

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**TUESDAY, 2 AUGUST 1977**

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## QUEENSLAND



# Parliamentary Debates

[HANSARD]

*Legislative Assembly*

### FOURTH SESSION OF THE FORTY-FIRST PARLIAMENT

Appointed to meet

AT BRISBANE ON THE SECOND DAY OF AUGUST, IN THE TWENTY-SIXTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II, IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1977

**TUESDAY, 2 AUGUST 1977**

#### OPENING OF PARLIAMENT

Pursuant to the proclamation by His Excellency the Governor, dated 30 June 1977, appointing Parliament to meet this day for the dispatch of business, the House met at 1.56 p.m. in the late Legislative Council Chamber.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. J. E. H. Houghton, Redcliffe) read prayers and took the Chair.

The Clerk read the proclamation.

#### GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH

At 2 p.m. His Excellency the Governor came in state to Parliament House, was announced by the Acting 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:

To be appointed to the office of Governor of this State is an honour which has come to only nineteen other people.

I am very conscious of that honour and will do all in my power adequately to represent Her Majesty The Queen during my term of office.

During the three-and-a-half months since my arrival, I have travelled to many centres along the east coast, to towns and areas in the north-west of the State and also throughout the south-eastern corner.

Wherever I have been, I have received the warmest of welcomes and am continually being assured by all responsible members of the communities visited of their sincere loyalty to the Sovereign.

I have no doubts that the enthusiasm and loyalty displayed during the recent visit by Her Majesty to Queensland during her Silver Jubilee year continues to be reflected throughout our State.

This, to me, is very gratifying and confirms that this State has been aptly named—it is truly the Queen's Land.

My Ministers have informed me that our State continues to be in a sound financial position. Last financial year ended with a deficit of only \$1 million in a total budget of more than \$1,600 million.

Every effort has been made to reduce administrative costs so that maximum funds can be directed to employment-creating projects such as schools, roads, hospitals and housing.

Since the last budget, an extra \$70 million has been provided for capital works as a result of careful management of the finances of our State. This has helped to relieve the unemployment problems in a number of areas.

One of the main items of business coming before you this Session will be your consideration of the Estimates of the probable ways and means and expenditure of the Government for the financial year 1977–78.

In the preparation of the Budget, which will be presented next month, my Government will be mindful of its responsibility to continue to exercise tight control over the expenditure of funds so that maximum benefit can be obtained from every available dollar.

The ceiling on public service growth will be maintained and there will be close scrutiny of administrative costs.

My Ministers fully accept the responsibility to ensure that adequate funds are provided to meet the growing needs of our community in education, health, housing, water conservation and communications.

Again this year the highest priority will be given to capital works programmes in these areas. Funds will be directed to employment-creating capital undertakings, particularly those in which there is private sector involvement.

I have been assured that the sound position of our State finances will enable essential works programmes to be maintained in the current financial year at a level at least equal to that achieved in 1976-77.

Honourable Members, in the last six months there has been a very welcome reduction in the rate of inflation in our nation and it is most important for all sections of the community, particularly primary producers and small businessmen, that this trend continue.

My Government played a very active part in helping to make the prices and wages pause a success during the period it was in force. Although this endeavour was prematurely terminated, it did demonstrate that governments, industry and commerce can work together to overcome our inflationary problems.

My Government will continue to play its part in the fight against inflation. By restraining any increases in State taxes and charges during 1977, it has given a lead for other sections of the community to follow.

Unemployment continues to be a major problem for our country.

There is reason for confidence that the employment position in Queensland will improve in the months ahead, particularly in comparison with the rest of Australia and because my Ministers will continue to ensure that maximum funds are made available for employment-creating projects.

The level of industrial disputes in key industries is causing very real concern to my Government. These disputes only add to unemployment problems, and jeopardise our position with our principal trading partners.

Despite these problems, Queensland continues to be the fastest growing State in Australia.

The results of the last national census confirm that Queensland leads Australia in population growth, and that five of the top nine regional growth areas in Australia are located in Queensland.

To a significant extent, this growth can be attributed to the expansion which has occurred in our mining industry in the last decade.

Recent announcements of new mining ventures, particularly in the export coal area, will ensure that the mining industry plays a dynamic role in the development of our State in the years ahead.

The annual value of mineral production in Queensland exceeds \$1,400 million, a three-fold increase in four years.

The value of mining projects either under way or firmly committed exceeds \$2,000 million.

My Ministers have been actively involved in the securing of new markets for our minerals, particularly export coal, and these endeavours will be vigorously pursued during the current year.

The mining industry is a significant employer of labour in our State, and the development of new mining projects will provide extra employment opportunities for our increasing population in decentralised areas.

A number of our primary industries continue to experience difficulties as a result of depressed world prices and limited market opportunities.

Important discussions are now under way with a view to the implementation of a Federal beef stabilisation scheme.

Arising from the report of the State Government appointed Beef Industry Committee a marketing scheme has been submitted to the Australian Agricultural Council.

My Government believes that the implementation of these proposals will be of significant benefit to beef producers in Queensland.

Changes were made earlier this year to milk marketing arrangements in south-east Queensland to provide some assistance to producers outside the Brisbane milk area.

Apart from the implementation of the dairy industry reorganisation scheme, in which all States are involved, consideration is also being given to major changes in the marketing of milk throughout the State.

Despite problems created by inflation, and other economic factors, the State's manufacturing industry remains in a basically sound position. Reduced inflation will improve the competitive position of manufacturers and ease cost pressures.

A "Buy Queensland Made" campaign is currently under way to draw consumer attention to the need to support local industries.

The estimated value of manufacturing production in 1975-76 was \$1,750 million, the third highest in Australia.

The reorganisation of Queensland's electricity supply industry came into operation on July 1. This will lead to a more efficient supply and distribution of electricity for industry and consumers throughout our State.

My Government is anxious to complete the Gladstone power station project which will play a vital role in meeting our future energy needs. The continued involvement of the Federal Government in this project has been strongly sought by my Ministers.

One of the major undertakings at the present time is the urban public transport improvement programme. Work is well advanced on both the suburban rail electrification system and the cross-river rail link.

An order has been placed with a decentralised Queensland manufacturer for the supply of electric rail cars and other contracts associated with the work have gone to local manufacturers.

Substantial financial assistance is being provided for municipal and private public transport operators, particularly the Brisbane City Council.

Work is proceeding on the urban freeway programmes and on highway improvements throughout the State. My Government is concerned at the level of Federal financial assistance for these projects and, in order that work can continue, extra money has been made available from State funds.

A public hospital capital works programme valued at more than \$80 million is well advanced to provide new and improved hospital services in many parts of the State. The Community Health Programme and the School Dental Scheme are now available at major centres of population.

My Government continues to place great importance on water conservation and irrigation projects. Funds have been provided to enable work to proceed on the important Bundaberg irrigation scheme and the Wivenhoe Dam scheme in the Brisbane Valley.

A committee has been formed to recommend ways of implementing a hydro-electric, water supply augmentation and irrigation scheme on the Burdekin River in North Queensland.

The Local Government Grants Commission has been meeting local authorities in all parts of the State to gain a better understanding of the needs and problems of councils. The work of this Commission will be vital in determining future financial assistance for all local authorities.

Education continues to enjoy the highest priority in my Government's programme. Pre-school facilities are now available to more than 60 per cent of children in the immediate pre-school year. The number of teachers has been increased, and extra specialist units in the fields of art, music and library services are being provided in secondary schools.

Funds have been provided to train more police. The internal investigations unit of the police force has been strengthened along the lines recommended by the committee of inquiry into police procedures.

A broadly representative committee of our indigenous citizens has been formed to advise the Government on changes to the Aboriginal and Islanders Act. During the current year, more responsibility will be transferred to the elected Aboriginal and Islander Councils.

This year, the level of assistance to sport, youth and community recreation groups will be a record. It is also much higher than assistance provided in other States, and is a sound investment in the welfare of the youth of today who are the citizens of tomorrow.

Honourable Members, included in the legislative proposals you will be asked to consider during this Session are:

- A Bill to consolidate, amend and reform the law of evidence along the lines recommended by the Queensland Law Reform Commission.
- A Bill to prescribe rules of evidence and practice to apply in the case of sexual offences with a view to protecting female complainants from unnecessary harassment.
- A Bill to provide for a more equitable distribution of the market for milk among the milk producers of Queensland and to reconstitute the Brisbane Milk Board as the Queensland Milk Board.
- A Bill to provide for the constitution and functions of the Queensland Recreation Council being a consequence of an inquiry into the nature and extent of problems confronting youth in Queensland.
- A Bill to provide for the establishment and administration of an area of some 25,000 hectares of land within the environs of Brisbane as a forest and recreation park.
- A Bill to provide for the constitution and functions of an Authority to control the campaign against pests that afflict the animals and crops of Queensland.
- A Bill to liberalise the benefits accruing to members of the Police Force and their dependants from the Police Superannuation Scheme.

In opening this Fourth Session of the Forty-first Parliament of Queensland, I trust that your deliberations will aid the advancement and welfare of all sections of the community.

May the blessings of Almighty God rest upon your counsels."

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 2.19 p.m.

## SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

**Hon. T. G. NEWBERY** (Mirani—Leader of the House): I move—

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

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 2.20 p.m.

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