

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 5 AUGUST 1969

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Legislative Assembly

FIRST SESSION OF THE THIRTY-NINTH PARLIAMENT

Appointed to meet

AT BRISBANE ON THE FIFTH DAY OF AUGUST, IN THE EIGHTEENTH YEAR OF
THE REIGN OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II, IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1969

TUESDAY, 5 AUGUST, 1969

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT

Pursuant to the proclamation by His Excellency the Administrator of the Government, dated 26 June, 1969, appointing Parliament to meet this day for the dispatch of business, the House met at 12 noon in the Legislative Assembly Chamber.

The Clerk-Assistant read the proclamation.

COMMISSION TO OPEN PARLIAMENT

The Clerk-Assistant acquainted the House that His Excellency the Administrator of the Government, not being able conveniently to be present in person this day, had been pleased to cause a Commission to be issued under the public seal of the State, appointing the Honourable Johannes Bjelke-Petersen, the Honourable Gordon William Wesley Chalk, and the Honourable Ronald Ernest Camm, Commissioners in order to the opening and holding of this session of Parliament.

The Commissioners so appointed being seated on the dais, and the Clerk-Assistant having read the Commission—

THE SENIOR COMMISSIONER (Hon. J. Bjelke-Petersen—Barambah) said: Hon. members, we have it in command from His Excellency the Administrator of the Government to let you know that as soon as the members of the Legislative Assembly have been sworn, the causes of this Parliament being called together will be declared to you: And it being necessary that a Speaker be first chosen, it is His Excellency's pleasure that you proceed to the election of one of your number to be your Speaker, and that you present such person so chosen to His Excellency the Administrator of the Government, at such time and place as His Excellency shall appoint.

The Premier thereupon produced a Commission under the public seal of the State empowering him, the Honourable Johannes Bjelke-Petersen, the Honourable Gordon William Wesley Chalk, and the Honourable Ronald Ernest Camm, or any one of them, to administer to all or any members or member of the House the oath or affirmation of allegiance to Her Majesty the Queen, which Commission was then read to the House by the Clerk-Assistant.

RETURN OF WRITS

The Clerk-Assistant informed the House that the writs for the various electoral districts had been returned to the Clerk severally endorsed as follows:—

Albert—Cecil Charles Carey.
Ashgrove—Seymour Douglas Tooth.
Aspley—Frederick Alexander Campbell.
Aubigny—Leslie Frank Diplock.
Balonne—Harold Mortimer Hungerford.
Barambah—Johannes Bjelke-Petersen.
Barcoo—Eugene Christopher O'Donnell.
Baroona—Patrick Joseph Hanlon.
Belmont—Harold Francis Newton.
Bowen—Peter Roylance Delamothe.
Brisbane—Brian John Davis.
Bulimba—John William Houston.
Bundaberg—Eugene Dubois Jensen.
Burdekin—Valmond James Bird.
Burke—Alexander James Inch.
Burnett—Claude Alfred Wharton.
Cairns—Raymond Jones.
Callide—Vincent Edward Jones.
Carnarvon—Henry Arthur McKechnie.
Chatsworth—William Douglas Hewitt.
Clayfield—John Murray.
Condamine—Victor Bruce Sullivan.
Cook—Bill Wood.
Cooroora—David Alan Low.
Cunningham—Alan Roy Fletcher.
Fassifern—Selwyn John Müller.
Flinders—William Horace Lonergan.
Greenslopes—Keith William Hooper.

- Gregory—Wallace Alexander Ramsay
Rae.
Gympie—Allen Maxwell Hodges.
Hawthorne—William Bernard Kaus.
Hinchinbrook—John Alfred Row.
Ipswich East—Evan Marginson.
Ipswich West—Ellen Violet Jordan.
Isis—James Robert Henry Blake.
Ithaca—Colin John Miller.
Kedron—Eric Gayford Lloyd.
Kurilpa—Clive Melwyn Hughes.
Landsborough—Michael John Ahern.
Lockyer—Gordon William Wesley Chalk.
Logan—Edgar Allan Baldwin.
Mackay—Edmund Denis Casey.
Mackenzie—Neville Thomas Eric Hewitt.
Maryborough—Horace Jason Davies.
Merthyr—Samuel Raymond Ramsden.
Mirani—Thomas Guy Newbery.
Mount Coot-tha—William Daniel Lickiss.
Mount Gravatt—Geoffrey Talbot
Chinchen.
Mourilyan—Francis Peter Moore.
Mulgrave—Roy Alexander Armstrong.
Murrumba—David Eric Nicholson.
Norman—Fred Phillip Bromley.
Nudgee—John Melloy.
Nundah—William Edward Knox.
Port Curtis—Martin Hanson.
Redcliffe—James Edward Hiram
Houghton.
Rockhampton North—Mervyn Herbert
Thackeray.
Rockhampton South—Keith Webb
Wright.
Roma—Kenneth Burgoyne Tomkins.
Salisbury—Douglas John Sherrington.
Sandgate—Harold Dean.
Sherwood—John Desmond Herbert.
Somerset—Harold Richter.
South Brisbane—Colin James Bennett.
South Coast—Russell James Hinze.
Tablelands—Edwin Wallis-Smith.
Toowong—Charles Robert Porter.
Toowoomba East—Peter Wood.
Toowoomba West—William Raymond
James Bousen.
Townsville North—Percy John Robert
Tucker.
Townsville South—Thomas Aikens.
Warrego—John Albert Aiken.
Warwick—David Wheatcroft Cory.
Wavell—Arthur Pinkerton Crawford.
Whitsunday—Ronald Ernest Camm.
Windsor—Robert Edgar Moore.
Wynnum—Edward David Harris.
Yeronga—Norman Edward Lee.

MEMBERS SWORN

The Commissioners, who with certain other members of the Ministry had been sworn in before His Excellency the Administrator of the Government on 31 July, 1969, and 4 August, 1969, and subscribed the roll, then administered the oath or affirmation of allegiance to the following other members, who thereupon also subscribed the roll—

Honourable John Alfred Row	} Ministers
Honourable Victor Bruce	
Sullivan	

- Ahern, Michael John, Esquire.
Aiken, John Albert, Esquire.
Aikens, Thomas, Esquire.
Armstrong, Roy Alexander, Esquire.
Baldwin, Edgar Allan, Esquire.
Bennett, Colin James, Esquire.
Bird, Valmond James, Esquire.
Blake, James Robert Henry, Esquire.
Bousen, William Raymond James,
Esquire.
Bromley, Fred Phillip, Esquire.
Carey, Cecil Charles, Esquire.
Casey, Edmund Denis, Esquire.
Chinchen, Geoffrey Talbot, Esquire.
Cory, David Wheatcroft, Esquire.
Crawford, Arthur Pinkerton, Esquire.
Davies, Horace Jason, Esquire.
Davis, Brian John, Esquire.
Dean, Harold, Esquire.
Diplock, Leslie Frank, Esquire.
Hanlon, Patrick Joseph, Esquire.
Hanson, Martin, Esquire.
Harris, Edward David, Esquire.
Hewitt, William Douglas, Esquire.
Hinze, Russell James, Esquire.
Hooper, Keith William, Esquire.
Houghton, James Edward Hiram,
Esquire.
Houston, John William, Esquire.
Hughes, Clive Melwyn, Esquire.
Hungerford, Harold Mortimer, Esquire.
Inch, Alexander James, Esquire.
Jensen, Eugene Dubois, Esquire.
Jones, Raymond, Esquire.
Jones, Vincent Edward, Esquire.
Jordan, Ellen Violet, Mrs.
Kaus, William Bernard, Esquire.
Lee, Norman Edward, Esquire.
Lickiss, William Daniel, Esquire.
Lloyd, Eric Gayford, Esquire.
Lonergan, William Horace, Esquire.
Low, David Alan, Esquire.
Marginson, Evan, Esquire.
McKechnie, Henry Arthur, Esquire.
Melloy, John, Esquire.
Miller, Colin John, Esquire.
Moore, Francis Peter, Esquire.
Moore, Robert Edgar, Esquire.
Müller, Selwyn John, Esquire.
Newbery, Thomas Guy, Esquire.
Newton, Harold Francis, Esquire.
Nicholson, David Eric, Esquire.
O'Donnell, Eugene Christopher, Esquire.
Porter, Charles Robert, Esquire.
Rae, Wallace Alexander Ramsay,
Esquire.
Ramsden, Samuel Raymond, Esquire.
Richter, Harold, Esquire.
Sherrington, Douglas John, Esquire.
Thackeray, Mervyn Herbert, Esquire.
Tomkins, Kenneth Burgoyne, Esquire.
Tucker, Percy John Robert, Esquire.
Wallis-Smith, Edwin, Esquire.
Wharton, Claude Alfred, Esquire.
Wood, Bill, Esquire.
Wood, Peter, Esquire.
Wright, Keith Webb, Esquire.

ELECTION OF SPEAKER

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier) (12.30 p.m.): With the swearing-in of members of this House, it is now our duty to elect a Speaker. Through the centuries of democratic government the position of Speaker has been held by men loyal to the Crown and loyal to Parliament. They have been men of wisdom, men of patience, whose main responsibility has been to safeguard the interests of Parliament.

The Speaker has many responsibilities and a certain amount of power. He is not only the servant of the House but also the master of the House. He is required to apply Standing Orders fairly and without favour; he has to protect the rights and liberties of all members, who are equal in the eyes of the Speaker.

Since I entered Parliament some 22 years ago I have served under a succession of effective Speakers, such as the late Sam Brassington, John Mann, Alan Fletcher, and, more recently, David Nicholson. The position of Speaker is, in some ways, an unenviable one. Some members are sure to disagree with some of the Speaker's decisions. As in every household we have differing points of view in Parliament, but in fulfilling this responsible position in the past David Nicholson has ably demonstrated that he conducts himself with dignity, ability, and fairness to all. He is well known to all of us who have been in previous Parliaments, and I am sure that new members also will find that he is a man of integrity and ability.

I have much pleasure in nominating David Nicholson to act as Speaker of this House and I move—

“That Mr. David Eric Nicholson do take the chair of the House as Speaker.”

Hon. G. W. W. CHALK (Lockyer—Treasurer) (12.33 p.m.): I am very pleased to have the opportunity of seconding the motion moved by the Premier that Mr. David Eric Nicholson be the Speaker of this Chamber during this term of Parliament. It is very true, as the Premier has said, that during the period that David Nicholson has been Speaker of this Chamber he has endeavoured to carry out his responsibilities without fear or favour.

The Speaker's task is indeed a most difficult one; I believe that every member of this Chamber would realise that his responsibilities are great. As the Premier has said, those who have gone before as Speakers of this Chamber, irrespective of their political outlook, have realised the important part that the Speaker plays in this Chamber.

So, Mr. George, I am very pleased to have the opportunity of supporting the nomination of David Nicholson, who has already proved himself an able and capable Speaker of this Chamber. I am sure that when re-elected to this office he will continue to accept his responsibilities in the good conduct of the government of this State.

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba—Leader of the Opposition) (12.35 p.m.): Mr. George, I am sure that I express the sentiments of every member of this Chamber when I say that I regret the sudden illness of Mr. Johnson, who cannot take his normal place today in this Chamber as Clerk of the Parliament. However, I do congratulate both Mr. Johnson and you, and other officers of this Parliament, on your elevation to your respective positions. I trust that it will not be long before Mr. Johnson is restored to good health and is able to occupy his position as Clerk of this Parliament.

I wish to nominate as Speaker Mr. Eugene Christopher O'Donnell, the hon. member for Barcoo, who was elected to this House in 1961. Most hon. members are aware that, prior to entering Parliament, he had quite a distinguished career as a teacher. In that position he showed himself to be a man who could control numbers of people and who also was dedicated to the job that he had in hand. We also know that he has proved himself to be a man who is very capable of expressing himself and, in addition, is very just in his views. I have no doubt at all that if he is given the opportunity of being Speaker of this Parliament he will carry out the duties of that position with dignity and decorum.

As the Premier and the Deputy Premier have said, the Speaker of the House has many responsibilities. On the one hand, he must be master of this House and insist that Standing Orders are carried out; on the other hand, he must protect the rights and liberties of all hon. members, ensuring that Standing Orders and conditions under which hon. members work are such as to enable them to carry out the duties of the high office to which they have been elected by the people of this State.

I think that all of us should realise that election to Parliament is not the lot of everyone in the community. Many people seek election to Parliament, but only a relative few are lucky enough to receive sufficient votes to enable them to attain that position. Surely when they do attain the position of member of Parliament they are entitled to be given every opportunity of doing the job that they should be doing. Nothing should be put in their way to prevent them from carrying out their great responsibilities. Of course, their first responsibility is that of carrying out the duties associated with the position of a member of this Chamber, whether in Government or in Opposition. They have the responsibility of discussing, analysing, and finally voting on, the laws of this State. Whether the laws are good or bad depends on the members of this Chamber, so all members should be given the opportunity of carrying out their responsibilities.

If we compare the responsibility of a member of Parliament with that of a public servant, we find that the member of Parliament has a great responsibility. People come

to him with all kinds of problems and complaints. On many occasions he handles matters in his own electorate that are not, in any book of rules, the duty of a member of Parliament. At times he is required to handle personal problems and to deal with matters that have nothing to do with the people's elected representative, but as a person and as a friend he tries to help the people concerned.

All members are equal and share equal rights. I believe that members should respect the Ministers. For a person to be elected to the high office of Minister he is required to pass the scrutiny of many people, including his own party supporters, and his own colleagues or his own Leader, whichever may be the case in the method of appointment of Cabinet Ministers. Once appointed, they have grave responsibilities. They are responsible for the introduction of legislation, the interpretation of legislation, and many other facets associated with our way of life. On the other hand, an ordinary member of Parliament has a right to expect that Ministers will accept his responsibility and his sincerity of purpose. When questions are asked in the House an ordinary member can expect and demand that the replies are factual, and that in no way do they cast any reflection on the member asking the question.

Mr. Speaker has a tremendous responsibility. On the one hand he has to uphold the dignity of the office of the Cabinet Minister concerned, and on the other hand he has to ensure that the rank-and-file member, whether in Government or in Opposition, is given an opportunity to present his case and, if he asks a question, that it is answered fully, with the full knowledge that what he is told he can stand by if he cares to quote it on another occasion.

Over the years it has been customary for Speakers to be members of the Government and members of the senior party. Till 1957 the senior party was the party in power. If we trace history we find that the party which had the greatest number of seats was the Government of the State and it elected the Speaker. From 1957 to 1969 the senior party has not been the party in Government in its own right. It has been part of a coalition. In 1957 the Honourable Alan Fletcher was elected Speaker as a member of the Country Party.

A Government Member: He was a good Speaker, too.

Mr. HOUSTON: I am not reflecting on him or any other Speaker. I am tracing history and the facts as I see them.

As I say, in 1957 Alan Fletcher was a member of the Country Party and as such was nominated by his colleagues as Speaker—I have no fight with that—and duly elected. At the same time the Liberal Party nominated Major Taylor, who eventually served as Chairman of Committees in

this Chamber. I do not think anyone will deny that Alan Fletcher carried out his duties with dignity whilst Speaker of this House. But we would also say with truth that while Major Taylor was Chairman of Committees, he also carried out his duties with dignity. On the various occasions that Major Taylor was Acting Speaker—they were many—he also carried out the duties of Speaker correctly and well. No-one had any argument about that. I am sure that the Government of the day was quite satisfied with its choice of Speaker and Acting Speaker. As we know, some time prior to the 1960 election Mr. Fletcher was appointed as a Minister of the Crown. The Government parties had to confer, but did they nominate Major Taylor as Speaker? Of course they did not! The Government did not elect Major Taylor, the experienced man, the man who had proved himself over a period to be a worthy Acting Speaker.

Mr. Carey: You can read that in "Hansard".

Mr. HOUSTON: That is right. I read it, too. I am glad that the hon. member knows how to read; he can do likewise.

The new Speaker was the hon. member for Murrumba, whose nomination received precedence over that of Major Taylor because he was a member of the Country Party. I do not think anyone would say that the hon. member for Murrumba was a better man in the chair than Major Taylor. Major Taylor had proved himself in the chair and at that time the hon. member for Murrumba had not. It is therefore true to say that the hon. member for Murrumba was nominated and elected as Speaker because he was a member of the senior party.

On 23 August, 1960, the hon. member for Clayfield, Major Taylor, was nominated as Speaker by the hon. member for Bundaberg, Mr. Walsh. The nomination was seconded by the hon. member for Cook, Mr. Adair. Major Taylor, after his nomination, said, among other things—

"I fought until I lost and I should rather lose with dignity than win by means that would enable anybody to describe me as a nasty rodent. I therefore decline the nomination."

Surely that statement indicates that Major Taylor thought that he should have been the Government nominee for the Speakership.

Mr. Ramsden: You thought you should be the Premier of the State.

Mr. HOUSTON: If the boundaries had been different, there would have been a different story. The Australian Labour Party received the majority of the votes. Let us look at the position today. The A.L.P. is the senior party in this Chamber today.

Opposition members: Hear, hear!

Mr. HOUSTON: No matter what argument is raised or what is said about boundaries, we are the senior party. The result of the recent election was—

Party	Seats	Percentage of Vote
Australian Labour Party	31	45
Country Party	26	21.1
Liberal Party	19	23.7

On a later occasion I shall have more to say about those figures and what they mean to the people and this State.

To elect the hon. member for Barcoo as Speaker of this Parliament would not break with tradition; in fact, not to elect him would break with tradition. The tradition has been that the Speaker should come from the senior party. That was established and carried out by the Government when the hon. member for Murrumba, and not the hon. member for Clayfield, was elected as Speaker.

As I said earlier, the hon. member for Barcoo is a most capable person. I am sure that all hon. members will agree that he is level-headed. He is well respected by all who know him. Over the years, he has shown that he has quick and sound judgment. With his election the only change from what was done in the past would be in having an Opposition member in the chair. Surely this would be an advantage. (Government laughter.)

Government members talk about democracy. The Premier and the Deputy Premier made fine speeches a short time ago. Those speeches were completely in line with the speech made by the late Jack Pizzey.

Mr. Chalk: And that I made.

Mr. HOUSTON: Yes, and with the one the Deputy Premier made previously. I read a few of those speeches this morning. The same things have been said again today. In all those speeches one thing that was stressed, and rightly so, was that the Speaker of this Parliament should be completely impartial. When Government members laugh, do they suggest that the hon. member for Barcoo would not be as impartial as any of their nominees? Of course not!

Let us look at some of the other advantages of having an Opposition member as Speaker, a practice that might be considered as worthy of being perpetuated. If a member of the Opposition was Speaker, he would know that his every decision was open to the judgment of this Parliament because he would be supported only when he was right, and not simply because of party affiliation.

Mr. Chinchin: Why didn't you do it when you were in Government?

Mr. HOUSTON: We were the senior party, and no Opposition member challenged it. I am challenging it today. I

am making a nomination. I am giving hon. members a choice. Government members say, "Private enterprise! Let us have the right of choice." I am giving them the right of choice. After what I have heard some hon. members opposite say about the previous Speaker, I am confident that they will vote for our nominee. Anyway, we are giving them the opportunity to do so; it is up to them to make their choice. This is, of course, a secret ballot—one of the few secret ballots taken in this Parliament—so no hon. members opposite can run away from their consciences. Their consciences can have a "free go". The point is that the Opposition is now giving all members of this House an opportunity to cast their votes.

If a member of the Opposition occupied the chair, he would know that his decisions would be governed by those politically opposed to him, not by those politically in line with him. Let us consider some examples. Can hon. members imagine the hon. member for Barcoo sitting in the chair—

Government Members: No!

Mr. HOUSTON: Government members talk about democracy and the right to nominate, but when it comes to a final showdown they are not really interested at all. Can hon. members imagine an Opposition Speaker who would see two Opposition members standing on their feet wanting to move notices of motion before he saw a Government member? If he did that, I am sure that Government members would object and he would be told to open both eyes. Can hon. members imagine under an Opposition Speaker a member being allowed to ask a sarcastic question of a very placid Minister? Of course one cannot imagine it, but those are things that could happen.

Let us now consider the present practice of having Government members as Speakers, and let us see how it has worked out in actual practice. We could go through—and so could hon. members opposite if they were honest—the examples of many Speakers over a long period of time. I want it to be clearly understood that I am not making a personal attack on the present nominee; Dave Nicholson knows that what I have to say I have said in other places. Over a period of time it has been found that Speakers have favoured Government members. I do not think there is any argument about that. Let us look at things of more importance outside this Chamber. Over the years members have disagreed at times with Speakers' rulings, some with more justification than others. From extensive inquiries, I can say that in their own way past Speakers have tried to do the job as they saw it. Why, then, over many years has this House failed to keep pace with the changing times? Why, for instance, has not the Standing Orders Committee met to review our rules and

procedures? I have been a member of that Committee for nearly three years, and not once has it met.

Mr. Ramsden: Why didn't you ask for a meeting?

Mr. HOUSTON: I did ask for a meeting, but the responsibility for calling the Committee together rests with the Speaker; that was established last year when I asked a question which suggested that the Premier should do so. The then Speaker made it very clear that he was the person with this responsibility.

I say it is wrong that the Standing Orders Committee in this House has not met for three years. The Premier is now talking about altering the parliamentary sitting hours, yet no reference has been made to any Standing Orders Committee. Government and A.L.P. members have for years wanted to be able to question without notice, yet this subject has not even been discussed at a Standing Orders Committee meeting.

Other committees also have met infrequently, and neither the results of their deliberations nor their recommendations have been presented to Parliament. In fact, the decision to spend thousands of dollars recently on work on this building was a Government decision, not a decision or recommendation of the Parliamentary Buildings Committee, because, again, that committee has not met.

We are told that these things are the responsibility of the Speaker. Are we to understand, then, that the Speaker did not attempt to do something about them? I believe that he did; I believe that he tried to do something. But, being tied to a political party in power, his hands were virtually tied.

I have not heard any Speaker, nor have I read of one, who has risen in this Chamber and brought to the attention of the House the shortcomings or recommendations of the various committees. Why did they not do so? Why did they fail to bring to the notice of hon. members matters pertaining to the committees that the House should have known about? I believe it was because of the system that ties the Speaker to the Government of the day. The knowledge of members of those committees is of no value unless the committees meet. Surely in the past Speakers have wanted changes and improvements. If so, why have not the committees been meeting at regular intervals? Surely it is only because Speakers have not been desirous of rocking their own Government parties' boat.

Conditions under which country members live while they are in Brisbane are atrocious. I do not wish to go into the history of that matter again; probably this is not the appropriate time to do so. However, it does show that in the past Speakers have failed over many years to convince Governments of which they have been members, whether Labour, Liberal, or Country Party, that the improvements are needed. For

how many years has the old Lodge adjacent to Parliament House been out of date? For far longer than the parties opposite have been in power, so I am not merely having a cry politically. That building has been a disgrace for 20 years.

Mr. Chalk: Why didn't Labour do something about it?

Mr. HOUSTON: One of the reasons why Labour did not do anything about it is also a reason why the parties opposite have not done anything about it. I believe that the Speaker would have done something to improve the building if he had not been tied to a political party.

It is strange that a metropolitan member should have to try to help Country Party members. What have they done? They have not even tried to help themselves. Three years ago in this Chamber I raised the question of The Lodge. Who rose and said that I did not know what I was talking about, that conditions were pretty good? One of the members of the Country Party said that. There is no hotel in this State, in a country area or anywhere else, that would be allowed to operate under the conditions under which The Lodge operates. A member would at least have a room to himself.

One would think that the part of Parliament House in which we are now sitting is the only part of Parliament House. Let us have a look at accommodation provided in this building for members. This is one of the things that I expect the Speaker to fight for, to rise in this Chamber and let the public, the Press and everybody know what is wrong.

When country members are in their own electorates, the conditions under which they work are shocking. An improvement in that direction would not cost very much but would make a very big difference to their representation. The Premier said earlier that one of the Speaker's jobs was to look after the welfare of members and enable them to do their work properly. Do hon. members think that the right thing is being done for members in areas outside Brisbane? When those members are not in their electorates, the member's wife has to act as a telephonist and answer the telephone and also act as a receptionist; the member has to do his own typing. When a member is in Brisbane, as he has to be when Parliament is sitting, his wife has to act as his secretary and work at home. Time and time again the Opposition has asked the two Speakers who have been in office since 1957 to give members representing country electorates at least some secretarial assistance in their electorates. But we have been refused this, so how can we support a system that allows a Speaker to be tied hand-in-glove with his political party? I believe that the Speaker must protect the rights of all members.

Mr. Hodges: The Leader of the Opposition did not even have a car before we came into office.

Mr. HOUSTON: Do not raise issues outside of this debate. If the hon. member wants to know something about motor-cars, let me tell him what happened last week.

Mr. Sullivan: We will box on with you during the session, don't make any mistake about that. You had enough to say during the election.

Mr. HOUSTON: I have not said nearly enough yet. When members opposite start winning seats from the A.L.P. they can start crowing.

I think I have made the Opposition's position very clear. We believe it is time for a change in this set-up and we think that Hughie O'Donnell is the right man for the job. I therefore have much pleasure in moving—

"That Mr. Eugene Christopher O'Donnell do take the chair of the House as Speaker."

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville North) (1.2 p.m.): It is my privilege and pleasure to second the nomination so ably moved by my Leader that Mr. Eugene O'Donnell, the hon. member for Barcoo, be appointed to the position of Speaker of this House. I believe that Hughie, as we all know him, has proved his competence both in this House and in the positions he occupied before he came into this House. He has shown himself to be a very capable member of this House and also a very capable headmaster in the Education Department.

Mr. Sullivan: Principal of a school!

Mr. TUCKER: What is wrong with being the principal of a school, and what is wrong with the administrative knowledge a man gains from that? I suppose this is one place in Queensland where a man does gain a firm grasp of administration, and Hughie O'Donnell has, in fact, gained this over quite a period of time. He understands that when a person accepts a position of responsibility and power, this is not solely for his own aggrandisement or his own comfort.

Mr. Sullivan interjected.

Mr. TUCKER: The hon. member can make what he likes out of it. He made mess enough in Cook and around the islands to show that he is not of much account anyway. Mr. O'Donnell understands that when any man accepts a position of power and responsibility, his first responsibility is to those people under him and, if I might borrow an Army phrase, let me say that as far as Hughie O'Donnell is concerned he would be firstly concerned with his own troops. Mr. George, I do not believe that this has happened in this Parliament for quite a long time. The occupant of this position, whoever he may be—I hope it is

Mr. O'Donnell—has a tremendous responsibility to the ordinary member in this Parliament and it is those people for whom he will be responsible. I believe that he understands this and is prepared to do something about it. He understands that the welfare of the ordinary member of Parliament is paramount.

It is the prerequisite of any leader, surely, that he should look after the people under him. Mr. O'Donnell would concern himself with the cramped quarters that we have had to occupy in this building since 1957—and I can speak for the last 10 years. One room downstairs, measuring 50 feet by 16 feet, which is 800 square feet, is occupied by 15 hon. members. That room is two-thirds the size of the ordinary home. If this does not affect our efficiency, what does? For years I have heard it said that something should be done about those cramped quarters, but we have continued to occupy them. If any member cares to go downstairs now he will see the same 15 desks in that room.

Where else in any department of the Queensland Public Service would that sort of situation be found? Where else would this be put up with? Nothing has been done in the years that I have been here. When I walked into that room, as an ex-public servant I was appalled at the conditions. When a phone rings, a member does not know whether it is his phone, the one belonging to the member next to him or the one belonging to the member behind him. Is this efficiency? Is this something that would allow a member to act efficiently? We all know that this has continued year after year and that promises are made year after year. I for one am sick of those conditions and ready to stand up in this Chamber and say something about them. I am not prepared to put up with them any longer. They inhibit our efficiency to a very marked degree. On many occasions I have waited late into the night until the room has been cleared so that I could have peace and quiet to be able to concentrate on some of the work that I am called upon to do; yet I am paid as a member of Parliament who is supposed to represent the people of his electorate efficiently.

What has the Country Party done about the situation? It occupies a position of power, but it has done nothing to alleviate the situation. It is about time we had a change. I believe that Hughie O'Donnell understands these things and would be prepared to do something about them. He is a man of action. The Queensland State Service Union would never countenance the kind of conditions under which we have had to work downstairs for years and years. It is no use saying that that was the situation when the Government took office, because in the 13 years that it has occupied its position of power it has done nothing about increasing the efficiency of members.

In 1960 I used to come to Brisbane from Townsville in a Viscount aircraft, which took from three-and-a-half to four hours; today I fly down in a jet. Man has reached the moon—but the Government has not altered its attitude or its thinking; it is conservative and old fashioned. The Government will never be able to move forward, no matter whom it elects as Speaker. Always I hear that something will be done next year. We always get this same lip service, and we always have to face the same problems. The solution to these problems seems to be like the end of the rainbow. When we move towards a solution, like the end of the rainbow it is in the next field. This has gone on for years and years. There has been no alleviation of the cramped conditions. No doubt time will eventually overcome me, but in the meantime I will still suffer the same conditions. It is about time that we took a little gamble to see if we cannot get someone who will do something to overcome the difficulties that we are experiencing in this House. I repeat that Mr. Eugene O'Donnell is the man for the job.

I will now deal with Country Party members, because they comprise the senior Government party. A moment ago my Leader suggested that we consider conditions at The Lodge. For years I have occupied a room there with two other members. I am not pushing my own barrow but merely quoting this as an example of the discomfort suffered by all in The Lodge. We have been asking for years for something to be done. I get to sleep when the last man in my room comes home. Perhaps the situation is in the reverse when I come in late. (Government laughter.)

It may be a joke to hon. members opposite who can go home after leaving Parliament House, but when we go to The Lodge we should expect a certain amount of comfort. No-one in the commercial world would countenance these conditions, yet to my knowledge they have existed for 10 years. The great majority of those occupying The Lodge are Country Party members. What is wrong with them when they continue to put up with these conditions and do nothing about them?

Mr. Houston: One of our members hasn't yet got a bed.

Mr. TUCKER: That is right. One of our members has not a room allocated to him. When the hon. member for Isis came down here there was no table for him. The then hon. member for Brisbane gave him his table because he knew he was in his last term. That was the only way in which Mr. Jim Blake got a table. Is that efficiency? Are those things that the Government can be proud of when it has fair warning about them? If those are the Government's ideas on efficiency they are not mine. I am looking for a man who will bring efficiency into these operations.

Mr. Hodges: When we became the Government the school-kiddies were like that. We had to fix them up first.

Mr. TUCKER: The Government can live in the past, but I am thinking of the present. The whole of the Country Party thinking is in the past.

My Leader referred to the position in the electorates. Surely all Country Party members come from country electorates. They have their offices in their own homes because they cannot afford to have them elsewhere. Labour Party members are in the same position. This sort of thing has existed for years. We have asked for something to be done. We have asked for some secretarial help. Has it been forthcoming? Not on your life! Who answers the telephone when it rings when we are in Brisbane? Our wives! Who answers all the calls, whenever they may be, or whoever they may be from? Our wives! If the wives of country members of Parliament went on strike today the whole electoral system of Queensland would come to a halt.

Surely to goodness it is not right to use the wives of members continually as unpaid secretaries. It is shocking that members in the western and northern areas of the State are unable to get secretarial assistance. Why should we have to use our daughters, our wives or any other relatives to answer the telephone? Why should they be the people who, for days on end, and sometimes weeks on end, have to carry on for us in country electorates? Is that right? The Federal Parliament says that it is not right and provides all the secretarial help that is needed. What have the Country Party members done? Have they tried to do something about it? Have they talked in the places where they should be able to talk to try to rectify the position? They have not! They are too incompetent and too old-fashioned. I am looking for a man who will do something, and I look to the hon. member for Barcoo. I think it can be said fairly that the hon. member for Murrumba has been given a fair trial as Speaker during the past nine years, and if he has not been able to achieve something in that time, he should be retired. The A.L.P. is attempting to bring a fresh and new approach to this position of power and responsibility, and if we can achieve something—

Mr. Camm: You have been talking about benefits for yourselves for over an hour.

Mr. TUCKER: The Minister is one of the lucky ones who enjoys all the amenities not enjoyed by an ordinary back-bencher.

We are seeking to provide an alternative, and if every thinking member here today does the right thing, he will vote for our nominee. There are many Government members, particularly Country Party members, who are chaffing at me but who know in their own hearts that they get

nothing and have got nothing for the past 12 years; they have been treated like third-rate citizens. If they had any sense, they would, in a secret ballot, slip in a vote for the hon. member for Barcoo. Many of them represent small electorates, and that is why they have no work to do. Some of them represent only 7,000 or 8,000 people. As a matter of fact, I heard that immediately Armstrong set foot on the moon the Premier declared it a Country Party electorate!

In all seriousness, the appointment of the hon. member for Barcoo as Speaker would be a decided advantage to this Parliament and a tremendous asset to this State. I therefore have much pleasure in seconding his nomination.

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) (1.18 p.m.): Everybody who has listened to this alleged debate has been disgusted and sickened by the hypocritical buffoonery of the Leader of the Opposition and his Deputy. If it is intended to appoint, as Speaker, a man who represents a majority party, what is wrong with me? My party polled 60 per cent. of the votes, and every one of its candidates was elected.

I have listened to this slobbering hypocrisy about members' conditions in this House. I admit that there is much room for improvement, but compared with the shocking conditions that obtained under the Labour Government, today's conditions are not all that bad.

The Leader of the Opposition spoke about the broken-down and dilapidated Lodge. I admit that it is broken-down and dilapidated. When I entered Parliament in 1944, it was the only place at which I could afford to stay, but I was refused accommodation there although the Labour Party Speaker made accommodation at the Lodge available to every stinking Tory who applied for it. He said, "There is no room at the Lodge for rats, scabs and renegades." That is an example of the impartiality manifested under the Labour Party!

The hon. member for Townsville North talks about 15 members being in one large room. For years after I came down here, when the Labour Party was in power, there were 14 members of the Country Party in one room, sharing one table and two telephones. There was a chair in the kitchen that was supposed to be used by the cook, but it had no canvas on it and a board had to be placed across it to sit on.

The hon. member also talks about the rackets that go on in Caucus. I will admit that there are just as many rackets in the Country and Liberal Parties as there are in the Labour Party. What about the racket that went on in 1947 with regard to the election of the Chairman of Committees? John Mann, whose virtues have quite rightly been extolled in this House today, had been a very efficient Chairman of Committees for three years, but in 1947 there was a move

to oust him, and, had he not reached an agreement quietly with John Duggan, he would have been defeated for the position of Chairman of Committees and would never have become Speaker. Do not talk to me about pulling shirt-tails, blowing down ears and working rackets with regard to the appointment of officers of this House.

Do not talk to me, either, about The Lodge. If I remember correctly, it was the Webb Committee that recommended that all members from the country be paid an allowance of 3 guineas a day whilst in Brisbane. Several were quite happy to accept that, but those who lived at The Lodge, including many members of the Labour Party, were too miserable and lousy to accept it; they wanted the 3 guineas a day plus cheap board and lodging at The Lodge at 11s. a week. The Speaker said, "You cannot have both," so they continued at The Lodge at 11s. a week. I hope those members concerned make it plain to the people that 11s. a week is all that they pay for the fine accommodation that they get there. Those not at The Lodge were deprived of the 3 guineas a day, which I think they should have received. That typifies the hypocrisy that we have been listening to today. The Webb Committee, the Done Committee and a couple of other committees investigated salaries and allowances of members, and the Labour Party blacklisted them.

The hon. member for Townsville North shed crocodile tears over our wives and womenfolk working in our homes.

Mr. Sherrington: You haven't got a phone on.

Mr. Tucker: They have difficulty in finding out where you are.

Mr. Davies: That is to dodge your constituents; they cannot ring you.

Mr. AIKENS: That is why I won by thousands and the hon. member for Townsville North scraped home by the skin of his teeth! The people respect me and know that they can come and talk to me. The hon. member for Townsville North has been in Parliament for nine years, yet 90 per cent. of his constituents would not know him if they fell over him.

I went before the Done Committee and made the plea put up by the hon. member for Townsville North. I said, "I am not interested in salary and allowances. Give me some secretarial assistance in Townsville." I was asked, "Why haven't the others asked for this?" No member of the Labour Party appeared before the Done Committee and asked for what I requested, because the Labour Party blacklisted the committee.

When members of the Done Committee made their report, they stated that any country member who wanted typing done could write his letters in longhand and send them to the secretarial staff at Parliament House. They

could be typed here and sent back to the member, who would then sign them and send them out. It would take eight days for a member in Townsville to have a letter prepared, signed and sent out. That report was accepted in toto by the Labour Party. I have not much time to spend on these points.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: I know that this is a matter for considerable jubilation by some members.

There are a couple of other things that I think I really should say, as this is the only opportunity that I shall have to say them. I am not going to be as churlish as Labour members and take advantage of the only really open debate in three years to say things that should be said in the debates on the Address in Reply, the Financial Statement, and various other matters.

We are now electing a Speaker of this Assembly, and as a man who has been browbeaten and bullied by all the Speakers of this Parliament over 25 years, I think I can speak with at least some knowledge of the duties of a Speaker. The duties are onerous, and at times it is necessary for the Speaker to make a quick decision. The decision is not always right, but I do not care if it is right as long as it is honest. However, it has not always been honest under Labour Party Speakers, Country Party Speakers, or any other Speakers. Because the duties are onerous, a man is needed who has at least some idea of what should be done, with, of course, one eye on the Government of the day. That was the case when the Australian Labour Party was in power; it will be the case under this Government.

When the hon. member for Murrumba, Mr. Nicholson, was first elected Speaker, he brought a very neophytic approach to the position and made several elementary blunders. But, like good whisky, he improved with age, and I will say that today he is not too bad. He made one egregious blunder during the lifetime of the last Parliament that I am sure he will not repeat. If there are new members of this House who are interested in the functions of Parliament—and they should be—I adjure them to be always on their guard to see that the rights and privileges of this Parliament, the supreme governing body of this State, are not whittled away by organisations that are themselves creations of Parliament, or by men who are merely appointees of Parliament. Unfortunately, that was one mistake—a very egregious one—that the Speaker made during the life of the last Parliament.

This Parliament was duly and democratically elected on 17 May this year by the people of Queensland for a term of three years. Whether or not it will last three years is, of course, very problematical. Whether it will be brought to a very untimely and unsavoury end will depend on

the actions of a group who are more concerned with a megalomaniacal hatred of the Country Party than they are with the democratic processes of this Parliament, and I believe that, even before legislation for the redistribution of electoral boundaries is brought before this House, some move will be made by these people to form an alliance with the members of the Labour Party, who will be foolish not to accept and who are sitting here now, grinning like Borneo apes, waiting for the approach to be made, to defeat the Government on the floor of the House, smash the coalition, smash the Liberal Party, and send this Parliament to the people. It is a matter of complete indifference to me whether the Liberal Party survives, whether the Country Party survives, or whether the A.L.P. survives. I view my political future with equanimity. I will survive as long as I want to survive.

Mr. Bennett: Oh!

Mr. AIKENS: I have proved that for 10 successive elections, and I have proved it against the bitterest opposition that could be brought against me. The A.L.P. in Townsville has not paid the bill for Moon's election expenses against me. That is how much money it spent at the recent election to try to defeat me. It is passing round the hat to the unions and the Q.C.E. The hon. member ought to know that. Perhaps he would not because he is not persona grata with the Q.C.E.

Mr. Bennett: What about the money you stole from the poor old fellow when you won the Casket? Why didn't you give it back to him?

Mr. AIKENS: I did not steal any money from him. He bought the ticket in both our names. I put in half the price of it, and he kept the ticket and we shared the prize. To be quite candid, he was the only one who saw the ticket; I never saw the ticket.

Mr. Bennett: But you saw the prize.

Mr. AIKENS: I did not rob him of money as you robbed poor old Honan. When the Bar Association was going to deal with you for robbing poor old Honan, you went along and said, "Fancy you gang of thieves trying to put me on the spot. Before you put me on the spot, I will tell the world all I know about you," and the members of the Bar Association put their tails between their legs and ran away.

I had to digress long enough to cut the hon. member off at the ankles. I know that this will probably be the only time he will be in this Chamber for some months, but I hope that he will come down sometimes because, if I may use a theatrical phrase, he acts as feed man for me in some of my speeches and I will miss him if he does not come. That is the fear I have in mind.

We have in this Chamber men who admittedly have ability and capacity. I would say that there is nothing wrong with their ability or their capacity, but what they do not realise is that when it comes to the election of politicians the electors look for more than capacity; they look for more than brains; they look for more than intelligence; they look for that thing that every Australian holds in the highest regard—a sense of mateship—and that is lacking in these people. And bear in mind that it is only necessary for this group to gather around their tattered banner of rebellion nine members and cross the floor of the House to defeat the Government.

Mr. Newton: Why don't you go and sit on the other side?

Mr. AIKENS: They will go to you and you will welcome them with open arms. I don't blame you as an Opposition. It is the Opposition's job to bring the Government down; it is your job to defeat the Government on the floor of the House; it is your job to send this Parliament back to the country, but it is not the job of those who profess superficial loyalty to the Government. Whether they do it or not, of course, is a matter for their own conscience. I believe they will without the slightest twinge of compunction, and after they do it there will not be the faintest scintilla of pudency because that will be completely foreign to their nature.

Mr. Lickiss interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: The hon. member knows whom I mean. If he has as much wisdom as he has brains he will know.

I want to deal now with something that I think really affects every person in this State and every person in the world. I am not blaming this Government for being responsible for this position; it is something inherited not only from the previous Government but from custom and tradition down through the centuries; it is that those at the university, whether they be students or academics, are considered to be apart from and above the ordinary people, and there is one law for the ordinary citizen in the State or country and another and softer law for those at the university. It is time that that was brought to an end; it is time that this Government woke up to its responsibilities and said to those at the university, "You are citizens of Queensland and we are going to introduce the principle of British justice that all men are equal before the law. If you break the law, if you go out in open defiance of the law, if you trespass on the liberty of others in the claim that you are exercising your own liberty, then you will be brought before the courts and dealt with according to the law." We know that there are men now running around the country—professors and other academics at the university—claiming that those of the university have the right to hold and express

opinions contrary to ours. I would be the last man to deny them that right because I know, as every sensible man knows, that it is by diversity of opinion that we live, and I will say to anyone at the university or anywhere else, "By all means formulate and express opinions contrary to mine or anyone else's." But there is a world of difference between holding, formulating and expressing opinions different to those held by others and going out on to the public highways and byways and putting into operation that most hideous of all things, mob rule, taking the law into your own hands, holding it in contempt, interfering with people's liberty, destroying property and getting away with it by saying, "We are from the university. Down the years we have been able to do it and we are still going to do it."

I tell the Premier that from the moment Mr. Nicholson gets into the chair, at the first opportunity I am going to put the Government parties on the mat. I am going to put them on the spot and on the mat in that, as from now, there shall be one law in Queensland for the whole of the people and not, as I said, a special and a softer law for those at the university.

I now intend to mention perhaps one of the most ticklish things that I have ever had to introduce. A number of women are present in the gallery, so I shall wait until the House assembles in proper order with Mr. Nicholson in the chair to read from this foul, filthy and slimy publication, entitled "Paper Dart; Erotica, Erotica, Erotica," which is printed at the university and distributed there, and everywhere else in Queensland. If the hon. member for Ipswich West remains in the Chamber, as I think she should, she will hear how foul and filthy this publication is. I will say about the hon. member for Ipswich West that at least she is a woman who has always conducted herself in the best traditions of womanhood, both inside and outside this Chamber—I pay her that compliment—but she is also a member of this Parliament and has no right to hide behind her sex in order to dodge her responsibilities. If she wants to do that she should either leave Parliament or change her sex.

At the opportune time I shall put this matter right in the Government's lap and challenge it to tell hon. members what would happen to any other person in this State who published and circulated a foul and filthy piece of paper like this. As a result of its publication one university student stood up on the battlements quite naked and did certain disgusting things. I understand, and believe it to be true, that no action was taken against the printers, publishers or circulators of this foul publication, or the pornographic lout who did those things, because of the unwritten law that the police have no jurisdiction at the university as the university campus is not

a public place. If that is the unwritten law, it is a foul blot on the democratic constitution of this Parliament and of this Government. If the Premier will not do something about it, then, to use the vernacular, I will be up him like a rat up a rope.

What is really wrong with the university? I will tell hon. members what is wrong. Over the years we have considered university students to be the intellectual superiors of the country in which they live. A number of hon. members have gone out to the university to address students. The hon. member for South Brisbane and the hon. member for Toowong, who would be two of the most able debaters and talkers in this Chamber, went out to address students at the university, but with the wrong attitude and the wrong approach. Instead of saying, "I am here to separate the sheep from the goats, and I am here to take my stand on the side of the sheep and to help the decent students and academics at the university drive all these filthy, pornographic louts off the campus into the streets, where they can dig ditches and delve into garbage cans," and instead of gaining the support of the decent section of university students and staff, which comprises about 90 per cent. of them, the two hon. members to whom I have referred tried to ingratiate themselves with all of the students and to grovel and genuflect to them, with the result that the lout section of the students, led by Laver, saw the stark terror on the faces of the two hon. members and heard their knees knocking and their teeth chattering, and drove them off the platform. No louts have ever driven me off a platform—and, believe me, I have had some tough beatings in my early days.

I was asked to go to the university at Townsville to address a meeting, but I did not go out there to placate, or mollify them, or lump them all together and say, "You are nice people, intellectually superior to me and everyone else." I went there as their equal and I separated the sheep from the goats.

Mr. Porter: You are wonderful.

Mr. AIKENS: I am not wonderful, but I have something that the hon. member has not got, namely, guts.

I knew what had been arranged for me. I talked to them for 25 to 30 minutes and after I finished there was absolute silence. They waited a while and then called on someone to propose a vote of thanks to me. These are almost his exact words, "Before I move this vote of thanks to Mr. Aikens, I would like to remind you all of what we rehearsed, and of what we agreed to do. I would like to remind you of the interjections we arranged to make and the interruptions that we rehearsed. I would like to remind you of all the questions that we were going to ask him and I intend to delay the moving of this vote of thanks until some of those questions are asked." It is on record that not one question was

asked. After listening to me for 25 to 30 minutes they knew that I would use the opportunity afforded me in replying to questions to rub salt into the open and gaping wounds that I had inflicted on them. When the vote of thanks was eventually put it was carried with tumultuous applause and from that day the Left section of the Townsville university has been virtually insignificant. I told them that if ever anyone wants to fight for real freedom, or if ever a hand is needed to drive the louts off the university campus, send for me and I will come along.

Mr. R. Jones interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: That is what I will do, but I doubt if the hon. member will ever do it. I doubt that he would have the guts to do it. If he were to go out there they would leave him with only his under-pants.

Mr. Tucker interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: While talking about the Townsville university, I could say something that would embarrass the hon. member.

Students talk about wanting student control. They believe that the students and the academics should control the university, set the courses, and determine what they should learn, how they should learn it, how the examinations should be held and so on. In the old days when those who were at the university put in the money to maintain and run the university they could have controlled it if they wished. That would have been no concern of mine, but today, 82 per cent. of the money required to build and maintain universities is taken by us politicians from the pockets of the taxpayers and poured into the coffers of the universities. We therefore have a right to demand that that money be not wasted, and that it be properly spent. The sooner the Laver crowd at the university get that simple truth into their pornographic heads the better it will be for all concerned. If they want to run the university let them maintain it. If they want the taxpayers to maintain the university, as they are at present, we, as the accredited elected representatives of the taxpayers, have the right to demand an explanation of what is going on and how the money is spent.

Mr. R. Jones: You are blackening them all because of the actions of the 10 per cent.

Mr. AIKENS: I am not. I am urging hon. members to get out and support the 90 per cent. The situation is just the same as that in trade unions and political parties, where the disorganised majority is being blackmailed and bullied by the organised minority.

Mr. R. Jones: You said I did not have guts.

Mr. AIKENS: I said the other day that the hon. member is a very good unionist, and a good man, but he should ensure that he is not corrupted and debased by some hon. members of the A.L.P. here. They are here now; look at the Santamaria boys. What a good man the hon. member will be if he stays as he is. If he stays as he is he will suit me. The Santamaria boys are here, and he should keep his eye on them.

Mr. R. Jones: You said that I had no guts.

Mr. AIKENS: I admit that in some respects the hon. member has plenty of guts.

The most recent Commem procession in Townsville was run by louts at the university who printed, and distributed in Flinders Street, 10,000 copies of the election pamphlet I have in my hand. The pamphlet was printed at the university printing works. Another 2,000 copies were given to the A.L.P. and the Communists in Townsville to post up all over the town. I raised this matter in the Press. They could just as easily have put in the pamphlet, "A.L.P. and Communist Party, South Brisbane, vote for Bennett," because that would have been as true as what is in this pamphlet. It is quite an illegal pamphlet because it does not bear the name of the person who authorised its publication or of the persons who printed it. But because it comes from the university, those responsible for it can get away with it.

I shall now deal with an interesting legal point. It is an anachronism in this Parliament that we cannot direct questions to Mr. Speaker or even put such questions on the Business Paper. We can, sometimes, seek his advice on Standing Orders, and if he is in the mood he will advise us. We can see him in his rather stuffy parlour, which is about the size of the "broom cupboard," although not as well appointed. He is amiable, affable and approachable. He will always have a talk to us and try to solve our problems. I could take this particular matter to him, but it would not then be publicised, and it should be.

I have many contacts at the universities in Townsville and in Brisbane because of my open support and advocacy for the 90 per cent. of students and academics who are decent. These people come to see me at my home and in my office at Parliament House. They write to me regularly and I write to them. Do not get it into your heads that the louts and hoodlums come only from the students, because the worst louts are academics and tutors, and one brilliant lout is a lecturer at the Townsville university.

This group at the university—I shall call it the Laver group—is organising another of its demonstrations to synchronise with the opening of the Federal election campaign. We know, of course, that Laver would be a nobody had he not become the white-haired darling of the Trades Hall group. They made the Laver group what it is today, and now

they are pretending that they want it off their backs, but they either will not or cannot get rid of it.

The Laver group is organising this procession. I am informed that at the Brisbane university 91, of whom 19 are lecturers and tutors, owe definite allegiance to Laver; and that at the Townsville university 11, of whom one is a lecturer and another a tutor, owe allegiance to Laver, although some of them are a little wobbly.

Mr. Bennett: Who are they?

Mr. AIKENS: I shall name them later on if you want to know.

Mr. Bennett: You want to put it on record. You have not got the guts, and you have been talking about guts all morning.

Mr. AIKENS: One of them is named Bennett.

It will be a typical demonstration. The moment the procession leaves the university grounds, the Communists, members of the Trades Hall Council, and all the other political riff-raff will join it. The same old slogans will be used, such as freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of this, freedom of that. These people should be told bluntly and emphatically that their freedom ends where it transgresses the freedoms of other people. By the time the procession reaches Parliament House, they hope to have a couple of thousand of the usual riff-raff with them.

They hope to be led by the same two Federal politicians who led them in the march on 4 July last year, namely, Senator Keeffe and Senator Georges. They also hope to be joined by certain A.L.P. members of this Parliament. I shall not mention their names because it is not certain whether they will be allowed to march. Some of the boys at the Trades Hall are at last getting it into their thick heads that association with the lout groups at the universities and with industrial disturbances and 24-hour stoppages, harms the Labour Party on polling days. On arrival here, the idea is to come through the main gate. One section is to go up the main stairway and block off the library and this corridor. Another section is to go up the other stairway and the lift and enter the ministerial room. This will be arranged to take place at about 2 minutes to 11 o'clock. They will ring the bells. What they will do with you, Mr. George, I do not know; they will probably put you in a corner and sit on you. They are then planning to enter the Premier's room and hold a demonstration there.

They will be accompanied by television cameramen, who are always on their side. They will not take any pictures of what the students are doing when breaking the law, but, the moment the police start to man-handle the students, they will assiduously take pictures which will be shown on television

screens with someone commenting that this is another example of police brutality and the establishment of a police State. We know what can be expected from some television cameramen, particularly some attached to the A.B.C.

Having done these things, some of the demonstrators will be taken to the "paddy wagon". I am not going to enlarge upon this, because this sort of thing has been seen over and over again and this will simply be a repetition of it, except to say that it is to be staged in this Parliament.

Mr. Bennett: You are hoping it will be.

Mr. AIKENS: I am hoping that this exposure of it will scare the boys at the Trades Hall into stopping A.L.P. support, because it is about time that Labour members realised that when the people of Queensland see "A.L.P." they no longer think that they are the initial letters of the Australian Labour Party but that they stand for the Australian "Laver" Party.

We know, of course, following the raid on Parliament House when the Government of Mr. Forgan Smith was in office, that the police have power to deal with demonstrators at Parliament House. We know that this Parliament has the right to deal with any of its members who take part in such a demonstration or raid. I have been informed, however, on the best of legal authority, that if any Federal A.L.P. politician—or any other Federal politician, if he is mad enough—joins in a demonstration or riot at a State Parliament House, neither the police, the State Parliament, nor the Federal Parliament has any power to discipline him or otherwise deal with him.

Mr. Bennett: Who told you that? Name him.

Mr. AIKENS: If the hon. member for South Brisbane had told me that, I would know it was a lie. If he has authority for what he is now saying, let him stand up and quote it. I ask the Speaker to try to find out from his legal authorities—I know there will be some disputation about it—what right he or Parliament has to deal with a Federal Parliamentarian who commits a breach of the peace or takes part in a demonstration or riot at this Parliament House. I can assure him that there is no power at all to deal with this situation. The Federal Parliament cannot deal with him because the act does not occur within the precincts of the Federal House. This House cannot deal with him because, as a Federal member, he does not come under the authority of this Parliament.

Mr. Bennett: Did Ray Smith give you that advice?

Mr. AIKENS: If Ray Smith gave me any legal advice I would say that it would be just about as worthless legally as any advice the hon. member for South Brisbane has

given me. So far as legal opinion is concerned, they are both tarred with the same brush. But Ray Smith is on a better racket now than the hon. member for South Brisbane is. The hon. member has frequently boasted in this House that in addition to the \$9,000 he picks up in salary and allowances as a member he also picks up over \$19,000 at the Bar, but Ray Smith has "left him for dead," with the perks that he now has coming in. The hon. member for South Brisbane might look at the legal question, if he has time in between "touching" his clients, of whether one of the jobs that Mr. Smith has is a breach of the rule governing office of profit under the Crown. Let the hon. member for South Brisbane have a look at that one if he wants to agitate his poor old legal mind.

I can assure the House that the information that I have given has come to me from the same reliable source from which I always get my information. I have been able to tell those people and this House what is going on. If this demonstration does take place, and if Senator Keeffe and Senator Georges or any other Federal Labour politician, or any other Federal politician, take part in a riot at Parliament House, what power exists, under law or any other statutory procedure of this Parliament, to deal with them?

Having made those few affable and conciliatory remarks, I again assure the Premier—I hold him in high personal regard—that the die must be cast. The hair on which the sword of Damocles is suspended over the necks of academics and university students must be cut. They must be told that, from the day the Premier makes up his mind or the Government makes up its mind—it is a responsibility that devolves on all hon. members opposite in Caucus, and I am not going to allow any member of the Government to wriggle out of this—to issue a directive to police and other authorities, if any university student or academic does anything, anywhere, that is a breach of the law, he will be prosecuted for that breach of the law in the same way as an ordinary citizen would be prosecuted. Frequently we see university students taking charge of the streets and going completely mad and berserk and then read the next day that they have been brought before a court and charged with failing to obey an order issued by a policeman, tearing a policeman's shirt, or some other piffling little offence. If they go out and make statements that are treasonable, let them be charged with treason; if they break and enter buildings, let them be charged with breaking and entering. Let us have no more of this namby-pamby treatment of the louts and hoodlums and the pornographic scum at the university. Let us clean them off the campus and, if possible, out of the State.

At 1.59 p.m.,

The Clerk-Assistant said:

"Mr. Nicholson and Mr. O'Donnell have been nominated and seconded for the office of Speaker. A ballot will now be taken.

"Will hon. members come forward as their names are called to receive the ballot papers. Each member will record his vote by placing a cross opposite the name of the member for whom he wishes to vote and then putting the ballot-paper in the ballot-box on the table."

The division bell was then rung for two minutes, the Bar was closed, and each member advanced to the table and placed his vote in the ballot-box.

The Clerk-Assistant thereupon opened the ballot-box, and having counted the votes, with the aid of the Second and Third Clerk-Assistants, declared the result as follows—

For MR. NICHOLSON	45
For MR. O'DONNELL	31
Informal	1

Mr. Nicholson, having submitted himself to the pleasure of the House, was conducted to the chair by the mover and the seconder. Speaking from the dais, he said: "I thank the Premier and the Deputy Premier for moving and seconding my nomination for this high office of Speaker of the Legislative Assembly."

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier) (2.17 p.m.): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Government I should like to offer to you congratulations on your election once again to the high office of Speaker of the House. It is one of the most important and responsible positions in this Parliament.

You are charged not only with a responsibility towards the staff of Parliament but also to the members of Parliament.

As most hon. members know, this is your fourth term as Speaker of this House. I know that with the help of hon. members you will continue to carry out the duties and responsibilities of your high office to the best of your ability. You have been responsible for maintaining a very high standard in the conduct of business in this House for a considerable period, and we in Queensland have gained a reputation that is the envy of other Parliaments.

On behalf of the Government, I again congratulate you and wish you a most successful and fruitful term of office.

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba—Leader of the Opposition) (2.19 p.m.): On behalf of the Opposition I congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your election once again to the high office of Speaker. I believe that this has been an interesting exercise. The Opposition does not apologise for its nomination, but naturally accepts the decision of hon. members. We wish you well in your term of

office. I can assure you that you will have the full support of members of the Opposition in carrying out your duties as you believe they should be carried out. We hope that during the term of this Parliament there will be meetings of the various committees, and that members will be given an opportunity to look at Standing Orders. We also hope that you will be successful in many of the projects that you have in mind to obtain improvements for members, both in this House and associated with their work as members. If the Opposition can be of any help in getting these things done, we will be very happy to assist. With those few remarks, once again I congratulate you on your elevation.

Mr. O'DONNELL (Barcoo) (2.21 p.m.): I also wish to congratulate you on your return to the office of Speaker. I feel that certain points have emerged from this election today which are of importance in our democratic life. This has been, to probably most members, an experience. I say that quite sincerely. It also has given an opportunity for members of this Parliament, if they so desired, to get various messages through to the Speaker in relation to his previous period of office in his important position. This is not an opportunity to be lightly passed over.

To be perhaps slightly light-hearted in my approach to this question, I should like to suggest that future swearing-in ceremonies be at 11 a.m. rather than 12 noon. I should also like to say that being nominated for the office of Speaker at least gives one the opportunity to have from it some ante-mortem eulogies. I again congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, and wish you the best for your period of office.

Mr. SPEAKER: Hon. members, I thank the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition, and also my opponent on this occasion, the hon. member for Barcoo, for their kindly remarks. They appeared to me to be—at least from one side—a complete change of face, as only a matter of a few minutes ago I was being castigated for things that I allegedly had not done.

If this were the House of Commons, following the vote which has just been taken I could, of course, no longer occupy the chair, because there it is thought that the Speaker should resign if he has lost the confidence of all, or even some, members. Here, of course, the position is entirely different. In Australia, Speakers are in rather an unfortunate situation. I well remember that when I was elected in 1966 the then Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Duggan, also expressed the view that it is unfortunate that a Speaker has to be nominated and still has to retain his party membership. I believe that on that occasion I replied that I would be very happy to resign my party affiliation as long as the Opposition also entered into an agreement

not to play politics with the Chair and did not compete against me in the election. That is the right of Speakers not only in the House of Commons but in many other Parliaments.

Today I have unfortunately been a victim of the "wog". I have also been heartily sickened by some of the suggestions and statements made during the course of this debate. All that I can say is that since I have been Speaker this House has been completely restored and reformed.

This is possibly the only opportunity I will have to speak my mind, and speak it I will, no matter how long it takes. If the remarks of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition had been true I could have accepted them, but never have I heard in this House such a spate of untruths. It is unfortunate that the hon. member was not in this House earlier. He has, of course, said, "Let us forget the past". How hon. members opposite would like to forget the past! When I came into this House—

Mr. Hanlon: You could have said this during the debate.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I am replying to criticism made by the hon. member for Townsville North.

Mr. Hanlon: You did not reply in the debate. Why don't you leave the chair and go on to the floor.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! If the hon. member for Barcoona is not very careful, he will be leaving his chair.

Mr. Hanlon: It was not a threat by me. If you wanted to take part, why didn't you do it from the floor during the debate?

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! An unfortunate situation has arisen relative to accommodation, and I must say that the building and the manner in which hon. members have to work in offices in it are not in accordance with my desires. I did not wish to see three and four members pushed into a room; I had no desire to have three or four members in one room in The Lodge. I might mention in passing that this is the only Parliament in the Commonwealth in which members are even provided with a bed.

So far as I am concerned, I have a very clear conscience about what I have done for hon. members on both sides of the House. I have done it equally for both sides, which I believe has proved my impartiality. When I think back on my days as a member of the Opposition and to the state of the House when first I entered it, I can turn to the Government side of the Chamber and say to the Minister for Works and Housing and to the Minister who preceded him in that office, "Thank you for the help you have given in bringing this House up to a semblance of something decent to work in", and I think that is a very fine

effort. Over \$500,000 has been spent on Parliament House since a Country-Liberal Government first came to office, and this Chamber has been completely remodelled. These are things to which hon. members should not close their eyes. A desk for every member of Parliament and a telephone on each desk has been provided in this building. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition mentioned that there were 15 members in one room, and I think he gave the size of it.

Mr. Tucker: 50 feet by 16 feet—800 square feet.

Mr. SPEAKER: I believe I have every right to tell the hon. member that when I first entered Parliament there were 15 Country Party members in a room 25 feet by 15 feet. It contained one table and two telephones and not enough chairs for the 15 members to sit on. That is all I have to say on that subject.

Having replied to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I have quite a number of other matters to mention. I wish to address myself particularly to the new members and congratulate them on their election. I say to them that, whenever they have any queries they wish to raise with me or any questions they wish to ask, my office is open to them. I know from the clerks at the table—here I join in the expressions of regret that the Clerk of the Parliament is absent on sick leave—that new members as well as those who have sat in previous Parliaments know they always have access to them or me and that we will seek to provide an answer to their problems.

We have some 300-odd Standing Rules and Orders in this House. Those Standing Rules and Orders are not made by the Speaker—this Parliament approves of them—and I say to the Leader of the Opposition that I appreciate his views when it comes to meetings of the Standing Orders Committee. I have often tried to get the members of that committee together, but as it consists of the Premier, the Deputy Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the Speaker and one other member, it is very difficult to get at least five people in executive positions to spare the time, at the same time, to meet and discuss the problems I want to discuss. I do not want just a half-hour meeting; I want a half-day meeting to discuss some of the amendments to the Standing Orders that I believe necessary.

In the election that has just taken place I appreciate the confidence that has been expressed in me by those who supported me. I appreciate too, the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition and also those of the hon. member for Barcoo. I realise this is a democratic world and while we have a

system of politics where the election of Speaker is based on a political plane, as it was today, then it is a difficult job for any occupant of the chair, irrespective of his political affiliations, to convince the people that he is being impartial. And that will continue, irrespective of who occupies the chair. That doubt will always remain while the election of Speaker is conducted on a political basis.

I thank hon. members for their patient hearing. I assure members of the Opposition that despite the fact that I have taken the opportunity to reply to the caustic criticism of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition—I know he is a person who, if he dishes it out, is also prepared to take it—I appreciate the manner in which they have listened. I say again to all hon. members, particularly the new members, “You are not only representatives of your own electorate; you are members of Parliament and, as such, you have certain privileges. Let not those privileges become licence lest you destroy the image that this Parliament has built up over the years.”

With those remarks, hon. members, I thank you and I assure the Leader of the Opposition and all other hon. members of my impartiality. If anyone doubts it he has only to look at my record over past years.

Mr. Bennett: Look at my record, too.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am quite sure that even the hon. member for South Brisbane knows that any admonitions I have handed out to him have been justly deserved and faithfully applied. Thank you.

PRESENTATION OF MR. SPEAKER

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier): I desire to inform honourable members that His Excellency the Administrator of the Government will receive the House for the purpose of presenting Mr. Speaker to His Excellency at Government House later this afternoon at a time to be arranged.

Mr. SPEAKER: I wish to inform the House that today, at a time to be arranged, I shall leave for Government House, there to present myself to His Excellency the Administrator of the Government as the member chosen to fill the high and honourable office of Speaker, and I invite such honourable members as care to do so to accompany me.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier): I move—

“That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 1.57 p.m. tomorrow in the late Legislative Council Chamber.”

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 2.35 p.m.