

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 2 AUGUST 1972

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Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. W. H. Lonergan, Flinders) read prayers and took the chair at 1.57 p.m. in the late Legislative Council Chamber.

PRESENTATION OF MR. SPEAKER

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to report that yesterday I presented myself to His Excellency the Governor as the member chosen to fill the high and honourable office of Speaker of this House, and that His Excellency was pleased to congratulate me upon my election.

GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH

At 2 p.m. His Excellency the Governor came in state to Parliament House, was announced by the Sergeant-at-Arms, received by Mr. Speaker, and accompanied to the dais.

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

"HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

"You have been summoned to this First Session of the Fortieth Parliament of Queensland to consider business of importance to the people of our State.

"This being a new Parliament, I offer my congratulations to all new members and a welcome back to those who served this State in the previous Parliament.

"To me this is a very special occasion as it is the first time I have been privileged to be here as your Governor.

"It is four months since I arrived in this chamber to be sworn-in as Her Majesty's representative. During that period, my wife and I have travelled widely throughout Queensland and it has been most gratifying to be so warmly welcomed wherever we have been.

"As a result, we both feel at home in Queensland, and I look forward to serving the Queen in this State and contributing, I hope, to its future welfare and development.

"My Government ended the last financial year with a surplus in the Consolidated Revenue Fund of \$2.7 million.

"That result was achieved only with special assistance of \$9 million from the Commonwealth Grants Commission; receipt of \$2.35 million from the Commonwealth at the February Premiers' Conference to cover rapidly rising State costs; Commonwealth payments under the Financial Assistance Grants formula increasing above estimate by \$3.5 million; and significant improvement in the State's own revenues.

"In 1972-73 my Government intends to continue its standard of services generally and to introduce improvements to the fullest extent finances allow. A crucial factor determining the State's financial ability will be the extent to which award costs and costs generally rise during the year.

"My Ministers advise that rural production for the financial year just ended is likely to gross an all-time record value of \$800 million and that the 1972 sugar cane crop is expected to be as high as 18,100,000 tons.

"However, the cost-price squeeze coupled with export changes, particularly the proposed entry of Britain into the European Economic Community, creates an urgent need for increased services in marketing and farm economics.

"Accordingly, in the year ahead the Department of Primary Industries will expand its marketing and farm economics research over a wide range of industries.

"Reconstruction of the rural section of the State is operating at full capacity and Government assistance will be continued during the current financial year to farmers, graziers and other primary producers considered to have the capacity to regain commercial viability with help.

"Provision is being made for 80 farm amalgamations under the Marginal Dairy Farms Reconstruction Scheme; a further 38 Fitzroy Basin brigalow blocks are yet to be dealt with and these will be made available progressively as predevelopment works, road construction and surveys are completed.

"Approximately 988,000 acres of sheep lands are programmed for disposition as additional areas, and about 75,000 acres of cattle lands which have reverted to the Crown will be made available for competition in the near future. A further 1,000,000 acres are intended for utilisation as blocks for new settlement. Applications will be invited for the development of five blocks in North Queensland suitable for cattle fattening and agriculture, with areas totalling approximately 4,000 acres.

"Development of the Crown Estate will continue together with the reclamation scheme at East Mackay. It is possible that work will commence on another reclamation project at Shute Harbour designed to provide parking space and amenities for the many tourists who visit the neighbouring islands.

"The cut of plantation timber is expected to reach 60 million superficial feet; softwood planting will reach 200,000 acres; and development of recreational facilities within State Forests in proximity to major centres of population will be expanded.

"Fairbairn, Beardmore and Maroon dams will be completed this financial year; Monduran Dam advanced; and irrigation works to serve the Gooburrum System, together with barrages on the Kolan and Burnett rivers, will be commenced.

"Work will continue on distribution systems to serve the Emerald Irrigation Area and the extension of the St. George Irrigation Area. Schemes to divert water available from Moogerah and Borumba dams will be commenced.

"Commencement of Pike Creek Dam, estimated to cost \$14 million, will proceed. It will be financed by equal contributions from Queensland, New South Wales and the Commonwealth.

"A dam and supply works, estimated to cost \$21.34 million, to provide urgently needed additional water supplies for the Mount Isa Mines and city complex, will be commenced, and a Water Area and Water Board constituted to install and manage the distribution works. These works will be jointly financed by Mount Isa Mines Limited, the Water Board and normal Government subsidy for the proportion attributable to the Board.

"Planning is nearing completion for large dams at Advancetown and at Copperlode Falls to augment the Gold Coast and Cairns water supplies, and investigations and planning are in progress for a major dam on the Boyne River to augment Gladstone's water supply.

"Total value of all minerals produced during 1971 was \$338.3 million or 2 per cent. higher than the record established in 1970.

"With anticipated improvement in world metal prices, growing market stability, and increasing demand for coal, the industry generally can be expected to continue to expand.

"The Railway Department will purchase additional diesel locomotives and wagons; complete construction of new stations at Rockhampton, Bowen Hills and Northgate; further upgrade permanent way and signalling systems; reconstruct several major bridges and eliminate more timber bridges.

"Also planned are new quarters for trainmen at Mackay, Gladstone and Winton; a new central amenities building at Mayne; commencement of new locomotive workshops at Townsville; new marshalling yards at Toowoomba; new goods yard facilities at Acacia Ridge; improved siding accommodation at Roma Street and installation of anti-pollution equipment at major diesel servicing depots and workshops.

"Further testing of radio control of locomotives in the running of long trains hauling minerals will be carried out and construction of the new 140-mile Greenvale line for the transport of nickel ore in North Queensland will continue.

"Erection of the new Railway Administration Building as part of the major project for the development of air space over Central Station will continue and also work at Brunswick Street Station, another major project which includes provision of a new station.

"The Merivale Street bridge, which will link Brisbane's northside and southside suburban systems, is being designed and construction will follow.

"A Metropolitan Transport Authority will be set up to provide a properly integrated, efficient and economic system of public passenger transport.

"An expanding road construction programme, designed to provide not only the basic new road needs of the State but also the upgrading of existing roads and rural highways for increasing traffic, and the building of additional Beef Roads, will proceed.

"Development of the Brisbane metropolitan freeways system will continue. Some works are already completed and others are nearing completion. Plans for a start on the Northern Freeway have been announced.

"My Government intends, during the life of this Parliament, to phase out repayments by Local Authorities for maintenance of Developmental and Main Roads.

"Decentralisation of educational administration will be extended to encompass secondary education. Secondary Regional Inspectors will be appointed and it is expected that closer liaison between the administration and the schools will result.

"A new syllabus in Art will be introduced in primary and special schools and the mathematics programme will be revised to emphasize metric measures. New textbooks for this programme will also be provided.

"Regional Library Advisers will be appointed and an in-service education seminar will be held for staff from schools with significant numbers of children.

"It is intended to establish during 1973 the first pre-schools under my Government's new policy for pre-school education. Planning for progressive extension of these facilities is receiving high priority.

"New primary schools will be built at Carole Park, Strathpine West and Wondai; a high school at Mossman; and major additions at Caloundra, Heatley, Moranbah and Town View (Mount Isa) State schools.

"An Opportunity School, just completed at Aitkenvale, Townsville, will open at the start of third term. New opportunity schools are to be constructed at Mount Isa, Bundaberg, Ipswich West and Aspley.

"The extensive building programme for Technical Colleges will continue. This year a new building for technician training will be completed at the South Brisbane Technical College, and two more blocks at the Mount Isa College.

"Block release training for apprentices, successfully introduced in the Graphic Arts trades in 1972, will be progressively extended to other trades. New courses will be provided, especially for middle-level occupations in management and commerce.

"It is anticipated that Stage II of the Police Academy, Oxley, and the new Courts of Law, Townsville, will be well advanced, and the new Court House at Holland Park completed.

"Stage I of the new Juvenile Training Prison at Woodford is expected to be ready for occupation early in 1973.

"A tender has been accepted for Stage I of the 250-bed Aged Persons Nursing Home at Wynnum; work on a kitchen-cafeteria block at Toowoomba Baillie Henderson Hospital will continue; a new accommodation unit for pre-school children and older girls at Wooloowin "Warilda" Home is proposed; a new building for the Queensland Institute of Medical Research in the grounds of Royal Brisbane Hospital and a Government Garage at Zillmere, are expected to be commenced.

"New hospital ward blocks are under construction at Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton and Mackay Hospitals; foundations for Block 7, Royal Brisbane Hospital, are being poured; a new hospital is nearing completion at Julia Creek and existing services at Moura and Weipa will be expanded to provide hospital facilities.

"Construction of new residential maternal and child welfare centres at Dalby and Goondiwindi will begin, and also replacement of the inadequate accommodation for the Division of Maternal and Child Welfare in St. Paul's Terrace. New mobile clinic vans will be brought into service to cater for the needs of mothers and babies in many new housing areas.

"The Community Home Care Service will expand to Townsville as the first step in creating a regionalised service for northern Queensland.

"Sections of Brisbane Dental Hospital will be remodelled to provide better treatment facilities; dental clinics will be established at Kingaroy, Injune and Laidley and improved facilities will be provided at Mareeba, Gympie, Gladstone, Burketown and Julia Creek.

"Periodic medical examinations for railway locomotive crews, operation of a 21-bed medical and surgical hospital at Brisbane Prison and a domiciliary service to the Queensland Police Academy will be introduced.

"Queensland Housing Commission will continue house construction for home ownership and rental.

"With a special Commonwealth Grant in addition to other funds, housing has been provided for single aged pensioners and aged pensioner couples at Holland Park, Zillmere, Hawthorne and Mount Isa. Contracts have been let for the construction of further pensioner units in Brisbane and 13 other centres, and further units are being arranged.

"Interest rates on Housing Commission loans have been reduced from 7½ per cent. to 5½ per cent. per annum within the last twelve months and, in fulfilment of my Government's election promise, maximum loans were increased to \$10,500 from July 1.

"Rebates to tenants of State Rental Houses with low incomes are now being made available on a wider scale, and pensioners with homes on State Housing Leasehold land or Workers' Homes Leasehold land are receiving generous concessions where payment of full land rent would prove a hardship.

"Greater emphasis will be placed by the Department of Commercial and Industrial Development on the provision of Government-financed factory buildings to accommodate pioneer-type industries.

"A new fire station will be opened at Townsville later this year.

"The renovated and expanded Brisbane office of the Tourist Bureau will open shortly as one of the most modern travel centres in Australia.

"Sufficient funds will be made available to the new Sub-Department of Sport to enable it to make a worthwhile contribution where need is greatest and most good can be achieved.

"The Department will cover all sports except Horse Racing, Trotting and Greyhound Racing.

"Regional Probation Offices were opened at Rockhampton and Toowoomba last financial year and it is anticipated that the increasing use by the courts of probation will require the opening of additional regional offices.

"Licensing Commission determinations to date should result in the establishment of 10 new hotels and taverns in new developing areas throughout the State and there is a possibility of a further 14 at other similar sites.

"The strength of the Police Force will be numerically increased and a continuous survey is being carried out of work-loads at Police Stations throughout the State to ensure the best deployment of members.

"The Police Academy at Oxley commenced operations this year with an intake of 150 cadets. It is intended that in 1973 a further 150 will commence training and 150 in 1974. When completed and functioning fully, the Academy will have a yearly output of 150 who have completed training.

"A joint study will be made by State and Commonwealth departments of environmental effects of the new Brisbane Airport.

"Monitoring and abatement of air pollution will continue and regulations concerning water pollution will be introduced soon.

"A pilot study of solid waste disposal, centred on Cairns, will be completed about the end of 1972, and a general policy to guide local authorities in this matter will be developed.

"A committee of the Environmental Control Council is expected to develop before long a guide to possible legislation on noise control.

"Revaluation of Local Authority Areas will be undertaken in the City of Charters Towers and Shires of Albert, Bauhinia, Bungil, Calliope, Emerald, Etheridge, Fitzroy, Herberton, Jondaryan, Mirani, Mundubbera, Murgon, Nanango, Rosalie, Rosenthal, Tambo, Waggamba and Wambo.

"Capital expenditure on electricity development will approximate \$78 million.

"Work on the Gladstone Power Station Project, for which contracts totalling more than \$110 million have now been let, will continue.

"The South Pine to Gladstone 275 kV transmission line will be completed by December, interconnecting South-Eastern and Central Queensland supply systems.

"Swanbank "B" Power Station will be completed with the installation of the fourth and final set due to be commissioned in March, 1973.

"Harbour works scheduled include construction of a \$300,000 Harbours and Marine Department works depot at Pinkenba, upgrading and part reconstruction of the grain terminal berth and provision of better access roads to industrial port lands at Hamilton and Hemmant.

"The 2,500-foot slipway at Cairncross Dock will become operative early in 1973 and tenders will be called for construction of 30-ton and 50-ton cranes to service the complex.

"Reconstruction of No. 3 berth in the Port of Townsville to provide modern facilities for the export of minerals from Mount Isa has commenced, and also provision of beacons for an enlarged access channel which will be deepened to cater for tanker vessels servicing the Greenvale Nickel project.

"Construction of a new wharf at Thursday Island has been approved, and extension of the sugar bulk loading facilities at Cairns and Mourilyan is nearing completion.

"Construction of an experimental groyne at Kirra Heads to safeguard the Coolangatta-Greenmount beach will be completed within this financial year.

"Honourable Members, included in the legislative proposals that you will be asked to consider are:

- "A Bill to appoint an Ombudsman;
- "A Bill to provide for Public Safety;
- "A Bill to amend the Succession and Probate Duties Act;
- "A Bill to amend the City of Brisbane Act;
- "A Bill to amend the Workers' Compensation Act;
- "Bills to implement recommendations of the Law Reform Commission;
- "A Bill to make provision for Group Titles of Land;
- "A Bill to provide for the supervision and control of Tow Trucks.

"HONOURABLE MEMBERS:

"I now leave you to discharge your duties to the people of Queensland and pray that Almighty God will bless your work."

His Excellency then left the Chamber.

Mr. SPEAKER announced that the sitting would be continued in the Legislative Assembly Chamber, where he took the chair at 2.23 p.m.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

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

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

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 2.25 p.m.