

## TUESDAY, 20 MARCH 2001

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### OPENING OF PARLIAMENT

Pursuant to the proclamation by His Excellency the Governor, dated 1 March 2001, appointing parliament to meet this day for the dispatch of business, the House met at 10 a.m. in the Legislative Assembly chamber.

The Clerk read the proclamation.

### COMMISSION TO OPEN PARLIAMENT

The Clerk acquainted the House that His Excellency the Governor, 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 Peter Douglas Beattie and the Honourable Terence Michael Mackenroth as 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 having read the commission—

**The SENIOR COMMISSIONER** (Honourable Peter Douglas Beattie—Brisbane Central): Honourable members, I have it in command from His Excellency the Governor 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 Governor at such time and place as His Excellency shall appoint.

I produce a commission under the public seal of the state, authorising the Honourable Peter Douglas Beattie and the Honourable Terence Michael Mackenroth, or either one of them, to administer to any member of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland the oath or affirmation of allegiance to Her Majesty that is required by law to be taken or made and subscribed by every member before the member is permitted to sit or vote in the Legislative Assembly.

The Clerk read the commission.

### RETURN OF WRITS

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

Albert: Margaret Majella Keech	Cunningham: Stuart William Copeland
Algester: Karen Lee Struthers	Currumbin: Merri Rose
Ashgrove: Demetrios Fouras	Darling Downs: Raymond Gordon Hopper
Aspley: Veronica Lesley Barry	Everton: Rodney Jon Welford
Barron River: Lesley Ann Clark	Ferny Grove: Geoffrey James Wilson
Beaudesert: Kevin Rowson Lingard	Fitzroy: James Pearce
Brisbane Central: Peter Douglas Beattie	Gaven: Robert Lindsay Poole
Broadwater: Peta-Kaye Croft	Gladstone: Elizabeth Anne Cunningham
Bulimba: Patrick Douglas Purcell	Glass House: Carolyn Therese Male
Bundaberg: Junita Irene Cunningham	Greenslopes: Gary Bernard Fenlon
Bundamba: Jo-Ann Roslyn Miller	Gregory: Vaughan Gregory Johnson
Burdekin: Steven Gordon Rodgers	Gympie: Elisa Mary Roberts
Burleigh: Christine Anne Smith	Hervey Bay: Andrew Ian McNamara
Burnett: Trevor Leonard Strong	Hinchinbrook: Marcus Hosking Rowell
Cairns: Desley Boyle	Inala: Heinrich Palaszczuk
Callide: Jeffrey William Seeney	Indooroopilly: Ronan Oliver Lee
Caloundra: Joan Mary Sheldon	Ipswich: Rachael Genevieve Nolan
Capalaba: Michael Wai-Man Choi	Ipswich West: Donald Wallace Livingstone
Charters Towers: Christine Margaret Scott	Kallangur: Kenneth William Hayward
Chatsworth: Terence Michael Mackenroth	Kawana: Christopher Paul Cummins
Clayfield: Elizabeth Anne Clark	Keppel: Vincent Patrick Lester
Cleveland: Darryl James Briskey	Kurwongbah: Linda Denise Lavarch
Cook: Stephen Dominic Bredhauer	Lockyer: William Bond Ingpen Flynn

Logan: Reginald John Mickel  
 Lytton: Paul Thomas Lucas  
 Mackay: Timothy Sean Mulherin  
 Mansfield: Philip Gerard Reeves  
 Maroochydore: Fiona Stuart Simpson  
 Maryborough: John Alan Kingston  
 Mirani: George Edward Malone  
 Moggill: David John Hopetoun Watson  
 Mount Coot-tha: Wendy Marjorie Edmond  
 Mount Gravatt: Judith Caroline Spence  
 Mount Isa: Anthony McGrady  
 Mount Ommaney: Julie Maree Attwood  
 Mudgeeraba: Dianna Ann Reilly  
 Mulgrave: Frederick Warren Pitt  
 Mundingburra: Lindel Helena Nelson-Carr  
 Murrumba: Dean MacMillan Wells  
 Nanango: Dorothy Ruth Pratt  
 Nicklin: Peter William Wellington  
 Noosa: Cathryn Molly  
 Nudgee: Neil Stuart Roberts  
 Pumicestone: Carryn Elizabeth Sullivan  
 Redcliffe: Raymond Keith Hollis

Redlands: John Michael English  
 Robina: Robert Joseph Quinn  
 Rockhampton: Robert Evan Schwarten  
 Sandgate: Gordon Richard Nuttall  
 South Brisbane: Anna Maria Bligh  
 Southern Downs: Lawrence James Springborg  
 Southport: Peter Joseph Lawlor  
 Springwood: Barbara Gwendoline Stone  
 Stafford: Terry Sullivan  
 Stretton: Stephen Robertson  
 Surfers Paradise: Robert Edward Borbidge  
 Tablelands: Rosa Theresa Lee Long  
 Thuringowa: Anita Phillips  
 Toowoomba North: Kerry Gerard Shine  
 Toowoomba South: Michael James Horan  
 Townsville: Michael Francis Reynolds  
 Warrego: Howard William Thomas Hobbs  
 Waterford: Thomas Alfred Barton  
 Whitsunday: Janice Heather Jarratt  
 Woodridge: Desley Carleton Scott  
 Yeerongpilly: Matthew Joseph Foley

### MEMBERS SWORN

The commissioners then administered the oath or affirmation of allegiance to the following members, who thereupon subscribed the roll—

ATTWOOD, Julie Maree  
 BARRY, Veronica Lesley  
 BARTON, Thomas Alfred  
 BLIGH, Anna Maria  
 BOYLE, Desley  
 BREDHAUER, Stephen Dominic  
 BRISKEY, Darryl James  
 CHOI, Michael Wai-Man  
 CLARK, Lesley Ann  
 CLARK, Elizabeth Anne  
 COPELAND, Stuart William  
 CROFT, Peta-Kaye  
 CUMMINS, Christopher Paul  
 CUNNINGHAM, Elizabeth Anne  
 CUNNINGHAM, Junita Irene  
 EDMOND, Wendy Marjorie  
 ENGLISH, John Michael  
 FENLON, Gary Bernard  
 FLYNN, William Bond Ingpen  
 FOLEY, Matthew Joseph  
 FOURAS, Demetrios  
 HAYWARD, Kenneth William  
 HOBBS, Howard William Thomas  
 HOLLIS, Raymond Keith  
 HOPPER, Raymond Gordon  
 HORAN, Michael James  
 JARRATT, Janice Heather  
 JOHNSON, Vaughan Gregory  
 KEECH, Margaret Majella  
 KINGSTON, John Alan  
 LAVARCH, Linda Denise  
 LAWLOR, Peter Joseph  
 LEE LONG, Rosa Theresa  
 LEE, Ronan Oliver  
 LESTER, Vincent Patrick  
 LINGARD, Kevin Rowson  
 LIVINGSTONE, Donald Wallace  
 LUCAS, Paul Thomas  
 MALE, Carolyn Therese  
 MALONE, George Edward  
 McGRADY, Tony  
 McNAMARA, Andrew Ian  
 MICKEL, Reginald John

MILLER, Jo-Ann Roslyn  
 MOLLOY, Cathryn  
 MULHERIN, Timothy Sean  
 NELSON-CARR, Lindel Helena  
 NOLAN, Rachael Genevieve  
 NUTTALL, Gordon Richard  
 PALASZCZUK, Heinrich  
 PEARCE, James  
 PHILLIPS, Anita  
 PITT, Frederick Warren  
 POOLE, Robert Lindsay  
 PRATT, Dorothy Ruth  
 PURCELL, Patrick Douglas  
 QUINN, Robert Joseph  
 REEVES, Philip Gerard  
 REILLY, Dianna Ann  
 REYNOLDS, Michael Francis  
 ROBERTS, Elisa Mary  
 ROBERTS, Neil Stuart  
 ROBERTSON, Stephen  
 RODGERS, Steven Gordon  
 ROSE, Merri  
 ROWELL, Marcus Hosking  
 SCHWARTEN, Robert Evan  
 SCOTT, Christine Margaret  
 SCOTT, Desley Carleton  
 SEENEY, Jeffrey William  
 SHINE, Kerry Gerard  
 SIMPSON, Fiona Stuart  
 SMITH, Christine Anne  
 SPENCE, Judith Caroline  
 SPRINGBORG, Lawrence James  
 STONE, Barbara Gwendoline  
 STRONG, Trevor Leonard  
 STRUTHERS, Karen Lee  
 SULLIVAN, Carryn Elizabeth  
 SULLIVAN, Terry  
 WATSON, David John Hopetoun  
 WELFORD, Rodney Jon  
 WELLINGTON, Peter William  
 WELLS, Dean MacMillan  
 WILSON, Geoffrey James

### ELECTION OF SPEAKER

The Clerk having called upon the longest serving member, not being a minister, to preside—  
Hon. V. P. Lester (Keppel) took the chair as the presiding member.

**The PRESIDING MEMBER:** Honourable members, before calling for proposals for Speaker, I draw the attention of honourable members to the standing orders, which provide that any member present in the chamber may be proposed as Speaker. Every proposal shall be seconded. Any member who has been proposed as Speaker is required to indicate if the proposal is acceptable. When all proposals have been made, seconded and accepted, debate may ensue. Debate shall be relevant to the question. Speeches shall not exceed five minutes for each member. I remind all honourable members that the provisions of standing orders apply in this debate. I now call for nominations.

**Hon. P. D. BEATTIE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (10.48 a.m.): I move—

That Raymond Keith Hollis do take the chair of this House as Speaker.

Mr Presiding Member, I welcome all members to the 50th parliament. This, indeed, is an interesting parliament. It has never had so many women members. There are, in fact, 33 women, which is 37 per cent of the parliament. This parliament will never be the same again. That has to be a good thing.

It is my privilege and honour to nominate the member for Redcliffe as the Speaker. In July 1998 I moved a similar motion nominating the member for Redcliffe for this position. At that time I said that Ray Hollis had the credentials and the ability for this important position. Today I can add another ingredient, and that is the ingredient of experience.

The role of Speaker, as we all know, is a most challenging one. The standard of debate in this parliament and in the parliaments around Australia will determine how well regarded members of parliament are in the community in the future. For too long exchanges in our parliaments have led to a disrespect for members of parliament in the community. It is absolutely essential, therefore, that the Speaker have the authority to control this parliament and to do it with dignity and with fairness. That is why I am nominating Ray Hollis.

It is important that we lift our standards. More than ever before members of the community have been looking for their members of parliament to come in here and debate in a positive way the things that affect our future, the things that need to be dealt with, the challenges that we all have. We know what is happening with the economy. We know what is happening with the falling dollar. We need to be doing positive things. Therefore, the role of the Speaker is fundamentally and intrinsically linked to the performance of this parliament.

In the member for Redcliffe we have a person equal to the task of fulfilling the demanding duties of Speaker in the 50th Queensland parliament. The strength of the member for Redcliffe's candidacy is in his character, his personal principles and his integrity. I remember that in the last parliament he was very fair. On a couple of occasions I thought he was too fair to the opposition. A lot of that has to do with Ray's history, his personal circumstances—which I will not go into—the hardship that he has experienced, his integrity and the fact that he was a man who rose above those personal hardships. He has reached the great honour of being Speaker of this parliament. That is why I have enormous regard for him.

Above all else, he is widely recognised as possessing an innate sense of fairness not only in this chamber but also in his whole approach to life. Ray Hollis is a fair person who believes strongly in the basic democratic rights and freedoms that our system of representative parliamentary democracy embraces and he is deeply committed to the institution of parliament as the basis of our democratic system of government. I am determined that my government will play its part by setting high standards of honesty and accountability. All Queenslanders deserve a parliament that they can respect. So all members should bring fairness and dignity to the robust debate that rightly occurs in this House.

I am not saying that we should not have robust debate. Of course we should. But this should not be a bearpit. This should be an inspiration—an inspiration to the people who elected us and the people whom we represent. When I talk about this parliament lifting its standards, I talk about all members, and I intend to lead by example. I believe that the member for Redcliffe will display authority, fairness and impartiality to guide this parliament along those lines. I am confident that, in trusting the affairs of this chamber and this parliament to Ray Hollis for the next term, we will be making a wise choice.

Raymond Keith Hollis was born in England on 30 January 1940. He is married to Diane and has brought up four children. By the time he had settled in Australia at the age of 22, he had already been a farmhand, galley boy, cook and steward. He ran a carrying business for 13 years—in fact, he moved my mother-in-law on one occasion, and he brought her back—before entering parliament on 2 December 1989 as the member for Redcliffe. I will always be grateful for that, Ray; I always will. One of the ways in which he has remained in touch with his constituents is by holding regular morning teas in his own home, and I have attended some of those. My party and my government are pleased to put forward and support the nomination of the member for Redcliffe as the Speaker of this House. I hope that we will see a lifting of the standards during this term.

At 1 o'clock, after we have adjourned from here, whomever the Speaker is going to be will join me for a special ceremony to lay down a time capsule to be opened by our counterparts a century from now. The time capsule provides a snapshot of the recent past, the present and what our generation sees as the future, and it marks the Centenary of Federation. There is material from the Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition and me. I invite all members to be present for that at 1 o'clock. I seek leave of the parliament to incorporate in *Hansard* what will be contained in that time capsule.

Leave granted.

#### Time Capsule Components

The items that will be included in the Time capsule are as follows:

- The Governor's Speech for the Opening of Parliament
- A copy of the returned Writ for the election
- The Cabinet Swearing in Booklet
- A photo of the Cabinet, along with a list of names and portfolio titles
- A photo of Parliament House
- A CD Copy of the Parliamentary Papers (Hansard, votes, proceedings, etc)
- A letter from the Premier outlining some of the key happenings in 2001 including the Centenary of Federation celebrations, the Goodwill Games and CHOGM.
- Significant items from the Courier Mail including the election day and the following day issues, Centenary of Federation features in 1st Jan and 3rd March (featuring the Queensland program)
- A copy of the Native Title Resolution Act 2000
- A copy of the Native Title (Qld) Act 1993
- A copy of the Smart State Jobs for the Future document
- A copy of Queensland the Smart State document
- A copy of Priorities in Progress (Volume 1 & 2)
- A copy of the 'Queensland: Australia's Dynamic State' book
- A copy of the 'Queensland Smartstate Biotechnology Brilliance' booklet
- The copy of the Parliamentary Seal
- A letter from Leader of the Opposition, Mike Horan MP to the people of Queensland
- List of Parliament House staff
- A Cap embroidered Queensland government logo
- A 'What's behind the Queensland Government's Corporate identity' poster
- The Premier's CD Rom Business Card
- The State Budget 2000-01 CD Rom
- A copy of the Parliamentary Dining Rooms Menu.

**Mr BEATTIE:** Finally, I understand that there will be a nomination for Speaker from the Leader of the Opposition. I think it is a positive thing to have an election of the Speaker. I see no difficulty with it. I understand Liz Cunningham will be nominated. I wish her well in the ballot.

**Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH** (Chatsworth—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Sport) (10.54 a.m.): I have pleasure in seconding the nomination of Ray Hollis as Speaker. Ray is the seventh Speaker I have served under in this parliament. One thing I have observed in the time I have been a member of parliament is that the job of Speaker is probably one of the hardest jobs in the parliament. As the Premier alluded to, quite often the government, whether it is our side or the other side, believes that the Speaker is too fair, in other words, giving the opposition too good a go, and the next day the Speaker is being abused by the opposition for

being too fair to the government, in other words, for not giving the opposition a go. That makes it very difficult to sit in that chair and make the decisions that are necessary.

One thing that I have observed that makes a good Speaker is that the Speaker needs to take control of the House, make his or her decisions, let members know that the decisions made are going to stand and not tolerate members who want to argue with that decision. Quite often members argue with the Speaker and the Speaker argues with them. I think the Speaker should make a ruling and simply move on. If the member wants to argue about that ruling, they should see the Speaker at lunchtime and talk about it then. In saying that, I tell members that in the 23 years that I have been here I have been warned under standing order 123A only once. So I observe what I am saying. I have never argued with the Speaker. Members need to respect the authority of the chair. That is the only way we are going to have the authority that is necessary to make that position work. I say this to whomever is elected Speaker today: if you want to have a good time as the Speaker, take control of the parliament early and let members know that you are going to run it very firmly but very fairly. If you do that, you will gain the respect of members. If whomever is elected Speaker does that, it will be a much better parliament to be in.

The past two parliaments have been very difficult for the Speaker. In both of those parliaments, the numbers were so close that the Speaker was reluctant to ask members to leave the chamber because he would be accused of being biased because of the numbers. That is not the position in this parliament. It is no longer of concern that ejecting a member will change the numbers. That in itself will make the Speaker's job that much easier. I look back at the parliaments I served in before the past two parliaments and make those observations from there. There are two members in the parliament besides the member for Redcliffe who have served as Speaker. I am sure that they would both agree with me when I say that their job in the chair is a lot easier if members respect their position. Finally, I never want to correct the Premier, but I draw to the House's attention that there are 27 female Labor members and 33 female members of parliament, which places this parliament third in the world for the number of female members. I congratulate all those women.

**Honourable members:** Hear, hear!

**The PRESIDING MEMBER:** Does the honourable member for Redcliffe accept the nomination?

**Hon. R. K. HOLLIS** (Redcliffe—ALP) (10.59 a.m.): I accept the nomination.

**Mr HORAN** (Toowoomba South—NPA) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.59 a.m.): I move—  
That Elizabeth Anne Cunningham do take the chair of this House as Speaker.

I have great pleasure in nominating Elizabeth Anne Cunningham, the honourable member for Gladstone, for the position of Speaker in this 50th parliament.

We really are facing quite a historic parliament. This is Queensland's 50th parliament and the election for the 32nd Speaker of the Queensland parliament—all this in 100 years of Federation in our great land of Australia. As other honourable members have mentioned, this parliament is also historic for the number of women who have been elected. The National Party opposition proposes for the role of Speaker a woman of great distinction and respect in Queensland in Mrs Cunningham, who represents the electorate of Gladstone.

I think the important thing for us all to consider here today is that for some time people have been calling out for reform in the Queensland parliament. The people of Queensland want a parliament they can have pride in, a parliament they respect and a parliament in which they get a fair go, regardless of the political persuasion of the member who represents them.

The role about which we are deliberating today is a very important one. The Speaker is responsible not only for the good organisation of this House but also for the entire historical precinct of this great Queensland parliament. This Speaker, as well as being a worldly person who can judge with the wisdom of Solomon and make the right decisions that enable this parliament to work well, is responsible for seeing that our parliament is well resourced, well protected and safe. Many members will find that, whether they be ministers, shadow ministers or backbenchers, as a result of their duties they will spend as much time in this precinct as they spend at home. It is also important that this building is well looked after and has adequate funds to ensure that it is maintained as one of the icons of the Queensland people.

The National Party went to the last election with a proposal that, were we elected, we would form an all-party committee to look at the role of the Speaker to see if we could bring about greater independence. Perhaps it would have been along the lines of the system that operates at

Westminster whereby the Speaker, once appointed, becomes an Independent and various other arrangements take effect regarding whether that Speaker continues to be elected or continues to represent their electorate.

Generally speaking, the people of Queensland are looking for some sort of sign that we in this parliament are about being more professional and more disciplined. They do not want us to just say we are going to behave and say we are going to do things properly for the people we represent. They want us to put forward positive signs that we are doing those things. It is in the spirit of this feeling of the state that the National Party opposition has put forward Mrs Cunningham as a nominee for the position of Speaker.

Mrs Cunningham is married and has three children. She worked as a voluntary tutor for a number of years before she entered public life. She entered public life in the Calliope Shire Council. She was a councillor for a number of years and then became the mayor of the Calliope Shire Council. She was elected to this parliament in 1995. Some six or seven months after her election she was put in the very difficult position, for a new member of parliament, of holding the balance of power. She performed that task admirably. She voted on a number of occasions to support proposals from both major parties. I think what impressed the people of Queensland and the people of this House was her genuineness and sincerity in deliberating on each and every bill that went through the parliament. That sincerity and genuineness continued during the last parliament.

Despite the huge workload involved in a single member working through every bill, many of us here noticed time and time again that the honourable member for Gladstone went to members on both sides of the House, talked to them about their particular points of view and voted according to her judgment. For that she is held in high regard throughout Queensland, particularly in her electorate of Gladstone, which she now represents for a third term.

Honourable members, I think we face a quite historic choice and historic chance here. This is an opportunity for this parliament to vote to step the Queensland parliament ahead of the other state parliaments. Here is a chance for us to lead the way and show that we can install a true Independent as Speaker. We will start from the top in the reform of this parliament by having an Independent who can make the many decisions that have to be made in this House in a true bipartisan manner.

I say to all honourable members: do not disappoint the people of Queensland. We are the servants of the people we represent. It is undoubtedly the mood of the people that we reform our parliament and bring about a professional performance in this parliament. We start by having an independent Speaker. Here is our chance to do the right thing by the people of Queensland. I urge honourable members to vote for Mrs Cunningham to hold the position of Speaker.

**Mr JOHNSON** (Gregory—NPA) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.04 a.m.): It gives me great pleasure to second the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition, nominating Mrs Elizabeth Cunningham, the member for Gladstone, for the position of Speaker of the 50th parliament of Queensland.

I place on record my sincere congratulations to each of the 89 members of this 50th parliament. I congratulate those members who have been returned to this place and those new members who were successful at the 17 February election. This parliament is a very important institution, one that I know honourable members will treat as such.

As the Leader of the Opposition has said, this decision is a very important one. We have heard over a long period of time about impartiality in this place. Impartiality comes as a result of two things: strong morals and high principles. Elizabeth Cunningham certainly possesses both strong morals and high principles. She has served on the Parliamentary Entitlements Committee and the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee. As the honourable Leader of the Opposition said, she has held some very high positions in her own community and rose to the position of mayor of Calliope shire.

Upon her election to this place in June 1995 Mrs Cunningham had a great deal of responsibility. It was not long after her election that she delivered government to the coalition parties. Over the two years and four months of the Borbidge-Sheldon government Mrs Cunningham demonstrated to the parliament and the people of Queensland just how sincere she was in her deliberations on policy—government policy she supported or opposition amendments she supported to bring about change to legislation.

I believe it is important for us as members of parliament to identify with what this lady is about. She demonstrates integrity when she walks into this place and in the Gladstone electorate. I think a true reflection of her qualities is her family. We are all very fiercely proud of our families. I mention her husband John and their three wonderful daughters. The qualities those three young girls display speak of a truly magnificent effort on the part of John and Elizabeth. It is a reflection of the family and of the parents in question. For Liz Cunningham to fill the role of Speaker of this parliament would be a unique situation.

Today we have heard the Premier, Deputy Premier and Leader of the Opposition make reference to the number of women in this 50th parliament. I think there is no more fitting time to elect a lady as Speaker. We could talk at length about the nominations made by those on both sides of this House. We could talk about impartiality and the things that are important to us—the integrity of the place and our integrity as members. As the Leader of the Opposition said, in light of the importance of this institution in the eyes of the general public it is absolutely paramount that we select somebody to act as Speaker who will provide impartiality.

This is the people's House, and I believe the people of Queensland would endorse the election of Elizabeth Cunningham, the member for Gladstone, as Speaker of the 50th parliament of Queensland. I trust that all members of parliament see merit in her nomination this morning.

**The PRESIDING MEMBER:** Order! Does the member for Gladstone accept that nomination?

**Mrs LIZ CUNNINGHAM** (Gladstone—Ind) (11.10 a.m.): Yes.

**Miss SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—NPA) (11.10 a.m.): I rise to support the nomination of Elizabeth Cunningham, member for Gladstone, for Speaker. This is a woman whom I have come to know and respect. I have the highest respect not only for her work ethic but also for her strong principles. She is fair and strives to do her best without fear or favour. Her character is above reproach, and she has an unquestionable desire to pursue truth and to behave honourably in her role as a representative of her electorate and as a representative of the citizens of Queensland. She will never take her marching orders from an outside person or party leader or the caucus.

Liz Cunningham is eminently qualified to perform the role of Speaker—a role in which impartiality and non-partisanship are very critical. I am aware that Premier Beattie has flagged a reform agenda and given a commitment to clean up the electoral cheats in his own party—the cheats who sought to undermine the integrity of the electoral system. I would challenge Premier Beattie that the first reform which is needed in this parliament is an independent Speaker.

The role of Speaker should not be a political prize determined by the factions. There have been some excellent Speakers who have risen above their political allegiances to behave with independence, but there have been others with whom that has not been the case. And in a parliament where there is such a dominance of one particular party, this is a time to look towards a progressive reform of installing a truly independent Speaker. I suggest that in a parliament where, for the first time, we have such a large number of women, it is time to take a very progressive step and install our first woman Speaker of this parliament.

The Speaker is crucial to not only the smooth running of the parliament but also the fabric of democracy in Queensland. There has never been a woman Speaker of this parliament. There has never been an Independent in this role. I believe it is time that this Parliament and the people of Queensland were treated with the respect that they deserve by installing a person who is truly impartial in their role and who will impartially undertake that role. There has never been a person who has come to this role such as Liz Cunningham, with her own particular style and her own particular characteristics. I commend the nomination of Liz Cunningham for Speaker.

**The PRESIDING MEMBER:** A ballot will now be conducted. I draw the attention of all honourable members to the form of the ballot paper which will be used. It will list only the names of those members who have been nominated and seconded and who have accepted the nominations. Members are required to place a cross in the square immediately to the left of the name of the member whom they choose to be the Speaker. As members' names are called, I ask them to please come forward to receive a ballot paper. After voting, members should place their folded ballot papers in the ballot box on the table.

At 11.15 a.m.,

In accordance with the provisions of standing orders Nos 6 and 7, a ballot was taken by the Clerk, with the following result—

Mr Hollis	66
Mrs Liz Cunningham	21
Informal	Nil

Mr Hollis submitted himself to the pleasure of the House and, on being called, was conducted to the chair by the mover and the seconder.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I am honoured to be chosen as the member to fill the high and honourable office of Speaker of the Queensland Parliament.

**Hon. P. D. BEATTIE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (11.44 a.m.): Mr Speaker, on behalf of all honourable members I congratulate you on your election. It is important that, as part of democracy, we have ballots from time to time. I offer my commiserations to the member for Gladstone, Liz Cunningham, but I congratulate her on being nominated. It is important that we have a choice in these things.

Mr Speaker, on behalf of the government I pledge that we will work with you to lift the standards of this parliament and we will support measures such as ministers having three minutes to answer questions, as was the case in our first term. The reason for that is that it gives the opposition more opportunities to ask questions. When I first came into this place—and subsequent to that election and others—we saw a process here where ministers often filibustered for 10 or 15 minutes on occasions, which deprived the opposition of the opportunity of being able to ask questions. We will not do that. We will be imposing a limitation of three minutes, and we believe that is appropriate.

We also support the continuation of the opportunity for private members' bills. One of the reforms we introduced in the first term was the ability for private members' bills to be introduced into this parliament to give individual members an opportunity to pursue matters of significance to them and their constituents. Hopefully, there will also be increased opportunities for individual members to raise in this parliament matters of concern to their electorates. There have been some discussions among the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the Liberal Party and me. I would hope that members on the other side of the chamber would share this view.

I have suggested it would be appropriate that we have one debate on matters once a week as opposed to three. That would give members an opportunity to pursue a matter of major importance but ensure that more members get an opportunity to raise matters of importance in the parliament. Many members told me that during the last term they missed the opportunity to raise matters in here; even though there were chances, there were never enough. Hopefully, during two or perhaps three-minute opportunities, members can raise matters of importance to their constituencies.

All members need to lift their standards in this parliament. I am determined, and so is the government, to do everything we can to increase public respect for members of parliament. All of us, regardless of our politics, know how hard we work in here. Two or three bad 6 o'clock news reports on performances in this parliament can destroy six months' hard work in the community. It is the responsibility of all members to behave themselves when in this chamber and to lift their standards.

Mr Speaker, we will give you our full support. I wish you well in your term. We know you will be a good Speaker and that you will be impartial. We wish you good luck.

**Mr HORAN** (Toowoomba South—NPA) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.47 a.m.): Mr Speaker, it is with pleasure that I congratulate you on your election for a second term as Speaker. There have not been many Speakers in this place who have presided over two parliamentary terms. On behalf of the opposition, I wish you well. I think it is also good that you have come through an election process—that is part of what this whole parliament is about—to resume your role. On behalf of the opposition, I say that we will give you our full support. On behalf of all honourable members, I say that we look forward to your help and assistance as our Speaker throughout the term of this 50th parliament.

I have had some discussions with the Premier about the way the parliament operates and, generally speaking, we agree that there is a need for members to be able to speak about issues that relate to their electorates. We are also, generally speaking, in agreement on some of the other issues that have been put forward, although not exactly everything.

Mr Speaker, this 50th parliament is going to be a very important parliament. Let's make this parliament one of the best this state has ever seen. The opposition and in particular the National Party—the party of which I am the leader—are determined to provide a very professional and disciplined opposition in this parliament. We hope that through our efforts, the positive statements we can make and the constructive criticisms that we can deliver, we can make Queensland a far better place through the avenue of this parliament.

Mr Speaker, you have a very big responsibility to every one of the 89 members in this parliament. You are the person we turn to for many, many things. When the Deputy Premier was talking about the numbers—66 to 23—I was wondering whether as the official opposition, with 11 members here, we are allowed six interjections to every one from the other side, but I will leave that to your judgment.

**Mr Terry Sullivan:** That's not fair. Why should you drop?

**Mr HORAN:** Drop our average?

It is a heavy responsibility not only to the members of this parliament but to this historical building and to all the staff who work here. Some of the staff in this place work around the clock, particularly security staff, catering staff and so forth. It is a big responsibility that they have to look after the family of this parliament, and we wish them well. Mr Speaker, on behalf of the opposition, I extend our very best wishes to you for the term of this parliament.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, it is the highest privilege amongst parliamentarians to be the Speaker. It is, indeed, a great honour to be elected by my colleagues to continue in this high office. I commence by thanking the parliament, especially those who proposed and seconded me to the House, the Premier and the Deputy Premier, and also the Leader of the Opposition for his kind words.

It is a great thrill to be the Speaker of the 50th parliament, an historic parliament in many ways. Honourable members, we are all charged with the great honour of being members of the 50th parliament, which commences in the year 2001 when Australia also celebrates the centenary of Federation. From this chair, one learns a lot about members, about this great state, and one learns a lot about the great history and beauty of this building and its surrounds.

In my previous term as Speaker, I initiated many activities to improve and promote the parliamentary precinct and its buildings. Every gate to the parliament is now open, giving that welcoming appearance to citizens and to visitors. I have endeavoured to improve the look of the parliament and its historic significance by the hanging of portraits and artworks and the display of artefacts relevant to the history of this place. I hope that members will continue to support me in continuing this agenda, and I consequently encourage all members to learn more about the history of this institution and the privilege of being a member of this parliament. Beyond these precincts I further commit to continue improving and promoting the ability of members to serve their electorates and the community at large via the provision of functional electorate offices and the support of the excellent staff of this parliament.

In 1998 the Premier and others called for a better standard of behaviour in this place. I believe that great improvements were achieved during the last parliament. However, we should all be aware that this is a public forum and that people in the galleries, particularly students, leave with a lasting impression of what they observe on their visit. This view often remains with them for the rest of their lives. If members ever fail to check themselves, I will remind them all sternly to uphold the best parliamentary standards. From time to time Speakers will do things that even majorities, no matter how large, do not like. So be it. Members are warned that that is my role.

To the 31 new members of this parliament, may I bid you welcome. You can always be assured that the Speaker's door will be open to you at any time. I again thank you all for the honour and privilege conferred upon me today.

### PRESENTATION OF MR SPEAKER

**Hon. P. D. BEATTIE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (11.52 a.m.): I desire to inform honourable members that His Excellency the Governor will receive members of the House for the purposes of presenting Mr Speaker to His Excellency at Government House today at 2.30 p.m. Cars will leave the porte-cochere, which is the front door—I just thought I would put it in plain English. I just wanted everyone to know where it is; it is the front door. It is downstairs and out there. Let us get back to the time. Cars will leave from the front door at 2.05 p.m. sharp. So if you are late you will get left behind.

Mr Speaker, I also just remind members of the House that at 1 o'clock you and I—and I would hope the Leader of the Opposition would join us—will be laying the time capsule on the Speaker's Green. We will be joined by the youth envoys associated with the Centenary of Federation. This is a major event for the parliament—in fact, probably the parliamentary event for the Centenary of Federation—and I hope all members can join us at 1 o'clock. It will be very brief. You are all going to be preserved for 100 years in that capsule. The official photograph of every

one of you will be put in the time capsule. That may terrify future generations—I am not sure—but your photo will be there for the next 100 years. So if you want to come and have a look, please be there at 1 o'clock.

### **SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT**

**Hon. P. D. BEATTIE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (11.53 a.m.): I move—

That this House, at its rising, do adjourn until 2.10 p.m. tomorrow in the late Legislative Council chamber.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 11.54 a.m.