

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**TUESDAY, 19 AUGUST 1952**

---

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy



# Queensland Parliamentary Debates.

## Legislative Assembly.

### THIRD SESSION OF THE THIRTY-SECOND PARLIAMENT.

Appointed to meet

AT BRISBANE ON THE NINETEENTH DAY OF AUGUST, IN THE FIRST YEAR OF THE REIGN OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II., IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1952.

TUESDAY, 19 AUGUST, 1952.

#### OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

Pursuant to the proclamation by His Excellency the Governor, dated 3 July, 1952, appointing Parliament to meet this day for the dispatch of business, the House met at 12 o'clock noon in the Legislative Assembly Chamber.

The Clerk read the proclamation.

#### GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

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

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

“GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY—

“I have called you together to this, the last session of the Thirty-second Parliament of Queensland.

“At our last meeting in this Chamber, I expressed what then appeared to be fair hopes of the restoration to health of his late Majesty, King George VI, and an active resumption of his Royal duties. His passing, on 6 February, deprived us of a leader whose devotion to duty and to the welfare of his people will be long remembered as a shining example.

“The accession of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, was duly proclaimed in Queensland on 8 February from the balcony of this House. Messages of devotion and loyalty from the Parliament and people of Queensland, and wishes for a long and peaceful reign, were sent to Her Majesty and acknowledged in due course.

“It is impossible to speak with confidence about the course of world affairs. International relations are still tense, and the fighting in Korea and elsewhere goes on. The free nations continue to build up the strength necessary to ensure present stability, and to

make efforts to improve living conditions among the less favoured peoples of the world, as a guarantee of prosperity and peace in the future. The people of this country must make up their minds to make a worthy contribution to these endeavours by providing for present defence and future essential production. A sustained and purposeful effort by the whole community is required. It can only be made, before it is too late, if the nation can be made conscious in good time of the mortal peril in which it stands.

“A surplus of £45,395 was shown in the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the year ended 30 June, 1952. Receipts amounted to £55,753,114 and expenditure £55,707,719.

“The surplus was slightly greater than that estimated and was the thirteenth surplus to be obtained in the last 14 years.

“Expenditure from the Loan Fund amounted to £23,662,458 or approximately £6 million greater than the previous year's total.

“Railways, chiefly new rolling stock, absorbed nearly £6½ million; £1,172,000 was used to enable people to build and purchase homes through the State Housing Commission; public buildings cost over £2¼ million and land settlement and irrigation, over £3,100,000.

“Loans and subsidies to local bodies and Hospitals Boards from all funds amounted to £5,849,421.

“The protracted drought of 1951 caused heavy losses in livestock and a drastic falling off in agricultural production.

“In the financial year ended 30 June last, £291,869 had been approved to assist dairy farmers and £22,432 for sugar-cane growers who had suffered severely from the drought.

“In most districts, however, following the breaking of the drought, there was a satisfactory growth of pastures and late-planted crops, and subsequent conditions favoured the preparation and planting of a very large acreage of wheat.

“In the Burdekin area encouraging results have followed the work of a strong team of departmental technologists on all aspects of crop and pasture production under irrigation.

"A Gayndah district cattle station, purchased by the Australian Meat Board, was made available for pasture research to be undertaken by the Department in the interests of the beef cattle industry.

"On a sheep property in the Julia Creek district, facilities for research, particularly into the problem of low lambing in the north-west, are being developed.

"Work carried out by officers of the Department of Agriculture and Stock on dairy farms throughout the State resulted in the average production of the 44 demonstration farms being half as much again as the average of all farms during the drought period.

"New dairy research laboratories are to be established at Murgon and Malanda to supplement the work of the Brisbane and Toowoomba laboratories.

"Stock owners now have a better veterinary service because of the expansion of the staff of the Department and the increase in the number of veterinarians in private practice in country towns.

"Tobacco leaf production in Queensland increased from 1,072 tons harvested from 4,142 acres in 1950-51 to 2,250 tons harvested from 5,200 acres in 1951-52. To date, a total of 1,758 tons of this season's leaf has been submitted for sale by auction, but only 76 per cent. of this leaf has been sold. Growers generally have been disappointed with the aggregate returns received from this season's sales.

"My advisers urged at the last Premiers' Conference, the protection and encouragement of this young Queensland industry. They proposed an increase in the percentage of Australian tobacco to be blended with imported tobacco, and that the excise duty imposed upon Australian tobacco should be reduced, the reduction to be counterbalanced by an increase of tobacco import duties.

"The drought also affected Queensland's production of raw sugar for the 1951 season which amounted to 703,800 tons or 175,800 tons below that of the previous season.

"The value of the 1951 output was £24,200,000 or some £700,000 less than for the previous year.

"The decline in value, however, was largely offset by increases in the retail price of home consumption sugar in July, 1951, and March, 1952, and by the higher price received for the sugar exported.

"The 1951-1956 Sugar Agreement between the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments, varied by arrangement in March last, provides for an increase of £12 per ton in the net wholesale price of refined sugar to meet the continually increasing costs of producing raw sugar and of processing and marketing.

"The British Ministry of Food has extended the present arrangement for the purchase of British Commonwealth sugar for a further year, that is, to the end of 1959.

"The value of irrigation was amply demonstrated during the drought period and underlined the importance which my advisers give to the expansion of irrigation.

"Weirs with a total capacity of 32,430 acre feet have been constructed by the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission.

"Three were completed during the past year and seven weirs are at present under construction. During the current year construction will commence on four more.

"Work on the construction of the Mareeba-Dimbulah project, approved by Parliament last session, will be begun this year with the provision of a township for the workers at the dam site and of access roads.

"The Burdekin River Authority during the year completed a comprehensive report on the Burdekin River irrigation, hydro-electric and flood mitigation project. Design is well advanced for stage construction of the dam, which is being planned so that water can be made available for the generation of power and for irrigation in progressively increasing quantities.

"Fourteen ex-servicemen were settled in the Clare irrigation area last year, bringing the total to 67.

"Camp establishment and road access for the construction of the weir on the Burdekin River to provide storage to serve 200 farms has been completed. The weir construction will commence this year.

"The Millaroo area upstream from Clare has been surveyed for irrigation. It is anticipated that 22 settlers will take up farms there this year.

"Work on the Theodore area to be undertaken includes the extension of the irrigated area, further reconstruction of canals and installation of meter wheels, extension of electricity service and provision of aerodrome facilities.

"It is anticipated that all but minor portions of the concrete work for Somerset Dam will be completed by the end of this year.

"Only minor portions of the hydro-electric plant have yet been delivered, but it is hoped that the plant will be in service by about next March.

"Provision has been made for an expenditure of £88,000 for watering facilities on the Channel Country stock routes this year.

"The Bureau of Investigation has engaged in experiments at research stations at Theodore and Gatton with permanent pastures and other crops grown under irrigation.

"Stock grazing trials at Gatton with both beef cattle and dairy cattle have shown that the carrying capacity of permanent irrigated pastures has been in excess of two beasts per acre.

"In the current year a detailed land utilisation survey to develop the underground water resources of the Callide Valley will be undertaken.

"Approval has been given for the re-opening of 57 expired pastoral holdings, comprising 4½ million acres of cattle country.

"It is anticipated that 14 blocks will be excised from these holdings and made available for public competition.

"The new leases will carry heavy conditions of development to ensure increased production and, in many cases, improved employee accommodation.

"It is expected that another group of expired holdings with a total area of 3 million acres will be reviewed by the end of the year.

"Eleven expired holdings comprising sheep country and totalling about 2 million acres, will be subdivided shortly, and this should result in 52 new grazing blocks becoming available for public competition.

"The demand for sheep country is still very great as has been shown by the large ballots conducted during the past 12 months for 17 blocks, with a total area of 558,314 acres.

"In mixed farming, war service land settlement activities have mainly centred around the establishment of approximately 136 farms in the Wandoo-Taroom district. This comprises the first section where all existing leases have been acquired, surveys completed, and 36 ex-servicemen in, or about to go into occupation.

"Twenty-five new settlers are now established on sugar farms in the Abergowie area of the Ingham district, and applications for a further 15 blocks closed on 15 August.

"A total of 429 blocks suitable for mixed farming, sugar cane and tobacco growing have, so far, been allocated by ballot. In addition, 70 blocks of grazing land have been made available exclusively for ballot amongst ex-servicemen, and new and increased sugar assignments were granted to 220 ex-servicemen landholders.

"Agricultural Bank advances to ex-servicemen, under the War Service Land Settlement Act, amounted to £551,408 making the total of advances under this Act, £2,137,070.

"A sum of £663,682 was approved for ex-servicemen under the Agricultural Bank Acts and £481,796 of that amount attracts a three years' interest and redemption free repayment term concession.

"Queensland's contribution towards war service land settlement is in the ratio of approximately 10 to the Commonwealth Government's one, and where, previously, an advance of from £5,000 to £6,000 was required to place a settler in full production, rising costs have resulted in from £10,000 to £13,000 being necessary today.

"My Advisers have been unable to obtain from the Commonwealth Government an increased contribution towards these high establishment costs. This, combined with reduced loan funds, is making it increasingly difficult to maintain the desired rate of settlement of ex-servicemen upon the land.

"The Stem Gall Fly, introduced from Hawaii to control crofton weed, has now been successfully established on dense infestations in the south-eastern part of the State, and gives promise of good results.

"Investigations are being made into the possibility of controlling noogoora burr, lantana and groundsel bush by biological means.

"In 1951-52, 4,000 acres of new forestry plantations were added to make a total of 52,800 acres. Treated and protected natural forests aggregated approximately 25,000 acres.

"Crown forests were again exploited for all classes of milling timber and when full figures are available the previously highest annual cut of 232 million superficial feet, made in 1941-42, may be eclipsed.

"Secondary industries continue to grow. During the year 1951-52 the number of factories increased by 292 to a grand total of 4,776, compared with 3,087 the highest pre-war figure in 1938-39. Factory output last year totalled well over £216 million, a rise of 23 per cent. over the highest value of output ever recorded for the State.

"The proposal to establish a fertiliser works in Central Queensland to produce sulphate of ammonia, using pyrites from Mount Morgan and ammonia from Callide or Blair Athol coal, is still under examination. Estimated cost of the works is approximately £10 million.

"Of a total of 19,201 British migrants to arrive in Queensland since 1 July, 1947, 97 per cent. have settled happily in Queensland, the total number of returnees to the United Kingdom (including compassionate cases) being 3 per cent. This percentage of successful settlement is the highest of any State in Australia.

"Included among the total arrivals are 4,481 single men and women or childless married couples who were nominated by the State Government under a wide variety of trade categories and for whom employment and accommodation have been found throughout Queensland.

"Decentralised hostels for the initial accommodation of British families whose breadwinners are tradesmen have been opened at Townsville and Rockhampton and a further hostel has been planned for Maryborough.

"The success of this phase of migration planning is shown by the fact that, in less than twelve months, 24 families comprising 96 people have passed through the Townsville hostel and during the past four months 19 families of 77 people have been accommodated at Rockhampton.

"When the Maryborough hostel comes into operation an absorption of 100 skilled tradesmen and their families into the community can be expected each year.

"These activities, obviously, involve the expenditure of large sums of money. The volume of immigration is entirely at the discretion of the Commonwealth Government, but it does not share the cost of settlement and provision of additional services within the State.

"The total value of the State's mineral output during 1951 reached the impressive figure of over £20½ million as compared with nearly £16½ million for the previous year.

"Gold production, at a total of 78,580 fine ounces, shows a drop of 9,669 fine ounces below the 1950 output.

"Copper, lead and zinc each showed a decrease in output but, in each case, higher prices lifted the value of the production above that of the previous year. The total value was over £12½ million.

"The possibility of the exploitation of Blair Athol coal deposits for the production of liquid fuel was dealt with in a report by Powell Duffryn Technical Services Ltd., which indicated that motor spirit of a quality equal to that of a good quality motor spirit obtained from natural petroleum could be produced, and that, for cheaper production costs, the establishment of a fertiliser plant in conjunction with the oil-from-coal plant was most desirable.

"This report was examined by an inter-departmental committee which recommended that it be referred to the Commonwealth Government for consideration.

"Coal production was a record for the State at nearly 2½ million tons valued at about £4½ million.

"The new central electricity generating station at Rockhampton, to serve the Capricornia Region, should be completed to its first stage and in operation by September of this year. A similar station at Townsville, to serve the Townsville Region, will be commissioned soon afterwards.

"A programme of electricity installation in 10 western Queensland townships is reaching finality.

"Installations are now operating at Quilpie, Isisford and Richmond, and, before the end of the calendar year, all of the townships in the group will have their own electricity supplies. Investigations are proceeding into similar schemes for other small towns.

"The economic establishment of electricity undertakings at all of these centres has been made possible by Government subsidy of up to 65 per cent. of the capital cost.

"My Advisers are most gratified by the community spirit shown by the citizens of Brisbane and the surrounding districts in co-operating so willingly in the measures adopted to conserve electricity during the present winter. Without that co-operation the industrial economy of South Eastern Queensland would have been severely threatened by power shortages.

"It is hoped that no greater difficulties will be encountered before the first of the generating plant in the new power stations serving this part of Queensland has been put into commission.

"On the Tully Falls hydro-electric project satisfactory progress has been made by the company constructing the diversion weir,

intake, tunnels and power station. These works are scheduled for completion by June, 1954.

"Preliminary work associated with the construction of Koombooloomba dam is well advanced.

"Materials are on order and tenders are under examination for the clearing and erection of the 66kV transmission line to be built from Home Hill to the Burdekin Falls area, to provide power for the irrigation areas being established in the Burdekin Valley and power for construction of the Burdekin Falls dam.

"During the year 51 new locomotives, 12 suburban carriages, 16 brake vans, and 596 wagons were placed in traffic, by the Railway Department. Contracts were arranged for the supply of 12 diesel-electric locomotives for use on the lighter main lines, two diesel mechanical locomotives for the Innisfail 2 feet gauge tramway, and a small diesel locomotive for the Etheridge Railway.

"An order also was placed last financial year for the construction of 1,000 four-wheeled steel coal hopper wagons.

"At the close of the financial year locomotives and rolling-stock on order and still to be supplied comprised 87 locomotives, nine air-conditioned trains, six suburban carriages, 31 brake vans, 5,810 wagons, and six rail motor trains.

"Seven diesel-electric locomotives of a group of 10 being manufactured in the United States of America by General Electric Company, are scheduled for shipment towards the end of August, and it is anticipated the first of 10 diesel-electric locomotives being constructed by the English Electric Co., England, will be completed in October, 1952.

"The first air-conditioned train should be available for traffic in November next. It will be placed in service between Townsville and Mt. Isa. It is expected that deliveries of the remaining air-conditioned trains should be effected at three-monthly intervals and, as they are received, they will be introduced on the Sunshine Route to Cairns and on the sections from Rockhampton to Winton and from Brisbane to Cunnamulla.

"Although it was necessary, as a result of the curtailment of loan funds, to postpone the building of the new railway to the Callide coalfield, advice has now been received that this rail link will be required sooner than was anticipated because of rapid port development. The money needed for this work will be diverted from other projects which were tentatively approved.

"The cut in loan funds has halted work on the electrification of the Brisbane suburban railways, but quadruplication works will be continued.

"The total expenditure of the Main Roads Commission, including works for other Departments, the Burdekin River Bridge, and miscellaneous expenditure other than Main Roads, was nearly £9 million, compared with over £5½ million in the previous year.

"The substructure of the Burdekin River Bridge is now completed for all the southern spans and four of the 10 main spans.

"All caissons in the river bed have been founded, some 100 feet below the river bed.

"Work is in hand on the main caisson on the Ayr bank, and on completing the pier tops in the river and the piers for the northern approach spans.

"The Fitzroy Bridge, a most important link in the State's communication system, will be officially opened for traffic on 27 September. The estimated cost of the bridge is approximately £600,000, of which the Government will provide 48½ per cent. and the Rockhampton City Council the balance.

"Wharfage accommodation and the depth of harbour approaches at the various ports are being steadily improved.

"A conveyor loading plant will be in commission within the next 12 months at Gladstone for the handling of coal and pyrites, and at Rockhampton the Gaviol Creek wharf is being improved and provision made at Port Alma for the handling of pyrites.

"Improved lighting for night navigation in Gladstone Harbour is being provided in view of the anticipated greatly increased trade.

"Re-beaconing of the entrance channel to Cairns has been completed.

"Dredging plant will be strengthened by the addition, during the next 12 months, of two large suction dredges, one of which is being purchased by the Townsville Harbour Board.

"Tenders have been accepted for other dredging units and a new pilot vessel for the Port of Brisbane.

"The Queensland Government Tourist Bureau at its branches extending from Cairns to Adelaide, created a record during the financial year ended 30 June, 1952, by over-the-counter transactions of £814,300, the greatest in the State's history.

"In the post war period there has been an increase, each year, in the volume of tourist business.

"Attendances in State Primary Schools have continued to increase at a very rapid pace with consequent staff and accommodation problems for the Department. Despite the fact that 50 additional Junior Teacher Scholarships were awarded in 1951-52, the numbers of students in training are insufficient to provide for expected enrolments.

"My advisers are planning a further variation in the scheme of teacher recruitment to ensure a sufficient supply of trained personnel.

"To meet the increase in enrolments for 1952, 146 new classrooms were provided in addition to alterations to 20 small schools.

"During the year, delivery was received from England of 95 prefabricated classrooms of timber construction, an order for which had been placed with an English company at a time when the demand for additional school accommodation could not be met from

the building resources available to the Department of Public Works. These buildings will be erected at schools throughout the State.

"A contract was also let in England for the supply of a number of aluminium prefabricated school and institution buildings, and delivery of these buildings is expected at an early date.

"Despite the measures taken to increase the number of recruits to the teaching service and the provision of so many additional classrooms in schools, my advisers have found it necessary to alter the regulation governing the age at which children may be admitted to schools.

"Under the new regulation, children may be admitted to school and enrolled at the beginning of the school year provided that they attain the age of six years in the calendar year in which they are admitted. Thus, provided a child has attained the age of five years in 1952, he will be admitted to school at the beginning of 1953. The youngest child admitted to school henceforth will be five years one month on admission.

"State secondary education facilities were further expanded last year by the opening of new high schools at Cavendish Road, Brisbane, and at Ingham.

"Fifty post-primary sites have so far been acquired throughout the State and, as the supply position appears to show improvement, it is expected that the provision of secondary school accommodation will now show steady progress as funds are made available.

"With the opening of vocational centres at East Brisbane and Sherwood schools—and one to be provided shortly at Eagle Junction School—manual training for boys and domestic science for girls have now been made available to all children in the upper grades of metropolitan schools.

"As from the opening of the school year, agricultural subjects have been provided as an additional optional course of instruction at Ingham High School and at the secondary departments of Malanda and Kingaroy schools. This is in conformity with the recommendations made by the committee which, under Cabinet direction, toured the State in 1945 to report on agricultural education requirements.

"The number of full-time students at the Agricultural High School and College undertaking courses leading to a diploma or to the University Junior Examination has this year reached 400. The highest pre-war enrolment was 167 in 1939.

"The expansion of technical education continues and now covers a wide range of occupations.

"Management training is being conducted in 1952 on a further extension of the 1951 programme. Courses provide for training of foremen and potential foremen, superintendents, works managers and other industrial executives, as well as for office managers and retail store managers.

"My Advisers are of the opinion that it is the wish of the people of Queensland that a policy of free hospital treatment for public ward patients should be maintained and, for that reason, have not accepted the Commonwealth Government's hospital benefits insurance scheme.

"Works completed during the year include new maternity hospitals at Gladstone and Southport, a new General and Maternity Hospital at Millmerran and additions to the Mossman Hospital.

"Major hospital works are under construction at Barcaldine, Emerald, Thursday Island, Townsville, Charters Towers, Innisfail, Bahinda, Mackay, Rockhampton, Maryborough, Toowoomba, Jandowae, Ipswich and Brisbane.

"Construction of tuberculosis annexes at the Cairns and Townsville hospitals should commence shortly.

"Progress on the new Acute Hospital of 650 beds at South Brisbane was advanced to the limit of the resources available.

"Orders have been placed for the buildings for the establishment of a modern hospital for the treatment of patients suffering from Hansen's Disease.

"Special financial assistance was provided for the Cairns Aerial Ambulance Service to enable it to replace its destroyed aircraft and so continue the excellent service it provides for the far North.

"The maternal mortality rate last year was the lowest yet recorded. The number of maternal deaths was 1.18 per 1,000 births, having fallen from 1.45 in the previous year.

"Maternal and Child Welfare homes were opened recently at Ipswich and Rockhampton for infants requiring special feeding attention. Premises have been secured at Townsville for a similar home.

"In furtherance of the campaign against tuberculosis, mass X-ray facilities are now available at Brisbane and will be provided at an early date at Toowoomba. A mobile plant is on order for the mass X-raying of people living in the country.

"Expenditure during the year on new buildings and the maintenance of public buildings totalled over £2 million, a considerable increase on any previous year's expenditure.

"In view of the reduction in the Loan Fund allocation, the programme of such works for 1952-53 will have to be curtailed.

"In the financial year just ended the Queensland Housing Commission completed 2,062 houses and at the close of the year, had 2,119 houses in various stages of construction.

"This represents an improvement of 70 per cent. compared with the previous financial year.

"For 12 months to the end of March, a total of 11,541 new dwellings were built in Queensland compared with 10,309 over the same period of 1950-51.

"As an indication of the vast turnover in property the consideration passing under transfers handled by the Titles Office last year was over £54½ million, and advances on mortgages were well above £28 million. Deeds dealt with by the Titles Office totalled 123,760 and certificates of title issued numbered 26,689.

"The shortage of materials which hampered the progress of water supply and sewerage schemes in country towns, was being eased by the importation of materials by local authorities, when a fresh difficulty arose through their inability to obtain the necessary loan funds to carry out original construction works. As a consequence, several schemes are already in abeyance.

"Throughout the State there are under investigation 149 water supply works (including extensions to existing schemes) estimated to cost nearly £6½ million, and 53 sewerage works estimated to cost over £5 million.

"Sixty-seven water supply and 17 sewerage schemes fully planned have not yet commenced. The estimated cost of these works is over £4 million.

"Sixty-nine water supply and 22 sewerage schemes are under construction at an estimated cost of about £6 million.

"The new business written by the Life Department of the State Government Insurance Office during the year ended 31 December, 1951, totalled £6,741,870 in respect of 9,472 policies, a record for the Office.

"The Life Fund now totals more than £9 million.

"Loyal and efficient service has been rendered by the Public Service and my Advisers are appreciative of the co-operation of officers in the administration of the wide and varied functions of Government.

"As a result of claims submitted by the Public Service unions to the State Industrial Court the salary scales and classifications of officers of the Public Service, including those in the Teaching Service, were substantially increased during the past financial year.

"The estimates for the current financial year are in the course of preparation and will be submitted to you as early as possible.

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

A Bill to amend the Land Acts, 1910 to 1951.

A Forestry Bill.

A Milk Supply Bill.

A Bill to amend the Second-hand Fruit Cases Acts, 1940 to 1951.

A Bill to amend the Diseases in Stock Acts, 1915 to 1950.

A Bill to amend the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Acts, 1932 to 1952.

A Bill to amend the Harbour Boards Acts, 1892 to 1951.

A Bill to amend the Succession and Probate Duties Acts, 1892 to 1952.

A Bill to amend the Matrimonial Causes Acts, 1864 to 1949.

A Bill to amend the Testator's Family Maintenance Acts, 1914 to 1943.

A Bill to amend the Guardianship and Custody of Infants Acts, 1891 to 1928.

A Bill to amend the Queensland Law Society Acts, 1927 to 1941.

A Bill to amend the Trust Accounts Acts, 1923 to 1925.

A Bill to amend the Aliens Acts, 1867 to 1948.

A Bill to amend the Companies Acts, 1931 to 1942.

"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 12.32 p.m., resuming it at 2.15 p.m.

#### DEATH OF KING GEORGE VI. AND ACCESSION OF QUEEN ELIZABETH II.

#### REPLY TO ADDRESSES OF CONDOLENCE AND CONGRATULATION.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I wish to notify the House of the acknowledgement by the Queen of the Address of Sympathy on the death of the late King and congratulations on the accession of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth as follows—

"Government House, Brisbane,  
21 April, 1952.

"Dear Sir,

"By direction of His Excellency the Governor I am enclosing herewith two letters which he has received from Buckingham Palace, in reply to the messages of sympathy on the death of the late King and of loyalty and allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth on her accession.

"Yours faithfully,

"A. V. Stark, Lt.-Colonel,

"Official Secretary.

"The Honourable the Speaker,

"Parliament House, Brisbane."

"Buckingham Palace,  
3 April, 1952.

"Dear Mr. Speaker,

"I am commanded by The Queen to convey Her Majesty's deepest appreciation and thanks to all members of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland for their message of sympathy in death of the late King.

"Yours very truly,

"A. Lascelles.

"The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland."

"Buckingham Palace,  
3 April, 1952.

"Dear Mr. Speaker,

"I am commanded by The Queen to convey to all members of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland Her Majesty's

sincere and grateful thanks for their message of loyalty and allegiance on her Accession. The support and congratulations of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland affords Her Majesty the greatest encouragement at this time.

"Yours very truly,

"A. Lascelles.

"The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland."

#### PANEL OF TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN.

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

James Clark, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Fitzroy;

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

Frederick Dickson Graham, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Mackay;

Duncan Macdonald, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Somerset;

John Albert Turner, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Kelvin Grove.

#### BY-ELECTION DURING RECESS; ITHACA.

#### RETURN OF WRIT.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I have to inform the House that following the issue of a writ on 11 March, 1952, for the election of a member to serve in the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Ithaca, the said writ has been duly returned to me with a certificate endorsed thereon by the returning officer of the election on 5 April, 1952, of Leonard Eastment, Esquire, to serve as such member.

Mr. L. Eastment was introduced, took the oath of allegiance, and subscribed the roll.

#### DEATH OF MR. W. C. INGRAM.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I have to report that during the recess I received a letter from the Registrar-General enclosing a certified copy of the registration of the death, on 24 July, 1952, of Walter Charles Ingram, Esquire, lately serving in the Legislative Assembly as member for the electoral district of Keppel.

#### SEAT DECLARED VACANT.

**Hon. V. C. GAIR** (South Brisbane—Premier): I move—

"That the seat in this House for the electoral district of Keppel hath become and is now vacant by reason of the death of the said Walter Charles Ingram, Esquire."

Motion agreed to.

## MOTION OF CONDOLENCE.

**Hon. V. C. GAIR** (South Brisbane—Premier) (2.20 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 Walter Charles Ingram, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Keppel.

“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.”

Walter Charles Ingram was elected to the thirtieth Parliament on 15 April, 1944, as member for the electoral district of Keppel. He represented that district through that Parliament, the whole of the thirty-first Parliament and until his death on 24 July 1952, during the period of the thirty-second Parliament. I assure you, Mr. Speaker, and hon. members that it is with great feeling and deep regret that I move this motion. Walter Ingram was a man who served the people whom he was honoured to serve as the elected representative for the district of Keppel in this Parliament, zealously, conscientiously, and well. I feel the political movement to which I have been attached virtually all my life has suffered a great loss in the passing of Walter Ingram, who served it with advantage, not so much to himself as to Queensland and its people. As one who is privileged to lead the Labour Party in this Parliament I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, and hon. members that it was with a deep sense of sorrow that I learned during my recent northern tour, of the passing of my colleague and friend. I knew, as most hon. members did, that he had not been well for some time. A few weeks before his death I visited the Rockhampton district and he accompanied me to schools and hospitals and other public institutions within his own electorate and although he suffered then from some disability, his zeal and energy and desire to give service and do the right thing by the people were ever evident. The years that he served the people of Keppel, I believe, have brought advantage to those people and to the development of that part of Queensland. I have always felt that his zeal and his desire to give service to the people and his energy in doing so have set an example for all members of this Parliament, because it can be truly said of him that he never spared himself in giving the maximum service of which he was capable to the people who elected him to the Parliament of his native State.

Walter Ingram, like so many more of us, was not born with a silver spoon in his mouth. He had to work in many callings but whatever job he did he recognised that there was a dignity attaching to it and he did it conscientiously and well. For that I believe he not only merited the admiration of his fellow workmen, but he also did a great deal for those who were fortunate enough to be his employers.

As I have said, the late hon. member's party, this House, this State and, particularly, the people of Keppel have suffered a great loss.

**Mr. NICKLIN** (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) (2.26 p.m.): Mr. Speaker, it is with regret that I second the motion moved by the Hon. the Premier. It is one of the sad duties of Parliament, when we meet each year, to record the deaths of those members who have passed on during the recess and express sympathy with their relatives. Fortunately, it is not often that we have to record the passing of a member of the current Parliament, but on this occasion we have to do so and that is why I feel that this motion has a greater personal significance than motions recording the passing of those who have not been members for many years.

Those of us who had the privilege of knowing the late Wally Ingram appreciated the work he did and the service he gave to his people. As the Premier has said, he did a great job for his party. He represented an electorate that it was very difficult for him to win in the first place but as the result of the hard work he put in as representative of its people, at the time of his death it would have been very difficult to beat the late Mr. Ingram as member for that area. I believe that Wally Ingram consolidated that electorate by always being readily approachable. He served the people of his electorate well and as a result they accorded him their support at each election he contested. I believe the measure of work of any parliamentarian can be tested by the following he gathers to him during the time he works for that electorate and of my knowledge of the Keppel electorate I would say that the late Wally Ingram gathered about him a greater number of personal friends than the average parliamentarian. One could say no greater thing about him than that the people he represented appreciated his work and its value to them. I believe he died the way he would have liked to die, in harness. Right up to the last few weeks of his life he was serving his electorate and the people therein. This Parliament has suffered a great loss, as have the people of Keppel, by the passing of Wally Ingram.

**Mr. CLARK** (Fitzroy) (2.29 p.m.): I join with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in expressing regret at the passing of my old friend and colleague, Walter Ingram, and in tendering a message of sympathy to the wife and family in their sad loss. To me, Mr. Speaker, it was a heavy loss, because Walter Ingram and I had been close friends since boyhood. I recall that we first met on a railway-construction job away back in the early 1910's. Even in those days he was a very capable young fellow with plenty of energy and at all times prepared to fight for the rights of the working class. When he won the Keppel electorate he did a very good job and he consolidated his position in that electorate by very hard work. As has been said by the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition, there is no member of Parliament who has done more work for his

electorate than the late Walter Ingram. And he worked at all times just as zealously for those who opposed him politically as he did for his friends in politics. He did an excellent job for his electorate. Even prior to his election to Parliament, Mr. Ingram served on several public organisations in the Central District and did an equally good job for the people there as he did later as a member of Parliament.

This House has suffered a great loss indeed by the passing of Mr. Ingram, who, in my opinion, was too young to die.

Motion (Mr. Gair) agreed to, hon. members standing in silence.

DEATH OF MESSRS. J. F. BARNES,  
J. B. EDWARDS AND J. D. ANNAND.

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE.

Hon. V. C. GAIR (South Brisbane—Premier) (2.31 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 John Francis Barnes, Esquire, James Braidwood Edwards, Esquire, and James Douglas Annand, Esquire, former members of the Parliament 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.”

John Francis Barnes, who died recently, was elected as the member for Bundaberg at the beginning of the 29th Parliament, on 29 March, 1941, and he served that electorate until the end of the 31st Parliament on 27 March, 1950, a period of just on nine years. He died on 12 May, 1952.

James Braidwood Edwards was elected as member for Nanango on 9 October, 1920, at the beginning of the 22nd Parliament. He continued to represent that electorate until the end of the 30th Parliament on 21 March, 1947. He did not seek re-election into the 31st Parliament. He served through the whole of nine Parliaments, a period of approximately 26½ years. He was Opposition Whip from 11 August, 1936, until his retirement in 1947. He died on 9 July, 1952.

James Douglas Annand was first elected to the Queensland Parliament as member for Toowoomba on 11 May, 1929, and served throughout that, the 25th Parliament, until 19 April, 1932. At a by-election occasioned by the death of Mr. T. R. Roberts, Mr. Annand was elected to the 26th Parliament on 18 August, 1934, as member for East Toowoomba, and served until 9 April, 1935. He died on 7 August, 1952.

As hon. members are well aware, the late Mr. Barnes had what might be described as a very stormy career in this Parliament during the period he represented the

Bundaberg electorate. He was probably one of the most unorthodox and unusual types of Member of Parliament ever to come into this House within the memory of those of us here and perhaps many older men. It is said by some, of course, that irritants play a very useful part in a social economy, but with all my Christian charity I cannot believe that Mr. Barnes could be said to have served any real purpose in this Parliament. I often feared and felt that his conduct had the effect of destroying the prestige of the parliamentary system, which after all is one of the main pedestals of democratic government and democracy. However, as we all subscribe to democracy and as the late gentleman was elected by the people of the Bundaberg electorate, he had equal rights in this House, but there is not one of us who can truthfully say he did not abuse the privileges and rights of parliamentarians in this branch of the democratic system of government. We, however, deeply sympathise with his wife and family on his passing.

The late J. B. Edwards, as I have already said, was a member of this Parliament for a considerable time and I believe gave something of value to this Parliament, inasmuch as he brought to it a wealth of experience and knowledge concerning, particularly, the primary industries. He participated in the debates that took place in this Parliament during the years he was here with advantage; his contributions were always worth listening to. He was genial in his general conduct and he was, I believe, generally liked by all members of this House. Speaking personally, I liked the late Jim Edwards and although we differed politically I always felt that he was conscientious in the beliefs he enunciated and espoused whilst member for the electoral district of Nanango. I felt his passing because I realise that Queensland had lost a good son, one who had contributed much to its development, and as a parliamentarian had given good service to the people he represented and to the State generally.

Although the late Mr. Annand was in this Parliament since I came here, I cannot claim to have known him very intimately, but I do know that apart from being a representative of a section of the people in this Parliament he was a big public-spirited man in the district in which he lived and was several times mayor of Toowoomba, and in that capacity displayed civic activity, which I believe was to the advantage of Toowoomba and its people. In the short time he was in this Parliament I believe he did his best to serve the people whom he was privileged to represent. To his relatives we convey our sympathy in the loss of one so dear to them.

Mr. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) (2.40 p.m.): I join with the Premier in seconding the motion of condolence in respect to the gentlemen who have passed away, men who were members of this Parliament for varying periods of time. I had the privilege of knowing Messrs. Barnes, Edwards and Annand during the time they served in this House. Mr. Annand served

for only a short time but for his local-authority work he was well-known throughout Queensland. As the Premier said, he was mayor of Toowoomba for many years and president of the Local Authorities Association for a long period.

Whilst he was in this House he made some very useful contributions to the debates, and I felt that the House was very much poorer when he was defeated, especially as he had such a specialised knowledge of local-authority affairs. It was a great tribute to the late Mr. Annand that, after having been out of local-authority work for so many years, he was recently re-elected as mayor of his beautiful city. It was a great pity that he was cut off before Toowoomba could reap the benefit of his knowledge of its problems and of local-authority requirements generally.

With regard to the late Frank Barnes, as the Premier has said, I do not think this Parliament has ever known a more colourful or a more unpredictable member. Nevertheless, during the time that he was here, notwithstanding the various occasions on which he behaved differently from other members of this House, one cannot but admit that he was an excellent worker for his electorate, and for the many people who sought his assistance. He possessed an extraordinary personality. Personally, a more delightful chap it would be hard to meet, but his desire to bring himself before the notice of the public resulted in the rather unorthodox procedure that he adopted in this House from time to time. However, we live in a democracy and apparently his electors did not disapprove of some of the things that we may have disapproved of, because they returned him time and time again. It is a tragedy that he should have been cut off so young in life, and we all join in extending our heartfelt sympathy to his young widow and family, who have been deprived of their husband and father. When the annals of this Parliament are recorded, there is no doubt that a prominent position in them will be given to the late Frank Barnes.

The late Jim Edwards was a colleague with whom I enjoyed the privilege of working for many years in this House. I admired him immensely for his sterling work and his wonderful character. He did not have the advantage of education; he had to start work immediately he was strong enough, and consequently did not have the advantages of those who followed him. I should say, however, that when he left this Parliament, he was one of the best educated men in the things that matter; he gained a wonderful education in the hard, practical way. He started with nothing and ended a successful farmer in the Kingaroy district. If one looks through the volumes of "Hansard" on the table of the House, one will see many common-sense, practical suggestions that were made by the late Jim Edwards. He had a remarkable knowledge of the primary industries of this State, in addition to a great understanding of the State and its requirements, and he gave expression to both in many interesting speeches.

The late Jim Edwards was one of the pioneers of this State. He went onto the Darling Downs in his early manhood, and after striking a good deal of adversity there as the result of weather conditions he moved on and became one of the pioneers of the Kingaroy district. As I said previously, after years of hard work he finished up a successful man in that district. But he did not live for himself. He played a leading part in public affairs. He was prominent in the Farmers' Union. He gravitated to this House where for very many years he gave great service to the people and to the State. For a long period he was a member of the Royal Commission on Public Works. As a result he gained great knowledge of the State and he gave the benefit of it to those who came in contact with him, both in this Chamber and outside. His was a great record of public service, a record of public service that will be appreciated for many years by those who knew him and had the privilege of coming into contact with him. I join in extending our heartfelt sympathy and condolences to his family.

**Hon. J. E. DUGGAN** (Toowoomba—Minister for Transport) (2.46 p.m.): I should like to join with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in extending my sympathy to the relatives of the deceased members of this House, but I should like the indulgence of the House to confine my remarks to Mr. J. D. Annand, one-time member of this House and an ex-mayor of the city of Toowoomba. I came into this Parliament in 1935 and consequently I had a very close association with the late Mr. Annand, particularly in his mayoral capacity. Although he was very active in his opposition to this Government I always found that in civic affairs he laid aside controversial questions in order that he might obtain all the advantages and benefits he could for the people he represented in that sphere.

The late Mr. Annand made no pretensions to being a polished or eloquent speaker. He endeavoured to avoid all serious disputations. He had a happy, breezy personality and he was able to take part in all sorts of gatherings in a way that was quite pleasing to the sponsors of them. With him it was always a case of "all things to all men" and his attitude to many citizens whom others might have criticised was "There, but for the grace of God, go I." He was helped considerably by his understanding wife and much of the credit that accrued to him in his mayoral capacity was due to the wise and sympathetic understanding of his wife, who discharged the lady mayoress's duties with remarkable efficiency.

The late J. D. Annand was identified with much large-scale civic development in Toowoomba; inevitably he was responsible for much of the progress of Toowoomba and the Darling Downs. He played a very distinguished part in the field of local government and for a time was president of the Local Authorities Association. Like all public men, he was obliged to run the gauntlet of public opinion once too often, but after his defeat

three or four years ago he made a triumphal re-entry into civic politics by establishing a record majority. It is tragic that after this triumphal re-entry into civic affairs he should be stricken down in a serious operation.

As member for Toowoomba and one who was closely associated with the late Mr. J. D. Annand for some time, I join with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in offering my sincere sympathy to Mrs. Annand and the relatives.

**Mr. CHALK (Lockyer)** (2.49 p.m.): I desire to associate myself with the motion and, like the hon. member for Toowoomba, I should like to confine my remarks to the late Mr. J. D. Annand. As the Minister for Transport said, Mr. Annand played an important part in public affairs in the city of Toowoomba. To most citizens he was just known as J.D.; it was something that went with him throughout his public life and it was something that endeared him to all the people in the city that he loved to call the queen city of the Darling Downs.

The late Alderman Annand was mayor of Toowoomba for over 21 years, but, as happens very often with public-spirited men, at some time or other the people feel that a change may be in their best interests, and in 1949 Toowoomba was shocked when the late J. D. Annand was defeated at the mayoral election. At that time those who apparently thought they had the interests of the city of Toowoomba at heart felt that perhaps a change would be for the betterment of the city, and undoubtedly some felt that after so many years given to public life many of the late "J.D.'s" ideas had possibly grown a little out of date, but three years later Toowoomba returned him as mayor with a majority of approximately 10,000 votes, which I am given to understand is a record majority for the mayoral election for any city of the size of Toowoomba. That alone, I believe, is something that will live for all time in the memory of the citizens of Toowoomba, to the honour of the late J. D. Annand. His whole heart and life were in the future of the city of Toowoomba; and I am certain there is not one public-spirited citizen in Toowoomba who would not give the greater part of credit for the establishment of Toowoomba's water supply, the Cooby Creek dam, to the late J. D. Annand. In moving this motion we are honouring a man of whom Toowoomba has been extremely proud, and as one of the elected representatives of an area over which Mr. Annand had municipal control I want to associate myself with the motion before the House.

**Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra)** (2.53 p.m.): I have heard many motions of condolence moved and spoken to since I have been in this Chamber, and I always believed the principle embraced by the Latin motto, "de mortuis nil nisi bonum" to be the keynote of the remarks made on such occasions. Today I was deeply shocked to hear the Premier in what he termed his Christian charity, unable to find one decent word to say for one of the most decent men who ever

came into this Chamber, the late J. F. Barnes. It is true that he was a colourful character and it is equally true that he was very popular. When I came in he had been here for three years, and every visitor who came to see me did not ask to see the Leader of the Opposition, the Premier or any responsible member of the Government, but asked me to introduce him to Bombshell Barnes; and I gladly did so. The room he occupied was almost a shrine for visitors.

It is equally true that Mr. Barnes's best friends cannot claim for him that his speeches in this Chamber or on the public platform were models of Chesterfieldian elegance. But even his enemies could not say that at any time he resorted to casuistry, sophistry, or dissimulation, and although he advanced some theories and arguments that some of us may even have thought to be queer, at least he left his hearers in no doubt as to the message he intended to convey. When we talk of abuses perpetrated in this Chamber I can remember with considerable horror, as I may term it, many abuses perpetrated in this Chamber when the late Frank Barnes was here, but they were not perpetrated by Frank Barnes; they were perpetrated on Frank Barnes by the Government of whom the Premier is now the leader.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. AIKENS:** I have no wish to introduce controversy into such a solemn occasion, but I would say that the history of these acts of persecution and abuse by the Government are there recorded in the pages of "Hansard." The motions and the division lists showing who supported those motions will go down in the history of this Parliament as the blackest pages in "Hansard." Frank Barnes at least did this: he proved to the people of Queensland that the majesty of the law still reigned in this State because he very clearly and convincingly demonstrated that no power-drunk Government, even though they had the full support of the Opposition, could set the law at naught.

The truth of the matter is this: Frank Barnes was a kindly soul. Personally I do not know that a more kindly man ever came into this Chamber. It is quite true that at times he would launch what might be termed a vicious and vitriolic political attack on somebody with whom he did not agree on a political matter but the very next moment he would go right out of his way to do that same person a personal favour. I liked Frank Barnes. I respected him for his courage, and that is something that very few members of this House possess to the same degree as Frank Barnes. I know the ordinary common decent people of Queensland will regret his passing. I regret the words of the Premier and will conclude by saying—and like Frank Barnes I rarely resort to casuistry and sophistry—that in the sands of time of this Assembly Frank Barnes has left a foot-print whereas many of those who persecuted, slandered, and abused him when alive and who may revile his memory will leave only a heel-print.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah) (2.58 p.m.): I join with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in the motion of condolence for the late James Braidwood Edwards. Those of us who well remember the late Mr. Edwards deeply appreciate the generous terms and references made by both the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition to his work and services over many years. As stated by the Premier, Mr. Edwards served the electorate then known as Nanango for some 27 years and I believe that is one of the best tests we can apply to the work any Parliamentarian has done for his electors.

The late Mr. Edwards served the people of Nanango faithfully and well. He became highly respected for his honesty and sincerity of purpose. He came to the district in his early years and from that time he worked in the interests of the people as a whole. His work, done perhaps without publicity, gained him the confidence of the people and their support. That was clearly proved by the long period he represented them in this Parliament. There is no doubt, as my Leader has said, that Mr. Edwards has left behind him a record of service to the public for which the people he represented will be grateful and of which his wife and family may be justly proud. I join with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in supporting the motion of sympathy with them.

Motion (Mr. Gair) agreed to, hon. members standing in silence.

#### MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

##### CHANGE IN DESIGNATION OF MINISTERIAL PORTFOLIO.

**Hon. V. C. GAIR** (South Brisbane—Premier) (3.2 p.m.), by leave: I desire to inform the House that on 1 May, 1952, an alteration was made in the designation of one of the ministerial portfolios. That of Secretary for Public Works, Housing and Local Government has been changed to Secretary for Public Works and Housing. I lay upon the table a copy of the relevant "Government Gazette" containing public notification of this alteration.

(Whereupon the hon. gentleman laid the paper on the table.)

#### PAPERS.

The following papers were laid on the table—

Proclamations under the Public Works Land Resumption Acts, 1906 to 1951, and the State Development and Public Works Organisation Acts, 1938 to 1951" (3 April, 26 June).

Regulations under the Public Service Acts, 1922 to 1950 (2) (10 July).

"Queensland Government Gazette" dated 21 July, 1952, showing particulars regarding the officers of the Queensland Public Service as on 31 December, 1951.

By-laws Nos. 590 to 599, under section 134 of the Railways Acts, 1914 to 1951.

Orders in Council under—

The Justices Acts Amendment Act of 1927 (24 July).

The Queensland Law Society Act of 1927 (24 July).

The Aliens Acts, 1867 to 1948 (91).

The Jury Acts, 1929 to 1934 (22 May).

The Landlord and Tenant Acts, 1948 to 1950 (10).

The Magistrates Court Act of 1921 (2) (24 April, 22 May).

The Profiteering Prevention Act of 1948 (17 April).

The Supreme Court Act of 1921 (5).

Proclamation under the Aliens Acts, 1867 to 1948 (17 April).

Regulations under—

The Elections Acts, 1915 to 1948.

The Hire Purchase Agreement Acts, 1933 to 1946.

Orders in Council under—

The Factories and Shops Acts, 1900 to 1945 (2) (10 April, 10, 17 July).

The Labour and Industry Acts, 1946 to 1952 (17 July).

Regulations under—

The Fish Supply Management Acts, 1935 to 1951 (24 April).

The Factories and Shops Acts, 1900 to 1945 (4 June).

The Traffic Acts, 1949 to 1952 (12 June).

Proclamation under the Workers' Accommodation Act of 1952 (8 May).

Regulations under—

The Aboriginals Preservation and Protection Acts, 1939 to 1946 (10 April).

The Torres Strait Islanders Acts, 1939 to 1946, and the Aboriginals Preservation and Protection Acts, 1939 to 1946 (10 April).

The Nurses and Masseurs Registration Acts, 1928 to 1948 (24 April).

The Health Acts, 1937 to 1949 (1 May, 12 June).

The Health Acts, 1937 to 1949 (The Tuberculosis Regulations of 1951) (30 June).

#### GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

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

**Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

## ADDRESS IN REPLY.

## OPENING DAY.

**Dr. DITTMER** (Mt. Gravatt) (3.22 p.m.), who was received with Government cheers, said: I move—

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

“May it please Your Excellency,—

“We, Her 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.”

Mr. Speaker, we all listened with rapt attention and with what one might term exacting care to the speech delivered by His Excellency this morning. There were many features in it that afforded us gratification, but there were some elements that would occasion foreboding and might even bring to our minds some measure of alarm in relation to the unrest abroad and the international position in general. For that reason I believe it is imperative that we bring stability and equilibrium to the Commonwealth and States’ relationship. Perhaps the Federal Government of today might be a little more generous in the finance allotted to Queensland if one took cognisance of the numerous questions asked this afternoon by the Opposition, the fulfilment of which would occasion no small increase in expenditure.

All hon. members realise that this is a State Parliament with sovereign powers and endowed with legislative responsibilities and that it is entitled under the Acts which established Queensland to all the rights, privileges, and authority that are necessary to the exercise of both of them. In support of that view we have in the case of Queensland not only the Establishment Acts to which I have referred, but the appointment by Her Most Gracious Majesty of her direct representative here in the person of His Excellency the Governor, Sir John Lavarack.

In considering the relationship between the States and the Commonwealth, it is important that we be seized of the exact meaning of the institution of federation in Australia, what it has come to mean, and how it may differ from federation in other countries. As all persons probably know, federation is an association of States for

mutual benefit, arranged on one or other of two bases. We have in history numerous examples of Federal constitutions. We have Federal Governments in Switzerland and Canada, we have had Federal Governments in Brazil, Argentina, Mexico and Germany, but in these latter countries, through the machinations of the central power and very often because of the apathy and lack of pugnacity on the part of the State or provincial representatives, the central Governments have been able to usurp all governmental powers, with the ultimate result of the degradation of the States or provinces. It is therefore particularly imperative that this should not happen in this country.

In dealing with federation in Australia we have to remember the basis on which it was created. In one type of federation we have certain powers delegated to the central authority, the residue of powers or the bulk of privileges, rights and powers remaining with the States. That form of federation is one merely of co-ordination and not one of subordination. We find that federation took place in Australia simply because the States desired to derive the benefit of protection by conceding a minimum of powers to the central government. However, there is the other form of federation in which certain specific powers are given to the States, the remainder or bulk of powers going to the central authority. In Australia it is the first type of federation that was adopted in which specific powers are intended to be delegated to the central government and the rest remaining the province of the State.

We must remember the atmosphere in which the Federation of Australia was accomplished. What do we find? At that time there was intense State or colonial jealousy, with tariffs and restrictions of various types, which if we had not been a sane people would probably have been associated with martial conflict. We have to remember that the representatives at the Convention determined expressly that State rights and privileges should be preserved and only a minimum of power should be conceded to the central government, the Commonwealth of Australia, for the benefit and protection of the States, the remainder to lie with the States. But we find that in the process of time large powers have been arrogantly usurped by the Federal Government.

If it was not the intention to concede only the minimum of powers to the Federal Government, why did we have a written constitution? It was an attempt by the people at that time to specify exactly what they intended to hand over. Unfortunately all written constitutions suffer from two weaknesses, one the looseness of phrasing and the other the interpretation of words and the method of interpreting them. That is why we have looseness of phrasing in such terms as freedom of trade, commerce and intercourse in section 92.

The actual interpretation of words is the province of the High Court of Australia. Here I make it quite clear that at no time

and in no way, either revealed or concealed, do I impugn the personal integrity or character of the individual members of the High Court of Australia, either past or present. But a survey of the interpretations given in many constitutional cases reveals an interesting position. It shows that prior to 1920 the judges almost invariably realised the spirit underlying Federation, whereas after 1920 the judges of the High Court, who in many cases were being cradled when Federation was born—with one exception—Sir Isaac Isaacs—were wedded to the principle of handing power to Canberra. Prior to 1920 the High Court, except on rare occasions, tended to preserve the rights of the States. Subsequent to 1920 the reverse was invariably the case, and continual attempts were made to whittle down the powers of the States.

As examples of what I say, I quote the Wheat Acquisition Act, passed by the New South Wales Government in 1914. An appeal was made against the validity of that legislation but the High Court dismissed it. Again, I remind hon. members that no-one sought to appeal against the Sugar Acquisition Act, but when it came to the Dried Fruits legislation an appeal was lodged on the ground that it sought to interfere with trade and commerce and intercourse amongst the States, and the High Court upheld the appeal. I ask, what right have the judges of the High Court to say what is in the minds of the democratically elected representatives of the people? We have often heard requests made for the establishment of a Constitutional Convention, and almost invariably the intention of the people seeking such a convention is to hand over more and more power to Canberra. In my mind the time is more than ripe for the calling of a States Rights Convention and I venture the opinion that there is no more conscientious or competent champion of State rights than the Premier of Queensland, the Hon. V. C. Gair, who has shown that he is prepared to battle for the rights of Queensland. It would be interesting to see this question put to the people who are clamouring for the preservation of State rights.

Canberra, because of its situation alone, is not loved. Even Federal Ministers have to be held there almost by compulsion and this has resulted in the development of a bureaucracy and the intensification of bureaucratic control or, in other words, executive action by written word rather than by personal contact in many cases.

It is rather interesting to review control by Canberra over the past years and to see what this control has meant to the more distant and less populous centres. We have a typical example in the Northern Territory, over which Canberra has had control for 40 years. There we have seen very little growth in population, internal settlement, or even in stock numbers. Again what has Canberra's influence ever meant to this State? Has it led to any substantial development comparable with our potentialities?

Sometimes I wonder just how power has got into the hands of Canberra. It is held by many constitutional lawyers, men who are just as eminent as the judges of the High Court, that Canberra has been guilty of arrogant usurpation of power. We could quote numerous examples of this if time permitted. It is rather interesting that Canberra is still doing it and that it has been possible not always because of the apathy of State representatives or through the vision of Federal members but by one particular mechanism, the control of the purse. The Federal Government is making it a more powerful instrument in their filching from the States of their rights.

In determining upon Federation the people believed that they had protected the States, and had set a limit to the power of the Federal Government, but we realise that in the written Commonwealth Constitution there have been revealed weaknesses, weaknesses not only due to the looseness of phrasing but to the interpretation of the Constitution also. The people decided that there should be established what was to be called a Senate, a States House as it were, a State-defence agency. That was what was meant, but what has happened in actual practice? If the Senate is of the same political colour as the House of Representatives it serves as a rubber stamp but if it is of a different political colour it serves as a mechanism of legislative frustration. We could be faced with the certainty of a deadlock on every alternate election. I feel, as do most people, that the Senate is not serving the purpose for which it was established and that it should be abolished and I am sure that if the question was submitted to the people they would universally condone its destruction.

In dealing with financial relations, it is particularly important that we remember that through financial control the central Government have usurped the powers of the States. It was said at the time of Federation by a gentleman of vision, Alfred Deakin, that the rights of self-government of the States have been fondly supposed to be safeguarded by the Constitution; it left them legally free but financially bound to the chariot wheels of the central Government. Their needs will be its opportunity. We find that those words are coming true today, in relation to the treatment of this State and in no small measure in relation to the other States.

What happened subsequently in relation to financial control? We had the Financial Agreement, ratified by a referendum and incorporated in the Constitution in Section 105A. We saw the setting up of the Loan Council, constituted of the Prime Minister and the Premiers of the States or their representatives, but the Premiers have one vote each and the Prime Minister two, with a casting vote. In effect the Prime Minister, combining with two Premiers, could throw four States into bondage. This is no suggestion of majority control or a partnership basis.

If we analyse the establishment of the Loan Council and the Financial Agreement we find that Section 105A, although it is in the Constitution, is above it. Written into the Financial Agreement are the words, "Notwithstanding anything included in the Constitution." That means in effect that we cannot for practical purposes alter the Financial Agreement and the establishment of the Loan Council unless we can have the unanimous consent of 13 Houses of Parliament in Australia. That is virtually a political impossibility. In other words, we and other State Governments—and perhaps the Government at Canberra—are meeting uselessly because although we are able to determine how we shall spend money an extra-parliamentary association determines what we shall spend. In effect, control has been taken from the elected representatives of the people, and the Loan Council has the power to determine the amount of money to be made available to the people's representatives, irrespective of the revenue that might be available in any particular sphere by way of loans.

Let us examine the constitution of the Loan Council. It is responsible to bondholders and others and takes borrowing powers from the States who cannot raise loans of any kind without its permission. It would be very interesting to inquire into the effect of Section 105A on the secession of a State, the establishment of a new State, or on any pre-election promise. Any attempt by a State Government to implement a pre-election promise by legislation would be invalidated if it conflicted with Section 105A.

**Mr. Morris:** You can throw over the Loan Council whenever you want to, and you know it.

**Dr. DITTMER:** Eminent Q.C.s. have said that the Loan Council cannot be discarded without the unanimous consent of 13 Houses of Parliament.

What has been the approach of the Federal Government to the States and the effect of that Government's parsimonious attitude as the distributing mechanism of finance, particularly in relation to the economic responsibilities, which should be regarded as the sole province of the State? Let us consider the effect on the hospitals of this State. May I be permitted to traverse briefly the history of the hospitals policy as laid down by Labour in this State and compare it with the sad story in the other States that have not seen fit to follow in our footsteps? I should like also to relate what will probably happen to our hospitals policy under the skinflint methods of the present Federal Government.

Prior to 1924 our hospitals were conducted under the so-called voluntary system, and hospitals were maintained, or not maintained, in a dilapidated condition, they were ill-equipped, they had inadequate accommodation for patients and disgraceful quarters for nurses. They were financed by fees, contributions, street collections, button-days, and so on. Anyone who knows the full story of those

hospitals knows that they were closed more often than they were open, and they were a disgrace to the districts in which they were established. The result was easy to foresee, that is, complete collapse and closure. In 1918, the Brisbane General Hospital faltered and could not carry on. The Labour Government had to take over its control, and what is now known as Labour's hospitals policy was inaugurated in 1924, when the Government introduced what we now know as the district system. Under that scheme magnificent buildings were constructed, properly equipped, giving adequate accommodation to patients and decent quarters for nursing and domestic staffs. Finance was available and secure. It was provided by donations and fees and any deficiency in the cost of management was made up by contributions of 60 per cent. from the Government and 40 per cent. from the local authorities concerned. Later on that proportion was altered to 75 per cent. from the Government and 25 per cent. from the local authorities. Later, the Queensland Labour Government, with their ever constant consideration for the care of the sick and the welfare of local authorities, abolished the local-authority contribution and became solely responsible for the cost of hospital administration. That meant a saving to the Brisbane City Council alone since 1946 of over one million pounds. The result is that in Queensland we have a system under which not one person is denied hospital care of the most efficient type.

Compare that policy with those operating in the other States. For instance, in New South Wales there is a shortage of 20,000 hospital beds. Dr. Schlink, an expert in hospital administration, has said that in New South Wales they are 20 years behind the times in hospital buildings and equipment. The story in Victoria is worse. Only recently "The Sydney Morning Herald" said that patients were dying in their beds at home because there were no hospital beds available for them. That is not the position in Queensland and it would be interesting to compare the hospitals policy in the other States with that in Queensland because in the other States it not only makes a poor showing in relation to financial control but it is an absolute negation of the people's desires and rights.

The present proposal of the Commonwealth in regard to hospitals is an absolute negation of the people's policy and choice. For over 20 years our free hospital system has had the absolute endorsement of the people and it has had the endorsement too of members of the Country Party in this State, in some cases secretly and in other cases quite openly. Members of the Queensland Country Party have applauded the Labour Government's hospitals policy here.

Let us analyse the Commonwealth-States relationship in the matter of hospital finance. In 1946, when the cost was 19s. 1d. per patient per day the Chifley Government agreed to provide 6s. a day a patient. On 1 July, 1948, when the cost was £1 12s. 1d. the amount was increased to 8s. a day. In 1951 the cost was £1 19s. 10d. but

there has been no increase in the contribution by the present Federal Government. The cost of hospital care today is well over £2 a patient and still there is no suggestion of any increased contribution from the present Federal Government. In 1945-46 the total maintenance cost of hospitals was £1,829,882, of which the Commonwealth contributed £289,804 for six months. In 1948-49 the total cost was £3,783,247 and the Commonwealth contribution was £898,077. In 1950-51 the total cost was £4,523,413 and the Commonwealth grant only £918,340. Despite the vast increase in their revenue, the present Federal Government did nothing more than contribute £918,340. They did not even provide a contribution for pharmaceutical benefits for in-patients. In the last year £106,383 was contributed for out-patients.

The hospitals policy of this State has been endorsed by the people repeatedly at elections. The Federal Government are prepared to flout the people's wishes. This is shown by the fact that they will not contribute moneys under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Formulary unless we alter our hospitals policy. The notice from the Federal Government expires on Saturday, and if we do not make a charge in relation to our hospital policy we shall forfeit the right to those pharmaceutical benefits. In their arrogance the Federal Government will very soon—if they are not already prepared to do so—deny to this State the 8s. a day per patient if we continue to follow our present hospitals policy. In effect, this will mean that Queensland will be deprived of over £1,000,000 this year. It will perhaps mean more, because the Prime Minister has said that if we are willing to make a charge they will make a contribution, not of 8s. but of 12s. a day. That would mean a denial to the people of Queensland of over £1,500,000. That is not going to be denied to the people of Victoria or New South Wales. Is not that an arbitrary discrimination between the States and the citizens?

If the Federal Government have the courage to face a universal problem such as sickness, let them put forward a policy of national insurance, on the promise of which the Prime Minister went in. It must be realised that this is an attempt to force us back 30 years in relation to hospital services. It is an attempt to destroy Queensland's stable Government—the people's Government. That shows what the methods of the Federal Government will mean in relation to hospital services.

Then let us take the railways and let us review what is going to happen there. We find that during the years of the war and since the war everyone, including members of the Opposition, have repeatedly expressed admiration of the magnificent job done by the Queensland railways under extraordinarily difficult conditions—a job for which the railways were not intended. Not only did the railways win the admiration of members of this House, but the admiration of the southern people also, at least for the time being. This Government, seized of their social and

economic responsibility, have faced the task of rehabilitation and new development work in connection with the railways in a manful way. They were prepared this year to face up to a rehabilitation programme of £10,785,000. What happened? The Federal Government, forgetting the obligation owed to the railways of this State by the citizens of Australia—forgetting the need for gratitude for the magnificent job already accomplished, and forgetting the contribution made to the defence of Australia, cut loan money by 25 per cent., which means a reduction of £2,536,900.

I feel certain that if the members of the Country Party are honest they will express unanimous approval of one reduction—£186,600 in the grant for the electrification of the city of Brisbane. (Opposition interjections.)

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Dr. DITTMER:** They would deny to the citizens of Brisbane the right to the convenience of modern railway electrification. (Opposition interjections.)

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I hope hon. members will obey my call to order. I ask hon. members to bear in mind that it is not usual to interject when an hon. member is moving the Address in Reply.

**Dr. DITTMER:** It would be rather interesting and the discussion would be unusual if the Opposition by any mischance were returned as the Government, to see the net result of a denial by the Country Party of the electrification of the city of Brisbane and perhaps the positive approach of the Liberals to that necessary work. Of course, now they express unanimous disapproval of it. But now let me tell them just what this reduction means to country areas and, with that knowledge, let them go forth into their areas and tell the people who elected them what the Federal Liberal-Country Party Government are prepared to deny them. In relation to the Rockhampton, Townsville, Cairns, and other workshops, it means a reduction of £270,900, a reduction of over 50 per cent.; in quadruplication and duplication £80,000; in refreshment rooms, £19,500; new cottages, £32,470; siding accommodation, 19,000; strengthening of bridges, £21,130; water supply for country districts, £35,000; new goods office at Cairns, £7,200; Callide line, £51,493; Emerald, £7,800; reduction of grades, £55,000; Rockhampton, £131,470. These are very interesting figures in view of the denial of the reasonable request made by the State Government to the Federal Government. These are just a few of the jobs in the country that are denied to the country people because of the action of the present unsympathetic Federal Government.

We now come to a particularly important phase of the life of people in this country in which it is contended we are maintaining the principle of an Australian Christian civilisation—housing. There will be no interruption from the Opposition in relation to this,

surely, because I believe that they are decent enough to agree with me that housing is the entitlement of each and every family man and each and every child in the community. What do we find? The Queensland Government had accomplished the best performance of all the States in the Commonwealth and they had every justification for going forth and seeking adequate provision for the erection of homes. I recall the words of certain Federal members in relation to this matter, but I will not repeat them; let me give to the House a few figures to show how Queensland is being denied homes. As is known, in May this year £22,000,000 was allocated for homes. Because of intense representation by the Queensland Government through the agency of the present Premier a special meeting of the Loan Council was called and an additional £8,000,000 was provided. But let me give hon. members details of the arbitrary division of this £30,000,000 and the ill-effects it has had on this particular State. The allocations were as follows:—

	£
New South Wales ..	12,100,000
Victoria .. ..	11,265,000
Queensland .. ..	3,730,000
Western Australia ..	2,905,000

An analysis in relation to the basis of population shows how adversely Queensland is affected. Had the money been allocated on the basis of population, the States would have received the following amounts—

	£
New South Wales ..	13,482,000
Victoria .. ..	9,237,000
Queensland .. ..	4,917,000
Western Australia ..	2,364,000

On further analysis, I find that if the money had been allocated on the basis of performance in the first three-quarters of last year—I do not take that period for any snide reason but because they were the only figures available to me, although I understand that the figures for the last quarter would have made my case still more effective—the States would have received—

	£
New South Wales ..	11,489,000
Victoria .. ..	9,734,000
Queensland .. ..	5,319,000
Western Australia ..	3,458,000

It will be seen, therefore, that Queensland has been extremely unfairly treated, if we make the analysis on any reasonable basis. Actually we have received approximately £3,700,000 whereas, if the money had been distributed on the basis of population we should have been entitled to £4,900,000 and if performance had been taken as the basis to £5,300,000.

In case the accuracy of my figures should be questioned, I quote from the report of the Housing Division of the Ministry of National Development, Canberra, for the three quarters ending 31 March, 1952. They

show that the following numbers of houses were under construction in the various States as at 1 July, 1951—

New South Wales .. ..	5,085
Victoria .. ..	3,422
Queensland .. ..	986
Western Australia .. ..	1,007

The houses completed between 1 July, 1951 and 31 March, 1952 were—

New South Wales .. ..	2,760
Victoria .. ..	2,125
Queensland .. ..	965
Western Australia .. ..	796

The houses under construction as at 30 March, 1952 were—

New South Wales .. ..	4,992
Victoria .. ..	3,863
Queensland .. ..	1,816
Western Australia .. ..	1,051

Assuming that the houses under construction as at 1 July, 1951 and 31 March, 1952 to be 30 per cent completed, and relating these incompletes to completed dwellings, we get this comparison between the States—

New South Wales .. ..	2,685
Victoria .. ..	2,272
Queensland .. ..	1,242
Western Australia .. ..	811

Taking Queensland as being 100 per cent., we find the comparison to be—

	Per cent.
New South Wales .. ..	216
Victoria .. ..	183
Queensland .. ..	100
Western Australia .. ..	65

(Time, on motion of Mr. Gunn, extended).

**Dr. DITTMER:** I thank the House for its courtesy and consideration.

Thus it will be seen that because of the Commonwealth's dictatorial approach to this matter, the result in effect is that although New South Wales constructed a little more than twice the number of houses Queensland did that State received three and a-quarter times more money than was allowed to Queensland, that although Victoria constructed 1-2/3rds the number of houses erected in Queensland that State received three times more money than Queensland, and that although Western Australia constructed only 65 per cent. of the number erected in Queensland it received 80 per cent. of the amount of money received by Queensland. Those figures should be enough to deter hon. members opposite from supporting a case for the retention of the present Federal Government and their system of control.

We see ominous signs that hon. members opposite will assume the role of attackers of the Queensland Government, of the Queensland Housing Commission and its Minister in particular, over the erection of prefabricated homes. I have already seen statements in the Press that Opposition

members are blaming the Queensland Government for the relative idleness of timber mills and the lack of work for builders and contractors, but they should in all decency and in a sense of fairness lay the blame where it rightly belongs—at the feet of the Federal Government. I say that for several reasons, the paramount ones being the restriction of credit and the unlimited importation of overseas timber. They went so far as to take the duty off imported timber and made the rebate duty retrospective for six months. It is questionable whether the customer received the rebate. In the three months before they decided on the policy of "no credit," they allowed the importation of 200,000,000 ft. of overseas timber. That is the factor behind the relative idleness of timber mills and the throwing of builders out of work.

In relation to prefabricated homes let me refresh the memories of hon. members opposite. In 1950 the Rt. Hon. R. G. Casey, when Minister for National Development, introduced a Bill seeking authority of the Federal Parliament for the payment to State Governments of £300 for each house they imported into Australia up to 30,000 made certain statements and it is rather interesting that section 1 clause 6 Commonwealth States Housing Agreements says the Commonwealth Government will make available to the States the moneys required for housing. It will be noted that there is no use of the word "may"—it is the obligation of compulsion—but with rare abandon the Commonwealth Government has seen fit to deny their obligation. They have reneged. They have caused embarrassment to the States and it is our responsibility as a Parliament to lay the blame at their feet.

Let me read the exact words of the Rt. Hon. R. G. Casey in bringing in his Bill. He said—

".....We must bring houses from abroad because we need many more houses than we can at present build ourselves. Time is the essence of the contract. A greatly increased population in the long, or not very long run, is the very condition of our continued existence as a nation. If we turn away immigrants now, the chance may not come to us again. Yet housing is the sine qua non of our immigration programme. We must have houses now.

"The overseas mission reported that 20,000 houses should be available from abroad by the end of 1951 and 40,000 a year thereafter. The world-wide rearmament programme already threatens our supplies affording another reason if we need it to act now.

"Australia must have more houses in the years immediately ahead. With all we can do ourselves, there is still in these immediate years, a gap between the houses we ourselves can build and those we need. This gap can be bridged in part by importation from overseas of complete houses. They will be used in a special way to aid our vital industries.

"The Commonwealth is importing houses for its own needs and this Bill is designed

to stimulate their use in the much wider field under which the constitution belongs to the States. I believe it is well-designed for the purpose and I commend it to hon. members as a milestone in our national development."

Those were his words in introducing the Bill authorising the importation of 30,000 prefabricated houses. The Federal Government agreed to give £300 by way of a clause of compulsion and agreed to pay other costs. If the States had ordered the 30,000 houses mentioned it would have meant £9,000,000 in subsidy and approximately £50,000,000 in other costs. What was the story? Only 11,260 houses have been imported, involving a total of, say, £20,000,000, yet the Commonwealth Government have seen fit to repudiate their responsibility to the States. They have reneged and have caused the curtailment of the Queensland State housing projects. If there is any blame for this I ask hon. members opposite, in all legislative decency, to debit it to the Federal Government.

There are many other phases of our legislative responsibilities in which we have been seriously curtailed by the present Federal Government. In war-service land settlement, we find that there has been a reduction in the total vote from £1,045,500 to £700,000, and that is something that the Federal Government asked the State Governments to undertake. Again—and this too should be of particular interest to Country Party members—reclamation works have had to be cut from £79,200 to £39,000. If hon. members so desired, I could give in detail the reduction of irrigation and water-supply projects in this State from an estimated cost of £1,210,447 to £726,447. In the Department of Forestry, too, we find that the programme has had to be reduced from £1,928,000 to £1,463,000, and that is not the whole story of the reduction through the mechanism of the Federal Government, because the State Government have contributed a special grant of £535,000 towards the cost of our forestry programme. In effect, as the result of the action of the Federal Government we can have only a limited planting of softwoods, maintenance of hardwood and cypress-pine areas sufficient only to prevent fire damage, bare maintenance of our national parks, with no expansion or development work and a minimum amount of road and survey work. Surely that is something that must be debited to the Federal Government?

If time permitted, I would tell hon. members of the reduction that has had to be made in main roads and local-authority work and in work at our various ports and harbours. These facts make interesting reading when we take cognisance of the words of the Rt. Hon. R. G. Casey, who came up here and talked glibly of a £250,000,000 development programme, and of Senator Spooner and Mr. Kent Hughes, who visited this State and spoke about our tremendous coal potentialities, and of Senator McLeay, who said that our ports and harbours should be developed, not only in the interests of Queensland but in the interests of Australia.

And that brings me to the problem of inflation. What a coincidence it was that immediately after the announcement of the Federal Treasurer that value had been restored to the pound and that inflation had been arrested, a rise was announced in the basic wage of 12s. a week in New South Wales, of 13s. in another State, and of 11s. in another State! As the result of the sympathetic and socially-conscious control exercised by this Government, there was a minimum rise of 6s. in Queensland. No credit is due to the Commonwealth Government for that; it was due solely to the efforts of the Government of this State.

If employment is stable why should there be riots at Bonegilla, with forced marches by migrants? The Federal Government are going back to a period 30 years ago, when men marched crying out for work. What is the solution of the Federal Government? It is to distribute the migrants round the various defence jobs in this country. If the Federal Government are confident that unemployment has been arrested and that there has been a cessation of inflation, let them make public the report tendered by Mr. Holt, the Minister for Labour in the Federal Government, at a Cabinet meeting prior to the framing of the Budget. He painted a very gloomy picture. He said that a review of statistical information concerning employment and unemployment revealed a very hazardous position and added that it was not nearly as rosy as his Government maintained it was. So alarming was the picture that he painted that certain New South Wales Ministers in the Federal Cabinet, fearing the tenure of their seats at the next elections, were almost in open revolt against their Government.

Senator McBryde has expressed the opinion that the discharging of men over 65 years of age and the sacking of married women workers has no relation to employment or unemployment, but let him say that to the people concerned. If the Federal Government are so confident that there is no great body of unemployment, why do they not allow Commonwealth officers to make available the figures in relation to unemployment insurance and unemployment generally? Why not allow them to make available the figures relating to unemployment at the principal bureaus in the larger towns of the country? Then the local people would be able of their own knowledge to form an opinion as to whether the figures were correct or not. That is a way in which to engender confidence.

I have some figures here relating to unemployment in this State. In the case of roads there are 1,011 out of work, in the timber industry 551, forestry 260, Brisbane City Council labourers over 300. In painting we find 50, moulding 25, ironworkers 12, sheet-metal workers 800, builders 500, and it is estimated that in the manufacturing industries there are 3,700 unemployed. I have given only a few figures of those available to me but they are accurate and informative.

Who is responsible for that position in this State and in the Commonwealth generally? When the Chifley Government were in

office they promised full employment and a programme of social security. The Opposition must admit that during the time of the Chifley Government our overseas reserves and credit were maintained and that the Chifley Government were able to give full employment in this country. Our overseas reserves were depleted because of the laissez-faire policy of the present Federal Liberal-Country Party Government. This country had been for 10 years building up an overseas reserve of £843,000,000 but it was dissipated by the present Federal Government.

They allowed to slip through their fingers an amount of over £500,000,000, and on 30 June, 1952, the overseas credit was £376,000,000, a figure that the present Federal Treasurer admitted was dangerously low and comparable with that which preceded the depression.

Nor was that the only contributing factor. There were also the restriction of local credit and the duplication of services.

I contend that the Commonwealth Government should make a reasonable approach to this question of duplicated services to the people and determine that we could carry out certain executive responsibility for them and at the same time leave to us those that are ours. One example of this duplication is in connection with Commonwealth housing, which involves three departments. One is the responsibility embraced in the Commonwealth-States Housing Agreement and the other is the Department of Works and Housing, and then there is the War Service Homes Department. In justification of my contention that we could efficiently administer these other Commonwealth authorities, I will quote the cost of prefabricated homes bought by Queensland compared with those erected by the Federal Government. A two-bedroom home under the Queensland Government scheme cost £2,128, a three-bedroom home £2,437, whereas under the Commonwealth Government scheme a home costs £2,100 and contracts were let at figures ranging from £1,200 to £1,400 for the erection—and the Commonwealth supplied the electrical fittings. That is a difference of over £1,000. I could tell a story of duplication in medical services and education, scientific research, and so on, and point out how this duplication is militating against efficiency. (Opposition interjections.)

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! This is the second occasion on which I have had to warn hon. members that continued interruption is highly disorderly. If hon. members continue I shall have to deal with them.

**Dr. DITTMER:** Let us consider the question of the loan moneys that Queensland received. The total asked for by the States was £351,000,000, of which amount Queensland wanted £30,700,000 for works. This request by the States was reduced by £104,000,000. The Federal Government would not make provision for more than £180,000,000, but they later increased the amount to £188,000,000.

It was said in the Press that this State inflated its programme. Rather was it the reverse. This State was a State that did budget honestly and was modest and moderate in its requests. Let us analyse the treatment that was meted out to this State. The State claimed an increase on last year of 30 per cent., which represents the increased cost. The Commonwealth increase came to 41 per cent., New South Wales 47 per cent., Victoria 41 per cent., South Australia 81 per cent., Western Australia 101 per cent., and Tasmania 66 per cent. Queensland has been honest in its approach and received only £18,500,000 or £4,000,000 less than last year.

In tax reimbursement Queensland received £21,700,000 of the total of £135,900,000 but had the allocation been determined on a population basis the amount would have been £20,100,000, which would not take cognisance of the extraordinarily high standard of service to the people that the Queensland Government have built up.

I will give the House some very interesting figures as regards the allocation of loan money. Queensland does not ask charity and the allocation takes no cognisance of the special grant by way of subsidy to southern States. It takes no recognition of the special grants to Western Australia, Tasmania, and South Australia. All these States benefited immeasurably compared with Queensland. In the allocation of loan funds—something that we seek to repay—Queensland received only a miserable £18,500,000, £4,000,000 less than last year, but had the allocation been on a population basis it would have received £23,500,000. If it had been on an area basis—Queensland is the State with the largest area of potentially productive land, it has more scope for developmental projects, it was the colony founded last and it is in the front line of the defences of the southern States—this State would have received the enormous sum of £51,100,000 but the Government asked only for the works that they were capable of carrying out in this year, a programme involving the expenditure of £13,700,000. Mr. Speaker, if the relationship between the States and the Commonwealth could be established on an equitable and justifiable basis, taking cognisance of the legislative rights, responsibilities and privileges of the States as sovereign powers and consistent with the wishes of the Australian people, then we shall possess an Australia, strong in its component and co-ordinate parts, of which we can all be proud.

**Mr. BYRNE (Mourilyan)** (4.28 p.m.): I second the motion so capably moved by the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt, who made one of the most convincing speeches that I have had the pleasure of listening to, both as regards scope and argument. I am sure it was very interesting to hon. members. I am glad to be associated with a Government who have done so much for the progress and development of Queensland, perhaps even more in the past few years than formerly.

It is my intention to deal with the subject of most vital importance of this great State,

that of the sugar industry. An impetus has been given to it by the assignment of additional land to the various sugar mills, which has resulted in increased activity. Additional lands are being cultivated, Virgin scrub is being felled and we find in the northern parts of the State, and in the southern parts to a lesser extent, great activity in the industry. The former Premier, the late Mr. Hanlon, left no stone unturned in his advocacy for the development of this industry. Hon. members will recall that he was subjected to a considerable amount of criticism but those hon. members who criticised must realise now that what he advocated has come to pass and that we are in the happy position of seeing great progress taking place. There has been a sharp rise in the home consumption of sugar since 1950, and the present market is 550,000 tons of 94 net titre sugar. A further pleasing feature is that it is expected that the annual increase in home consumption will be from 12,000 to 15,000 tons. This, in three years, would equal the production of a new mill, taking the average present capacity of existing mills.

The recommendation of the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board in 1950 provided for increased mill peaks to the extent of 172,000 tons and the assignment of 63,000 acres by the end of 1951 was intended to produce this increase. Under normal conditions, the target for these newly assigned areas, added to the areas already assigned, is 1,045,000 tons. This, added to the 55,000 tons produced by New South Wales, makes a total of 1,100,000 tons that can be achieved by 1953. I believe, further, that the ultimate target for 1954-1955 will be in the vicinity of 1,200,000 tons. It will be seen, therefore, that this Government's interest in the sugar industry has been such that our mills are now almost reaching capacity and certainly will be on capacity crushing if they achieve their quotas. Our progress has been unprecedented. It has been even greater than perhaps we believe we were capable of achieving and certainly much greater than our critics believed possible.

I am concerned at the fact that although we have so much sugar allotted in Queensland and that although individual peaks have been increased so greatly we have almost reached milling capacity in certain areas already. I refer in particular to the South Johnstone mill, which this year will have somewhere between 340,000 and 350,000 tons of cane to crush. This mill will be "flat out" in trying to crush that cane, even by the end of January, and nobody can say that January is an economic period for the crushing of cane. Again, at Tully we have somewhere between 350,000 and 360,000 tons of cane to crush. Even there our milling capacity is reached already and it is not hard to visualise what the position will be in a few years' time, especially when we appreciate that the introduction of new varieties of cane and the eradication of pests and diseases have been instrumental in producing a greater tonnage of cane to the acre than was possible previously.

The Central Board is concerned with the production of the peak quotas allotted to each mill but it realises that with the increase that is taking place in the home consumption of sugar duplication becomes necessary. It has referred to the fact that duplication will have to be considered seriously by the mills at Tully, Macknade and Farleigh.

**Mr. Evans:** Not by the mills, by the Government.

**Mr. BYRNE:** The point I am making is that duplication will be necessary, that duplication has been suggested by the recent Royal Commission on the Sugar Industry, and that the mills mentioned by that Royal Commission as being the ones that will have to give serious consideration to duplication are Tully, Macknade, and Farleigh.

We must consider also the price factor. The increase of 1½d. a lb. granted by the Federal Government was in my opinion insufficient to meet the needs of our cane-farmers and I say that a further increase in the price of sugar is absolutely necessary. It is urgently required and I see no justification for the delay in making public the findings of the committee appointed by the Federal Government to go into the matter. Every day's delay in granting an increase beyond the 1½d. means a loss to the cane-growers of Queensland and I sincerely hope in the interests of those growers that the committee appointed will not delay any longer in making its findings public. This loss to the growers comes at a time when they can ill afford it. The Federal Government should do everything within their power to bring about a further increase in price.

As a matter of fact, I think that there was no justification for the appointment of the committee at all because a good case for an increase was made out by the industry and it was strongly supported by the Queensland Government. There was no need for the appointment of this committee, because the Federal Government were aware that the industry was in a sore financial plight occasioned by heavy increases in costs that have to be borne by the growers. The Commonwealth Government must have known that a rise in price was urgently needed.

We must appreciate the activities of the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations and the good work done by the Department of Agriculture and Stock, under whose guidance the industry is proceeding. We must further realise that new varieties of cane are playing a wonderful part in the production of sugar and that land that previously could not average 15 tons to the acre is now producing up to at least 30 tons to an acre. What is more, there is now an absence of those pests that made it so difficult and so costly for the farmer to carry on his occupation. I also pay a compliment to the workers in this seasonal industry, men who hang onto their jobs from one season to another, very often without other employment.

**Mr. Aikens:** Was this increase in tons per acre achieved with the same types of cane?

**Mr. BYRNE:** No, new varieties. There was no necessity for the Leader of the Opposition to make the statement that the primary industries should give a lead in the return to a 44-hour week. I do not believe that the 40-hour week was a political expedient. The people in the sugar industry are giving of their best. It is going to expand, and nothing can stop that expansion.

We must be prepared to take advantage of every opportunity that offers to obtain even greater prices for our export sugar. We shall not always remain in our present position; we must look ahead. If the world wants sugar and we can provide it, we should do so. We have land of undoubted fertility and we can grow more sugar than we are growing at present. However, we must see that the millers erect machinery that will enable our crops to be harvested in the most economical period.

Prior to the last election, Opposition members toured the country and spoke in a very critical and carping spirit. They said they did not believe that the sugar industry was capable of expansion and that this Government's policy was designed purely to hoodwink the people. They said that there would be over-production in the sugar industry and that this Government were bankrupt of ideas to expand it. They were particularly critical of the late Premier's efforts, which finally resulted in the signing of the British Commonwealth Sugar Agreement.

We have much to thank this Government for in the progress of the sugar industry and in its achievements, and I am particularly proud to be a member for a sugar-growing district. I have seen the progress that has taken place, not only in my area but in other areas, mainly as the result of the policy of this Government.

We have many harbours in this State, and it has been the policy of this Government to develop each of them to the utmost. During the recent northern tour of the Premier, I was privileged to accompany him when he was invited to open the access road to Mourilyan harbour. We travelled from Innisfail to the harbour along a very wide bitumen road on which cargo can be transported from one end to the other in a comparatively few minutes. There can be no suggestion that cargo at Innisfail or at Mourilyan cannot be transported to its destination in the quickest possible time. The filling-in behind the wharf has been completed and other improvements have been effected, with the result that very little complaint can be made about the facilities for both inward and outward cargo. Those improvements and facilities brought forth to the Premier very complimentary remarks from the chairman of the Johnstone Shire Council and the president of the Mourilyan Harbour League, and others who were previously politically opposed to this Labour Government, but who now appreciate to the full what they have done for the district in erecting the facilities that exist at Mourilyan harbour to-day.

But Mourilyan harbour lacks shipping. No matter what port you have or what facilities you provide there, unless you can get ships to call to bring cargo and take it away, the port is useless. We know that there is a dearth of shipping to-day, not only in Queensland but also throughout Australia and throughout the world. Ships are not as plentiful now as they were in years gone by. No objection can be raised to the use of Mourilyan harbour. There is some obligation on shipping companies to co-operate with the local harbour to give a shipping service there commensurate with the cargo available. Mr. Dixon, of the C.S.R. Company, said that no tenders were accepted to-day for the transport of interstate sugar simply because no-one was willing to take it. We have excellent facilities at the harbour for the type of ships that can enter, but we cannot compel the shipping companies to come and use them. There is no objection to its use by private enterprise—we recognise the right of private enterprise. We are only hoping that ultimately the shipping companies will be induced to give a greater measure of service, particularly to Mourilyan, than they have hitherto done. It is true that the Railway Department gives a transport service and the people at Innisfail enter into contracts with the department for the conveyance of their goods and that virtually every business man in the town has a transport contract with the State Government but it does not follow that shipping companies could not compete with the Railway Department in the carrying trade, and there is nothing to prevent them from doing so. There is a considerable amount of cargo that the companies could take to the port if they so desired. Until the companies decide to enter the port and carry the cargo, little can be done either by the local authorities or the Government.

Further development could take place at Mourilyan by the construction of a railway.

**Mr. Aikens:** What about the building of a 3 ft. 6 in. line?

**Mr. BYRNE:** I think that will eventually come, but it cannot be undertaken at the moment unless the shipping companies say, "We will carry cargo to your port and we will give you a regular service." The building of the line would involve the expenditure of a considerable sum of loan money, and there would be no guarantee that ships would call at the port. The Premier told the people of Innisfail that it would mean a tremendous expenditure of loan funds and without any guarantee of service from the shipping companies he could not recommend the construction of the line at the present time.

He nevertheless believed it would ultimately come. So far the loan funds are not available. Hon. members opposite say that we should do this and that but when it comes to providing loan funds we find that they are not available; and, as the Premier has pointed out from time to time, we are not receiving any help from the Federal Government.

I am particularly desirous of seeing Mourilyan harbour established as a port for the bulk handling of sugar. At the present time Babinda and Tully sugar is being diverted to other ports. I would urge the sugar industry to see that Mourilyan is included as a port in the scheme for the bulk handling of sugar. I will do all I can to influence the Government in that direction.

We hear very much about our visitors to the North. We frequently, during the milder months of the year, get political visitors to the North who recognise the beauties of the harbour, and who are sometimes given to flights of fancy when telling us what should be done. Very often they do not realise the facts of the position.

**Mr. Aikens:** They are winter tourists.

**Mr. BYRNE:** They are, as the hon. member for Mundingburra states, winter tourists. The Leader of the Opposition paid a hurried visit to that area and said that Mourilyan harbour would get top priority when his Party was returned to power. I suggest this to the Leader of the Opposition: that top priority today is to get the ships to come to the harbour. There is nothing to prevent them from doing so. The policy of the Government is to develop all their ports, not only one. Mourilyan harbour is in the same category as the others. Local people have thanked us for what we have done, and we will continue to do more. As time goes on and with bulk handling of sugar at Mourilyan, I hope to see it become one of the leading ports of Queensland.

I wish to refer briefly to a further development that is taking place in my area, under the auspices of the Department of Agriculture and Stock. I refer to the growing of pineapples and bananas. Recently I was privileged to attend a field day at Mission Beach where excellent addresses were delivered by officers of the department on the subject. At the present time the industry is in its infancy but we have 170 pineapple-growers north of Cardwell with approximately 200 acres and there are approximately 100 banana-growers with 380 acres. Judging by the interest shown I was convinced that those field days should be held at more frequent intervals. I advocate a form of organisation to include the banana and pineapple-growers similar to the Sugar Experiment Stations in the sugar industry, the organisation amongst other things to obtain and distribute to the growers information obtained by it from time to time. I urge on the Secretary for Public Lands—I know he has the matter in view—the opening of Crown land for subdivision into suitable areas. The time is fast approaching when Crown lands must be used for the purpose for which they were intended and lessees who are not making use of such land should have no cause for complaint when asked to forfeit it. A lessee who is not using land for the the best purpose but holding it merely for exploitation should get no sympathy from anybody and there should be no complaint from him when he holds land from the Crown and is not using it as he promised. That land

should be forfeited and made available to people who are prepared to make the best use of it. There are land-hungry people in the North and much of the land held by lessees of the Crown is not being worked to the best advantage, or a small part only of the total area is worked; this land should be made available to these land-hungry people who are seeking to produce pineapples and bananas. When the sugar mills got the increased peaks the adjoining lands were of considerable value but they should not be held only for the purpose of speculation. The putting of the land into production of bananas and pineapples would prevent exploitation.

It is necessary under our land laws to reforest lands suitable for that purpose. I have discussed this matter at various times with the Secretary for Public Lands, who is aware of the necessity of ensuring that land suitable for reforestation shall be kept for that purpose. Notwithstanding that there are timber mills in our area we cannot say that we have an unlimited supply of timber. The time will come when the stands of timber will be cut out and unless reforestation is embarked upon eventually the timber will be so far from the mills as to become uneconomic to work. I urge upon the Minister a long-range plan of reforestation. We want to ensure development in our part of the State and if we have our people gainfully employed we shall find towns springing up here and there and our people happy and contented.

The sawmills have enjoyed and will continue to enjoy a reasonable measure of prosperity. That prosperity has been evident, for some few years past, but today the position is reversed. Nevertheless these mills do provide a great measure of employment for our people and I sincerely hope they never again experience the difficult times through which they passed in recent months as a result of the shortsighted import restrictions policy of the Federal Government, who opened the door wide to the importation of all classes of timber and even plywoods, with the result that our timber workers in the field and in the mills have had to be put off because local timbers could not be sold. This industry is one of major importance and I commend that suggestion to the Secretary for Public Lands.

Although the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt dealt fully with our hospitals system and the difficulty that will be experienced as a result of interference by the Federal Government, I crave the indulgence of the House to refer to one or two aspects of hospital administration. I feel that the action contemplated by the Federal Government and their challenge to this State are the most retrograde steps that could possibly be taken. Their contemplated action is an interference with State rights and an interference with State obligations. Indeed, it is an imposition upon Queenslanders by someone who is not fully acquainted with the way in which the system has been built up over a considerable number of years. Again, it brings in the question of discrimination between people to a large

extent, discrimination between various areas of the State, and lack of the knowledge which is possessed by Queenslanders, of what hospitals mean to the outback and what the people need in hospital services. I for one will do my utmost in opposing the Federal scheme and I hope that every Queensland worthy of the name will follow in my footsteps. Our present hospitals system provides the best possible service for our sick and suffering, and treatment in our public wards is absolutely free of cost. There are hospitals in the cities and towns, and in almost every little hamlet in the State capable of supporting them. We want our people to be free from sickness, we want to give them the best possible service and we know that the people of this State appreciate what is being done for them.

In addition to giving service at local hospitals, we give the sick and suffering the right to specialised treatment and attention in the cities and towns. We Parliamentarians have the right to recommend to the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs, under whose department hospitals are administered, that certain cases be transported to the metropolitan area for special treatment. If the Minister accepts the recommendation those cases are transported to and treated free of cost in the metropolitan area. Not only is it free to the patient but where an escort is necessary, free transport is available for the escort also.

As I have said, we parliamentarians do not want to lose that right by adopting another system. Can the Federal Government suggest to us something better than our system? It appears that they cannot. All they say is that if we do not fall in with their scheme they will not give us the financial aid we are entitled to. I say that their system will do untold harm to Queensland. If they could suggest an improvement to the Queensland system of hospitalisation, we would listen to them; merely to declare that we must comply with their requirements is most unreasonable. We can progress under our system; we do not want to go back to the days when hospital treatment was determined by the money in one's pocket or by one's capabilities for paying the doctors and nurses. We have seen too much of that system. Perhaps the younger generation do not realise it to the same extent as we do. We do not want to go back to the days when a certain portion of a ward was cut off and labelled "Pauper," when there was discrimination between those who could pay and those who could not. Hospital treatment should be free to all, because the people are an asset whilst they are working in industry but not an asset whilst they are confined to hospital. It is our duty to treat our people in the best possible way and give them the service that will reflect credit upon the Government. We will continue to give the service we have been giving, irrespective of what suggestion might be put forward by the Federal Government. We will not subscribe to their suggestions and I am sure that the people of Queensland, irrespective of political

outlook, will strongly oppose the challenge thrown out to this Government by the Federal Government.

Debate, on motion of Mr. Nicklin, adjourned.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

**Hon. V. C. GAIR** (South Brisbane—Premier): I move—

“That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 11 a.m. tomorrow.”

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 5.10 p.m.