



Speech by

**Hon. RAY HOLLIS**

**MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE**

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Hansard 13 December 2001

#### VALEDICTORY

**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, at the end of the first year of the 50th Queensland Parliament I thank all members for their support and efforts during 2001 and reiterate my appreciation to my colleagues for extending my term as Speaker. The 50th Parliament, with its large government majority, could be thought of as easier for the Speaker than previous parliaments. However, I have enjoyed a range of challenges arising from the numbers in the House. In that context, I am grateful to the excellent Table Office staff who have continued to provide timely advice. In the Clerk's absence, I must express our appreciation to the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, their whips, minor party leaders and to the Leader of the House for their assistance in achieving a productive year for the Assembly.

This year I have been, to some extent, spoilt by a large and enthusiastic team of Temporary Chairmen. My deputy, Jim Fouras, and the member for Logan, John Mickel, have supported the leadership of this team very well. Despite my protestations on specific occasions, I praise the House on its general good behaviour during 2001. The vast majority of MPs who do not disrupt this place should be commended. This is important to this institution's public image. In relation to that image, I am pleased to see that the parliament's partnership with the community has continued to develop. Our third Charity Golf Day raised almost \$14,000 for the Cerebral Palsy League and our Queensland Day celebrations saw a record 3,500 Queenslanders visit this beautiful building and the multicultural displays that were here for the first time on the Speaker's Green.

Speaking of visitors to this building, I must note the role the parliament is playing in welcoming visitors and providing them with a sense of the history of this place. In this regard, I thank staff, members and others who have supported the naming of the Belle Vue Room, the operation of the Federation Study Centre and the development of displays on Queensland's contribution to Federation and also on the abolition of the upper house. Having mentioned thanks for staff, on behalf of all members I want, firstly, to express our appreciation to our electorate officers and assistant electorate officers. These additional staff have been the stand-out change of 2001. Of course, the leaders have already commented on the excellent parliamentary staff that we all appreciate, and I concur with their praise.

This place deserve no less than the extent and quality of the services provided. Of course, this would not be the case without the high quality of staff in all subprograms. This year I wish to make special mention of two staff members who have retired after very long and dedicated service to the parliament and its members—Nick Bannenberg and Alf Whackett. Nick served in the Parliamentary Library for 41 years, with 28 years as the Librarian. Alf was a gardener for 47 years, keeping our surrounds beautiful and well maintained. I ask all members to consider the continuity of commitment that these careers represent. This commitment is not uncommon amongst our parliamentary staff, but it would be impractical to continue to mention them all. The Clerk, Robert Doyle, and the Executive Director of Corporate and Property Services, Bob Fick, have led their teams well. In the last year, a number of staff members have met challenges, both big and small, with commitment and skill. I particularly thank Neil Laurie, Mary Seefried and Geraldine Broerse.

Finally, the work of my personal staff is very valuable to me. Col is often the face for the parliament with our visiting dignitaries. Christina coordinates demands on time and space with

unwavering nerve. Keith, my driver, has been a new addition to our staff following Bob, whose support I appreciated. Stirling has persevered through highs and lows. Juliana and Val maintain the Redcliffe front. I pay special tribute to Juliana's strength as she faces a very difficult personal challenge. As members would appreciate, your spouse is important to your job. As Speaker, my wife, Diane, is essential to our work on behalf of the parliament. Thank you, Di.

I offer my best Christmas and New Year wishes to all members, their staff, Parliament House staff and, as always, our friends in the media. I join with the Premier in expressing my sorrow at the fact that Mike D'Arcy will be leaving. He has been a good friend to me. I have also had the same love-hate relationship with him sometimes, but he is not a bad bloke. I am sure we will all miss him around the place. I conclude by inviting you all to join me upon the adjournment in the Parliamentary Annexe's Function Room B to enjoy some light refreshments at the behest of the Speaker.

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