which should be provided and the new routes for which licenses for additional services should be granted.

"Liaison has been established with Local Government Authorities, road transport operators, and other persons and organisations interested in transport matters. Action has been taken to provide a better and quicker service for the transport of fruit and vegetables from producer to consumer.

"My Advisers have been busily engaged in planning for the development of Queensland's rich undeveloped coal deposits. A combined Commonwealth and State investigation has been made on the possibility of the use of Blair Athol coal deposits on a very large scale, and a detailed drilling campaign and topographical survey of the field is now in progress.

"Investigations point to the fact that, from Collinsville to Callide, there are large quantities of coal which could be advantage-

ously developed. Contact has been made with various British organisations which are contemplating large scale development of some of these resources, and it is hoped to announce in the near future plans for this work to proceed.

"During the financial year ended on 30th June, 1947, the receipts in the Consolidated Revenue Fund amounted to £25,033,131, and the expenditure to £25,017,275, leaving a surplus of £15,856 on the year's transactions. This was the ninth successive surplus shown in the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

"Expenditure from Loan Fund during the year on capital and other works amounted to £4,531,663, an increase of £2,122,996 over the preceding year.

"The works programme for the present financial year has been designed to continue the policy of encouraging settlement and development in order to widen the avenues of wealth production. The programme, apart from the emphasis on housing, will cover a wide range of projects and will provide for an expansion of hospital and educational facilities and a vigorous programme of electrical, road, forestry, and irrigation works.

"My Advisers have given every encouragement to the expansion of industrial development, and a Secondary Industries Division within the Department of Labour and Industry is now in operation.

"As a result of the establishment of many new industries since the war ended, factory employment has reached the highest level ever recorded, and has been maintained. The average employment over the whole of the year 1945-46 was 11,350 greater than in the last prewar years and 9,646 of that increase were males.

"Building permits for industrial expansion are being maintained at as high a level as possible.

"The first step towards increased regional development and devolution of administration has been taken by the division of the State into eighteen regions, each of which will have a central administrative area. It is proposed this year to commence with the decentralisation of the administration of the Education Department and, as officers in the Department become acquainted with the principles involved, to extend the policy with the ultimate objective of fully decentralising public service administration in the most advantageous manner.

"The State's extremely efficient machinery of industrial conciliation and arbitration has been improved and strengthened.

"In accordance with the policy endorsed by the electors, my Advisers will submit to Parliament a Bill to give effect to the 40-hour week in industry. They are confident that improved industrial conditions will produce continuity of production and promote harmony in industry. A number of large industries already operate on a 40-hour week

and my Advisers are confident that, with contented staffs, production will substantially improve.

“Employment during the past year continued at a very high level, and a shortage of labour was apparent in many occupations, particularly the skilled trades. The State Employment Exchanges have continued to operate effectively and the Juvenile Employment Bureau has increased its activities considerably.

“The Commonwealth Statistician has recently publicly announced that, on a population basis, Queensland's post-war housing programme is ahead of that of any other State.

“Housing is still one of the most urgent problems facing my Advisers, although satisfactory progress is being made. In the fifteen months from January, 1946, when the State assumed responsibility for the control of building, until March, 1947, a total of 797 new houses were built under the Commonwealth State Housing Scheme by the Queensland State Housing Commission, and by other governmental authorities, and at the 31st March this year 496 were under construction. In addition, it is estimated by the Government Statistician that homes constructed through private channels totalled 6,961, and 2,800 were under construction at the end of March, 1947. Of the 7,758 houses completed during the fifteen months, 2,220 were completed during the quarter ended 31st March, 1947. This shows a gratifying increase in the rate of construction. However, the shortage of homes throughout the State is still sufficiently acute to warrant the continuation of the restrictions on unnecessary building. The system of controls operating was devised to ensure that the construction of new dwellings had first priority.

“In the whole State during 1946, work on dwellings to the value of £8,818,000 was approved, and on other buildings to the value of £1,353,000.

“The encouragement given to the construction of dwellings, and the severe restrictions imposed upon unnecessary building in Queensland, have put us far ahead of the other States in the rate at which houses are being built.

“The number of dwellings completed in Queensland in the first quarter of this year represented a rate of 200 dwellings per 100,000 of population, as compared with 90 in New South Wales, 88 in Tasmania, 87 in Western Australia, 76 in South Australia, and 69 in Victoria.

“Statistics also show that, relative to population, more houses are being commenced in Queensland than in any other State and that the delays during construction are much shorter here than elsewhere.

“In the operation of the railways, train miles run show an increase of more than half a million, and ton miles an increase of 122 millions. The average gross load of goods and livestock trains was the highest on record, with the exception of the peak war years. Difficulty

was experienced in maintaining adequate services, in some instances, because of the deterioration in the rolling stock from heavy wartime usage.

“Unfortunately, the year's operations were marred by a major railway disaster on 5th May, 1947, when a special train was wrecked near Camp Mountain and sixteen persons were killed and twenty-nine injured. I join with my Advisers in extending sympathy to the relatives of the deceased and injured, and appreciation and thanks to the doctors, nurses, ambulance officers, passengers, railwaymen and others who assisted the injured. A Court of Inquiry was held into the causes of the accident and a report has been presented. My Advisers will deal sympathetically with compensation claims without prejudice to legal rights.

“Mr. F. H. Harrison, Chief Mechanical Engineer of the South Australian Railways, who was appointed by the Government to undertake an inspection and to report on the various locomotive workshops throughout the State, visited Queensland towards the end of the financial year. He is now engaged on the preparation of his report, which is expected shortly.

“The Committee appointed by the Government to investigate the electrification of the suburban railway system commenced its investigations in April last. The members are engaged upon the task allotted to them and their report is awaited.

“The financial year 1947-48 saw a return to the normal activities of the Main Roads Commission, following the curtailment of ordinary Main Roads Works during the war years.

“The expenditure by the Commission for the year was £3,411,000, as compared with £2,143,000 in the year 1945-46. In addition to the foregoing amount, a sum of £460,000 was disbursed in various ways, including the carrying out of works for Government Departments, and of this sum £135,000 was expended on the Burdekin River Bridge.

“Maintenance expenditure for the year, which included £233,886 deferred Maintenance Works, was the highest ever recorded for this type of work. Many new roads and bridges and improvements to existing roads are now in hand.

“The report of the Tourist Development Board on the tourist resources of Queensland and the requirements for their development has been presented to my Advisers. The report sets out, comprehensively, the tourist resources of our State, and makes recommendations for their development.

“The examination and classification of lands for the settlement of eligible discharged servicemen in terms of the Commonwealth-State Agreement is proceeding as expeditiously as possible. A total area of 926,334 acres has been investigated, or is in course of investigation. Ballots have been conducted for the allotment of lands in certain areas and others will proceed as the areas are ready for occupation.

"The Classification Committee formed for the purpose of examining applicants for land, to determine their fitness to engage in farming, has visited various centres in the State and has examined some hundreds of applicants. Some 858 have been declared eligible to acquire farms under the settlement scheme and 214 have been recommended for subsidised training in farming.

"There were 939 applications under 'The War Service (Sugar Industry) Land Settlement Act of 1946' by ex-servicemen for the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board's assignments to grow cane. Examination of these applicants is being made by the Classification Committee of three discharged servicemen, one of whom is a farmer. This Committee has the assistance of a local cane grower as an additional member.

"In addition to making mixed farms available pursuant to its agreement with the Commonwealth Government, the Queensland Government has decided to reserve for ex-servicemen at least one-half of the total number of portions to be opened as Grazing Homesteads within the five-year period expiring on 29th April, 1951.

"The Agricultural Bank Acts were amended in December last, reducing the interest rate from 4 per cent. to 3½ per cent. per annum as from 1st July, 1946. At the same time, provision was made enabling the Bank to extend the repayment terms of existing advances for such periods as it considered necessary, and also to extend the period during which interest only shall be payable should the Bank consider such relief measures warranted.

"Loans approved by the Agricultural Bank during the year 1946-47, exclusive of advances for drought relief, totalled £1,605,684, exceeding the previous year's record of £1,078,864. Of the advances approved, no less than £1,189,085 were in respect of discharged servicemen, covering all activities administered by the Bank. Since the introduction in 1945 of the Government's special Agricultural Bank assistance to discharged servicemen by way of loans on land mortgage security with freedom of interest and redemption for three years, servicemen's advances approved by the Bank have aggregated £1,900,425. The special concessions in respect of interest and redemption free periods apply to loan approvals of £1,509,848 in respect of 1,148 applicants.

"Because of the damage caused by dingoes, special steps were taken, and last November 367,000 baits were distributed from an aircraft over 97,000 square miles in the Cloncurry and adjoining areas. Plans for the continuance of this large-scale destruction of dingoes during the present year involves the dropping (in flights approximating a total distance of 29,000 miles) of sixty baits to the mile over an area of 280,000 square miles.

"The Co-ordinating Board constituted under 'The Stock Routes and Rural Lands Protection Acts, 1944 to 1946,' has submitted a plan of works which includes construction of eighty-four watering facilities at an esti-

mated expenditure of £86,000 during the present financial year.

"The Commonwealth Government has offered to the State supplies of surplus Army high explosives and consideration is being given to their use in blasting earth tanks by T.N.T. A site for an experiment has been selected and an early decision will be made.

"Provision has been made to charge a uniform travelling stock rate within thirty-six shires in the pastoral area of the State. In future, owners of travelling stock will be required to pay only one charge for the use of any stock route watering facility in these shires. This will be a decided advantage to owners or persons in charge of travelling stock.

"The Officers' Committee of the Northern Australia Development Committee, the Queensland representatives being the Co-ordinator-General and the State Mining Engineer, held three meetings during the past year and has now finalised a comprehensive report, which has been submitted to the Policy Committee, comprising the Prime Minister, Minister for the Interior, and the Premiers of Queensland and Western Australia. This report, which embodies recommendations on the measures necessary for the development of Northern Australia, should enable the Policy Committee to lay down a general policy on which a continuous and long-term programme for development can be based.

"A number of urgent matters have also been considered and referred to the Policy Committee, including disabilities experienced by families in the north, taxation, the pastoral, mining, and pearling industries, &c. As a result of the Committee's recommendations, action has been taken to re-establish the pearling industry, to rehabilitate the natives in the area, and to initiate surveys and investigations associated with mining proposals, irrigation projects, and other major developmental schemes.

"The Bureau of Investigation established under 'The Land and Water Resources Development Act of 1943' has continued its surveys of various areas throughout the State. As a preliminary to an investigation of all the Queensland rivers which flow into South Australia, a field survey has been undertaken in the area served by Cooper's Creek, and a comprehensive report on the potentialities of cattle fattening in this area is being compiled.

"On behalf of the Bureau, the Main Roads Commission has continued the engineering survey of the Burdekin River for irrigation, hydro-electricity and flood mitigation purposes. The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research has agreed to co-operate with the State in soil surveys and pasture experiments in the Lower Burdekin, and a Research Station is in process of establishment at Ayr. Investigation is proceeding on the possible establishment of an irrigation scheme for pastures for fattening cattle in an extensive tract of country in the Lower Burdekin area.

"The Bureau of Investigation has begun irrigated pasture experiments at the Gattax

Research Station; extended activities at Theodore on pasture irrigation on brigalow soils; and conducted investigations on possible water conservation schemes in various parts of the State.

"In the Fitzroy Delta in the vicinity of Rockhampton borings are now being undertaken to determine the extent of the underground water supplies. An intensive geological and hydrological examination of the Mary Valley has also been made with the object of determining irrigation potentialities of this fertile valley.

"Foundations for weirs have been tested in many areas and underground waters investigated with a view to location of supplies for irrigation purposes. A comprehensive programme of water conservation is in hand, and plant and materials for construction work are being assembled.

"It is anticipated that the work at the Stanley River Dam, which was suspended during the war, will be recommenced during the year if the necessary constructional resources and manpower become available.

"The past year has been marked by a considerable increase in Forestry activity as this part of the Government's plans for post-war employment. Marketing of timber for housing has been stepped up, and it is estimated that the output of mill logs from Crown forests for 1946-47 will be some 30,000,000 superficial feet in excess of that for 1945-46. An active programme of road construction is being carried out to open up further areas for logging.

"Soil erosion is engaging the close attention of the Government. The soil conservation officer of the Bureau of Investigation has instituted a State-wide survey of the effects of soil erosion, and progress surveys have been made. A soil conservationist was also recently appointed to the staff of the Department of Agriculture and Stock, and mechanical equipment for investigations and demonstrations of soil conservation methods has been acquired, and a survey of sites suitable for demonstration purposes has been completed on the Darling Downs.

"One of the most important developments during the past twelve months has been the investigation of problems associated with the efficient refrigerated transportation of fruit and vegetables to the northern and western districts of the State. The experiments have been most successful. A further development has been the purchase of a suitably situated property in the Cleveland district on which it is proposed to investigate many matters associated with the production of vegetables for the metropolitan and other markets.

"The Government is subsidising, at the rate of 6½d. per lb., the aerial transport of fresh fish from the coast to Charleville, Longreach and other inland towns. The service has been greatly appreciated.

"Plans are being prepared for the establishment of a tobacco experiment station on which problems associated with the production of tobacco, under irrigation, will be studied.

The cost of the station is being shared equally by the Commonwealth and State Governments. It is hoped that it will eventually be practicable to establish one such station in the northern tobacco producing areas and to establish another to serve the tobacco-growing districts in the Inglewood-Yelarbon-Texas area. To assist tobacco growers in the Mareeba-Dimbulah area, the Irrigation Commission has now commenced the construction of a large weir on the Walsh River near Dimbulah, which will store 790 acre feet and back up water to a distance of 2½ miles.

"Adverse climatic conditions again affected the sugar-cane crop. A pleasing feature of this industry, however, has been the increase, during recent years, in the acreage planted to varieties of sugar-cane bred by Queensland plant breeders.

"My Advisers are keeping in close touch with the Commonwealth Government to preserve the interests of the sugar industry at the Geneva trade talks, and will co-operate with the sugar industry organisations in representations to the Commonwealth Government for an increased price for sugar if the industry can submit a sound claim for this review.

"During the year Drought Relief assistance amounting to £374,007 was approved for loans to dairy farmers and canegrowers who had suffered through the drought. These advances were made available through dairy factories and sugar mills on an interest-free basis for the first twelve months and attract interest thereafter at the rate of 2 per cent. per annum.

"My Advisers have received an assurance from the Prime Minister that the Commonwealth Government will participate with the State in the drought relief scheme. It has therefore been decided to extend the interest-free period on drought relief loans for a further period of twelve months and to implement a scheme to assist dairy farmers to restock. The collaboration of the Commonwealth Government is confidently anticipated in a plan of finance for silo construction and fodder conservation on farms to obviate heavy losses in drought periods. Liberal terms for such financial assistance will be offered to farmers.

"Queensland's public hospitals and their staffs have given splendid service under difficult conditions. Queensland is the only State providing a complete free indoor and outdoor patient service, which includes the services of specialists, where available.

"The year ended 31st December, 1946, was marked by a further reduction in the infant and maternal mortality rates for the State. The previous lowest rates were recorded in 1945. In the achievement of these record low rates in two successive years, due recognition must be accorded to the Maternal and Child Welfare Services, the Hospital Services and the Medical and Nursing personnel of those Services.

"The success achieved by the Queensland Radium Institute in its relatively short period of operation has been commended by the

distinguished British cancer specialist, Dr. Ralston Paterson, upon whose recommendation the Government established the Institute. The Institute is now bringing its highly-specialised service to country sufferers through sub-centres at Cairns, Mackay, Rockhampton, and Townsville, and regular visits by a radio-therapist to certain other centres.

"The newly-established Queensland Institute of Medical Research is now in process of development. A noted Australian research worker has been selected as Director of the Institute.

"The Department of Public Instruction is at present experiencing difficulty in staffing schools adequately. The shortage of teachers is due mainly to the abnormally large number of resignations of female teachers, to an increase in the school population, and to the temporary withdrawal from active teaching of many ex-servicemen who are in attendance at special classes organised for their benefit. Of the resignations from the service for the 18 months ended 30th June, 1947, 70 per cent. were female teachers. Of the number of female teachers who resigned in that period, 68 per cent. did so to be married or to follow household duties. The balance was made up of those retiring because of having reached the age limit or for other reasons. Steps are being taken to alleviate the position.

"It has been decided to review the Syllabus now in use in primary schools and a Committee comprising representatives of the Department of Public Instruction, the Institute of Inspectors, Head Teachers and Assistant Teachers has this work in hand.

"Further progress has been made in the preparation of primary school text books. Several have been issued and others are now being printed. These books will be available to pupils free of cost, for use in school.

"It is proposed to set up within the Department of Public Instruction a Research and Guidance Branch to develop a system of vocational guidance so that every encouragement may be given to children to pursue the course best suited to their aptitude and ability.

"The Adult Education Scheme inaugurated by the Government has continued to attract much public support. Additional assistant organisers have been appointed and district offices opened at Maryborough and Toowoomba. It is intended to establish a district office in Cairns in the near future. Libraries are now available for the free use of Adult Education students at all centres where a permanent office has been established, and this service will shortly be extended to all towns where classes are held.

"The training and rehabilitation of ex-service personnel on behalf of the Commonwealth Government has been continued. Thousands of those trainees are well advanced in their new trades and thousands more are improving their status by attendance at part-time classes or by correspondence studies from State Institutions.

"A salient feature of the mining industry in Queensland is the vigorous exploration work for base metals in view of their ruling high prices and world scarcity.

"There has been a substantial rise in the gold production of the State. Tin production is being maintained at a high figure. Further capital is being sought for the purchase and erection of a copper smelter at Mount Isa Mines.

"Oil exploration has attracted attention and three groups of companies are now engaged in prospecting campaigns in the Southern and South-Western portions of the State. This exploration work is being very thoroughly carried out with the latest geological, geophysical, and drilling aids.

"It is proposed to liberalise mine workers' pensions, and in due course legislation will be brought before you for your consideration.

"My Advisers are giving consideration to increasing the benefits under the Workers' Compensation Acts, and the maximum amounts payable in compensation are being reviewed.

"Expenditure by the Department of Public Works on building construction during the past year showed a marked increase on that of previous years and compared more than favourably with expenditure in pre-war years.

"Administrative problems arising in the transitional period from a state of war to a state of peace call for a high degree of efficiency in the public service. In the past two years public servants have had very onerous responsibilities. My Advisers are confident that the loyalty and co-operation of the Service in the pressing problems of peace will not in any way diminish.

"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. An Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Acts Amendment Bill.
2. A Bill to amend the Workers' Compensation Acts.
3. A Bill to amend the Apprentices and Minors Acts.
4. A Coal Oil Shale Mine Workers' (Pension) Act Amendment Bill.
5. A Fruit and Vegetables Bill.
6. A Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Acts Amendment Bill.
7. A Bill to amend the Co-ordination of Rural Advances and Agricultural Bank Acts.
8. A Valuation of Land Act Amendment Bill.
9. A Bill to amend the Financial Arrangements and Development Aid Act.
10. A Building Operations and Timber and Building Materials Control Act Amendment Bill.

11. A Coroners' Act Amendment Bill.

12. A Justices 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 12.43 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. W. B. J. G. SPARKES.

Mr. Walter Beresford James Gordon Sparkes, having taken the oath of allegiance and subscribed the roll, took his seat as member for the electoral district of Aubigny.

#### ELECTIONS TRIBUNAL.

JUDGE FOR 1947.

Mr. SPEAKER announced the receipt of a letter from His Honour the Chief Justice intimating that His Honour Mr. Justice Matthews would be the judge to preside at the sittings of the Elections Tribunal for the year 1947.

#### PANEL OF TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN.

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

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

Eric Paul Decker, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Sandgate;

George Henry Devries, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Gregory;

Thomas Dunstan, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Gympie;

Paul Jerome Remigius Hilton, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Carnarvon.

#### MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

**Hon. E. M. HANLON** (Ithaca—Premier) (2.19 p.m.): I desire to inform the House that on 15 May, 1947, His Excellency the Governor accepted the resignations of the Hon. E. J. Walsh and the Hon. T. L. Williams as members of the Executive Council of Queensland and as Minister for Transport and as Secretary for Public Instruction respectively.

On the same day His Excellency the Governor made the following appointments:—

The Honourable Edward Michael Hanlon to be Premier and Chief Secretary of Queensland and Vice-President of the Executive Council of Queensland, and

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

The Honourable Harold Henry Collins to be Secretary for Agriculture and Stock of Queensland;

The Honourable Thomas Andrew Foley to be Secretary for Public Lands and Secretary for Mines of Queensland;

The Honourable Arthur Jones to be Secretary for Health and Home Affairs of Queensland;

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

The Honourable James Larcombe to be Treasurer of Queensland;

The Honourable Henry Adam Bruce to be Secretary for Public Instruction of Queensland;

The Honourable John Edmund Duggan to be Minister for Transport of Queensland; and

The Honourable William Power to be Secretary for Public Works, Housing, and Local Government of Queensland.

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

#### DEATH OF Mr. E. H. C. CLAYTON.

**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 30 December, 1946, of Ernest Henry Collet Clayton, lately serving in the Legislative Assembly as member for the electoral district of Wide Bay.

#### MOTION OF CONDOLENCE.

**Hon. E. M. HANLON** (Ithaca—Premier) (2.21 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 Ernest Henry Collet Clayton, Esq., lately serving the Parliament as member for the electoral district of Wide Bay.

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."

The late hon. gentleman was elected for the Wide Bay seat on 9 October, 1920, and served continuously as member for that district until his death on 30 December, 1946.

He came into the 22nd Parliament and served till nearly the end of the 30th Parliament, that is, through the whole of nine Parliaments.

I want to say, in moving this resolution of regret and sympathy, that the hon. gentleman served in this Chamber for those 26 years, and during that time I think he earned the respect and friendship of members on both sides of the House.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. HANLON:** He was a modest, retiring man, without any of the assertiveness that so often goes with public life. He devoted his time to the interests of the people he represented in this Parliament; and I am sure the people of Wide Bay were very well served by him.

I desire to add my personal sympathy with his relatives because when I first entered Parliament I became very friendly with Mr. Clayton; we were both addicted to a game of cards at the time and became closely associated for many years, before the busy work of Ministerial office forced me to give up all such vices. I do sincerely regret the loss of that hon. member.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. NICKLIN** (Murrumba—Leader of the Opposition) (2.23 p.m.): I desire to second the motion moved by the hon. the Premier, and to associate the Opposition with this motion of sympathy with the relatives of the late Harry Clayton. The late Mr. Clayton gave faithful service, as the Premier said, for 26 years, and he worked hard in the interests of the people he represented and all the people of this State. Before the passing of the late hon. member I had an opportunity of going through the Wide Bay electorate and I heard his electors expressing their respect for him and the thankfulness they felt for the work he had done. He did a great job for the people he represented.

As the Premier truly said, Mr. Clayton was a quiet worker but a constant worker. I remember only too well that when I first came into this Chamber he gave me very much useful information on many things, which has stood not only me but other new members in great stead in adequately filling the position of member of the Legislative Assembly.

It can be said truthfully of the late Harry Clayton that he was one of nature's gentlemen. I am sure we all very much regret that he passed away before he was able to enjoy the rest he so richly deserved after long service to the people of this State. I associate myself and the Opposition with the motion moved by the Premier.

**Mr. PIE** (Windsor) (2.26 p.m.): On behalf of my party and myself I desire sincerely to support the remarks of the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in reference to the late Harry Clayton. When I came into this House a new member, as you know Mr. Speaker an Independent, I became probably one of his closest friends

here. On the very day I entered this House he held out the hand of friendship to me and the record he leaves in this Parliament is that he never did any harm to any person knowingly. He was a splendid man and one whom we all appreciated. He earned the friendship of virtually every hon. member in this House. On behalf of my party I desire to express our sympathy with his relatives in his passing.

**Mr. AIKENS** (Mundingburra) (2.27 p.m.): Mr. Speaker, I desire to pay my personal tribute at the passing of one who can be termed a really great man. He was a great man because he retained natural right to the end. Very few people can pass along the road to public eminence without allowing it to affect them in some way or other. I knew the late Mr. Clayton only for the three years I have been a member of this House. On the very first day I entered this Chamber he came to me in a spirit of friendliness and offered all the advice and help he could possibly give. He was a simple soul, although not simple according to the interpretation given to that word by certain sections of the community today. His greatness, I think, lay in his simplicity and in his lack of what may be termed political sophistication. I was deeply grieved to hear of his death and through the medium of my few remarks today I should like to convey my personal condolences to his sorrowing relatives. When I read of his death I was reminded of the immortal words of Ingersoll spoken at the graveside of a man something like the late Harry Clayton. Ingersoll said—

“If every man for whom he has done some kind or loving service takes one blossom to his grave he will sleep beneath a wilderness of sweet flowers.”

Motion agreed to, hon. members standing in silence.

#### CAMP MOUNTAIN RAILWAY DISASTER.

##### MOTION OF CONDOLENCE.

**Hon. E. M. HANLON** (Ithaca—Premier) by leave, without notice: I move—

“That this House desires to express its deep sympathy with the relatives and friends of all those who were killed and with those who were injured, in the tragic railway disaster at Camp Mountain on 5 May, 1947.”

**Mr. NICKLIN** (Murrumba—Leader of the Opposition): I second the motion.

Motion agreed to, hon. members standing in silence.

#### PAPERS.

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

Details of Polling—General Elections held 3 May, 1947.

Annual Reports of the Department of Mines for the years 1942, 1943, 1944, and 1945.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

- Orders in Council (6) under the Magistrates Courts Act of 1921.
- Orders in Council under the Lessees Relief Acts, 1931 to 1932; the Purchasers of Homes Relief Acts, 1930 to 1932; 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; and the Contracts of Sale of Land Act of 1933.
- Orders in Council (6) under the Supreme Court Act of 1921.
- Regulations under the Elections Acts, 1915 to 1944.
- Proclamation under the Cash Orders and Hire-Purchase Agreements Regulation Act of 1946.
- Regulations under the Hire-Purchase Agreement Acts, 1933 to 1946.
- Proclamation under the Co-operative Societies Act of 1946.
- Regulations under the Co-operative Societies Act of 1946 (6, 13 February).
- Orders in Council under the Jury Acts, 1929 to 1934.
- Order in Council under the Money Lenders Acts, 1916 to 1934.
- Regulations under The Friendly Societies Acts, 1913 to 1943.
- Proclamation under the Justices Acts, 1886 to 1945.
- Balance Sheet of the Union Trustee Company of Australia Ltd. for year ended 28 February, 1947.
- Proclamation under the Diseases in Plants Acts, 1929 to 1937.
- Proclamation under the Sugar Experiment Stations Acts, 1900 to 1946.
- Orders in Council under the Banana Industry Protection Acts, 1929 to 1937.
- Orders in Council under the Fauna Protection Act of 1937 (5).
- Orders in Council under the Milk Supply Act of 1938 (2).
- Orders in Council under the Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Acts, 1926 to 1946 (15).
- Regulations under the Brands Acts, 1915 to 1945.
- Regulations under the Fertilisers Act of 1935.
- Regulations under the Fruit Marketing Organisation Acts, 1923 to 1945 (6).
- Regulations under the Poultry Industry Act of 1946 (27 February, 1947).
- Regulations under the Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Acts, 1926 to 1946 (9).
- Regulations under the Seeds Acts, 1937 to 1941 (13 March, 1947).
- Regulations under the Slaughtering Act of 1898.
- Regulations under the Sugar Experiment Stations Acts, 1900 to 1946.
- Regulations under the Wheat Pool Acts, 1920 to 1930.
- Return of all moneys advanced or expended under the Mining Machinery Advances Act of 1906.
- Regulations under the War Service Land Settlement Act of 1946 (22 May, 1947).
- Regulations under the State Forests and National Parks Acts, 1906 to 1941 (30 January, 1947).
- Regulations under the Land Acts, 1910 to 1946 (the Timber and Quarry Regulations of 1924) (9 January and 29 May, 1947).
- Regulations under the State Forests and National Parks Acts, 1906 to 1934 (29 May, 1947).
- Regulations under the Stock Routes and Rural Lands Protection Acts, 1944 to 1946 (24 July, 1947).
- Orders in Council under the Stock Routes and Rural Lands Protection Acts, 1944 to 1946 (20 December, 1946, 27 March, 1947, 22 May, 1947, 29 May, 1947).
- By-law under the Opticians Acts, 1917 to 1939 (12 December, 1946).
- Regulations, entitled the Milk-sellers Regulations of 1946 under the Health Acts, 1937 to 1946.
- Order in Council under the Medical Acts, 1939 to 1940 (20 December, 1946).
- Regulations under the Nurses and Masseurs Registration Acts, 1928 to 1940 (29 May, 1947).
- Proclamation under the Health Acts Amendment Act of 1941 (19 June, 1947).
- Regulations entitled the Poisons Regulations of 1947, under the Health Acts, 1937 to 1946.
- Regulation under the Motor Spirit Vendors Acts, 1933 to 1934 (16 January, 1947).
- Regulation under the Electrical Workers' Acts, 1927 to 1937 (30 January, 1947).
- Regulation under the Charitable Institutions Management Act of 1885 and the Blind, Deaf, and Dumb Children Instruction Act of 1924 (9 January, 1947).
- Regulations under the Apprentices and Minors Acts, 1929 to 1945 (16, 23, January, 6 February, 6 March, 8 May, 1947).
- Regulations under the Technical Instruction Acts, 1908 to 1918 (23 January, 1947).
- Regulation under the Picture Theatres and Films Act of 1946.
- Ordinances under the City of Brisbane Acts, 1924 to 1945 (11 January, 1947, 8 March, 1947, 29 March, 1947, 7 June, 1947, 21 June, 1947, and 5 July, 1947).
- Order in Council under the Labour and Industry Act of 1946 (1 March, 1947).

Order in Council under the Public Service Acts, 1922 to 1945 (10 April, 1947).

Order in Council under the State Development and Public Works Organisation Acts, 1938 to 1940 (15 May, 1947).

Order in Council under the Public Accountants Registration Act of 1946 (22 May, 1947).

Order in Council under the Bureau of Industry Acts, 1932 to 1934 (5 June, 1947).

Proclamation under the Public Works Land Resumption Acts, 1906 to 1940, and the State Development and Public Works Organisation Acts, 1938 to 1940 (16 January, 1947).

Amendments to the Public Service Regulations of 1923 (20 December, 1946).

Regulations under the Public Accountants Registration Act of 1946 (27 March, 1947).

#### LEADER OF OPPOSITION.

**Mr. NICKLIN** (Murrumba) (2.43 p.m.), by leave: I desire to inform the House that I have been appointed Leader of the Opposition; the honourable member for West Moreton (Mr. Maher), Deputy Leader; the honourable member for Stanley (Mr. Macdonald), Whip; and the honourable member for Fassifern (Mr. Muller), Secretary.

#### QUESTION.

##### STATE'S CASH BALANCES.

**Mr. KERR** (Oxley), without notice, asked the Treasurer—

“What were the State's cash balances at 31 July, 1947, under the following heads:—

(1) Trust and Special Funds, giving details of the Post War Reconstruction Funds; how held or invested, and at what rates of interest.

(2) Consolidated Revenue Account.”

**Hon. J. LARCOMBE** (Rockhampton) replied—

“I shall supply the information tomorrow.”

#### 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. CROWLEY** (Cairns) (2.57 p.m.) who was received with Government cheers, said—  
I move:—

“That the following Address be presented to the Governor in reply to the

Speech delivered by His Excellency in opening this the first session of the Thirty-first Parliament of Queensland.”

“May it please Your Excellency,—

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

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

I must congratulate the Governor on his being the first Queensland-born Governor of Queensland. His Excellency was a great soldier in World Wars I and II and I am sure that he will be a great Governor of this State. I congratulate him also and thank him for making a tour of Queensland so soon after his appointment. We in the North appreciate visits from the high officials of this State. We are 1,040 miles from Brisbane and we are also farther west than Charleville, and it is a pleasure to have a leading citizen—and His Excellency is our leading citizen—visit our part of this State. We thank the Governor and his good lady for the way in which they toured the northern part of the State and saw the whole of the North and the back country.

The development of the Far North and Far West calls for much consideration. This area must be developed. There are two ways in which it can be developed, one being by immigration—and by this I do not mean merely immigration from overseas. There must be much immigration from the cities as well. If we do not go ahead and develop the North and the West we shall not be spared as we have been spared in the past. For the other method of development will be by way of invasion from overseas and I do not think there is one member in this House who desires to see that. Everyone, irrespective of whether he is on the Government or the Opposition side, can play his part in ensuring that the North and the back country are developed in the way in which they should. In future we shall be looking not for promises in this direction but for action.

There can be no doubt that the Government are wise in taking steps to make water available to the various areas of the State by either the construction of dams or other means. The supply of water to all areas of the State is a tremendous problem and I hope that the Government will continue to pursue their wise policy of water conservation. The few dams that we have in the hinterland of the North are appreciated, but I suggest that before any big schemes are undertaken

in the future the lands to be served should be resumed by the Government for closer settlement. I hope, too, that the Minister concerned with this activity will keep in mind the desirability of looking after the young people of the North by giving them land at a reasonable cost and so preventing private enterprise from exploiting the expenditure of public money.

We of the Cairns district contend that we have the best sites in Queensland for the generation of hydro-electricity. In fact, in the Cairns district we have the only hydro-electric works in the State, and a second plant will be operating there shortly. I am a member of the Cairns Regional Electricity Board and by virtue of that position I am able to say that that authority proposes expending £1,000,000 on a scheme at Tully Falls, and I should like the Government to see to it that the people overseas and in the Southern States are made aware of the amount of electricity that will be available in North Queensland for the development of secondary industries. We want the decentralisation of industry, and to my mind North Queensland offers the best opportunities for its development.

I am pleased to see that the Government have it in mind to construct roads for the benefit of the settlers of the backblocks and so avoid the necessity of using railways, very often at great cost in both time and distance. The people of the outback are entitled to the best possible transport facilities available and I am gratified that the Government propose introducing measures to give them this much-needed help.

It was pleasing to note from His Excellency's Speech that the Government intend to continue their housing programme. It is essential that we do everything possible to provide homes for those who need them. Of course, it is not altogether the fault of the Government that the housing position has deteriorated to its present state. We all know that in the past private enterprise enjoyed a virtual monopoly of housing. Prior to the war, people were paying high rents for what were really slum buildings, and it is a disgrace to Australia that our young children are being reared in some of the houses in existence today.

The Government are to be congratulated also on putting into effect the best hospitals scheme in the Commonwealth. For many years now I have been a member of the Cairns Hospitals Board, and I take this opportunity of paying tribute to the medical staff, the nurses and the general staff of the Cairns Hospital for the way in which they carried on that institution short-handed during the war. These people have received far too little recognition of the wonderful work they have done.

The introduction of specialist services in the North is much appreciated by the people there. Little did I think when I moved in this matter that the scheme would be agreed to by the Government, and little did I know that one of my own children would be

amongst the first to receive specialist treatment. We in the North are now able to receive the same treatment as those in the cities obtain. We expect it and we hope for a continuation of specialist treatment. I thank the Minister concerned for his efforts in this regard, because it is a step towards improving the conditions of the people in the backblocks.

School committees are doing wonderful work in the North in the building of assembly halls and playgrounds, and the 50-50 grant to these committees on sums up to £500 in each year is appreciated. School grounds are being improved and being brought up to a standard necessary for the education of my children and your children, Mr. Speaker.

We have for a long time wanted to see secondary industries established in North Queensland and we have not been lacking in our efforts to achieve this end, but we have been told, for instance, that there would not be a sufficient demand for cement in the North to warrant the establishment of a cement-making industry there. We have not been asleep in this matter and from our inquiries we find that the demand in North Queensland approximates 25,000 tons a year and our future requirements are expected to be greater if we are able to build up the North as we hope. Only recently I saw in the paper reference to the formation of a company in Melbourne with a capital of £150,000 and an estimated output of 23,000 tons a year. We got a quote for a 70,000-ton output and found that the cost would be £200,000, plus the cost of installation. The need for cement exists in the North and we shall continue to press for the establishment of such industries.

I am pleased to be associated with a Government who propose to bring about decentralisation within the Public Service. It is necessary to have our Public Service divided so that a resident of the North can deal in the North with matters concerning that area. I understand that Queensland will be divided into 18 regions and thus the Public Service will be spread over Queensland. This will bring about a decentralisation of population and the placing of people into the backblocks of the State. This is a measure worthy of praise and the people of the North appreciate the step about to be taken.

I am pleased to be associated with a Government who intend also to introduce a 40-hour week in industry. We heard many squeals when night trading was abolished. It was said, "How can the man in the backblocks live; how can the farmer shop if he cannot shop at night?" But, Mr. Speaker, the farmer lived and if he found that he could not shop at night he found also that he could shop at other times. The Opposition will agree to the introduction of a 40-hour week in some three or four years' time—its members always lag three or four years behind any progressive Government.

I notice that we are to receive a report from Mr. Harrison in connection with railways and I hope that he has reported on the railway workshops at Cairns.

It is not very encouraging to a parent to think that his boy is apprenticed to a trade at a workshop where the machines are obsolete, or that he will have to continue to work on the obsolete machines after he has served his time. I know that the Minister has called for a report on the efficiency of railway workshops generally, and I am sure that Mr. Harrison, who has been charged with the duty of making the report, will not overlook the obsolescence of the Cairns railway workshop.

I desire to congratulate Messrs. Ferguson, Harvey, Byrne, and Rogers, the members of the Royal Commission on Tourist Development, on their excellent report. Very frequently reports are drawn up in a lounge or the back room of a Government building, but the report of the Royal Commission on Tourist Facilities was drafted by the Commissioners after they had travelled extensively in the North and seen the tourist attractions that exist throughout the State. The job was a responsible one, but they tackled it in the right way, by travelling the State to see the facilities for themselves, and in making their report they did credit to themselves and justice to the State.

I make bold to say that the tourist facilities in the Cairns district are second to none in any part of Australia. It is the nearest city in the State to the Barrier Reef; Fitzroy Island, one of many islands off the coast, is only four miles from the mainland, and 17 miles by water from Cairns. The scenic beauties of the Cairns district are not to be excelled anywhere in Queensland or any other part of Australia, and I venture to say that one would have to travel the world to see anything better. Therefore it is pleasing to know that the members of the Commission decided to see these tourist facilities at first hand, which is far preferable to the attitude of those who are content to administer Government departments without getting first-hand information concerning matters under their jurisdiction.

I hope that the settlement of returned soldiers in the sugar industry will be speeded up. Applicants for land have already been examined to determine their fitness as cane-growers, and I hope that steps will be taken, especially in the North, to enable them to get the advantage of a sugar crop this year. If the report is completed by the end of this month or the middle of next many of these new sugar-cane farmers will be able to get a crop this year, which will be of benefit to the district and to the soldiers themselves. I hope that the Minister concerned will endeavour to have matters expedited so that that worthy object may be accomplished.

It has often been said that farmers should be protected against the ravages of drought, and with that sentiment I entirely concur. The Secretary for Agriculture and Stock, who was a farmer in our district for many years, has always encouraged the farmer to guard against drought losses, and it is to be hoped that he will continue in that attitude. There have been many bitter complaints that dairy farmers were not given drought relief by way of a milk subsidy. While I agree that

any man who undertakes dairy farming is entitled to all the help he can get, still it must be extended on a fair basis. The farmer is the backbone of the State, for too long has he been the wood-and-water joey of the State. However, I cannot agree with the directors of quite a number of farmers' co-operative societies that a subsidy of, say, 3d. or 4d. a gallon on milk should be paid in certain periods of the year. The man who incurs the biggest loss perhaps is the one who has lost, say, 60 per cent. of his stock, and whose output has been reduced to about 20 per cent. of his usual production. On the other hand, another farmer may have a fertile dairy block on a river bank, where he is able to grow pasture to help him withstand the ravages of drought, and on that account his production is only reduced to about 80 per cent. of its usual volume.

Under a scheme such as that proposed the large and more favourably situated dairymen would receive all the benefit from a 4d. a gallon subsidy while the smaller man not so fortunately situated would get virtually no relief. The scheme would not help the man who needs help. It would merely feed the man who was always looking for a lot. I hope that some scheme will be evolved whereby drought relief will be more equitably distributed.

The North Australia Development Committee that has been appointed by the Federal Government will have great scope for work—there is no doubt about that. One-half of Australia is in the northern part of the continent, yet the six capital cities of the States are in the southern half. The capital city of the Commonwealth, too, is in the southern half, and 95 per cent. of the population of the Commonwealth is congregated there, only 5 per cent. being in the northern half. That is a sad state of affairs but nevertheless true. It is pleasing to know that the Commonwealth Government have set about to remedy this state of affairs and I hope that this House will do everything to help them.

Another important matter affecting Northern Queensland is mining development. If one cares to go 150 miles from Cairns in any direction, except seawards, one will find nearly every mineral that is known to man today. I would not say that all minerals are to be found in big quantities in that area but many of them are. Governments of the past have done great service in developing the mining potentialities of the North, but sufficient attention has not been given to providing amenities for the people settled in mining areas. As a result the miners, their wives and families have suffered severely from sickness. It is only right and proper that mining development should be proceeded with under the best possible conditions, bearing in mind that the best results are obtained by mining with modern machinery and enabling the people dependent on mining to live under modern conditions.

I congratulate the Secretary for Public Instruction on the amount of Main Roads work done by him in the North while he was in charge of the department administering

main roads. We cannot have sufficient roads, either in Queensland or Australia. We have a fair number of main roads and it is to the credit of that Minister, who was in charge of the pre-war operations, and his administrators, that we have such splendid roads in the North. Our objective should be to have good main roads all over the State, but to have them twofold in the North in order to develop its great potentialities. The Cook Highway should be continued right up to the Peninsula in order to develop its great possibilities. When the Cook Highway was constructed from Cairns to Mossman the population of that area doubled inside two years, which is evidence that people are willing to live in the backblocks if they get the roads and amenities they deserve.

Another important industry that affects the whole of our population is forestry. Reports disclose that the amount of timber made available to sawmills increased in the past year, but this notwithstanding a great amount of waste is going on in the forests. It is a shame that when timber supplies are short tops of trees and sometimes branches that could be milled to great advantage are not used. Timber men believe that 20 per cent. of the timber that is felled and could and should be brought to the mills, is left in the forests. Of course, people will go after big money and in doing so seek only big girths, leaving behind the small timber. There is a desperate need for timber and it is necessary that means should be devised to recover every foot it is possible to recover from the felled tree.

A number of sugar workers who have slack periods from November and December until late in the first half of the year could be employed on reforestation work. This is a factor that the Government should consider. It is, moreover, a time of the year in the North when men cannot be gainfully employed on road and other works. This work would be a twofold service to the country, first in supplying long overdue supplies of timber to the people and secondly in providing work for the workers.

It is necessary, too, that experts should classify the sawn timbers before they go out to builders. We should avoid sending out timbers that are found after four or five years to be not suitable for the purpose for which they were used. It is to be hoped that in the various regions of the State inspectors will be appointed to classify the timber that is required for certain jobs. It is very necessary to do this because otherwise great burdens may be thrown on the builders.

It is pleasing to note that the Far West and the North are going to benefit by refrigeration in train and other transport. In the North and West, too, refrigeration is essential in every home. It should be part and parcel of the building.

Between Mount Garnet and Cooktown we have in the great Dimbulah and Mareeba areas the greatest tobacco belt in Australia and we could grow sufficient tobacco there to provide for Australian consumption and leave some over for export. We have in the

North the most suitable area for tobacco-growing in the Commonwealth, and I am pleased the Government are giving consideration to this matter because I think it could receive greater attention with advantage to the State.

The sugar industry is the best organised agricultural industry in Australia, and its return is equal to that offering in any industry. The industry is efficient because it is well organised on both sides and both parties work together; and they have been able to sell sugar to Australia at a cheaper price than any other part of the world, although they have had to compete with countries producing sugar with black labour. That is a great credit to the industry, and it is to be hoped the fruit and dairying industries will take a lesson from the sugar people's book and co-operate in the same way. It is a pity that in the fruitgrowing, dairying, and tobacco-growing industries the conditions of the workers are not as good as they are in the sugar industry. It is a pity that people have to be asked to work for wages that are not what they should be. It is the Government's duty to protect these people and see that improvement is brought about.

The purchase of school textbooks has been a very sore point for years, especially with people who move from town to town, and many workers are in this class. I am glad to notice that the Government are going to supply new textbooks. We hope they will be supplied to all schools in the State, irrespective of their denomination.

I congratulate the Minister on providing for a permanent head at the School of Adult Education in Cairns. I happen to be a member of the committee of that board and I know there is an attendance of from 50 to 80 weekly and the classes have been very good. The Minister deserves credit for providing this avenue of education for adults. I hope it will be extended to other parts of the State.

I congratulate the Secretary for Public Instruction and his staff on the way they have looked after the interests of returned soldiers who are undergoing courses of training and rehabilitation. There have been wonderful results in the North. The way in which the two Governments, the Commonwealth and the State, co-operate in the interests of these men, who thoroughly deserve the training they get, is remarkable. I congratulate the Minister and his teachers in the North for the way in which they are giving this service.

The Committee of Direction of Fruit Marketing is a great organisation in the South. During the war period it was a great organisation in the North, but I think that northern farmers are entitled to some representation on that Committee. Today the C.O.D.'s activities in the North are used as a dumping ground for the South. We in the North do not mind using up the surplus of the South or having the South use the surplus, but we do not like fruit from the South dumped on our markets merely to cheapen the fruit to the retailers at the expense of

the growers in the North, who would thus be deprived of the return they are justified in expecting. The representatives of the farmers in the North should have a say in the management of the C.O.D.'s work in the North.

Reclamation plays a big role in the Cairns area, but the Cairns Harbour Board has been dredging the channel and emptying the mud about five miles out to sea, only to drift inshore further north. There should be some way of forcing a public body to use such spoil to the advantage of the district from which it comes, as in filling in mangrove swamps. Money is being expended in the eradication of mosquitoes and other pests, and it is to be hoped the Minister in charge of such matters will take a note of this practice to ascertain what remedy can be effected. This dumping of the spoil at sea has continued for some fifty years and with it thousands of acres could have been reclaimed and profitable areas made from mangrove foreshores, swamps and other waste lands.

Sewerage and town-planning at Cairns are necessary from the point of view of the town itself, the tourist traffic, and the health of the people, and it is to be hoped that the Cairns Council will have no difficulty in getting the money for these two projects when it puts forward its application in the near future. The work is essential.

In Cairns harbour we have one of the most splendid harbours on the coast, equal to any. The distance round the harbour is four miles and there is a 1,600-acre island in the middle of the channel. Cairns is a railhead and the harbour can be developed to be the equal of anything on the coast and it is to be hoped that it will be so developed, that it will be able to accommodate any overseas ships that may call at the port. I trust this work too will receive the encouragement of the Minister concerned.

Cairns has an excellent ambulance brigade. This body was the first public body on which I served and the expenditure some 15 years ago was just under £2,000, whereas today it has risen to over £10,000. It is the only ambulance brigade that has an aerial service to the backblocks. It is the duty of the people of the cities to serve their fellow men farther away and it is on that duty that we always keep our eyes. We believe that the people in the backblocks should have the advantage of an aerial ambulance incorporated with a hospital. To attend to urgent cases doctors from the hospital fly with the ambulance, and this gives the people in the backblocks a feeling of security to which we believe they are entitled. I congratulate the chairman and superintendent of the Cairns branch of the Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade on the great work it has done.

Mr. Speaker, I deem it an honour and privilege to have the opportunity, on behalf of the people of Cairns, of moving this Address in Reply and I hope that during my term here I shall be able to serve this State and do a little for the people of the backblocks.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. ROBERTS** (Nundah) (3 31 p.m.): I am very pleased to have this opportunity of seconding the motion so ably and conscientiously moved by the honourable member for Cairns.

I desire to associate myself with the sentiments contained in the motion. In particular, I desire to associate myself with the words of welcome to His Excellency. I feel that in a democracy such as ours the highest office in the State—that of Governor—should be open to those citizens of the State and this great Commonwealth who, by reason of their contribution to the general welfare of the community in any capacity, have shown themselves worthy of it. I am also satisfied that such appointments will in no way weaken our union in that greater Commonwealth the British Commonwealth of Nations. It is particularly pleasing, therefore, for me to be able to add my few words of welcome to His Excellency, an Australian and a soldier who has proved himself worthy of this high honour. I sincerely wish him long life and success in the discharge of the duties of his office.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. ROBERTS:** I take the opportunity also—and I am sure that every honourable member will join with me—of wishing Her Royal Highness, Princess Elizabeth, and our future Prince Consort, long life and happiness.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, Hear!

**Mr. ROBERTS:** I am fully conscious of the privilege that is mine in having been elected a member of this Assembly. I am aware of the obligations and responsibilities that I have to fulfill to the best of my ability, and, as a new member in this Assembly, I crave your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, and that of each honourable member.

From a perusal of past "Hansards" it would seem that it has become customary for those honourable members who occupy the Opposition benches invariably to refer to His Excellency's Speech as being nebulous, whether there is any foundation or not for such an assertion. I have no doubt that it will be suggested again, but after hearing His Excellency's Speech I submit that on this occasion there can be no foundation whatsoever for such criticism, if it ever existed before.

The Speech delivered by His Excellency this morning contained two elements. The first was a factual account of what the Government accomplished and the second constructive, realistic and progressive proposals for the pastoral, agricultural and industrial development of the State, and for the greater well-being of the residents of the State.

The factual account was succinct, but nevertheless pertinent. The proposals and suggestions generally were, as I said, progressive and realistic, and I maintain that they make manifest the leadership and statesmanship that are being rendered to this State by the present Government. It is pleasing to

note that the Government's work in this respect has recently been acknowledged by the electors throughout the length and breadth of this State.

This State is on the threshold of an era of great industrial activity and expansion. I have no doubt that in the next 15 or 20 years Queensland will be in the forefront of the Australian States in industrial development. It is the function of this Government to encourage and foster that development. It is our duty to ensure that every opportunity is given to the expansion and development of industries, but that encouragement and that assistance rendered by the Government must be consistent with our obligation, to preserve the advantages of such expansion and development for the well-being of the whole of this community, and consistent with the obligation upon us to protect our great resources from exploitation by a few for their own personal advantage and private profit. Our motto and watchwords must be, "Expansion without exploitation."

We know that Queensland possesses actual and potential agricultural and pastoral industries, great natural resources and mineral deposits such as are not possessed or enjoyed by any other State in the Commonwealth.

There is a world-wide shortage of coal today. In Queensland we possess easily accessible first-quality coal in deposits so extensive that this mineral alone opens up a future for this State that staggers the imagination. Cheap, first-quality coal, together with our vast deposits of iron ore and other minerals, and our excellent harbours, must of necessity attract great industrial activity in this State. History discloses that the country, or that part of a country that possesses cheap first-quality coal has an industrial advantage with which no other country or no other district can compete. I say that despite the atomic age and jet propulsion, coal is today still our greatest source of power, and it will remain so for many years to come.

I was very pleased indeed, therefore, to hear reference made in His Excellency's Speech to the Government's proposals for the development of our coal resources. Again I say that that development must be without exploitation.

Let us see to it that the advantages to be derived from the development of our resources are distributed equitably, so that every man, woman, and child in the community may have his or her share of the benefit. Let us seize upon this wealth to increase the purchasing power of the community generally and to increase the basic wage—which after all determines in no small measure the purchasing power of the community—a basic wage that today has in effect become the minimum remuneration necessary that a man, his wife and three children may subsist on. Let us lift that basic wage up to an optimum wage, that is, a wage that industry generally can afford to pay and a sum sufficient to enable a man, his wife and as many children as they care to bring into the world, to live comfortably and as essential units in our society, to enable them to enjoy life as

it ought to be enjoyed by all of us in this age which despite its many handicaps is still an enlightened age with many advantages, if those advantages are used properly.

We in Queensland today, as a result of the present administration, enjoy the most effective basic wage in the Commonwealth of Australia. But that is not good enough. With all this wealth at our fingertips I feel that the time has passed—if it ever existed—when a basic wage is justified that is always lagging behind the cost of living. I hope and I feel confident that the present Government will not lose sight of this matter as we begin to reap the advantages of the development of our latent resources.

Mention is made in the Governor's Speech of the contact that has already been made with various British organisations that are contemplating the large-scale development of some of our resources. That is a good thing and the Government are to be commended for the way in which they have already successfully encouraged the interests of British and other outside capital in this State and for the present negotiations with respect to the investment of British capital in this State with the object of developing our natural resources. If the government of the State were in the hands of men wedded to the sanctity of private enterprise there would, I feel sure, be so grave a danger to this State that this British capital might obtain a complete monopoly over those resources to the detriment of the well-being of the State. I am satisfied, however, that the present Government are capable and will control this development not only in the interests of those investing their capital in this State but also with the greatest possible advantage to the State as a whole.

In view of the criticism that has been levelled against the Government recently by members of political parties opposed to them and their political aspirants with respect to the Government's housing programme it is very illuminating and gratifying to me to hear mention made in the Governor's Speech to the effect that the Government Statistician has recently publicly announced that on a population basis, Queensland's post-war housing programme is ahead of that of any other State in the Commonwealth.

I fully appreciate the acuteness of the housing position as it still exists in Queensland but this should not influence us so that we deny praise where praise is due.

**Government Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. ROBERTS:** Hundreds of families throughout Queensland have been placed in new homes as the result of the erection of Government rental houses. Most of these people are grateful for what the Government have done for them. Without criticising those few who have real complaints—with which officers of the Housing Commission are expeditiously and effectively dealing from day to day—I have no hesitation in saying that the majority of complaints made by occupants of these Government rental houses are made by people who if given the world would still

clamour for the sun, the moon and the stars too. We know that the occupants of Government rental houses have to pay only a rental that their financial position permits and that if that sum is less than the economic rental of the house the balance is made up by the Commonwealth Government and the State Government on a 60/40 basis in accordance with the agreements made, I think, at the 1944 and 1945 Premiers' Conferences.

I feel that on the whole this arrangement is working out very satisfactorily but I do suggest that some consideration might be given to the possibility of excluding from that sum upon which the occupants' rental is assessed wages earned by junior members of the family. I feel that the 17s. or 18s. a week that a young man or woman in his or her teens receives is totally inadequate to keep that young man or woman, as the case may be, in clothing, food and reasonable entertainment and ought not to be taken into consideration in assessing the rent payable by the householder. I realise and appreciate that this is a matter for agreement between the Commonwealth Government and all the State Governments in Australia, and I appreciate the great difficulty that might prevail in obtaining that agreement.

Having been elected to this Chamber by a particular electorate it would be easy to overlook the fact that once elected we are all members of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland, not of Nundah or any other electorate, as the case may be. We must give full representation to our particular electorate's requirements but we must not lose sight of the fact that the welfare of all Queensland is the responsibility of each and every one of us.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. ROBERTS:** There is no justification for an hon. member to adopt the attitude that it is his function to obtain all he possibly can for his particular electorate and for other hon. members to do likewise and for the devil or the next election to take the hindmost. Such an attitude can only result in friction and in the final analysis in a division between metropolitan and country members.

I am satisfied that to adopt such an attitude would be an insult to the intelligence of the average elector. The majority of men and women in our cities and towns realise full well that notwithstanding the essential nature of their own work in our social and industrial economy, without the basic primary producer—the man on the land—they would not be able to enjoy the good things of this life to the extent they do.

**Country Party Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. ROBERTS:** They realise that their own welfare is so indissolubly bound up with that of what I term the basic primary producer that it is essential in the national interests that the farming and rural working community generally be given every opportunity so that they may enjoy the fullest possible compensation for their contribution to the national well-being, and that their lives may be made more comfortable and

more enjoyable. I am confident that the electors of Nundah, only a small number of whom are farmers or rural workers, will appreciate my attitude in this matter. I feel their welfare and the welfare of our people in our towns and in our cities is so intimately bound up with the welfare of the State as a whole that it is my duty to help to the best of my ability to preserve the place that Queensland already holds among the States of the Commonwealth and also to ensure that the whole of this State shall be developed so as to provide every man, woman and child in it with the best possible working conditions and the highest standard of living, provided of course that those people who expect this consideration are willing to do their bit, whether physically or mentally, towards the production of the goods and services that we require as a community in order that we may enjoy life as it ought to be enjoyed in a land free from fear of want and insecurity. There is no room in my scheme of things for the loafer or the man or woman who wants to sit back and enjoy the labour of others simply because he or she can afford to invest pounds, shillings and pence in industry.

In order that our basic primary producers may enjoy the fullest compensation for their lack of city amenities and that they may enjoy a more comfortable life, consideration must be given to three essentials: water and irrigation, transport, and electricity. It was gratifying, therefore, for me not only to hear mention made in the Governor's Speech of what the Government have done in respect to these matters, but to hear of the constructive policy the Government have in hand to improve the present position and to supply the people of our inland with fresh fruit, vegetables, and fish.

We in Queensland enjoy greater industrial peace than is enjoyed in any other State in the Commonwealth of Australia. This is largely due to our efficient machinery of industrial conciliation and arbitration. There can be only two reasons, therefore, for the statements made from time to time by Queensland industrialists to the effect that Queensland is in a state of industrial chaos. I suggest that the first reason is to discourage British and outside capital investments in this State in order that they may enjoy and exploit this field for their own personal profit and the second reason their desire to make political propaganda against a Government which on its record has shown itself to be motivated by a desire to govern and administer the affairs of this State in the interests of all without fear or favour of class or creed. I feel that those who have made and make such statements are doing a great injustice to the Government, and, more than that, are doing a gross disservice to the State itself.

Parliamentary supremacy is acknowledged as being the fundamental axiom of the constitutional law of the Imperial Parliament. Prior to Federation the six colonial Governments or Parliaments in Australia adopted this principle so far as colonial instrumentalities were concerned, the only limitation being the

overriding supremacy of the Imperial Parliament itself. The division and allocation of powers between the Federal and State Parliaments have to a great extent destroyed the doctrine of parliamentary supremacy in Australia but in addition, Mr. Speaker, this principle has been and is still being whittled away as the result of the growth in this country of what in the United States of America is referred to as the judicial review. To a great extent the justices of the High Court of Australia have it in their hands to adapt the Constitution to what they consider to be the changing needs of the times and public opinion and to the extent that the High Court invalidates statutes on quasi-political grounds I say the political and constitutional views of the justices of the High Court are of major political importance. Some believe that the growing power of Australian courts over our Parliaments should be abolished; others welcome the fastening of judicial fetters upon the Australian Parliaments. Whether we favour or condemn such judicial fetters is a political issue and I feel we should not allow the growth of this judicial interference to develop, as it were, by default.

But hand in hand with this growth of judicial review has been the growth of Federal powers and instrumentalities throughout the length and breadth of Australia. The Australian Constitution was a compromise, but since the inception of Federation the Commonwealth Parliament has endeavoured to extend its powers at the expense of those sovereign powers that the States retained at the date of federation. The Commonwealth Parliament has found in the exercise of its defence power during the two wars, in which Australia played a part with such glorious distinction a very effective and useful instrument with which to whittle away these State powers and this emasculation of State Parliaments, as one might term it, continues to improve or to worsen, according to one's point of view.

It is not my purpose to say that the growth of Federal powers at the expense of State powers is a good or bad thing, but I do say that we must consciously consider this matter and, having arrived at a conclusion, act accordingly. This is a vital matter, for in my opinion we must determine first whether or not complete unification—and that is what it amounts to—would be good for Queensland, and secondly whether or not we, as members of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland, elected to this House by Queenslanders, would be betraying the trust and confidence placed in us to preserve our present parliamentary system with its present division of powers, if we even passively acquiesced in what I regard as a determined and deliberate Federal programme. These are matters that I believe worthy of the fullest discussion and debate.

In conclusion, let me again express my pleasure at having had the opportunity of seconding this motion. It was a great pleasure, and I feel that it was also an honour.

Debate, on motion of Mr. Nicklin, adjourned.

#### SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

**Hon. E. M. HANLON** (Ithaca—Premier):  
I move—

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

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 4.4 p.m.

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