

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 2 AUGUST 1949

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Legislative Assembly.

THIRD SESSION OF THE THIRTY-FIRST PARLIAMENT.

Appointed to meet

AT BRISBANE ON THE SECOND DAY OF AUGUST, IN THE THIRTEENTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE VI., IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1949.

TUESDAY, 2 AUGUST, 1949.

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

Pursuant to the proclamation by His Excellency the Governor, dated 7 July, 1949, appointing Parliament to meet this day for the dispatch of business, the House met at 12 o'clock noon in the Legislative Assembly Chamber.

The Clerk of the Parliament read the proclamation and notified the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker (Hon. S. J. Brassington) on account of illness.

GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

At noon His Excellency the Governor came in state to Parliament House, was announced by the Sergeant-at-Arms, received by the Acting Speaker (Mr. J. H. Mann) at the bar, and accompanied to the dais.

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

“GENTLEMEN OF THE PARLIAMENT OF QUEENSLAND—

“It affords me great pleasure to meet you at the Opening of this, the Third Session of the Thirty-first Parliament of Queensland.

“At this time last year, we in Queensland were looking forward with great pleasure to the Royal Visit of Their Majesties The King and Queen and Her Royal Highness Princess Margaret, and it was with extreme regret we learned of the illness of His Majesty, which necessitated the cancellation of the visit.

“The King's recovery to the stage where His Majesty is able to undertake some duties is very welcome information, and we hope that, with further improvement in His Majesty's health, it will be possible for the Royal visit to be made in the near future.

“My visits to all parts of the State, of Queensland have proved the loyalty of the people and the hope that they may be given the opportunity to welcome the Royal Family.

“In this land of ours, a land so richly endowed and able to provide an ample living for a population much greater than we have now, it is rather amazing and certainly regrettable to learn that many hundreds of thousands can be thrown out of work, industry paralysed, and the whole nation brought to a condition bordering on chaos when the necessary laws and procedure exist for the settlement of all industrial disputes. It is devoutly to be hoped that saner counsels will prevail in the future.

“In my address, when opening Parliament last year, I mentioned the splendid effort made by the people of Queensland in providing food and other essentials to peoples overseas who were in dire need. It is very gratifying to see that Queensland has not only kept that standard, but has embarked on further plans which will not only be of great assistance overseas, but an asset to our State. Let us not slacken our efforts because a buyers' market is said to be coming into being over much of the world, in place of the seller's market lately prevailing. This fact, if it is a fact, should not, in the name of common sense, prevent us from continuing to export all the food that we can produce and spare. The best way to ensure peace is to make the peoples of the world prosperous, and to this end food is the first requirement.

“The receipts of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the year ended 30th June, 1949, amounted to £32,979,078, and the expenditure to £32,929,355, leaving a surplus of £49,723 on the year's transactions. This was the tenth revenue surplus since 1st July, 1938. Railway revenue was particularly buoyant and was £1,403,231 more than the amount estimated.

“Expenditure was £1,486,925 in excess of the estimate. Substantial amounts were required to meet increased salaries and wages following the determination of award variations by the Industrial Court, and for increased maintenance costs of hospitals and other institutions, but, notwithstanding these additional charges, disbursements of some departments were less than the amounts appropriated.

“Recently the Chief Engineer of the Department of Harbours and Marine has been giving attention to the matter of improving the harbours of the State with a view to ensuring that they will be in a position to meet the demands of an increased shipping trade consequent on the expanding production of the State, and his recommendations are now under consideration.

“The construction of two dredges, one for the Government and the other for the Townsville Harbour Board, is proceeding satisfactorily. Plans are being prepared for two additional dredges, tenders for which will be called shortly.

“A special committee of engineers has been formed under the chairmanship of the Co-ordinator General of Public Works to advise the Government as to the immediate requirements for coal handling in Brisbane, also future needs, having regard to the anticipated rapid increase in production.

“Loan accommodation and assistance by Government subsidy have been given to the Rockhampton Harbour Board and the Gladstone Harbour Board for the construction of coal storage and loading facilities.

“Pearl and pearl shell culture experiments by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation at Thursday Island are being carried out with the collaboration of the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments.

“The Commonwealth Government has provided the technical staff and also a research vessel for the purposes of the experiments, and the Queensland Government on its part is providing the shore station. Two officers of the C.S.I.R.O. already have taken up duty at Thursday Island.

“The State Government Insurance Office had another year of outstanding progress. In the Life Department the number of policies issued was 8,402 and the sums assured £3,684,920. This was an all-time record for the Office.

“In 1948-49 loans approved through the agency of the Agricultural Bank, including advances made under the Commonwealth's Re-establishment and Employment Act, 1945, and the State War Service Land Settlement Acts, 1946 to 1948, amounted to £1,716,387, which was approximately £200,000 greater than the approvals in 1947-48.

“The major portion of these approvals was for ex-servicemen, the greater part of which attracted the three-year interest and redemption free concession.

“The prospects of establishing new industries in Queensland are still attracting the attention of overseas and southern industrialists.

“The contacts made by the Honourable the Premier, during his visit to England, have already borne fruit in the arrangements made by two English companies to open new works at Rocklea.

“It is pleasing to note that the share capital offered to public subscription for the

large new cement works at Stuart, near Townsville, has been over-subscribed, and plans for the construction of the works are complete.

“Since the end of the war, full employment has been available for workers throughout Queensland, the only noteworthy loss of work having been due to industrial disputes.

“My Advisers have made every effort to mitigate public inconvenience and hardship arising from these disputes and to restore production as speedily as possible.

“Trade unions which have observed the law and sought the protection of the Industrial Court, have benefited greatly in the matter of wages and conditions of employment.

“The basic wage in 1945 was £4 17s. for males and £2 14s. 6d. for females. To these amounts parities are added in western and northern districts. It is now £6 6s. for males and £3 17s. 6d. for females plus western and northern parities. That represents, for the period, about £18,850,000, and, of course, does not include margins, penalty rates and other allowances.

“The number of factories operating in Queensland had reached a record figure of 3,642 compared with 3,087, the highest pre-war figure, in 1938-39. A total of 76,732 of our people (63,506 males and 13,226 females) were engaged in factory output which last year totalled £125,244,000, a rise of 25 per cent. over the highest value of output ever previously recorded for the State.

“Wool sales in Queensland during the past selling season yielded a record sum of £31,500,000 for 473,000 bales. Good seasonal conditions over the bulk of the sheep country, including areas that last year were suffering heavily from drought, are expected to result in an offering of 500,000 bales in the next series of sales.

“Following the passing of “The Abattoirs Acts Amendment Act of 1949,” my Advisers have taken steps towards the provision of central killing in several of the main centres of population.

“Because of the urgent need for increased meat production, the benefits to be derived from the construction of first-class roads linking the cattle fattening Channel Country and nearest railheads are being closely examined by officers of the State and Commonwealth Governments.

“An exploratory agricultural farm is being opened on a Gulf cattle property to test, among other things, the growing of fodder crops in that area.

“Proposals for the expansion of the beef cattle industry in the Gulf country by the establishment of meatworks and for the transport of carcass beef by air to the nearest port on the eastern coast are being examined.

“The development of local killing in the Gulf country may so improve that it may be desirable to ship direct from a Gulf port.

“The dairying areas again experienced favourable seasonal conditions, with production higher than in the previous year. Dairy stock numbers increased by 50,000 during the

year and milk production by 1,500,000 gallons. Butter production was about 1,890,000 boxes, the highest figure since 1942-43. The quality of cheese produced showed a marked improvement.

"Seasonal conditions were very favourable for agricultural production in 1948-49, and this was reflected in the record production of both sugar cane and wheat. The yield of 6,500,000 tons of sugar cane represented an increase of 2,250,000 tons over the previous season's crop.

"The wheat area of 630,000 acres and production of 14,000,000 bushels showed substantial increases over the figures for the previous year, and a surplus over local requirements was available for export. Prospects for the current season's record planting are bright.

"The production of more than 2,000,000 lb. of cured tobacco leaf is indicative of a very welcome upward trend, and every effort is being made for the expansion of production of this very profitable crop.

"It is hoped that the case for a revised basis of payment for raw cotton presented to the Tariff Board by the State Government and other interested parties will result in a measure of stability which will encourage the expansion of the cotton industry in Australia.

"Mechanical harvesting trials have indicated that it may be quite practicable to adopt this method of harvesting and so increase the efficiency of the industry.

"The growth of the linseed plantings in the State from 500 acres in 1947 to an estimated 12,000 acres in the current season is a noteworthy agricultural development. The projected local processing of a substantial tonnage of this oil-seed crop would greatly increase the State's supply of protein-rich concentrates for stock feeding purposes.

"From July, 1947, to date, 5,385 new settlers from the United Kingdom have arrived in Queensland. The total number of arrivals comprises 2,908 males, 2,477 females, and included in the total are 989 family units with a total of 1,574 children of tender years.

"The number of births registered in 1948 was 27,858, a decrease of 502 on the previous year, but the figure is still higher than any year prior to 1947.

"Marriages during the year 1948 totalled 10,125. Although 874 fewer than 1947, this number is higher than for any pre-war year.

"During the year ended 30th June, 1949, the policy of My Advisers in regard to water conservation has been put into effect to the fullest extent permitted by the staff and material resources available to the Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply.

"Weirs on Dogwood Creek, near Miles, Granite Creek, near Mareeba, and Hilliards Creek, near Cleveland, were completed during the year.

"Other weirs to provide a total storage of 10,665 acre feet are under construction at Walsh River, near Dimbulah, Tinaroo Creek, near Mareeba, Monal Creek and Three Moon Creek, near Monto, Burnett River, near Mundubbera, Balonne River, near St. George, on

the Dumaresq River, near Bonshaw, and at Whetstone on McIntyre Brook, near Inglewood.

"In the programme for the current financial year, 13 weirs, providing a further storage of 9,000 acre feet, are listed for construction in the northern, central and south-western districts of the State.

"At Nullinga Dam site on the Walsh River, diamond drilling, to investigate foundations, is being carried out. This dam will create one of the storages for the Mareeba-Dimbulah project, which will utilise the water of the Walsh River for the irrigation of tobacco farms.

"Survey investigations of the Burdekin River irrigation, power and flood mitigation project under the direction of the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works, have continued throughout the year.

"Approximately 100,000 acres of the irrigable area below the dam site already have been gridded and contoured to permit of the preparation of topographical maps from which to plan the general design of the irrigation water distribution system. The gridding and contouring are proceeding at a rapid rate.

"Operations have begun in connection with foundation tests of the main storage dam site by boring.

"Preliminary investigations of the major scheme have been completed to a stage where designs and calculations are ready for examination by the Commonwealth authorities. The Commonwealth Government has promised substantial financial contribution.

"Pending the construction of storages for water, suitable areas along the river, as at Clare irrigation settlement, will be developed as far as practicable, utilising the water available from the unregulated flow of the river. Progressive development of this nature will assist materially in the successful establishment of the major scheme.

"In conjunction with the War Service Land Settlement Branch of the Lands Department, the Irrigation Commission is proceeding with the development of the Clare irrigation area on the Burdekin River for settlement of ex-servicemen on irrigated farms for the growing of tobacco and other crops. The Government has given approval for the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission to provide for 88 irrigated farms.

"The expenditure of the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission during 1948-49 amounted to £627,902, an increase of £339,489 as compared with the previous year.

"The work programme for 1949-50 makes provision for a works and investigation expenditure of approximately £800,000 exclusive of administration salaries and incidental expenses.

"The Local Government Department has in hand substantial works for the extension of town water supply and sewerage facilities throughout the State. Fifty-four water supply works (including extensions of existing schemes), estimated to cost £1,635,000, are in

course of construction, and 18 sewerage works (including extensions of existing schemes), estimated to cost £687,000 are also in hand.

"In addition, forty-seven water supply and twelve sewerage schemes have been fully planned but have not yet been commenced.

"The estimated cost of these works is £2,580,000. Proposals totalling £5,022,000 are under investigation and are being planned.

"Six of the river bed caissons for the Burdekin River high-level bridge have been sunk to their depth. The big caisson on the south bank has also been sunk to its final position, leaving only three, caissons in the river bed to do this year and the big caisson on the north bank early next year. All resources are being concentrated on the river bed work, on which progress is well in hand. If reasonable deliveries of steel could be assured, it would be possible to begin construction of the superstructure about the end of 1950.

"The co-ordinated works programme for the current financial year will cover a wide range of urgently needed developmental works. Shortage of building materials, however, is still very acute, especially steel and steel products. To ease the position, the Government, early in 1949, arranged for the importation of 4,500 tons of reinforcing steel from France and 18,000 tons of cement from England towards meeting urgent Government and hospital requirements.

"In addition, arrangements are being made for the purchase from overseas of substantial quantities of structural steel for these purposes. My advisers have already purchased a quantity of galvanised iron from overseas, and are also considering the importation of wire and wire netting.

"The Queensland-British Food Corporation exceeded its original objective of 25,000 acres planted to sorghum last season. In accordance with the provisions of the Queensland-British Food Production Act, the resumption of properties to enable it to expand its activities has continued.

"Following agreement with the owners, six properties totalling some 412,000 acres in the Emerald-Springsure district had been resumed by 30 June last.

"Negotiations for the acquisition of a further 55,700 acres are well advanced. The arable land will be used for the production of grain sorghum. The target for the coming season is 100,000 acres.

"The Corporation has made a start with the establishment of its first piggery on a site leased to it on the Dawson River near Moura.

"Pastures will be grown under irrigation using water stored by the Moura bridge weir.

"Some 680 acres have been resumed for further piggeries in the Bajool area south of Rockhampton.

"The acquisition of an additional area is being sought along the Nogoia River near Emerald, convenient to the weir to be built in the vicinity.

"The Queensland Housing Commission during the year ended 30 June, 1949, completed 1,015 houses, had 618 in various stages of construction and approved the erection of 670. This represents the satisfactory increase of 23 per cent. over the houses completed during the previous year. Such rate of building is the maximum that the materials and manpower available during the year permitted.

"Dwellings completed in Queensland in the twelve months ended 31 March were 9,019.

"During the year, work was in progress by the Department of Public Works on 735 separate new building projects. Of this number, 212 were works ranging in individual values from £1,000 to £130,000.

"Expenditure on new building projects, including the acquisition of land and property, amounted to £731,316.

"Railway Department cash collections amounted to £14,903,231, representing an increase of £3,959,483 on 1947-48.

"Working expenses were £13,770,167, being £3,431,029 greater than the preceding year.

"Extensive orders have been placed for new locomotives, carriages and wagons.

"Completion of the report of the Commission investigating the electrification of Brisbane and suburban railways is expected at an early date.

"The loads of trains from Blair Athol to Emerald will be improved by approximately 27 per cent. when regrading certain sections of that line is completed.

"The high-level bridge over the Elliott River, Bowen-Townsville section, was opened for traffic in April, and strengthening of bridges on various sections to take heavier axle loads is proceeding.

"A high-level bridge is to be constructed over the Haughton River near Giru, North Queensland, and bores have been put down to test for foundations.

"Tenders are being called for the erection of a new station building at Cairns. The preparation of working drawings for a new station building at Rockhampton is in hand.

"Further progress in base metal production was made by the mining industry in Queensland during the past year, due principally to the continued attractive prices ruling for these metals.

"Gold production, however, decreased by 2,635 fine ozs. on the previous year's operations, owing to loss of production by Mount Morgan Ltd., the principal producer, consequent upon industrial unrest in the early part of 1948. The other major gold producing fields were Cracow and Charters Towers.

"Copper production increased considerably, Mount Morgan Ltd. continuing to be the outstanding producer. It is expected that when the Mount Isa Mines copper production plant is completed, considerably higher tonnages of copper will be produced annually in Queensland—probably more than double the present output.

"Mount Isa Mines Ltd. continued to lead in silver-lead-zinc production.

"Investigations now under way are directed to the utilisation of mining by-products with a view to establishing new and valuable industries in the State.

"Queensland's coal output for 1948 was valued at the record figure of £2,347,065.

"The Queensland Coal Board is now fully constituted and its function will be to examine ways and means to put the coal industry on a more progressive and more productive basis.

"A report showing the result of the survey of our coal resources made by Powell Duffryn Technical Services is expected shortly and will be promptly presented to Parliament.

"With the approval of the Governor in Council, given in accordance with the provisions of the Electric Supply Corporation (Overseas) Ltd. Agreement Act, the Electric Supply Corporation (Overseas) Limited has assigned its rights and responsibilities for the development of the Blair Athol coalfield to the Central Queensland Coal Development Company Pty. Ltd., which has been registered in Queensland.

"Investigations by this company are rapidly nearing completion.

"Every encouragement is being given towards the development of the Callide field. Improvements which are being undertaken on the Biloela-Rockhampton railway include the elimination of the rack section near Mt. Morgan. This will greatly increase the capacity of the railways to carry coal from the field.

"The construction of a rail link of about 10 miles from the Callide coalfield to the Lawgi-Biloela-Mt. Morgan line offers the most practicable means, in present circumstances, of raiiling the coal to port of shipment, and in the building of this line My Advisers anticipate the assistance of the Commonwealth Government. The necessary survey is to be made as soon as possible.

"A 14-mile road deviation from the field to the Biloela-Gladstone road is to be built at an estimated cost of £126,000. This will result in a saving of 12½ miles on the present length of road haul for coal to the port of Gladstone.

"The beach sands mining industry is making steady progress. The production of zircon-rutile-ilmenite-monzazite concentrates was valued last year at £226,678, as compared with £152,889 for the previous year.

"The search for oil in Queensland will reach its peak during the latter half of 1949. Shell (Queensland) Development Ltd. is expected to conduct its deep boring test this month in the Central District. In the Roma district considerable research work has been carried out by experts employed by the Commonwealth Government working in conjunction with private companies who are intensifying their search for oil in this area.

"Land has been acquired for War Service Land Settlement purposes in the Atherton, Bundaberg, Cairns, Dalby, Gladstone, Gympie, Ingham, Innisfail, Mackay, Nanango,

Toowoomba, and Townsville districts comprising 110 properties, with a total area of 125,359 acres.

"To date 100 blocks for mixed farming have been allotted by ballot to approved servicemen, ten blocks on the Clare tobacco settlement have been allotted, and 48 sugar cane farms have been made available to landless ex-servicemen.

"A total of 108 sugar cane assignments have been granted to ex-servicemen owning or holding options over land, and increased assignments or farm peaks have been granted in the case of 137 ex-servicemen.

"Twenty-nine blocks of grazing land, mainly in the western areas of the State, have been made available exclusively for ballot among ex-servicemen.

"Intensive investigation of the Taroom-Wandoan land to establish closer settlement in this locality is under way. Indications are that a number of ex-servicemen can be established in that locality in dairying and mixed farming pursuits.

"In addition, War Service Land Settlement activities have been extended to the Calliope area, where investigations are now in progress.

"Altogether it is anticipated that a further 104 blocks will be ballotted for under the War Service Land Settlement Scheme by the end of this year and that during 1950 an additional 200 blocks will become available.

"Notwithstanding delays caused by heavy rains and floods in the early part of this year, good progress has been made with the design and subdivision of expired sheep holdings for closer settlement.

"There was much activity in all phases of forestry operations during the past year. More than 207,000,000 super. feet of mill logs were delivered from Crown lands during 1948-49; the plantations established by the Department yielding over 6,000,000 super. feet of thinnings. Extensive road construction work to open up further areas for logging was carried out.

"Approximately 3,300 acres of new plantations were established, whilst treatment work on the hardwood and cypress pine forests for promotion of the better class trees was continued. At the end of the year 1,600 men were employed on reforestation work.

"Properties have been acquired at Townsville and Ipswich for maternal and child welfare homes for the specialised care of premature and delicate babies. Similar homes will be established at Rockhampton and Cairns as soon as suitable properties can be obtained.

"The lowest rate of infant mortality ever recorded for the State was a feature of 1948. The previously lowest rates were recorded in 1946 and 1945.

"My Advisers and the Commonwealth Government have agreed on arrangements for a campaign against tuberculosis which it is expected will further reduce the low incidence of the disease in this State.

"Religious organisations constructing new hospitals will in future be subsidised by the Government on the cost of accommodation provided for public patients. They will also be subsidised for the maintenance of their public ward patients.

"The new hospital at Townsville is nearing completion and the new quarters for nurses have been commenced. Fourteen other major hospital works are under construction throughout the State. Tenders have been let for five others. Final plans have been completed for another five.

"The new University buildings at St. Lucia have been in partial occupation for some time. It is expected that the Geology Building will be sufficiently advanced, to enable the transfer of the Geology Department from George Street early in 1950.

"These transfers will make available valuable space at George Street for use as required by the Government.

"The Government has approved of subsidy at the rate of £1 for £1 up to £50,000 for each college, towards the cost of erection of the six University affiliated colleges in the St. Lucia University grounds.

"The Government, in its effort to develop the mineral resources of the State, desires to undertake a complete geological survey of North Queensland, and has invited the Senate of the University to institute a full course in Mining Engineering. For this purpose the Government has agreed to supplement the grant offered by the Queensland Chamber of Mines towards the establishment of this course.

"It is expected that the necessary staff and equipment will be available for the beginning of the 1950 academic year, and that Queensland students will receive a complete training in mining, both coal and metalliferous, and will be absorbed, as engineering experts, into the industry in their own State. Too often, in the past, our students, who were compelled to complete their mining engineering courses in other States, secured employment elsewhere, and their services have been lost to their own State.

"My Advisers have also decided to restore the Veterinary Science Faculty at the University to a full operative basis as early as practicable, having regard to the availability of lecturing staff and suitable accommodation.

"Departmental officers and representatives of the University are now conferring on the terms of recommendation to be submitted to the Government as to the date upon which training in the fourth and fifth years might conveniently begin.

"At the instigation of the Government, in pursuance of its policy of decentralisation, the Senate of the University has under consideration a plan to extend the scope, function and efficiency of its Department of External Studies. For some years the University has provided country students with typed copies of lecture notes to enable them to qualify for degrees, diplomas, or certificates in the

Faculties of Arts, Commerce, Law, and Education. These students, apart from the receipt of the lecture notes have, in the main, been left to their own resources.

"It is now proposed to conduct classes in Townsville, Rockhampton and Ipswich. These classes will be established to widen and strengthen the advantages, and increase the efficiency, of the academic external courses of the University; to encourage a greater proportion of our young people to take advantage of the external system of the University; to assist teachers and others in their preparation for University examinations; and to provide an incentive to commercial and business men to enrol for courses connected with their professions.

"The Department of Public Instruction will co-operate with the University by providing staff qualified to conduct the classes, and it is hoped that, in the case of Townsville and Rockhampton, these classes will form the nuclei of National University Colleges as envisaged in the 1941 amendment to the University Act.

"Today a child reaching the age of 14 has to choose between entering upon employment and transferring to a secondary school. Many with ability, who could, with advantage to themselves and to the State, proceed to a higher education, choose the former course. As a result, the source of recruitment for the professions and higher-grade occupations is diminished.

"My advisers propose to make the break as soon as practicable between primary and secondary education at age 12, when the child will be well established in a post-primary school and the age at which he might leave school may pass unnoticed.

"To meet the shortage of teachers, it is proposed, as an emergency measure, to attempt to recruit student teachers who have passed the junior or equivalent examination, to attach them to large schools in their districts, to pay them reasonable salaries, to provide for their educational advancement by organising special classes for their instruction, and to give them the advantage of a full training course when the position becomes easier. Care will be taken to ensure that, whatever the scholastic attainments of these young people may be, they be given every opportunity and encouragement to advance in their studies.

"It is proposed, also, to offer to young people who desire to enter the teaching profession, an emergency course in selected towns outside the metropolitan area. The course will include instruction in School Method, Physical Education, Art and Music, that is, in those subjects of which the recruit will have, up to date, insufficient knowledge. In both the student-teacher and the emergency-course schemes, an endeavour will be made to place the recruits in or near their own home-centres.

"More than 9,000 ex-service personnel began full-time vocational training in this State, and 21,000 received part-time instruction, either by attendance at classes or by

correspondence. The number of full-time trainees to begin training in the building trades exceeds 4,500.

"In country districts where technical college facilities are not available apprentices in 19 of the common trades received all or part of their training by correspondence. Forty supervisors are now employed to assist them with their studies.

"The training of apprentices by correspondence in remote country districts has been developed to a greater extent in Queensland than in any other State.

"Decentralisation of the administration of the Department of Public Instruction has begun with the appointment of four Regional Directors with official headquarters at Rockhampton, Townsville, Hughenden, and Roma. This move already has produced excellent results by bringing matters associated with the administrative side of education closer to the people in the several regions.

"For the benefit of country readers, a free book-lending service is being organised by the Library Board. Although this service has been in operation only for a short period, many expressions of appreciation and gratitude have been received.

"It is a condition of the grant of £10,000 each year to the Queensland Symphony Orchestra that the orchestra shall present concerts for the public generally, for young people and for school children, not only in the metropolis but in centres throughout the State. In fulfilment of that condition towns visited in the past two years included Toowoomba and the principal centres north of Brisbane as far as Marceba.

"Arrangements are now in hand to enable the orchestra to visit western towns during the coming year.

"A new State String Quartet has been appointed by the Government, and a State Opera Scheme has been inaugurated.

"For many years, music in schools has been fostered by the appointment of specialist teachers in music and now, by the encouragement of opera throughout the State, My Advisers hope that a love of good music will be further developed.

"Five full vocal scholarships, each valued at £75 per year in tuition fees and carrying a living allowance of £4 per week, have been awarded by the Government.

"In addition, ten part scholarships, carrying £35 per year in tuition fees, have also been awarded.

"The scholarship winners for 1949 were chosen at the final auditions in the City Hall on 23 June.

"They will be trained for two years in opera, and My Advisers hope that they will eventually form the nucleus of opera in this State.

"The Government is providing financial aid to country centres to form opera societies and is providing scenery and music free of charge.

"My Advisers are appreciative of the efforts of members of the Public Service in putting into effect the Government's progressive policy of State development in the present difficult period of manpower and material shortages. Many administrative problems and difficulties have been solved and overcome through their initiative and enthusiasm.

"During the past financial year, officers of the Public Service have received substantial increases in salary following upon variations of the Public Service Awards, and officers have now the benefit of the liberalised Public Service Superannuation Scheme under which annuities paid to contributors upon their retirement are subsidised by the Government.

"The Public Service Regulations relating to extended leave of absence are to be liberalised to provide, in the case of retired officers, a maximum of 39 weeks on full pay in place of the maximum of 26 weeks on full pay as at present.

"Where officers of the Public Service die after becoming eligible for extended leave, and are without dependants within the meaning of the Regulations, it is proposed to pay to their estates the cash value of the extended leave due.

"Female officers resigning to marry upon completion of 10 years of meritorious service, and upon the production of a marriage certificate, will be paid the cash equivalent of the extended leave due on a pro rata basis.

"In conformity with the Government's policy of decentralisation, branches of the Public Service Commissioner's Department, with Public Service Inspectors in charge, have been established at Townsville and Rockhampton.

"Other departments are now preparing plans for the decentralisation of their administration.

"The estimates for the current financial year are in the course of preparation and will be submitted to you as early as possible.

"During the session you will be invited to give consideration to the following among other measures:—

A Comprehensive Housing Bill.

A Bill to amend the law relating to proceedings against, and contribution between "Tortfeasors" and to amend the law relating to contributory negligence.

Friendly Societies Acts Amendment Bill.

Australian Consular Officers' Notarial Powers and Evidence Act Amendment Bill.

A Bill to consolidate certain Acts relating to the shortening and interpretation of Acts of the Legislature of Queensland.

A Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to the maintenance of deserted wives and children.

Auctioneers and Commission Agents Acts Amendment Bill.

Workers' Compensation Acts Amendment Bill.

Succession and Probate Duties Acts Amendment Bill.

Diseases in Stock Acts Amendment Bill.

A Poultry Industry Bill.

A Bill to authorise the entering into of an arrangement between the Commonwealth and this State for the provision of services and facilities for the diagnosis, treatment, and control of tuberculosis.

A Valuation of Land Acts Amendment Bill.

"I invite your earnest consideration of all matters that may be brought before you, and I pray that the blessings of Divine Providence attend your labours."

His Excellency then left the Chamber.

Mr. ACTING SPEAKER left the Chair at 12.37 p.m., resuming it at 2.15 p.m.

PANEL OF TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Pursuant to the requirements of Standing Order No. 13 I hereby nominate the following members to form the Panel of Temporary Chairmen for the present session:—

William Alfred Brand, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Isis;

Eric Paul Decker, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Sandgate;

Thomas Dunstan, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Gympie;

Paul Jerome Remigius Hilton, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Carnarvon;

George Keyatta, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Townsville.

DEATH OF HON. D. A. GLEDSON AND MR. P. K. COPLEY.

SEATS DECLARED VACANT.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I have to report that, during the recess, letters were received from the Registrar-General enclosing certified copies of the registration of the deaths—

(a) on May 14, 1949, of the Hon. David Alexander Gledson, lately serving in the Legislative Assembly as member for the electoral district of Ipswich;

(b) on July 18, 1949, of Patrick Kerry Copley, Esquire, lately serving in the Legislative Assembly as member for the electoral district of Kurilpa.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier) (2.19 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That the seats in this House for the electoral districts of Ipswich and Kurilpa have become and are now vacant by reason of the deaths of the said the Hon. David Alexander Gledson, and the said Patrick Kerry Copley, Esquire."

Motion agreed to.

DEATH OF HON. D. A. GLEDSON.

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier) (2.19 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"1. That this House desires to place on record its sense of the loss this State has sustained by the death of the Honourable David Alexander Gledson, member for the electoral district of Ipswich and Attorney-General in the present Administration.

"2. That Mr. Speaker be requested to communicate to the widow and family of the deceased gentleman the above resolution, together with an expression of the sympathy and sorrow of the members of the Parliament of Queensland, in the loss they have sustained."

The late Hon. David Alexander Gledson was first elected to this House on 22 May, 1915, when he defeated James William Blair, the then member for Ipswich, and entered the Twentieth Parliament. He continued as the representative for that district until 11 May, 1929, at the end of the Twenty-fourth Parliament. He was defeated for the Twenty-fifth Parliament, 1929-1932, by Mr. J. E. Walker. However, he was elected to the Twenty-sixth Parliament on 11 June, 1932, and continuously represented that district, the district of Ipswich, until his death on 14 May, 1949.

He served throughout the whole of ten Parliaments and nearly the whole of the 11th, a total period of 30 years 298 days.

His services as a Minister were as follows: Minister without portfolio, 22 October, 1925, to 6 September, 1926; Secretary for Labour and Industry, 6 September, 1925, to 20 May, 1929; Assistant Secretary for Agriculture and Stock, 16 February, 1939, to 3 August, 1939; Secretary for Mines, 4 August, 1939, to 8 December, 1941; Attorney-General, 8 December, 1941, to the date of his death, 14 May, 1949.

I am sure hon. members will agree with me when I say that very few members of this Assembly have been more devoted and faithful servants to the State than the late Mr. Gledson.

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. HANLON: His service was long and sincerely faithful to the people who elected him to this Parliament. His outlook was always that of a man who regarded his seat in Parliament as being held, not merely for the benefit and in the interests of the people he represented, but for the welfare of the State as a whole.

Mr. Gledson had a very long period of service in the industrial union movement in our Commonwealth. He was one of those very fine democrats who did great work in organising it. Many years he worked in the mines and at the same time he laboured in the organisation of the miners of Queensland, in the bad days when they undoubtedly suffered very, very seriously indeed under the conditions then obtaining. As times improved in the years that were occupied in building up the conditions of the working people to the

stage they have now reached, David Gledson continued that work and no matter how strenuous the struggle was on the industrial field or how difficult it was in this House or elsewhere in the political arena, no-one can say that he was ever unfair.

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. HANLON: Or that he said anything about anyone that gave affront or offence. He was naturally a kindly man and I am sure his death is regretted by all hon. members.

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba—Leader of the Opposition) (2.22 p.m.): Very often when this House assembles for a new Session we have the sad duty of recording these motions of condolence with respect to either members of the current or previous Parliaments. On this occasion two members of this Assembly have passed away since we last met. The late David Alexander Gledson was a gentleman whom all in this Chamber admired and respected.

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. NICKLIN: As the Premier has said, he had a remarkable record of public service. He showed great application to his job and had a very sincere sense of duty. I venture to say that no more versatile Minister ever sat in this House.

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. NICKLIN: The late Mr. Gledson at some time or other during his long period in this Chamber handled virtually every portfolio in the Cabinet and he handled them all with great credit to himself and the Ministry he represented. He was a man with great personal qualifications. He had very high ideals, ideals he endeavoured to live up to.

I think the best tribute that any man could get was the remarkable tribute given to the late Mr. Gledson at his funeral at Bundamba where we saw a large number of the people for whom he had given the best period of his life paying their last respects to him. This House is definitely the poorer by his passing and we on this side join with the Premier in passing this motion of condolence with his relatives.

• **Mr. HILEY** (Logan) (2.25 p.m.): I think after a long period of service in this House anyone who can retire commanding two outstanding impressions has done something really notable. My two outstanding impressions of the late David Gledson were, first, that he commanded from both sides of the House the real kindness and friendliness that characterised his attitude to all members. The second impression is that in this hard and censorious world, where it is an easy thing for those who take upon their shoulders the responsibility of public affairs to be attacked with slanders and innuendoes challenging the purity of their motives and the sincerity of their actions, never was one word of suspicion ever breathed against him. That after such a long service he should pass away with an unsullied record in spite of the

abuse and the attacks that are made on those who serve in Parliament is something we should note.

I join with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in paying tribute to the late hon. gentleman.

Mr. DONALD (Bremer) (2.26 p.m.): I wish to add briefly to what has been said. Unlike previous speakers I cannot claim long association in this Chamber with the late Hon. David Gledson. But I first became acquainted with him at a very early age and the friendship then formed grew and strengthened with the passing of the years until it became a very close friendship indeed.

The late Dave Gledson and I had many things in common. We came to this Chamber from the same industry and from the same position in that industry. During the Bremer by-election campaign that ended in my entry into this Parliament, he was campaign director for the Labour Party, and I feel that I should be ungrateful if I did not take this opportunity of expressing my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, and the Leader of the Liberal Party, for the obvious sincerity of their tributes to him. The Premier, in addition to holding that office, is leader of the political party to which the late Mr. Gledson gave long, sincere, loyal and devoted service; he therefore speaks with the authority of long years of experience of the late Mr. Gledson's worth in the political and industrial fields. The Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Liberal Party have referred to his work as a Cabinet Minister and member of this Parliament. I sincerely thank those gentlemen for the fine tributes they have paid to our late friend.

I want to refer very briefly to the late Mr. Gledson in the capacity in which I knew him best—as an ordinary citizen, as a husband and father, as a friend and a churchman. In each of those roles his life was beyond suspicion. His kindly disposition, his lovable nature, and the earnestness and purity of his motives and his willingness to forgive marked him as the truly Christian gentleman he was. We have lost a very valued friend and the Australian Labour Party and the Queensland Government, and indeed the State as a whole, has suffered from his passing. He leaves a memory that we may well cherish and he has set an example from which, if we follow it, the whole community must benefit.

Motion agreed to, hon. members standing in silence.

DEATH OF MR. P. K. COPLEY.

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier) (2.29 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

“1. That this House desires to place on record its sense of the loss this State has sustained by the death of Patrick Kerry Copley, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Kurilpa.

"2. That Mr. Speaker be requested to convey to the widow of the deceased gentleman the above resolution, together with an expression of the sympathy and sorrow of the members of the Parliament of Queensland, in the loss she has sustained."

The late Mr. Copley was elected to Parliament on 11 June, 1932, as member for Kurilpa, defeating James Porter Fry, the sitting member. He represented that electorate continually from that date until he died on 18 July, 1949, thus serving through the whole of five Parliaments, the 26th to 30th, and the greater part of the 31st Parliament.

Mr. Copley was a product of the educational system of this State, which enabled him, the son of a working man, to educate himself first of all to the standard of entry to the Public Service and during his years as a public servant to qualify for the bar. He attained his ambition of being admitted to the Bar while a member of the Public Service of this State. He then resigned from that service to go into private practice. He was only a short time in private practice when the opportunity came to contest the Kurilpa seat, which he won, and thus he entered this Chamber.

Mr. Copley was a very brilliant speaker and a very industrious man. During the early years of his life he had been a very great athlete and like so many men who have been prominent in athletics his health suffered. As time went on, as a member of this House, his health gradually failed, but he was not a man who complained about it much. His robust build was deceptive and very few of those who associated with him knew he was in such a condition as he was. His death came with remarkable suddenness. Without the slightest warning or indication that he was any worse than usual he came into town, but died before he was able to return home. I am sure all members will regret the passing of Mr. Copley and that they will join in sending a message of condolence to his widow.

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba—Leader of the Opposition) (2.33 p.m.): I second the motion moved by the Premier and I realise with him the tragedy by which one palpably so young in years is suddenly cut off. But, as the Premier has said, that very often is the penalty for early strenuous activities in athletics.

Mr. Copley entered Parliament at the same time as I, after a brilliant scholastic record, and showed by the speeches he made in this Chamber that he gave very close application to them, particularly those concerning legal matters. He made very many useful contributions to the debates on such subjects and he must have worked very hard in his electorate, because at each election he was returned with a considerable majority. That is a tribute to the work he did for those whom he represented.

As I have said, it is a tragedy that one so young should be cut off but that is something over which we have no control. I

sincerely join with the Premier in extending condolence to the widow of the late Kerry Copley.

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to, hon. members standing in silence.

DEATH OF HON. T. C. BEIRNE.

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier) (2.35 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"1. That this House desires to place on record its appreciation of the services rendered to this State by the late the Hon. Thomas Charles Beirne, a former member of the Parliament of Queensland.

"2. That Mr. Speaker be requested to convey to the family of the deceased gentleman the above Resolution, together with an expression of the sympathy and sorrow of the members of the Parliament of Queensland in the loss they have sustained."

Thomas Charles Beirne was summoned to the Legislative Council on 27 July, 1905, and took his seat therein on 13 September, of the same year. He continued as a member of the Legislative Council until the Council was abolished under the provisions of the Constitution Act Amendment Act of 1922.

I think the majority of hon. members of this House, although they were not in Parliament at the time when Mr. Beirne was a member of the Legislative Council, will have known Mr. Beirne very well, at least by repute. He came here as a young man not blessed with the wealth of the world, set up in business, and built up what is, I suppose, the greatest retail enterprise in the State. During that time he was always interested in public affairs.

Mr. Beirne's period of service in the Legislative Council was valuable to the State, as he was a fearless speaker on any question that came before that Chamber. At least everybody in this State knew what T. C. Beirne thought on any subject that ever came up for discussion.

He was also benefactor to many charitable and public causes, his most notable contribution to education being the donation of the money that established the Faculty of Law in the Queensland University. The graduates and under-graduates of the University have lost a very good friend.

I am sure all hon. members will join in offering to Mr. Beirne's family our expression of appreciation of his services and sincere condolences in their great loss.

Mr. MAHER (West Moreton) (2.37 p.m.): On behalf of the Opposition I join with the Premier in voicing our deep sense of the great loss this State has sustained by the death of the late T. C. Beirne. The success achieved by Mr. Beirne emphasises the benefits that accrue in a free democracy and the opportunities than can be seized by men who have the ability to rise from the lowest rung of the ladder to the highest. The late

Mr. Beirne was a man of strong character, fine personality, and a keen business sense which were important factors in building up an enormous enterprise. His life is a great example to us of the opportunities that exist in our free country for all, irrespective of whether they come from families of rank or from the common people in our midst.

Mr. Beirne in his lifetime was a member of the Legislative Council and served the people well in that sphere. He was a public benefactor, as the Premier has stated. He came to this country as a young man from Ireland and in this new country of his adoption, played a notable part in the development of the State. He gave employment to a tremendous number of people and ran a very great enterprise in Queensland.

On behalf of the Opposition I express our very deep condolences and sincere sympathy to the members of his family in the loss of a really great man.

Motion agreed to, hon. members standing in silence.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

APPOINTMENT OF HON. G. H. DEVRIES AS ATTORNEY-GENERAL.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier): I desire to inform the House that on 9 June, 1949, Mr. George Henry Devries, M.L.A., was appointed a member of the Executive Council of Queensland and that on the same day a proclamation was issued appointing Mr. George Henry Devries to be Attorney-General for the State.

I lay upon the table the Government "Gazette" containing notification of his appointment.

PAPERS.

The following paper was laid on the table, and ordered to be printed:—

The First Annual Report of The Queensland-British Food Corporation for the year 1948-49.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Proclamations under the Aliens Acts, 1867 to 1948.

Orders in Council under the Aliens Acts, 1867 to 1948.

Order in Council under the Justices Acts, 1886 to 1949.

Order in Council under the Supreme Court Act of 1921.

Proclamation under the Justices Acts, 1886 to 1949.

Order in Council under the Criminal Code.

Orders in Council under the Profiteering Prevention Act of 1948.

Order in Council under the Real Property Acts, 1861 to 1887.

Regulations under the Hire Purchase Agreement Acts, 1933 to 1946.

Order in Council under the Money Lenders Acts, 1916 to 1946.

Regulation under the Trust Accounts Acts, 1923 to 1925.

Regulation under the Auctioneers and Commission Agents Acts, 1922 to 1946.

Balance Sheet as at 28 February, 1949, of The Union Trustee Company of Australia Ltd.

Order in Council under the Roofing Tiles Act of 1949 (28 July).

Ordinances under the City of Brisbane Acts, 1924 to 1949.

Regulations under the Hospitals Acts, 1936 to 1946 (28 April).

Regulations under the State Children Acts, 1911 to 1943 (26 April).

Order in Council under the Health Acts, 1937 to 1948 (12 May).

By-laws under the Opticians Acts, 1917 to 1939 (7 July).

Proclamation under the Public Works Land Resumption Acts, 1906 to 1940, and the State Development and Public Works Organisation Acts, 1938 to 1940 (28 April, 1949).

Proclamations (5) under the Public Works Land Resumption Acts, 1906 to 1940, the State Development and Public Works Organisation Acts, 1938 to 1940, and the Queensland-British Food Production Act of 1948 (16 June, 1949).

Proclamations (2) under the State Transport Acts, 1938 to 1943 (27 June, 27 July, 1949).

Order in Council under the Electric Supply Corporation (Overseas) Limited Agreement Act of 1947 (5 May, 1949).

Orders in Council (9) under the State Transport Acts, 1938 to 1943 (28 June, 7 July (2), 14, 15, 19, 22, 27, 29, 1949).

Orders in Council (2) under the Bureau of Industry Acts, 1932 to 1943, and the Labour and Industry Act of 1946 (28 July, 1949).

Regulations under the Public Service Acts, 1922 to 1948 (21 April, 1949).

Orders in Council under the Stock Routes and Rural Lands Protection Acts, 1944 to 1948 (7 April, 19 May (2), 14 July).

Order in Council under the Post-War Reconstruction and Development Trust Fund Act of 1943 (26 April).

Order in Council under the Succession and Probate Duties Act of 1904 (21 April).

Regulations (3) under the Navigation Acts, 1876 to 1939 (19 May, 9 June, 14 July).

By-laws Nos. 507 to 517 under the Railways Acts, 1914 to 1946.

Orders in Council under the Landlord and Tenant Act of 1948.

GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I have to report that His Excellency the Governor this day delivered to Parliament an Opening Speech, of which, for greater accuracy, I have obtained a copy. I presume hon. members will take this Speech as read.

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

OPENING DAY.

Mr. JESSON (Kennedy) (2.58 p.m.), who was received with Government cheers, said—
I move—

“That the following Address be presented to the Governor in reply to the Speech delivered by His Excellency in opening this the Third Session of the Thirty-first Parliament of Queensland:—

“May it please Your Excellency,—

“We, His Majesty’s loyal and dutiful subjects, the members of the Legislature of Queensland, in Parliament assembled, desire to assure Your Excellency of our continued loyalty and affection towards the Throne and Person of Our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to tender our thanks to Your Excellency for the Speech with which you have been pleased to open the present Session.

“The various measures to which Your Excellency has referred, and all other matters that may be brought before us, will receive our most careful consideration, and it shall be our earnest endeavour so to deal with them that our labours may tend to the advancement and prosperity of the State.”

Before proceeding with my speech, I should like briefly to refer to the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, who, as we all know, was stricken down by a rather serious illness several weeks ago. I am sure all hon. members will be pleased to know that he has now returned to his home and is progressing favourably.

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. JESSON: I feel that all hon. members and members of the staff will join me in wishing him a speedy recovery and an early return to his duties as Speaker of this House.

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. JESSON: This morning I was very pleased to listen to the Governor’s Speech, in which he gave an indication to the people of Queensland and, I might say, to the people of Australia, of what the Queensland Government have done in the past. Despite the shortages of materials and the unsettled state of world affairs, the precarious position of Great Britain, and various other factors that have had a detrimental effect on the world generally, the Governor’s Speech was one that should give a lead to the nations of the world. As a young country, we have begun to make progress. The Government have a comprehensive programme of important public works that will be continued by them after the next election and we hope that many will be started before then so that we can prove to the people we represent that our objective is progress.

I was very pleased to note in His Excellency’s Speech that a comprehensive Housing Bill is to be one of the first measures to be introduced by the Government this session, but I do not know really how it could be

more comprehensive than our present legislation because in the Governor’s Speech itself it is proven by figures from the department that the housing of our people has continued despite the unfavourable conditions mentioned and that the State Housing Commission has built 23 per cent. more homes than in the previous year. Under existing circumstances that, I think, is a very fine effort. But we hope that this Bill, when we see it, will prove to be comprehensive enough to enable us to show to the people at the next election that the increase over this year was 50 per cent. Housing is one of the greatest problems in the world today. If people are not properly housed and fed they fall prey to various ’isms, particularly to that vicious circle of Communism we see going round the world today. At this stage I will not enlarge on Communism, but will return to it later in my speech if time permits.

I was very pleased to note also that despite the catch-cry of parties opposed to the Labor Party throughout the country that the Queensland Government are not capable of governing, we have been able to show a budget surplus on 10 consecutive occasions. That should prove conclusively to the people of Queensland at least that this Labor Government can wisely and properly handle their financial affairs. As a matter of fact, this position is astounding because I think the Queensland Government are the only Government in Australia, other than the Commonwealth Government, who have been able to show such surpluses. That is a very fine effort on the part of the Treasurer and the officers in the various departments of the Government.

It is very pleasing to note the improvements that are to be made to the harbours of Queensland, and when making comparisons with the other States one must be fair, because in Queensland we have at least six harbours that might be termed large, whereas in New South Wales, for example, Sydney and Newcastle are the only two major harbours and in Victoria there is only the port of Melbourne. Taking into consideration all the necessary railway lines, roads, and inter-communications to our various ports and the fact that we have a population of only a little over one million, we must agree that the Government have done a remarkably good job in keeping up the various harbour appliances.

I note that the Government have already bought two dredges, one for their own use, the other for the Townsville Harbour Board, and that negotiations are in progress for two additional dredges. There are two very important matters that I wish to bring before the Government and the Treasurer regarding these dredges. One is the reason why I think so much land is being lost by floodings and erosion in the various rivers of Queensland. As a matter of fact, travelling by aeroplane on several occasions, one notes the great damage and the inroads made by flood and erosion to the coast of this State by the silting of the mouths of rivers. I gave a mental picture to the Treasurer some months ago of what I call the very dangerous practice of allowing mouths of rivers to silt up.

Year after year floods come down from the mountains and tablelands carrying big logs, all sorts of debris, and many animals. These are all caught on the sandbanks at the mouths of the rivers and gradually build them up with the result that they become blocked. This in turn means that flood waters are dammed up and often inundate the country perhaps one hundred miles inland, with the result that many thousands of acres of valuable agricultural land are lost to us.

I suggest that a complete survey be made of the rivers of the North in particular. The rivers at Rockhampton, Cairns, Gladstone and Brisbane are dredged continually, every day or every week. In some instances it is virtually a 24-hour process. I am speaking now more of the Burdekin, the Herbert, the Tully, and other rivers along the northern coast, where I suggest that by spending a penny wisely now the Government would save many thousands of pounds and many acres of valuable land to the State later.

Over the past eight years I have travelled backwards and forwards by plane to Townsville and Cairns and have seen great stretches of water after a flood in places where years ago there was no water, which proves that nature has found other courses for many of our streams. We hear men nowadays say that their sons have fine blocks of land on beautiful river flats, but I doubt whether any of them realise that many years ago those river flats were actually river beds and that because of the blocking up of the mouths of the rivers over the years the main streams have been diverted to other channels. I suggest that the Government give serious consideration to removing blockages from the mouths of rivers and to straightening the rivers, many of which bend and twist like snakes, as may be seen from the air, for this would mean the saving of many thousands of pounds in the future. I leave that suggestion in the hands of the Minister. I know he has the matter under review, but I thought it would be wise to mention it at this stage.

I should like also to congratulate the State Government Insurance Office upon its splendid work over the past 12 months. Despite the opposition of all the private companies, the State Government Insurance Office has continued to progress, and has demonstrated that at least in some instances the Government can compete with private enterprise to the benefit of the people. The Fire Department of that office has meant the saving of many pounds to the people by the fact that it has forced other companies to keep their rates down. The Public Curator's Office is another State instrumentality that the people are now beginning to realise can be of great benefit to them.

I was also pleased to read in the Governor's Speech about the number of factories in this State. We hear many people deeming this State. Recently the Leader of the Opposition, the hon. member for Cooroora, the hon. member for Mirani, and other hon. members of the Opposition toured North Queensland. Those hon. members were trying to give the people the impression that because of the

operations of a Labour Government as a State we were on the rocks and this country was "settled." It is very pleasing to learn that despite the ramblings of these "knockers" the number of factories in Queensland has increased considerably since the war and that 70,000 people are now employed in our manufacturing and secondary industries and that as a result of these operations the wealth of the State was increased by £125,244,000 last year. That is a truly magnificent effort on the part of a very large State with a small population.

Mr. Muller: How many unemployed are there in Queensland today?

Mr. JESSON: It does not become the hon. member for Fassifern to make such a stupid interjection because he should know that at present we are experiencing industrial trouble that is not of our making.

Mr. Muller: Due to your Government's silly policy.

Mr. JESSON: Due to the collaboration of the Liberal Party and the Communist Party. (Laughter.) There have been such machinations on previous occasions just prior to an election. I know very well that hon. members of the Opposition will be very disappointed if I do not allude to this matter and consequently I will continue. I saw a picture in the "Courier-Mail" of a few days ago depicting Mr. Malcolm McCole being tutored in election platform technique by Mr. Porter. In the background there was a technician operating the wire recorder. It will not be long before they will have the lie detector on them.

Mr. Muller: Are you getting nervous?

Mr. JESSON: Not at all; I am not the nervous type.

I wish now to refer to another article in the "Courier-Mail," where the question why the party opposite was always changing its name was asked. The whole purpose of this change of name is to fool the people. I can well imagine Mr. McCole repeating the answer over and over again, in case he should make a mistake. Because if he makes a mistake, as the hon. member for East Toowoomba did, he will not get endorsed next time. The reply chosen for the question was:

"It is better to change your name and keep to the same ideals than change your ideals and keep the same name."

What a funny answer to such a silly question! The Labour Party on the other hand has always been the same. Its ideals have been improved upon from time to time but fundamentally they have never changed. Its policy has always been the same as it was when it was first formed, although improved upon from time to time.

Even in this morning's paper we saw a picture of Mr. Menzies and Mr. Fadden under the caption "Menzies and Fadden have Single Aim." The aim is for both of them to be Prime Minister of Australia at the one time. If a student of psychology could read

Mr. Menzies's mind he would know that to be true; Arty has a look of great anxiety on his face.

And what of Bob's face? He has a cunning expression that seems to say, "Arty, I don't believe you." That is what he has in his mind. Each is wondering when the other is going to stab him in the back. Which leads me to congratulate the Queensland People's Party on at last being honest to the people of Queensland. For years they masqueraded as the Queensland People's Party, and its former leader went round the country telling the people of Queensland that the party consisted of Queenslanders. But then it sold out to the highest bidder. Let me correct that statement that they sold out. They have always been the Liberal Party, always controlled by the big financial groups of Melbourne. They were controlled all the time by the Queen-street directors of the various companies, but I congratulate them on being honest enough at last to come out in their true colours and to stop masquerading as the Queensland People's Party.

Let me go further. These things always happen about election time. Now we have Mr. Menzies and Mr. Fadden on the one platform together. It is the first time that they have spoken together since 1941. They have kissed and made it up, for six or seven months at any rate, and after that they will be stabbing one another in the back. While they are doing that they will be caring not whether Australia goes to the wolves.

Mr. Muller: A bit like the Labour Party and the Communists.

Mr. JESSON: Do not give us that about the Labour Party and the Communists. We know very well where the Communists are getting their finances—from the Liberal Party—in an effort to defeat the Chifley Government at the next Federal elections. This has always been their plot and it is intensified just before every election. Just before the last State and Federal elections we had what was called a New Deal for the West—a new deal for the people of the West, but after the elections it died a natural or an unnatural death. Now we have in North Queensland the North Queensland Development League. Let us analyse it. Of whom does it consist? Not the workers but just vested interests, manufacturers, and big concerns who have bled North Queensland white and squeezed the sponge almost dry, taking from it all the money that they could get. Now they want the Government to step in and build up enterprise. They consist of a lot of Tories, Communists and fellow-travellers that even the Communists will not have, and some, a few genuine people. The genuine people have been gulled into thinking that North Queensland is not getting a fair deal but let me tell them as a member of a North Queensland electorate that if I thought North Queensland was not getting a fair deal I should get up in this Chamber and express myself very forcefully indeed.

In the short time that I have been there, a little over 25 years, North Queensland has

gone ahead by leaps and bounds. Let us always remember, too, that in that period of 25 years we were at war for seven years. Why not be honest and decent and cease from stampeding reputable people into believing that the North is being neglected? When I first went to Ingham there were no roads, water or electric facilities or amenities of that kind. In that period of 25 years of which I speak there were 10 years in which we were fighting a desperate struggle in war and the aftermath of war. I am satisfied that the decent people in North Queensland realise that the Government are doing all that they possibly can for them and that it is not possible to stretch the £1 further than it will go.

On 28 May, 1945, the Townsville Trades and Labour Council, which is Communist-controlled, sent out a circular letter to all the people of Northern Queensland signed by Mr. J. W. Clubley, who has on three occasions unsuccessfully contested seats at general elections. They call themselves the People's Party. Their arrangements were exactly the same as those of the North Queensland Development League.

I want to say that there are some things in the North to which a little more consideration could be given by the Government. Certain things there could be improved on. I say without fear of contradiction that the Government have done a real good job for Northern Queensland. When I say "the people" I mean the people who count most. For the next financial year the Government propose an expenditure on hospitals north of Mackay of more than £3,500,000, as against £2,500,000 on similar institutions south of Mackay. I will give the House some figures later on. The point I want to make is that the North Queensland Development League is endeavouring to pull the leg of the decent chap who has not been in the North long enough to know what is really going on.

Mr. Low: Why did you not tell them what was going on?

Mr. JESSON: Because I do not associate with Communists and Tories. I can go to the A.L.P. meetings and do the job there. They are doing the job for the people. The "Herbert River Express" of 11 June, 1949, published a report of the meeting of the Ingham Chamber of Commerce. The hon. member for Cooroora and a couple of his colleagues went to Ingham and addressed a meeting on behalf of their party's candidate for the Federal seat. After the meeting they were asked questions. The hon. member was asked about the Herbert River pollution. He said he knew nothing about it. Another member of the party—I think it was the hon. member for Albert—said he had heard something about the subject but when he got back to Brisbane he would make some inquiries. (Government laughter.) I have made a speech in this House on the pollution of the Herbert River not once, but on a number of occasions.

This is what was said at the meeting of the Chamber of Commerce by Mr. Johnson, who was my Kewpie-Liberal Party opponent at the last election—(laughter)—

“The other night he asked two southern politicians what their attitude was towards the pollution of the Herbert River. One said he did not know about the pollution until he arrived in Ingham. The other said he had only recently heard about it. He thought they must have been asleep in Parliament when the pollution was discussed. He moved that the Leader of the Country Party, Mr. Nicklin, be supplied with a dossier of information regarding the pollution of the Herbert River. Seconded by Mr. Ridge and carried.”

The motion was seconded by Mr. Ridge, another Kewpie, and carried. I wonder whether the Leader of the Opposition has received this dossier.

Mr. Low: For your information, no such statement was made. Mr. Johnson asked the question and we said we would take certain action.

Mr. JESSON: Later on in this session of Parliament I will produce the newspaper report, which was handed in to the newspaper by their secretary because the newspaper had no reporter at the meeting. They typed out the report themselves and then handed it to the newspaper. Hon. members opposite have been asleep for four years.

Mr. Low: We know what took place.

Mr. JESSON: I know what took place. I would believe Johnson before I would believe the hon. member. I am endeavouring to connect my remarks with the organisations which crop up around election time.

From 22 July to 10 August, 1947, the Director of the Secondary Industries Division of the Department of Labour and Industry went through North Queensland asking for suggestions as to how to develop the North. Public addresses were given at Bowen, Ayr, Townsville, Ingham and other places. At Townsville a meeting was held on 29 July, 1947. Amongst those present were Mr. Lawrence, president of the chamber of commerce and president of the North Queensland Development League and Mr. Hackett, vice-president of the chamber of commerce, and manager of Samuel Allens Ltd., Mr. Holliday, the representative of the employers in the Industrial Court, Mr. Butler, a member of the chamber of commerce, a big timber merchant, and Mr. T. Aikens who crashes in on everything in order to get publicity. The main trend of the address was that the Government did not intend to establish any industry on its own account but that the Government would give every encouragement and assistance, financial and otherwise, to any company, co-operative society or other organisation proposing to establish an industry.

Every town in the North was clamouring for industries such as cement works, fruit canneries and others to be established in its own particular district but in the larger industries there would be at present room for one only and then the most suitable and

economical site had to be chosen in accordance with supplies of raw materials, costs of production, marketing, &c.

In reply Mr. Lawrence stated:—

“No part of the Commonwealth was crying out for more development or had been more neglected than North Queensland. They had advocated many things such as sugar refineries, brickworks, cement works, fruit canneries, leather works and various others. Competition in the South precluded the opening of enterprises here. Men had always migrated to the cities and the North could not hold them. Development moves to be successful must come from the Government itself.”

Some people of the same political colour, for instance the hon. member for West Moreton, get up and condemn the Government for what they allege are attempts by the Government at socialisation. The hon. member for Albert joined those other hon. members in referring to the Peak Downs scheme to feed the people of Britain as a socialistic idea, and they prophesied that before long the whole of the farmers' farms would be taken over and made into one collective farm. That was purely political propaganda engaged in just before an election campaign.

Mr. Hackett also stated that when suitable clay and shale deposits were found in a convenient area a company would be formed to establish a brickworks.

That is two years ago. There is plenty of clay round Townsville but there is no sign of brickworks.

He went on to say, that apart from this there was no proposal from any local organisation or persons to form a company or society to establish any industry. They wanted to get the Government to start these things and then if they went broke they would say, “There you are! They started a brickworks and went broke.” None of them are game to put their own money into anything.

Let me tell hon. members what was done in Townsville.

A woollen mill was established in Charters Towers away back in 1924, but it could not get wool tops. They had to be brought from Brisbane to Charters Towers. The woollen mills went bung and the machinery and franchise were sold to the Charters Towers electricity authority.

Mr. Bruce: They never turned a wheel.

Mr. JESSON: They never turned a wheel because they could not get the support of the Northern people. Later the Townsville brewery was closed by a Victorian combine. Owing to the lack of foresight of the civic fathers, shall I term them, of those days there was a lack of water and this brewery closed. We have also the instance of a brewery at Charters Towers, which made a very palatable glass of the ambrosial fluid but was closed by southern interests that bought it. The Cairns brewery for many years did not pay any dividend until the shares were bought up for virtually nothing by southern interests. These are instances of these firms, Samuel Allen & Sons Ltd.,

Burns Philp & Co. Ltd., the Hacketts, the Lawrences and the others who are now so concerned about northern development. As I have said, the shares of this brewery were bought by southern interests for virtually nothing and it then began to make good beer, but before that it could not manufacture beer decent enough to drink, let alone sell to the public.

Then we have the greatest scandal of all, the Mono Tropical Preserving Company, which started off by selling land at Abergowrie, outside of Ingham. The primary object of this company was to sell big parcels of land to people by entering into contracts to take their produce, such as papaws and melons, but so soon as they unloaded their land the Mono Tropical Preserving Co. closed down.

Another move was to erect a factory to make chutney from mangoes. What happened to that? It never even started, for the simple reason that these merchants would not sell this chutney because they were agents for Palms and Bengal brands, from which they could get their filthy commission, and they did this at the expense of the industries that could have been established in the North.

As to the establishment of a canning works at Ingham, I have here letters written by a very old gentleman who for many years was a resident of the Ingham district, Mr. J. W. S. Lee-Warren. This was away back in July, 1945, just as the war was about to collapse. Mr. Warren said that it was very encouraging to have my proposal to have a fruit and vegetable cannery established at Ingham. I travelled to Canberra and there saw Senators Courtice and Gordon Brown, Mr. Martens, and other northern members, who in turn introduced me to the C.S.I.R. I went to Western Australia at my own expense, there inspecting a canning works that could have been bought for one-third of the original price and are today canning salmon. I might mention that I also saw Mr. Cottee, managing director of a big preserving firm here in this city. Mr. Cottee said he would come to North Queensland and give us the benefit of his experience gratis for three months. After collecting all this information I called a public meeting at the shire hall at Ingham. It was largely attended and there was great support to get the proposal moving, but immediately I left the district the saboteurs, because it was to be a co-operative concern and they could not get their filthy fingers onto the profits, started sabotage to close it down.

For the information of hon. members, I will quote from the Cairns "Sunday Australian"—

"M.L.A. Jesson claims Ingham Move has been Sabotaged.

"The movement launched at Ingham some time ago to found a co-operative cannery in that centre, similar to such highly successful enterprises operating in the south, had been deliberately sabotaged by certain sections in that community because some people were unable to get their hands on it." Mr. C. G. Jesson, M.L.A., said yesterday.

"Declaring that he was very disappointed with the outcome of his campaign to achieve such an objective, Mr. Jesson said that he had taken every possible action except build the factory.

"He had spent money from his own pocket visiting canning centres in New South Wales, where he had made intensive investigations into similar undertakings, and in visiting Canberra to consult with the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture and Commerce.

"I intend discussing the present position with Ingham people during a visit to my electorate next week," Mr. Jesson proceeded, 'and there is just the possibility that I will later return and organise the movement, either on a share or co-operative basis.'"

What happened? As soon as my back was turned the scheme was knocked on the head by these saboteurs.

Then there was an undertaking in Cairns to make coal and other baskets out of lawyer cane. That was sabotaged by these big northern people. I am speaking now not about the workers, whose daughters would be pleased to get jobs in these projects, but about the big firms that are now shedding crocodile tears about the neglect of the North.

Mr. Muller: What did the Government do about it?

Mr. JESSON: The hon. member is the greatest knocker in Australia. People endeavoured to start factories for all these things but they were closed down deliberately by vested interests and people from the South.

At Townsville at the present time a returned soldier has been helped by the Secondary Industries Commission and by Materials Control to get materials for the building of a tile works at Townsville. He makes a tile that has passed the Government's test but as yet he has not been able to sell enough tiles to do one roof in Townsville. Why?

Mr. H. B. Taylor: Has it passed the test?

Mr. JESSON: It has passed all the tests, yet not one house in Townsville has been roofed with these tiles. People may ask why the Housing Commission has not used them but I remind hon. members that the Housing Commission has not built any houses at Townsville over the last couple of years. In that period all houses have been built by private contractors, who have erected several hundred dwellings. This company is struggling for an opportunity to employ men, yet the very people who can help it are doing everything to keep it down.

Then we have the North Queensland Construction Company, which has received £3,000 worth of orders from England for big sweeps for lifeboats for the British Navy.

(Time, on motion of Mr. Devries, extended.)

Mr. JESSON: I thank hon. members and the Attorney-General for the courtesy extended to me.

The North Queensland Construction Company has been helped by the Government. That being so, the hon. member for Fassifern cannot ask what the Government are doing in this instance, because they have leased to the company land at Garbutt with a railway siding for the unloading of logs. The Building Control people have given the man concerned a priority for iron for his factory.

Mr. Muller: Did you say "iron"?

Mr. JESSON: Yes.

Mr. Muller: We do not know what it looks like.

Mr. JESSON: In any case, the hon. member does not deserve it. He and his friends take everything out of the country and put nothing back, whereas this man is trying to develop an industry that will employ hundreds of people. He has been helped in every possible way but he has been sabotaged by the sawmillers of Townsville who will not supply him with timber. They say they have not got the timber. Recently when the Timber Commission visited North Queensland he was one of the first to give evidence before it and asked that the Government keep the quandong timber to be used for the purpose for which his industry is being established. He said that it was too valuable to be used for scantlings and as rough timber in homes.

This gentleman said that he was prepared to pay twice as much as he was previously paying for this timber. It is not even listed by the Sub-Department of Forestry, being put in among miscellaneous timbers.

Then we had the spectacle of Mr. Hyne, a representative of vested interests, saying that it was used extensively in the building trade. I am prepared to say—and this speech of mine will save me the trouble of going before the Timber Commission—that not 3 per cent. of quandong is used in the whole of Queensland today. This man has travelled all over the countryside in an effort to get this class of timber in order that he may make tool-handles, oars, and sweeps for the British Navy. He has a contract worth £3,000 from the British Navy for the making of oars and sweeps. This new industry is being sabotaged by vested interests and these very people have the audacity to say that the Government have neglected the North. The big fellows in the North have drowned any attempt to improve the North. I remember the time when Thomas Browns endeavoured to introduce XXXX beer in North Queensland. The southern people would not let them and a price fixing war was begun by Thomas Browns when they started selling XXXX beer at 1s. a bottle. Foster's and Abbott's lager came down to 1s. a bottle and it was not long before the XXXX trade was drowned.

Mr. Muller interjected.

Mr. JESSON: It is dreadful, Mr. Acting Speaker, to try to make a speech when you have a grinning ape sitting opposite you.

Let us analyse the taxation receipts received from North Queensland for the last financial year and we see that of a total

collection of £26,000,000, £5,000,000-odd came from North Queensland. Turning to the expenditure per capita on works we find that the amount in the southern part of the State, where 72 per cent. of the population live, was £9 3s. a head.; in the Central District, where there are 12.9 per cent. of the population, the figure was £13 3s.; and for North Queensland, where there is a population of 160,520 or 14.3 per cent. of the total, the expenditure per capita was £16 5s. I say that those figures show very clearly that the Government are doing the best they can under existing circumstances in the development of North Queensland. I do not know of any proposal put to the Queensland Government at any time that has not been thoroughly investigated with a view to its implementation. Despite what I have said we have the work of these "knockers" and when election time comes round they start off with a propaganda of hate in an endeavour to condemn the present Labour Government.

Now I come to the sugar industry, and in saying what I am about to say I am not advocating a new plank in the platform of the Labour Party, because it is no new thing to ask for a refinery or a new sugar mill in the northern part of the State as members on this side of the House have been bringing up the question for many years. However, owing to the unsettled state of world affairs and because it has not been possible to see very clearly into the future this venture has not been undertaken, primarily because of the competition by black labour.

Today even the blackfellow is beginning to realise that he is a human being deserving of decent wages and conditions, and consequently when his living standards are on a par with those of other people the costs of labour in sugar-growing in the various countries will be the same.

In Ingham, for instance, 50 years ago there were five mills, the Macknade mill changed hands three times and was eventually bought by the C.S.R. Company in 1897. The Victorian mill, which was owned by the Victoria Sugar Company, was built by the C.S.R. Company. Two mills eventually amalgamated in 1897 and were known as the C.S.R. Company's mills. Then there was the Habledon mill, which was owned by the late Sir Alfred Cowley, one-time Speaker of this Assembly. Then there was a mill owned by Gaylor and another at Ripple Creek owned by Wood Bros. and Boyne. Years ago this mill refined their own sugar. Old residents of Ingham can well remember the days when the 70 lb. bags of sugar carried the brand "Ripple Creek" across them. Consequently I suggest that if the Government are of the opinion that there is room for new mills in the North they should give serious consideration to the establishment of a co-operative refinery along the lines of the distillery at Sarina. To establish such an industry up there would be a move in the right direction. If the people at Ripple Creek could refine and sell their sugar 50 years ago we today, with all the technicians and scientists at our command, should be in a position to refine sugar

in North Queensland and overcome any obstacles that vested interests may put in our way.

It is interesting to note that in the district I represent over £6,500,000 has been invested in the sugar industry, which clearly indicates the great wealth that can be won from the industries there. The industry in that district has been so successful because of the production of the marvellous Trojan cane, which has been developed over the past couple of years, and I want to give full credit to Mr. Gard, of the C.S.R. experiment station at Macknade, for the evolution of this variety. He can be rightly called the mother, the father, the grandfather and the grandmother of this particular type of cane. If it had not been for his marvellous work in evolving the Trojan cane many cane-growers in this area would have been bankrupt today. And I say that with all sincerity.

Let me now refer to another industry, one that the Government are helping in every possible way. Recently a tobacco experiment station was established by the Government at Abergowrie. I have some very interesting figures that I propose to quote in the hope that they may give encouragement to some young men to make their start in life in the tobacco industry in the North. Several years ago a man by the name of D. Giodano, his wife, son and daughter started out in the tobacco industry in the Ingham district at Helidon Hill. His capital outlay was £3,200. I am not going to give his outlay in detail but it included the cost of the land at about £4 an acre. There are some land sharks in the district today who would ask £10 an acre, simply because some men have made a success of the industry there. The fact remains that his capital outlay amounted to £3,200. His average yield over the past six years has been 1,808 lb., or £325 an acre. His average price has been 3s. 7d. per lb. His average cultivation was 5.8 acres and his gross yearly income £1,894.

He puts his working expenses, not including wages for himself and son and the assistance rendered by his wife at different times, at £568, and his profit at £1,326. This is the point I want to make: tobacco is grown for only about four months of the year. For the other portion of the year tomatoes and vegetables are grown and this considerably augments growers' income.

In 1945 there was one tobacco farmer left in the Ingham district. Many men had gone on the land but could not make a success of tobacco-growing. One of the factors that knocked tobacco over in northern Queensland happened when the Scullin Government fell and the Lyons-Page Government took over the reins of government. What did they do? Men then walked off their tobacco farms and lost not only their land but the money they had put into it, because the Lyons Government increased the excise and reduced the imports duty on tobacco. In 1945, as I say, there was one tobacco farmer in the Ingham district. In 1947 the number increased to six. The estimated crop then was 38 short tons. In 1948 10 farmers were growing tobacco and today there are

over 45. At Abergowrie there are three share farmers cultivating tobacco on 10 acres. Last year £2,351 was received from the crop grown on that 10 acres. There are 5,000 acres of land available in the same district for tobacco-growing. It is all really good tobacco land. Little money has to be spent on irrigation, as the land is on the bank of a creek. As 10 acres affords an ample living for a grower, that would mean that 500 settlers, soldiers or others, could be placed on that land for a small amount of money. I know of no industry in which settlers can be placed on the land as cheaply as the tobacco industry. Tobacco-growers have not to buy tractors and other costly implements, which is necessary in the sugar industry, for instance. Consequently the Government should give some consideration to a survey of tobacco land in the Abergowrie area.

That leads me to bring before the Government the need for damming the Herbert River. An investigation has been made of a site near Abergowrie for the purpose. I suggest, although the Government are doing a mighty job in their long-range planning in connection with such schemes as the Burdekin River, where it is hoped in the next 10 or 15 years to place 500 or 600 people on farms, that the Herbert River has more potentialities, or perhaps is a little better than the Burdekin scheme, as it will not cost such a vast amount of money. There is a gorge on the Herbert River 22 miles long, situated between two mountain spurs.

I am nearly sick of speaking about this subject, as I have mentioned it nearly every session of Parliament since 1935. It will be necessary, with our increased population and the increasing number of displaced persons being brought to this State from overseas, to find some industry to keep them employed all the year round. Here is a splendid opportunity for the Government to undertake an intensive investigation of this scheme. It would provide not only an immense hydro-electric undertaking but an adequate water supply for Townsville. There is no doubt in my mind that in 10 or 15 years Townsville will be just as badly off for water as it is today because the amount conserved at Mt. Spec cannot supply a population twice the size of Townsville's today, and Townsville expects that its population will double in a decade. There is no better place than the Herbert River for a water scheme for Townsville.

I do not want to take up much more time, but I must take advantage of this opportunity to make a suggestion to the Government and local authorities with reference to the galvanised-iron position. That is a matter that affects all areas in the State.

I suggest that the hon. member for Fassifern put down his "Telegraph" and listen to what I have to say and he will hear something about the scheme. I am suggesting that it would be better if collective buying of iron, instead of individual buying, was done by the local authorities or the Government.

Mr. Muller: Where will you buy it?

Mr. JESSON: In England.

Mr. Muller: Fancy importing iron! Are you not ashamed to say it?

Mr. JESSON: You cannot get it here because these people such as Lysaghts are endeavouring to get machinery in order to increase production. If the coal strike ended tomorrow and Lysaghts got into full production within a fortnight they could not supply one-tenth of Australia's requirements during the next three years, with their present machinery. I know people who bought machinery three years ago and they have not got it yet. These factories are not able to handle the increased production. If they had all the coal, they have not the machinery to do the job. It is not the lack of manpower that is the trouble but the shortage of machinery to do the job.

Mr. Bruce: The failure of private enterprise to make provision.

Mr. JESSON: As the Secretary for Public Instruction says, it is the failure of private enterprise to make provision for the advancement of this great country of ours. English iron, 26 gauge, 8 feet long, runs out at 146 sheets to the ton and costs about 18s. a sheet. Aluminium, 24 gauge, costs approximately £1 a sheet. There are 146 sheets to the ton of galvanised iron and 320 of aluminium. I think if the Government and the local authorities got together and placed their order through the Department of Labour and Industry and got a shipment, there would be a great saving. I put forward that suggestion for consideration.

I should like to speak briefly about the pollution of the Herbert River. I do this especially for the benefit of the hon. member for Cooroora and his colleague, so that the next time he goes up there he will know something about this very burning question. The only thing I say about it is this: I do not believe that the tin-dredging company is telling the truth; I believe it is telling the Government stories. Medical men have told me that although there may not be any immediate cause to worry about the health of the people in that area, if the people continue to drink this water with sludge in it over a period of years, when they reach middle age—and when the children reach the 20's—there may be a very detrimental effect on their kidneys and bladders. I have seen it in animals. These companies are very wealthy.

Mr. Gair: Who is the secretary?

Mr. JESSON: The hon. member for Logan. I called them murderers last year, and they did not even object. If I had called them political skunks or something else they would have jumped to their feet on a point of order. I told them they were murderers and they never flicked an eyelid. Why? Because they were getting a lot of money out of this enterprise. Two little boys were drowned in the Herbert River. Because of the pollution of the stream searchers could not see them on the bottom of the river. As I said, I called them murderers and they never flicked an eyelid.

Mr. Muller: Nobody was taking any notice.

Mr. JESSON: I have been very kindly today but I will not be so kindly in future if the hon. member insists on being so rude. I will tell the people about the cat in the vat.

The Government introduced legislation in all good faith with the object of abating this nuisance, which is worrying the Premier and every member on this side. This concern is producing a lot of tin, one-third of Australia's production. Although we are very concerned about that, we are concerned with the health of the people also. Alluvial Gold Ltd. took an option—which was extended—over this area in Mt. Garnet. It contains 31,000,000 cubic yards of dredgeable ground with an average value of 10.5 ozs. tin oxide a yard, assaying 72 per cent. metallic tin. Alluvial Gold Ltd. bought the option from Alluvial Equipment Ltd. which I believe was Broken Hill Pty. I am not too sure about that; I could not find a shareholder but I will—that can be left to me. They paid £40,000 for the option and the cost of check-boring and other investigations was about £4,000. Hon. members must use their own imagination; a company that could afford to pay £40,000 for its right to operate must be able to pay to abate a nuisance.

It has been suggested that this nuisance can be abated by pumping the water back over the mountain into the gorges there. There is no good ground there and the water could be allowed to settle there. Of course, there is the vexed question whether this water might not run into other rivers and pollute them. I am pressing the Government to do something in the matter. I do not believe that tin is so scarce as to justify sacrificing everything to its production. There appears to be plenty of tin in America but apparently it is a question of the shortage of the dollar.

I have no intention of belabouring this question. I thank the Premier for giving me the honour of moving this motion, and I hope to see Mr. Speaker enjoying good health in the very near future.

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. CLARK (Fitzroy) (4.4 p.m.): I am conscious of the honour and privilege conferred on me this afternoon in seconding the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply, which has been ably moved by the hon. member for Kennedy. I congratulate him on the very able speech he made and like him I regret very much that Mr. Speaker, the Hon. S. J. Brassington, at the present time is ill. I trust it will not be long before he is restored to good health and is with us again.

The Governor's Speech was very inspiring. It mentioned many measures that will lead to the betterment and prosperity of this State. It shows that despite industrial troubles, shortages of materials and labour, remarkable progress is being made in the development of Queensland.

I wish to confine my remarks mainly to Central Queensland and to refer at the outset to the activities of the Queensland-British Food Corporation. That scheme will be of great benefit to the Central District and to Queensland as a whole. It will also help the people of Great Britain, who suffered dreadful experiences and battering during the last world war.

I visited Peak Downs recently with several other hon. members. On arriving at Capella we were taken to Peak Downs, where the large area under grain sorghum was an inspiring sight. People who have not seen it for themselves cannot realise just what it is. To my mind, the taking up of that land for the growing of sorghum was one of the finest things ever done in Queensland. It seemed to me that the people who owned the land prior to its acquisition by the Queensland-British Food Corporation had allowed their sheep to eat out the grass and had made no provision whatever for any other kind of fodder. The land had been bled dry.

The people of Queensland should be proud of this scheme. Ploughing was started on 22 May, 1948, and was continued until approximately 30,000 acres had been turned over and made ready for the planting of grain sorghum. On the morning we arrived at Peak Downs we were taken out to the area where harvesting was about to begin, and it was grand to see 22 headers moving out to reap the harvest. Although the expected yield may not be achieved, the return will be quite satisfactory.

In addition to all this ploughing and planting a great amount of other work in connection with the scheme has been carried out over the past 12 months. Sheds capable of storing 20,000 tons of bagged grain have been built. A railway siding to give access to the storage sheds has been provided and accommodation for the employees of the scheme has been erected. Boring for water has been carried out and I believe there is every possibility of obtaining a good underground supply.

Taking it on the whole, a scheme that was really an experiment has proved a great success, and much credit for that is due to the men and officers engaged in it. The scheme is of great value and demonstrates what can be done by way of large-scale production. Many of the graziers in the area now intend to grow sorghum after having seen what has been done at Peak Downs.

Mr. Muller: They were growing it before Peak Downs started.

Mr. CLARK: But not to any extent. Many more are engaging in it after seeing what was done at Peak Downs. I spoke to many men up there who had never grown it before and who now say they will be growing it this year.

What has been the attitude of hon. members of the Opposition towards the Peak Downs scheme? It was deplorable to hear the

Leader of the Opposition, the hon. member for Cunningham, the hon. member for Dalby, and others trying to belittle the scheme and doing everything possible to ridicule it. Theirs was a foolish attitude; they profess to want to see greater production in Queensland, yet they opposed the greatest production scheme ever known in the State.

Mr. Nicklin: You are quite satisfied with the results?

Mr. CLARK: It was an experiment and I am satisfied with the results. Unfortunately the most favourable conditions did not operate up to the completion of ploughing. There was rain when it was not wanted and there was frost when it was not wanted and for those reasons the expected production will not be reached. I repeat that it was an experiment that was well worth while and I am satisfied with its success up to the present. I trust that when the scheme is finalised it will prove a greater success than it is today. In order to provide pig meat for Great Britain piggeries are being set up and one has been started at Moura in the Dawson Valley, arrangements have been made to start another outside Rockhampton, and a third will be established at Capella. Hon. members opposite, instead of trying to dampen the scheme, should be in favour of it because I believe that in their own hearts they know that it will be worth while. They have ridiculed the scheme, just because a Labour Government fostered it. In their desire to denounce the scheme they have forgotten the interests of the State. It is fortunate for a Labour Government and the people of Queensland that the Opposition's forecast of failure has not been realised. Their opposition has been for political purposes.

Referring to the industrial trouble we are experiencing today, I congratulate the Federal Government and the State Government on their stand in support of arbitration. I do not say that the miners should not have some of their demands granted but I do say that the Arbitration Court is the place to seek improvement. We all adhere to the principle of arbitration and I think that the right and proper thing for those mixed up in this industrial trouble is to return to arbitration; at least, if they do not get all their demands, they will get some of them.

In this regard too the Opposition have demonstrated their incapacity to control the affairs of the State. That is their ambition and in order to get political advantage they have joined with the Communist Party in denouncing the Government instead of joining with the Government and the people of Australia to have the principle of arbitration vindicated. They have placed the welfare of the people below their selfish interests. The Opposition speak of strong action but in Victoria, which has an anti-Labour Premier, nearly 7,000 tons of coal has been lying on the wharves for some time and instead of showing strength that Government have stood idly by while the coal has been deteriorating.

The Premier, Mr. Hollway, made strong complaints against the men but he did nothing of any value. However, when the Prime Minister took a firm stand on the coal question the Premier of Victoria got a little courage and said he would endeavour to have the coal unloaded but he did nothing until the Prime Minister took control of affairs.

I am pleased to know that the Government are having inquiries made into a proposal to provide an additional deepwater port for Rockhampton. This is necessary and it will be even more necessary in the future because of the increased trade that will follow the development that is taking place in the Central district.

I am pleased to know also that the Government propose to eliminate the rack section on the Mt. Morgan railway line and put in a deviation. I have spoken on this matter in this Chamber before because I know that the disadvantages of the rack section are numerous. The greatest at the present time is that the maximum load than can be carried over the rack section is 125 tons and at times that has to be reduced to 90 tons. At the present time the engines can haul 450 tons from the Dawson and Callide Valley to Moongan, the point where the rack section begins. There the load has to be broken down to four trains of 90 to 125 tons. The time taken to do the job is two hours or more, while the distance on the rack section is approximately one mile. The same applies to other trains that come heavily laden to the bottom of the rack section. A passenger train of anything up to 300 tons has to be broken into two. It is inconvenient at times for passengers to have to sit at the bottom of the hill until one half of the train is pulled up and the engine comes back for the other half. The same applies to cattle trains. I have known of instances in which cattle trains from the Dawson and Callide, on reaching Moongan, have to be broken into four trains to go down the hill. The fact is that the first load of cattle down the hill should be at the Lake's Creek Meatworks by the time the last load comes down from Moongan to Moonmera. After the deviation is put in it will be possible to haul 450 tons from the Dawson and Callide Valley to Moongan and from Moongan to Rockhampton 650 tons will be hauled over the line. The time taken will be approximately one hour and the distance 20 miles. This deviation will greatly assist in developing the coal resources and in production in the Dawson and Callide Valley.

I desire now to refer to the development of the coal resources in the Central District. Central Queensland is well off in the matter of coal resources but unfortunately they are not very favourably situated in relation to the coast. From Blair Athol the coal has to be hauled 239 miles to Rockhampton by rail. The distance from the Bluff to Rockhampton is 107 miles by rail. Baralaba is 89 miles south-west of Rockhampton by rail. Callide is 12 miles east of Biloela which is 102 miles south of Rockhampton by rail. Some coal is transported to Gladstone by road. Styx

is 85 miles north-west of Rockhampton by rail and Byfield is approximately 50 miles from Rockhampton.

In 1947 Central Queensland produced 361,871 tons of coal. In other words, 19.21 per cent. of the total coal production of the State is obtained from that area. The Blair Athol coalfield contains the largest known outcrop of black coal in the Southern Hemisphere and is capable of being worked by the open-cut method. Recently I visited the Blair Athol mines and the sight was something to be seen to be believed. When you go down to both open-cut mines you are confronted with seams of 60 feet of black coal. It is something that Queensland should be proud of. There is sufficient coal at Blair Athol and Callide to supply the wants of Queensland for a long period of years. There is, too, the possibility of a great export trade from both mines. The seam has been proved over five square miles. There is an overburden, mainly of sandstone, varying from 22 to 105 feet in depth. The coal is of a good steaming quality, but unfortunately it is not satisfactory for coking or gas-making.

The same applies to the Callide coalfield. It is an extensive field 82 miles south-west of Gladstone and this coal too is mined by open-cut methods. I had the opportunity recently of visiting it. The coal is transported by road to Gladstone, and by road to Biloela. The extent of the Callide field is not yet known, but away back in 1891 it was estimated to contain 50 million tons. In my opinion it would be very hard to define the quantity of coal that could be procured on both the Callide and Blair Athol fields.

I want to mention next the Styx coal-mine, the only one in Central Queensland that is worked by the underground methods, and the only one that gives coal of good coking and gas-producing qualities. That is the reason why I mention this mine particularly.

I congratulate the Government on their decision to develop the Callide coal field and on their decision to expend more than £100,000 in improving road facilities between the field and Gladstone. In my opinion the road is in very fair condition and with several improvements, including a few bridges, which were not completed at the time of my visit. Transport facilities from the mine to Gladstone will not be too bad. The Government are now altering the route from the Callide field to Gladstone by the construction of a new road for 14 miles that will shorten the haulage by road from the mine to Gladstone by 12½ miles.

I congratulate the Government also on their decision to expend £100,000 on improving the Blair Athol line to enable locomotives to haul heavier loads than at present. That is work that should be accomplished as soon as possible. To achieve this result some regrading and strengthening of bridges will be necessary and the sooner it is done the better it will be for Queensland. When this work is completed trainloads from Blair Athol to Emerald will be increased by approximately 27 per cent. That is a big consideration.

The mineral production of Central Queensland in the past has made an important direct contribution to the wealth of the State and to prove that statement I wish to read a state-

ment setting out the minerals that were produced in Central Queensland in the year 1948:—

Mineral Field or District.	Nature of Minerals.	Quantity.	Value.	
			£	s. d.
Anakie	Gems	6,059	0 0
Clermont	Coal (Blair Athol)	216,610 tons	202,274	0 0
	Gold	1,271 fine oz.	13,679	0 0
			215,953	0 0
Gladstone	Copper	1 7/8 tons	252	0 0
	Silver	45 oz.	9	0 0
	Marble	648 tons	9,078	0 0
	Limestone	2,500 tons	3,500	0 0
	Gold	49 fine oz.	527	0 0
			13,366	0 0
Mount Morgan	Copper	2,962 1/2 tons	447,293	0 0
	Silver	13,775 oz.	3,235	0 0
	Coal (Baralaba and Callide)	43,245 tons	36,144	0 0
	Gold	52,796 fine oz.	568,217	0 0
			1,054,889	0 0
Rockhampton	Coal (Styx and Bluff)	73,611 tons	104,807	0 0
	Lime	7,975 tons	17,145	0 0
	Ironstone	555 tons	1,110	0 0
	Gold	84 fine oz.	904	0 0
			123,966	0 0
Mulgeldie	Coal (Burnett Colliery, Selene)	14,748 tons	28,556	0 0
Mount Perry	Copper	3 3/8 tons	507	0 0
	Silver	9 oz.	2	0 0
	Gold	5 fine oz.	54	0 0
			563	0 0

Total value of production, £1,443,352.

NOTE.—Value of gold stated in Australian currency, £10 15s. 3d. per fine oz.

That is a great benefit to the Central district. In my opinion mining has allowed a more rapid development of the country to take place than any other industry that I know. It has helped to establish townships and communications that have been of benefit to other primary industries, even after mining operations have ceased. While the productive life of some mining fields has been comparatively short, others have been in operation for long periods. The world-famous Mt. Morgan gold-copper mine has been a very large producer since its discovery in 1881. It now employs over 1,000 men, and has ore reserves of 6,000,000 tons, with the probability of a further 2 1/4 million tons being available for treatment, and should retain its place as the premier gold mine of Queensland for many years.

Since the discovery of gold at Mt. Morgan in 1881, the mine has produced over 5 1/2 million ounces of gold and more than 145,000 tons of copper. I want to mention, too, that there is a possibility of Mt. Morgan's developing into something greater than it is today. As a by-product from the copper-gold concentrating plant at Mt. Morgan very large tonnages of iron pyrites have been obtained. These are available for large-scale production of sulphuric acid and sulphur and I should like to read an article that appeared in the Brisbane "Courier-Mail" last year but before doing so would mention that could we produce

enough pyrites for sulphur in Queensland or Australia it would be a great dollar-saving proposition—

“£1 1/2 Million Plan.

“Pyrites to Save Dollars.

“Millions of tons of pyrites lying at grass at Mount Morgan are to be used in an attempt to make Australia independent of the United States in producing sulphuric acid.

“Pyrites is sulphide of iron employed in the production of the sulphuric acid.

“The venture, which is expected to involve up to £1 1/2 million, is planned to save Australia hundreds of thousands of pounds annually in dollar expenditure.

“Two companies are believed to be interested—Broken Hill Pty. Co. Ltd. in New South Wales, and the A.C.F. and Shirleys Fertilisers Ltd., Brisbane.”

This quantity of pyrites has to be transported from Mt. Morgan to some other plant for treatment and this throws a big job on the railways of Queensland. Last year the Minister for Transport, Mr. Duggan, stated—

“The Transport Minister (Mr. Duggan) said yesterday, that the Railway Department had been asked to shift 50,000 tons of pyrites from Mt. Morgan to Port Alma or Gladstone in the next 12 months.

Ultimately, it was stated, the tonnage would increase to 200,000 and 250,000 annually.

“Mr Duggan said this would represent a problem for the Railway Department because much ‘dead’ one-way running of trucks would be entailed.”

I agree with him and if some company took control of these pyrites and established a treatment plant in Central Queensland it would be a great saving to the Railway Department. Although that tonnage has not been reached a large amount is today shipped through to New South Wales. I should like a treatment plant established in Central Queensland, but do not care where. Millions of tons of pyrites are lying at grass and hundreds of tons are produced every day at the works of the Mount Morgan Gold Mining Co. It would be a great saving to Australia if such a plant was set up in the Central district. This would also be of great benefit to the farmers of Queensland as sulphuric acid is an ingredient in the making of fertilisers.

Now to refer to the Cracow goldfield: although the discovery was made in 1931 that is comparatively recently. It shows that the prospects of discovering new ore deposits in this area have not been exhausted. In the first 10 years of this field 224,000 ozs. of gold was produced. To this amount the Golden Plateau contributed 203,000 ozs., valued at £1,750,000. The reason for mentioning Cracow is that I believe that some of these old fields such as Cracow, Mt. Usher and Mt. Chalmers—to mention three—offer great possibilities of a revival of mining. As a very young man I remember the Cracow goldfield and the prospectors operating there but nothing of value was found until 1931.

I believe that in the Mt. Chalmers area there is a possibility still of discovering something worth while. Even today in the old Mt. Usher area there are great prospects. Some of the old-age pensioners living there find good colours and even nuggets weighing up to 5 dwts.

The Miclere goldfield has been worked by individual miners and has produced a tremendous quantity of gold up to date. Of late years Gold Mines of Australia put down sampling bores and a shaft with a view to ascertaining whether satisfactory values were to be obtained over the whole area for the treatment of large-scale tonnages. Unfortunately, the exploration did not show the desired results but the field today still offers scope for individual miners. There is still a good deal of gold to be found in the Miclere district.

There are minerals of all kinds in Central Queensland and it seems to me that only now is the need being felt for some of them. For instance, we have the example of the manganese show just outside Gympie. Until recently no-one wanted it but today the Broken Hill Company will take all the manganese it can get.

Another item of value to Central Queensland is the production of building and ornamental stone. We have the dark granite of Gracemere, which is very hard. Then we have

the white and variegated marble of Ulam, some of which has been used extensively in Brisbane. I am sure these products can be developed to a much greater extent than at present.

Before concluding, I wish to refer to the irrigation area of Theodore, about which there was some newspaper controversy recently. I well remember the time when the scheme was started and I know that during the period of its development a great deal of hard work was done. Most of the materials required had to be carted not by rail but by road from Rannes through Banana and back to Theodore. Unfortunately, when arrangements were made to construct the big dam at Nathan Gorge it was found that the stone in the area was not suitable, with the result that the Government, through the Sub-Department of Irrigation and Water Supply, abandoned the larger scheme temporarily and decided to undertake a smaller scheme. Works have been carried out in the Theodore area each year and it seems to me that we have now reached the stage at which it is possible to back up a good supply of water by a major dam.

Mr. Macdonald: Every farm cost over £10,000.

Mr. CLARK: Even if it cost £8,000,000 today, I believe the scheme would be profitable.

I have always said that the Theodore irrigation scheme must come about and whether it comes about in my life time or not it will come about in the future. The area is one of the finest agricultural areas in Queensland.

I want to add my measure of praise of the wise step taken by the Queensland Government in having a geological survey made of North Queensland. I hope that this survey will not be confined to the northern part of the State but will extend to the whole of it. I feel that the result will go a long way towards bringing the mining industry back to the position it occupied years ago.

Cotton-growing in Queensland is a precarious industry, because its success can be marred by moths, weevils, dry weather and wet weather. I have always said that the price the grower receives for his product has not been sufficient and it would be pleasing if representations by the Commonwealth Government to the Tariff Board could result in the grower's getting a better price for his produce. When cotton was grown in quantities in this State the industry was the avenue of much employment and although some people did not do very well others made a fairly good living out of it.

I repeat my congratulations to the Government on conducting a geological survey of North Queensland, as I believe that it will be one of the greatest events in the history of this State. Plenty of minerals are to be found throughout the State, particularly in the North, and I think that most of the minerals to be found up there will be required in the near future. It is only recently that our coal has been required to the extent it is today. God knows, it might

not be required in the next 5 or 10 years! I am hopeful that the mining resources of Queensland will bring the mining industry back to the position it occupied in times gone by, when it brought this country out of the difficulty it was then in.

Debate, on motion of Mr. Nicklin, adjourned.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier):
[move—

“That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 10.30 a.m. tomorrow.”

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 4.45 p.m.
