

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 28 AUGUST 1957

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“My Ministers and I express to His Excellency our appreciation of the magnificent work which he has done for this State during the past 11 years, and in doing so, we are not unmindful of the prominent and important part which Lady Lavarack has taken in the public life of our community. We hope that His Excellency will soon be restored to health and we wish both him and Lady Lavarack many years to enjoy their retirement.

“In the early part of this year there was an unusually dry period, but, although this affected crops and pastures, the general prosperity of the community continues to be buoyant.

“The new Government is fully cognisant of the fact that available capital resources from the usual channels are wholly inadequate for the proper development of the State, and that the future advancement of the State to a place of high prominence in the Australian economy hinges on the ability of the Government to attract to Queensland the huge capital investment necessary to fully exploit and develop the unparalleled natural resources of our State.

“With this object in mind, they propose a full-scale drive throughout the Commonwealth and abroad to publicise Queensland to potential investors. The success of such a move—dedicated, as it is, to development—is regarded with the utmost confidence, and is expected to usher in the greatest era of prosperity ever known in this State.

“My Advisers welcome the early display of initiative and co-operation by industrial, commercial, and development interests which are organising an overseas trip by a delegation of Queensland businessmen early in 1958 for the purpose of attracting new capital to the State.

“My Advisers also propose to give every encouragement to the decentralisation of existing and prospective industries so that all parts of the State can share in the resultant expansion and prosperity.

“The first steps in this direction have already been taken by my Advisers in the allocation of a senior portfolio—the Minister for Development—embracing the major aspects of State development.

“In addition, the Minister for Labour and Industry has already visited other States seeking investment from outside Queensland.

“In accordance with their election promises, my Advisers propose to take as soon as practicable legislative action to entrench in the Constitution of this State certain provisions designed to protect and preserve the political institutions of the State, the basic political rights of the people, the freedom of the individual and the protection of his property, and to maintain an independent judiciary.

WEDNESDAY, 28 AUGUST, 1957.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. A. R. Fletcher, Cunningham) took the chair at 11.57 a.m.

PRESENTATION OF Mr. SPEAKER.

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

ADMINISTRATOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

At noon His Excellency the Administrator came in state to Parliament House, was announced by the Sergeant-at-Arms, received by Mr. Speaker (Hon. A. R. Fletcher) at the Bar, and accompanied to the dais.

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

“GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY—

“You have been called together in this, the first session of the Thirty-fifth Parliament of Queensland, to give your attention to, and make decisions upon, matters pertaining to the welfare of the people of this State.

“The proposed visit to Australia during the coming year of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, has been acclaimed throughout the length and breadth of Queensland, and all Queenslanders look forward to the opportunity of demonstrating anew their loyalty and affection for the Royal Family.

“The Governor, His Excellency Lieutenant-General Sir John Lavarack, became ill on 24 January, and he is still unable, on account of his indisposition, to perform the duties of his office. He is due to retire at the end of next month.

"Advances in the mining industry are still a feature of the development of the natural resources of this State, and the recent discovery in the Cape York Peninsula of what is estimated to be one of the largest known deposits of high grade bauxite augurs well for the future settlement of that sparsely populated area.

"Bulk loading of sugar has commenced at Mackay. The saving in cost of production which will result from this and from proposed similar installations at Lucinda Point, Bundaberg and Townsville will do much to meet the ever rising costs in an industry which is so important in our economy.

"Receipts of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the year ended 30 June, 1957, were £85,158,100. Expenditure totalled £85,142,870, the resultant surplus being £15,230. When the Budget was brought down it was anticipated that there would be a surplus of £15,153.

"The stated Consolidated Revenue surplus of £15,230 should, however, be considered in the light of the fact that, in the same year, it was necessary to withdraw over £1 million from what amounted to the reserve funds of the State.

"The entire monies available to the State for loan expenditure were fully utilised. Expenditure from Loan Fund amounted to £22,976,064, an increase of £1,320,925 over last year's expenditure and £976,064 over the approved programme of £22 million. The increase was largely due to favourable weather conditions allowing uninterrupted progress on construction works throughout the State.

"Main items of expenditure were—

"Railways, £5,353,960; Public Buildings, Schools, etc., £3,004,741; Construction Works under the control of the Co-ordinator-General, £2,451,892; Irrigation and Water Supply, £2,337,587; and advances to Local Bodies and Hospitals Boards, £4,816,136.

"A record volume of wool (798,906 bales) was sold during the 1956-57 season; it returned £83½ million, the second highest figure on record. The outturn of beef cattle was high, but export sales were made at a lower price level than in the previous year.

"Raw sugar production from the 1956 crop was 1,171,500 tons, 36,000 tons higher than from the 1955 crop, and realised £54½ million.

"A record planting of tobacco (7,265 acres) was made in 1956 and a record yield of about 4½ million lb. was obtained.

"Provision of funds for building a cool storage research station at Hamilton opens the way for wider investigations of problems of fruit and vegetable storage, transport and processing.

"During the year ended 30 June, 1957, 63 blocks of good quality grazing and mixed farming lands with an area of 648,695 acres were made available for new settlement.

"Resumptions from four pastoral holdings for closer settlement, totalling 277,040 acres, were determined by the Land Court in pursuance of Section 146 of the Land Acts.

"In the sphere of land administration, my Advisers propose to effect many needed reforms, the foundation of which will be closer settlement, based on adequate living areas.

"Legislation will be introduced as soon as possible to do away with the present restrictive policy whereby existing and prospective settlers and holders of town and suburban allotments from the Government are debarred from securing land on free-holding tenures of any kind.

"Purchases of suitable freehold or leasehold property made for the purpose of closer settlement or soldier settlement will henceforth be made on just acquisition terms.

"My Advisers also propose an immediate resumption of soldier settlement and, for this purpose, will enter into prompt negotiations with the Commonwealth Government for inclusion in the Commonwealth scheme as an Agent State.

"My Advisers have surveyed housing needs and, on the most recent advices available, the housing shortage in this State can be stated as Metropolitan, 4,738, and Country, 1,807, a total of 6,545 homes.

"In the year just completed, dwellings constructed through the Queensland Housing Commission totalled 1,912, made up of Metropolitan, 1,255, and Country, 657.

"My Advisers are not content to regard the Commission as the sole, or even the dominating, factor in meeting the housing needs of the people. Every avenue of home construction and finance will be explored in order to contribute to a greater total performance. Building societies, insurance companies, and other sources of finance will be encouraged to share in this task alongside all the available resources of the State Housing Commission.

"Whilst my Advisers recognise an enduring need for rental homes, they place greater emphasis on home ownership as a cardinal feature of the social structure they seek to encourage. Accordingly, home ownership will feature prominently in Commission activity, and dominantly in the supplemental sources to which I have previously referred. Still further, Commission tenants will be encouraged either to purchase the houses which they are occupying or, by purchasing a new home, built to their selected design, free their existing houses for occupation by the waiting applicants.

"It is unfortunate that a not inconsiderable portion of the Commission funds will be diverted from new construction to the corrective treatment and repair of the houses at Zillmere where extensive attack of the imported softwoods by a European borer has necessitated both preventive fumigation and repair of damaged timbers. This work will be carried out with expedition, and provides another chapter in adversity for this ill-fated venture.

"My advisers are determined to press home building activity to the point where there is a full utilisation of all available resources of skilled manpower and materials. They reject a society in which homeless or badly housed families live side by side with unemployed tradesmen and idle sawmills.

"Almost £1,300,000 was spent in the last financial year in providing for the future timber needs of the State. An additional 5,300 acres of plantations were established, bringing the total area to 78,000 acres. The Forestry Department aims to plant a minimum area of 5,000 acres yearly towards the ultimate goal of 200,000 acres, which is the estimated minimum area required to meet the State's softwood needs of the future.

"Total expenditure on electrical development throughout the State during the past year amounted to £12½ million.

"The interconnecting transmission line from Tully Falls, linking the Cairns and Townsville Regions with electricity will be supplying hydro-electric power to Townsville in the near future.

"Twenty-nine centres have now been supplied with electricity under the small townships scheme, mainly in Western Queensland. Only a few small communities in that part of the State now remain without electricity supplies.

"During the past year the efforts of the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission were directed chiefly to construction of the Mareeba-Dimbulah Irrigation Project.

"The works have now reached a stage where it is expected that the Tinaroo Falls Dam will be storing water by the end of 1957, and that it will be completed in 1959.

"Concurrently with the erection of the dam, work is proceeding on channel construction to permit use of the water as soon as possible after storage is available.

"Gross value of factory output has advanced by no less than £15.55 millions to a new record of £371.64 millions. There are now 5,378 factories in Queensland employing approximately 103,000 workers.

"In Southern Queensland the preliminaries associated with the establishment of a building board mill at Ebbw Vale have been completed. The Petrie paper board mill, a major project, will commence production later in this year.

"Industrial developments associated with the mining industry in the Northern part of the State again dominated development of the State as a whole.

"Good progress was made with the construction of the town and plant of Mary Kathleen Uranium Ltd. near Cloncurry and the plant is expected to commence production early in 1959.

"The significant discoveries of additional reserves of copper and lead-zinc ore bodies by Mount Isa Mines Ltd. and the huge developmental programme envisaged by that company as well as important mineral discoveries in the Cloncurry field by other exploration companies presage a very bright future for the North-western part of the State.

"The Government is fully aware of the tremendous part the mining industry has played in the past and will play in the future development of this State, and intends to give every practicable encouragement to mineral exploration and mining development which will promote further development of Queensland.

"Value of Queensland's mineral production for the year ended December 31, 1956, amounted to more than £37 million—an increase of more than £5,800,000 over that of the previous year.

"The Railway Department has pursued a policy of progressively strengthening its resources of locomotive power and rolling stock, the progressive dieselisation of locomotives being the main theme. Forty-four diesel-electric locomotives are now in service. The Department has allotted these locomotives to the working of mail train services, northbound fast freight services and the haulage of trains generally on the Toowoomba-Brisbane section on which two mountain ranges have to be negotiated, and between Brisbane and Rockhampton, where there is a heavy concentration of traffic.

"In 1956-57, the high level dual-purpose bridge over the Burdekin River, built by the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works' Department, was completed. A two-span steel and concrete bridge over the Brisbane River at Indooroopilly should be completed by the end of the present calendar year. A contract was let to Electric Power Transmission Pty. Ltd. for the provision of a £276,000 high-level bridge over the Haughton River near Giru.

"The new £4½ million workshops project at Redbank is taking shape, whilst nearby the Bulk Store and Reclamation Depot should be occupied in October of this year.

"During the year, £715,000 was spent in furthering work on the suburban quadruplication scheme to overcome traffic bottlenecks.

"The tourist industry is taking an increasingly important part in the economics of Queensland. Queensland is now in a position

to offer first-class accommodation to overseas and interstate tourists at Brisbane, Toowoomba, the North and South Coast, Hayman Island, Cairns and elsewhere.

"The Queensland Government Tourist Bureau over-the-counter receipts for the year 1956-57 were £1,302,408, which was a record.

"Other countries, less blessed by nature than Queensland, have increased their national income greatly by the tourist industry, and the new Government considers that, with proper development, our State can benefit considerably in the next few years, and it will attach major importance to this valuable means of attracting outside capital to the State.

"The Government will give its whole-hearted support to a vigorous immigration policy. The State Migration Office is concerned primarily with the nomination and settlement of British migrants, although it also renders settlement assistance to non-British migrants in Queensland.

"The number of Personal Nominations lodged with the State Migration Office in 1957, already exceeds the total for any year of the post-war period with the exception of 1951. The record 1951 total probably will be exceeded before the end of the year.

"The Government will continue to nominate British migrants under the various Queensland Government Group Nomination schemes, besides giving its full support to the Commonwealth Government "Bring Out a Briton" campaign.

"A progressive policy of port development is being adopted. Work being undertaken includes the provision of new wharves and facilities, the installation of improved navigation aids and the deepening of dredged channels.

"Work is in hand on the new deep-water port at Bundaberg.

"The proposal to mine and treat bauxite in Cape York Peninsula involves the provision of a port on the Gulf of Carpentaria and a survey of potential sites is now under way.

"The discoveries of new grounds for trawling for prawns and scallops off the Queensland coast is of real significance, and the Commonwealth Division of Fisheries is now carrying out a survey of the prawn resources of the Queensland coast.

"The dimensions of the prawning grounds are not yet known, but already there is sufficient to indicate the possibility of a substantial overseas market—particularly a dollar-earning market—being established.

"On the Coastal Highway between Brisbane and Cairns, further works have been carried out towards the provision of a continuous bitumen surfaced roadway on this important route.

"Where traffic density is heavy, four lane pavements are being provided. On the Pacific Highway, the length of such roadway has been increased, and on the Brisbane-Toowoomba road, work is in progress on a deviation which will divert through traffic from the congested streets of Ipswich.

"Construction of a gravel road from Cloncurry to the uranium deposit at Mary Kathleen is nearing completion. Bitumen surfacing of this road is proposed as soon as the gravel has been thoroughly compacted by traffic.

"My Advisers intend, during the life of this Parliament, to progressively attack the task of bitumen sealing the uncompleted portions of the coastal highway to Cairns, and the construction of all-weather roads on the main arterial routes linking the coast with the western and distant parts of the State.

"It is anticipated that enrolments in State Primary Schools will reach 200,000 during the next year.

"The scheme of teacher recruitment has enlisted greater numbers of young people for training as teachers than at any previous period in the history of the State. Junior Teacher Scholarship-holders preparing for the Senior Public Examination in Secondary Schools number some 1,400 and, in addition, some 1,100 students are in training at the Teachers' College.

"In the field of the education of handicapped children, a new Opportunity School will be opened in Townsville in the immediate future.

"Clinical examination of handicapped children by Departmental Officers, both prior to their admission to school and during their school careers, is permitting more efficient use of special schools and special courses.

"The Conservatorium of Music already has attracted a promising number of students. Courses are offered both for the professional and the amateur student, facilities being available to students taking single studies over a wide range of subjects. The Diploma awarded from the Conservatorium is intended as a professional qualification of the highest order.

"My Advisers recognise the urgent need for improved facilities for teacher training and for the restoration of the two-year training period. To meet this need, a Teachers' College will be commenced at Kedron and preliminary investigations will be instituted into the erection at St. Lucia of a second college, preferably with boarding accommodation for country students.

"An Education Week is planned for 1958. Through this agency, the new Government aims to establish closer relations between the school and the home and to emphasise the importance of education in a democratic community.

“Technical education continues to expand to meet the needs of the industrial and scientific age in which we live. During the last year, over £1 million was spent on the provision of technical facilities. In addition, modern, well-equipped workshops were opened at Cairns, Bundaberg and Brisbane.

“Of the total expenditure of slightly more than £3½ million by the Department of Public Works on buildings during 1956-57, more than £2 million was spent on educational buildings.

“It will be the objective of the new Government to completely relieve overcrowding in Mental Hospitals within the shortest possible time.

“The brevity of the period since my Advisers assumed office prevents their furnishing a full legislative programme for consideration during the Session in 1957. Parliament will, however, be asked to resume its labours early in the New Year for a longer period than has been customary, when the main legislative programme of my Advisers will be brought forward.

“During the current Session, you will be invited to give consideration to the following, among other measures:—

A Bill to amend the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Acts, 1932 to 1955, in certain particulars.

A Bill to amend the University of Queensland Acts, 1909 to 1956, in certain particulars.

A Bill to amend the Liquor Acts, 1912 to 1954, in certain particulars.

A Bill to amend the Law Relating to Coroners, and for other purposes.

A Bill to amend the Local Bodies' Loans Guarantee Acts, 1923 to 1936, in certain particulars.

A Bill to amend the Sugar Experiment Stations Acts, 1900 to 1954, in certain particulars.

“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. Speaker left the chair at 12.25 p.m. and resumed it at 2.30 p.m.

COMMISSION TO ADMINISTER OATH.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to inform the House that His Excellency the Administrator has been pleased to issue a commission under the public seal of the State empowering me to administer the oath or affirmation of allegiance to such members as might hereafter present themselves to be sworn, which I now ask the Clerk to read to the House.

Commission thereupon read by the Clerk.

MEMBER SWORN.

MR. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN.

Mr. Johannes Bjelke-Petersen, having taken the oath of allegiance and subscribed the roll, took his seat as member for the electoral district of Barambah.

PANEL OF TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN.

Mr. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the requirements of Standing Order No. 13, I nominate the following members to form the panel of Temporary Chairmen for the present session:—

William Edward Baxter, Esquire, Member for the electoral district of Norman;

Alexander Tattenhall Dewar, Esquire, Member for the electoral district of Chermerside;

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

David Alan Low, Esquire, Member for the electoral district of Cooroora;

David Eric Nicholson, Esquire, Member for the electoral district of Murrumba.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (2.33 p.m.): I desire to inform the House that on Monday, 12 August, 1957, His Excellency the Administrator of the Government—

(a) accepted the resignation tendered by—

The Honourable V. C. Gair as Vice-President and member of the Executive Council of Queensland;

(b) accepted the resignations tendered by—

The Honourable Edward Joseph Walsh,
The Honourable Harold Henry Collins,
The Honourable Arthur Jones,
The Honourable William Matthew Moore,

The Honourable William Power,
The Honourable Paul Jerome Remigius Hilton,

The Honourable Colin George McCathie,

The Honourable Leslie Frank Diplock, and

The Honourable Thomas Moores as members of the Executive Council of Queensland;

(c) accepted the resignations tendered by—
The Honourable Vincent Clair Gair as Premier and Chief Secretary of Queensland.

The Hon. Edward Joseph Walsh as Treasurer of Queensland.

The Hon. Harold Henry Collins as Secretary for Agriculture and Stock of Queensland.

The Hon. Arthur Jones as Secretary for Labour and Industry of Queensland.

The Hon. William Matthew Moore as Secretary for Health and Home Affairs of Queensland.

The Hon. William Power as Attorney-General of Queensland.

The Hon. Paul Jerome Remigius Hilton as Secretary for Public Lands and Irrigation of Queensland.

The Hon. Colin George McCathie as Secretary for Public Works, Housing and Immigration of Queensland.

The Hon. Leslie Frank Diplock as Secretary for Public Instruction of Queensland; and

The Hon. Thomas Moores as Minister for Transport of Queensland.

(d) appointed

George Francis Reuben Nicklin, Esquire, to be a Member and the Vice-President of the Executive Council of Queensland; and

Kenneth James Morris, Esquire,

Jack Charles Allan Pizzey, Esquire, B.A., Dip.Ed.,

Alan Whiteside Munro, Esquire,

Thomas Alfred Hiley, Esquire,

Ernest Evans, Esquire,

Adolf Gustave Muller, Esquire,

Henry Winston Noble, Esquire, M.B., B.S.,

Otto Ottosen Madsen, Esquire,

James Alfred Heading, Esquire, C.M.G.,

Gordon William Wesley Chalk, Esquire,

to be Members of the Executive Council of Queensland.

(e) appointed

The Hon. George Francis Reuben Nicklin to be Premier and Chief Secretary of Queensland;

The Hon. Kenneth James Morris to be Minister for Labour and Industry of Queensland;

The Hon. Jack Charles Allan Pizzey, B.A., Dip.Ed., to be Minister for Education of Queensland.

The Hon. Alan Whiteside Munro to be Attorney-General of Queensland;

The Hon. Thomas Alfred Hiley to be Treasurer and Minister for Housing of Queensland;

The Hon. Ernest Evans to be Minister for Development, Mines and Main Roads of Queensland;

The Hon. Adolf Gustave Muller to be Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation of Queensland;

The Hon. Henry Winston Noble, M.B., B.S., to be Minister for Health and Home Affairs of Queensland;

The Hon. Otto Ottosen Madsen to be Minister for Agriculture and Stock of Queensland;

The Hon. James Alfred Heading, C.M.G., to be Minister for Public Works and Local Government of Queensland; and

The Hon. Gordon William Wesley Chalk to be Minister for Transport of Queensland.

I now lay upon the table of the House a copy of the "Queensland Government Gazette Extraordinary" dated 12 August, 1957, containing notification of the above.

Whereupon the hon. gentleman laid the "Government Gazette Extraordinary" upon the table.

I also wish to inform the House that the hon. member for Whitsunday, Mr. L. H. S. Roberts, has been appointed Government Whip and the hon. member for Sherwood, Mr. J. D. Herbert, Secretary of the Government Party.

LEADERSHIP OF OPPOSITION.

RESCISSION OF RESOLUTION.

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (2.37 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That the Resolution passed by the then Legislative Assembly on the eleventh day of June, one thousand nine hundred and fifty-seven, with respect to the offices of Leader of the Opposition, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Opposition Whip and Opposition Secretary shall be and is hereby rescinded."

The motion has for its object the repeal of a Resolution moved by myself and passed by the preceding Legislative Assembly on 11 June last. I do not wish to recapitulate in detail the reasons for the Resolution of 11 June last. I think it is sufficient to say that I moved it because I considered that the then Speaker erred in his application of Standing Order 333 to a question which had arisen concerning Opposition offices in the then Assembly.

Necessarily, having regard to the issues involved, and the action taken in the matter by the then Speaker, the Resolution was framed in very wide terms. As it cannot possibly be applied to this new House or conceivably to any future Assembly, it is, I think, expedient to rescind it and I move accordingly.

Motion (Mr. Nicklin) agreed to.

LEADER OF OPPOSITION.

Mr. WOOD (North Toowoomba—Leader of the Opposition) (2.40 p.m.): I desire to inform the House that I have been elected Leader of the Australian Labour Party, the hon. member for Kedron (Mr. E. G. Lloyd), Deputy Leader, the hon. member for Hinchinbrook (Mr. C. G. Jesson), Whip, and the hon. member for Bremer (Mr. J. Donald), Secretary.

LEADER OF QUEENSLAND LABOUR PARTY.

Mr. GAIR (South Brisbane) (2.41 p.m.): I desire to inform the House that I have been elected Leader of the Queensland Labour Party, the hon. member for Bundaberg (Mr. E. J. Walsh), Deputy Leader, the hon. member for Condamine (Mr. L. F. Diplock), Secretary, and the hon. member for Rockhampton (Mr. H. R. Gardner), Whip.

DEATH OF HON. G. H. DEVRIES.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to inform the House that I have received from the Registrar-General a certified copy of the registration of the death, on 17 July, 1957, of the Hon. George Henry Devries, who at that time was Secretary for Mines and member for the electoral district of Gregory.

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE.

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (2.42 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 George Henry Devries, who was Secretary for Mines and member for the electoral district of Gregory.

2. That Mr. Speaker be requested to convey 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.”

I am sure all hon. members were deeply grieved at the sudden death, on 13 July, of the former Secretary for Mines, Mr. George Devries. We deeply regret his death and we extend our deepest sympathy to his relatives in their sad loss.

Mr. Devries died unexpectedly from a heart attack whilst he was engaged in the electoral campaign in the electorate of Gregory.

We all remember him as an excellent gentleman, a man of very high principle, one admired by his political friends and opponents alike. He carried out his Parliamentary and Ministerial duties zealously, with credit to himself and the high office that he held.

He entered Parliament as member for Gregory in March, 1941, and he retained the confidence of his constituents until his death. During the 16 years of service that he gave to the State, Mr. Devries served for half that time as a Cabinet Minister. He became Attorney-General in June, 1949, was appointed Secretary for Public Instruction in 1950, and assumed the Mines portfolio last year.

Mr. Devries was born in Manchester, was apprenticed as a midshipman at the age of 15, and served four years at sea. He then came to Australia to join his parents on the land at Bushley, near Rockhampton. He had a wide experience in the agricultural and pastoral industries of the State.

During World War I he served with the 15th Battalion in France and Belgium; he had an excellent record as a soldier in that well-known Queensland battalion. He leaves a widow, two daughters and two sons.

When I heard of his death I thought not only of his good personal qualities but also of his war service, and I felt glad that he had died still adhering to those high principles for which he had always fought.

Mr. WOOD (North Toowoomba—Leader of the Opposition) (2.45 p.m.): I associate the members of the Opposition with this motion. We have very pleasant recollections of many happy hours spent in the kindly, warm and good-hearted company of the late George Devries. He was a friend to most of us, an enemy to none. And regardless of political affiliations, all hon. members liked and respected him.

He had a long association with the trade union movement, he was a member of that great organisation the Australian Workers' Union. His association with working people in the outback parts of the State in that organisation fully qualified him to take his place as a member of the Parliamentary Labour Party.

On the executive side, my principal recollections are of his work as Secretary for Public Instruction. He had to overcome many difficulties but, he was, in my opinion, one of the most successful Secretaries for Public Instruction that the State has ever had. He was outstanding in his affection for children and it was reciprocated by them. We deeply regret his passing and we extend our sincere sympathy to his relatives.

Mr. GAIR (South Brisbane) (2.48 p.m.): I join with the previous speakers in expressing sympathy to the widow and family of the late George Henry Devries. As most of us know, he dedicated his life to the industrial and political wellbeing of the State. He came into prominence in 1929 when he was appointed Secretary of the western district of the Australian Workers' Union. In that capacity he worked zealously for 12 years for his fellow workers and members of his union and he earned the reputation of being a formidable foe of the Communists both in and outside the union.

He won a reputation for his charity and philanthropy, particularly during the depression years of the late '20s and early '30s. He made many friends among those who appreciated his help in those wretched years and they were grateful to him. Hence, when he decided to enter Parliament he had no difficulty in winning the Gregory seat. I am sure that if he had been spared he would have continued to hold it after the recent

election. His earnestness of purpose and conscientiousness were well known and he displayed those qualities and characteristics as a Minister of the Government. I was a member of the Executive Council with him for a number of years and I always found him loyal and ready to serve the Government and the people. He held three portfolios, Attorney-General, Secretary for Public Instruction, and Secretary for Mines. He will be remembered most by his association with the Department of Public Instruction because he was so keen about the education of children. During his regime there was a marked growth in school transport services in the country areas for he was cognisant of the hardships that children in the back blocks suffered through lack of transport facilities.

It is a matter of great regret that during the recent election campaign the then hon. member for Toowoomba saw fit to say that I had demanded the resignation of George Devries as a member of the Executive Council. In fairness to the late Mr. Devries and to myself I take the opportunity to deny that I did it. At no time did I seek the resignation of Mr. Devries—or for that matter, any other Minister. Hon. members will understand that had I done so it would have had to be forthcoming.

It is true that we differed on the closure of a provincial school at Elaroo. I did not agree with what he did and I exercised my right to have the school re-opened.

I was associated with Mr. Devries in the Executive Council and as a fellow member of the Government party, and I had an opportunity of knowing his true worth and value, his loyalties, ideals, and way of life. He rendered faithful service to his electorate and passed away amongst the people whom he so ably represented.

Before his departure to enter upon the campaign in Gregory and other electorates in which he was to assist he was confident of his own success and the success of the Queensland Labour Party candidates in contiguous electorates.

I am proud to have been associated with him. He was a real man. Although he knew he was not well physically, he embarked on an election campaign in the interests of his State, to further the ideals for which he fought for many years. Until 13 July he fought vigorously in the defence of our parliamentary system of Government when my party took a stand on a major issue. There was never any question at any stage where Mr. Devries stood.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (2.54 p.m.): I join with other hon. members in expressing my sympathy to Mr. Devries's widow and children. In the years that I knew George Devries in this Chamber I formed a very great liking for him because he was essentially a man of great humanity and simple honesty, attributes seldom found in men today. He never forgot the class from which he sprang; he never forgot the

people or the needs of the people who first sent him to Parliament. If I might use the term in a most complimentary sense he remained "a rough diamond" to the end. It was as Secretary for Public Instruction that I think he demonstrated his real worth. We have seen many Ministers come and go. We have seen some Ministers who, if I may use this term, were more or less rubber stamps for the heads of their departments. Some ministers exercised some control over their departments and others really controlled their departments. George Devries certainly was one of the latter. He did that as Secretary for Public Instruction. His decisions were based on his own observations, his own fund of common sense and worldly knowledge. I have a particularly vivid recollection of George Devries as Secretary for Public Instruction insofar as a favorable decision he gave on a couple of matters in my own electorate are concerned. He came to the electorate and said in effect, "I am the Secretary for Public Instruction. I am responsible for anything that is done or is not done and I am going to decide to do so-and-so in regard to these matters." I never forgot him for that. I gave him full credit for individuality and courage.

During his travels abroad as a Minister he set a very commendable example. Very often we have seen Ministers travelling round with an entourage, frequently with a private secretary and the head of the department, but George Devries frequently travelled round by himself—without even a private secretary. I remember on one occasion when he was in the far North-west of Queensland, how at considerable inconvenience to himself he and the Regional Director of Education and the local inspector of schools travelled for hundreds of miles at night in little railway motor section cars in order to visit outlying schools in the area. I do not know of any other Minister who has ridden through the night in a section car in order to get back to the central starting point after visiting the farflung country schools during the day. I was shocked and stunned when I heard that he had passed away. I am not going to be a hypocrite and say that I have had any tears to shed at the passing of some members of Parliament, rather have I been elated to hear of their passing. But I was deeply shocked and profoundly moved to hear of the sudden passing of George Devries. He was a man whom this Parliament and this State will sadly miss.

Motion (Mr. Nicklin) agreed to, hon. members standing in silence.

DEATH OF MR. J. LARCOMBE.

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE.

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (2.59 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 James

Larcombe, Esquire, a former Member of the Parliament of Queensland and Minister of the Crown.

(2) That Mr. Speaker be requested to convey to the relatives 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.'

I am sure all hon. members learned with great regret of the passing on 20 June last of a veteran Labour politician in the person of the late Mr. James Larcombe.

Jimmy, as he was affectionately called by those who knew him well and valued his friendship, lived to the good age of 73 years. He was a colourful figure in Queensland politics for the greater part of the past half-century. He had a great parliamentary record of which any hon. member could be proud.

He entered Parliament on 27 April, 1912, as member for Keppel and was Father of the House when he retired before the 1956 elections.

He represented Keppel until 21 May, 1929, and for the last 10 years of that period held Cabinet rank. He lost his seat in the 1929 election, but was returned to Parliament in 1932 as member for Rockhampton and re-entered the Cabinet in 1939. In all he held Cabinet rank for almost 23 years, filling the positions of Minister without portfolio on two occasions and the portfolios of Public Works, Railways, Mines, Attorney-General, Transport and Treasurer. There are not too many who enter this Parliament who achieve the great parliamentary record of the late James Larcombe during his long service in this House.

We remember him as a vigorous debater, a man who very carefully prepared the material he used in his speeches, a man who under fire never lost his temper and at all times maintained an attitude of good humour during the most heated debates.

In addition to being a parliamentarian with a wonderful record, Mr. Larcombe in his younger days was an excellent athlete. In his youth he represented Rockhampton at Rugby Union football, and later became president of the Rockhampton Rugby League and patron of the Queensland Rugby League. He helped to found the Australian Rugby League Board of Control. We all know his keenness right to the end for the game of football that he did so much to foster in this State.

He was an authority on the growth of the Labour Movement and in 1926 wrote a history of Labour administration entitled, "Ten Years of Labour Government."

He was also an authority on the works of the poet Burns, whom he admired very much and from whose works he often quoted passages during the course of debates in this Chamber.

The late Mr. Larcombe was an able administrator, a formidable debater, and a warm and very approachable person. His valuable service to the State of Queensland will long be remembered not only by those who had the privilege of being associated with him in this Parliament but also by his many hundreds of friends throughout the State.

I am sure all hon. members will join with me in extending to the relatives of the late Mr. Larcombe our deepest sympathy in their sad and great loss.

Mr. WOOD (North Toowoomba—Leader of the Opposition) (3.4 p.m.): I join with the Premier in expressing our deepest regret at the loss of one of the great Labour stalwarts of the Commonwealth.

As the Premier quite rightly pointed out, the late Jimmy Larcombe had three great loves, first, his love for the Labour Movement, second, love of literature, particularly that of Bobby Burns, and, third, good sport and in particular Rugby League football, but his outstanding characteristic was loyalty. I have no knowledge in my personal or political experience of any man with loyalty more intensely developed than it was in Jimmy Larcombe. At no time did he deviate from the great ideal of loyalty that meant so much to him. He was undoubtedly an authority on the activities of the Labour movement. His whole life was wrapped up in it and he contributed very greatly to the movement of which he was so proud. Although small in stature he was an extremely formidable debater, and as the Premier said, he was vigorous and forthright but never nasty. He was particularly at home in dealing with the period 1929-1932 when there was so much hardship in the land. We have heard him deliver extremely forthright speeches on the hardships of those days.

It was my pleasure to hear his wise comments on the games of Rugby League football that we watched up to just before he died. He was intensely interested in the game that he helped so much to develop in the State.

He always helped new members in this Assembly. Three or four days ago when I was cleaning out a desk I formerly occupied I came across some notes written by the late James Larcombe for the use of the late Walter Ingram who represented the electorate of Keppel. He had set out the ideals that he thought a new member of this Assembly should follow, and he had given some extremely valuable hints concerning representation not only on behalf of the people of the State but also of his electorate. We will all miss the late Mr. Larcombe. The Labour movement has produced many great men but few have lived up to its ideals as the late gentleman did.

Mr. GAIR (South Brisbane) (3.8 p.m.): I, too, express my sympathy to the relatives of the late James Larcombe. I suppose I

can claim to have known him longer than most members of this Assembly. As a native of Rockhampton, and one interested in politics at an early age, I used to sit on vacant allotments at Rockhampton during election campaigns and listen to the late James Larcombe. I knew him and his brothers as footballers. I have always enjoyed the friendship of the late Jimmy Larcombe. He was a prolific reader and a great student of more subjects than politics. He had a very ordinary education but he improved himself considerably by reading and study and he never ceased until his death. He wrote a great deal of valuable material—much of which is an excellent record that will increase in value as the years go by. He was loyal to the fingertips to the Labour Party and a great fighter for the principles for which he stood.

Queensland is the poorer because of the death of the late James Larcombe, but at least it can be said with truth that he has left an indelible monument by his work, his service, and his unselfish discharge of the positions that he occupied in the political life of this State.

Mr. GARDNER (Rockhampton) (3.11 p.m.): As one who took the place of the late James Larcombe in Parliament after he retired in 1956, I should like to join with previous speakers in saying that Queensland lost a gallant son when it lost Jim Larcombe. He set an example that would be very hard for most men to follow. He devoted a lifetime to the ideals in which he believed, and he made many personal sacrifices in the interests of the Labour Movement. The late Jim Larcombe was widely read; he was a leading authority on Robert Burns and a keen student of the Australian poet, Henry Lawson.

Jim Larcombe has left many monuments to his work in Rockhampton, and we of that city can remember his pioneering of Labour's ideals as far back as the horse-and-buggy days. His sincerity could be excelled by no man. He gave his life to the Labour Movement on both its political and industrial sides. He also made many personal sacrifices for the betterment of mankind.

Motion (Mr. Nicklin) agreed to, hon. members standing in silence.

PAPERS.

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

Report of the Public Accountants Registration Board of Queensland for the year 1956-1957.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Proclamations under the Public Works Land Resumption Acts, 1906 to 1955 and the State Development and Public Works Organisation Acts, 1938 to 1954.

Order in Council under the State Development and Public Works Organisation Acts, 1938 to 1954 and the Tully Falls Hydro-Electric Project Act of 1950.

Orders in Council under the Labour and Industry Acts, 1946 to 1952.

Regulations under the Traffic Acts, 1949 to 1957.

Orders in Council under the Traffic Acts, 1949 to 1957.

Regulations under the Apprentices and Minors Acts, 1929 to 1954.

Ordinances under the City of Brisbane Acts, 1924 to 1954.

Regulations under the Local Government Acts, 1936 to 1957.

Proclamation under the Diseases in Plants Acts, 1929 to 1948.

Order in Council under the Abattoirs Acts, 1930 to 1949.

Order in Council under the Banana Industry Protection Acts, 1929 to 1937.

Order in Council under the Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Acts, 1926 to 1957.

Regulations under the Agricultural Standards Act of 1952.

Regulations under the Dairy Produce Acts, 1920 to 1952.

Regulations under the Fruit Marketing Organisation Acts, 1923 to 1956.

Regulations under the Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Acts, 1926 to 1957.

Regulations under the Slaughtering Act of 1951.

Orders in Council under the State Electricity Commission Acts, 1937 to 1954.

Orders in Council under the Southern Electric Authority of Queensland Acts, 1952 to 1954.

Report of the Queensland Coal Board for the year 1956-1957.

Regulations under the Nurses and Masseurs Registration Acts, 1928 to 1948.

By-laws Nos. 727 to 734 inclusive under the Railways Acts, 1914 to 1955.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

MR. SPEAKER'S RULING.

Mr. BAXTER (Norman) having given notice of motions for Private Members' Day—

Mr. SPEAKER: I would point out to the hon. member for Norman that under the Standing Orders I can take only one Notice of Motion from him at a time; I cannot take two consecutively. His second Notice of Motion will have to give precedence to Notices of Motion by other members.

ADMINISTRATOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to report that His Excellency the Administrator this day delivered to Parliament an Opening Speech

of which, for greater accuracy, I have obtained a copy. I presume hon. members will take the Speech as read?

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

OPENING DAY.

Mr. ANDERSON (Toowoomba) (3.33 p.m.), who was received with Government "Hear, hears!" said: I move—

"That the following Address be presented to the Administrator of the Government in reply to the Speech delivered by His Excellency in opening this, the first session of the Thirty-fifth Parliament of Queensland:—

"May it please Your Excellency—

"We, Her 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 I speak to the motion, I desire to tender to you, Mr. Speaker, my congratulations on your election to the important office that you now hold. It is indeed gratifying to me to know that such a distinct honour should be conferred on a friend of mine of long standing and that it should go to a person who has so ably represented one of the greatest agricultural districts in Queensland. Having enjoyed your friendship, I am well acquainted with your capacity for sound judgment, the essential fairness of your outlook, and at times your unparalleled wit. I have no doubt that you will execute the duties of your new office with distinction and dignity, and thus bring added honour to the Parliament which today honours you.

In reaffirming our loyalty to Her Most Gracious Majesty, I am fully conscious that I am a new hon. member of a new Government and like my parliamentary colleagues, will approach my responsibilities with humility and caution, but will nevertheless stand steadfast in my loyalty to the throne. I cannot help but recall the year 1954 when we in Australia were graced with the singular honour of a visit by Her Most Gracious Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. On that momentous occasion in Australian history our allegiance to the throne was never more vividly demonstrated throughout the Commonwealth.

In February next year the Queen Mother is to visit Australia. We well remember her visit to Queensland as the Duchess of York and we look forward with eagerness to the opportunity of welcoming her to our State again. We are also mindful of the fact that in 1959, during the term of office of this Government, Queensland will be celebrating its centenary. Negotiations are in train for a Royal visit to the State on that occasion, and I sincerely trust that my Government will spare no effort to make it possible.

In speaking to the motion I do so with a feeling of regret that we have recently lost the services of a very distinguished man, both in war and in peace, in the person of our Governor Sir John Lavarack. During his term as Governor of the State his record of achievement was equalled only by his military record. In each instance we owe him a great debt of gratitude. It is with sorrow that I record that ill health forced Sir John into retirement before his term expired. However, I trust that he will be long spared to enjoy a well earned rest, secure in the knowledge that he served Queensland and Australia well. To Lady Lavarack I also express the sincere thanks of my Government for her outstanding contribution to the many charitable and community services in the State, not only in taking her official place beside Sir John on so many occasions, but also in her individual effort. She has endeared herself to all with whom she came in contact. It is our sincere wish that she too will be long spared to enjoy a well-earned rest in retirement.

We are fortunate in having the services of such a distinguished and capable administrator in the person of His Honour Mr. Justice Mansfield. Might I compliment His Excellency on the manner in which he has handled the duties of his office. He too has left an indelible mark in the history of the State and his record of achievement, particularly since the termination of World War II. is very noteworthy indeed.

At this juncture it would be fitting for me to offer my congratulations to the Premier and the members of his Cabinet who have been elected to guide the destiny of this State for, I trust, many years to come. I know that they have prepared themselves well for the very important and difficult task that lies before them, but they will be secure in the knowledge that they will have the wholehearted support and co-operation of every member of the Government. Speaking for them, and on my own behalf, it is our intention to approach the task of governing this State with earnestness and humility, at all times endeavouring to avoid the pitfalls that many politicians encounter so easily in their desire to serve a narrow party interest. We are determined that the

advancement of Queensland and the well-being of all its people will be our first and paramount consideration.

As I have said, I am a new member of Parliament, but it is not necessary to hold such a position to realise that Queensland is lagging behind her sister States in many respects. Possibly this lag could be expressed simply as a lack of progress and development, brought about by various conditions that have existed within these walls in the past. I do not intend to analyse those conditions except to say that the new Government, of which I am honoured to be a member, will immediately set about eliminating any condition that might have a retarding influence on Queensland's progress and development. It will be our aim to encourage, not retard, the development of Queensland, and when offering this encouragement we shall not be unmindful of the fact that the attraction of further industries is of paramount importance.

However, in order of priority, we must first ensure that we can offer sufficient accommodation to the many people who necessarily will be attracted to this State. In this respect, it is indeed very gratifying to record that positive steps have already been taken in an effort to overcome the housing shortage. I refer of course to the Treasurer's immediate appraisal of the acute problems that exist within the Queensland Housing Commission, and his business-like approach to them. We already have evidence that his sound business capacity and judgment will undoubtedly lead us to the solution of those problems, and whilst all of them will not be rectified immediately, it is pleasing to note that an amount of £200,000 has already been provided to enable further contracts to be quickly completed. I should say that the Premier has shown sound judgment in placing housing in the very capable hands of the Treasurer, for in no other department is the need for a very close liaison with finance more necessary.

However, in our quest for greater development we must not concentrate on the city of Brisbane to the detriment of other cities and towns in Queensland. Whilst we all realise that this is by no means the aim of the Government, we are equally aware that development must take place over the whole of Queensland. And, might I ask, what State offers a greater potential for development than Queensland? No-one, not even the people of Brisbane, wants to see all the industries crowded into the capital city. Indeed, the city of Brisbane will be stronger following the development of other cities and towns and the growth of new industries simultaneously throughout the State.

Let us not, right at the beginning of this new era of government in Queensland, show any favouritism towards cities lest we be criticised—and rightly, too—for being members of a Queen Street Government or, if you like, a Ruthven Street Government.

The development of Queensland is our aim, and Queensland it will be. Take my own city of Toowoomba, for example. And I can speak with a certain amount of experience on this matter, because in my position as Mayor of Toowoomba I have been able to observe many instances where progress has been retarded through unbusinesslike and unco-operative approaches by past Governments to the problems of local authorities such as the Toowoomba City Council.

Let us examine problems presently confronting local governments like Toowoomba. I have already commended my Government for their definite and immediate approach to the housing problem. It must be appreciated, however, that hand in hand with the provision of housing, it is the function of local government to provide for the construction and maintenance of roads. Moreover, it is also its function to provide such public utilities as water, and sewerage and, at times, electricity and public transport to meet the demands of this expanding housing programme. Local government is prepared to carry out these functions as long as loan funds and other revenues are available in sufficient amounts to provide for the expenditure necessary on these capital works. Every new home erected makes additional demands on the local authorities and, I might add, the home-owner has every right to expect these provisions from local government.

I urge my Government to give urgent consideration to loan raising and the system at present employed by local authorities. An analysis of the present system shows that, whilst the Loan Council is the final authority on the amount of loan money available for raising, it also limits the rate of interest that can be paid on such loans. Under these limitations, local government bodies find it very difficult indeed to compete in a field when more attractive returns are offered to investors elsewhere. As an example, I point to the present Commonwealth Loan. It is being advertised as a 4 per cent. loan issued at £95 4s. and repayable in 1959. The following table shows the effective return from various taxable incomes after allowing for the special rebate on the Commonwealth Loan.

Taxable Incomes	Returns. Per cent.
1,000	5.1
2,000	5.5
5,000	5.9
10,000	6.3
AND THE FIVE PER CENT. LOAN.	
1,000	5.6
2,000	5.8
5,000	6.1

A glance at these figures is sufficient to prove that, whilst local governments have an interest rate fixed at £5 7s. 6d. per cent to £5 10s. per cent., they cannot hope to achieve anything spectacular in their loan-raising efforts. The absence of a tax rebate puts them at a very severe disadvantage. You will know

from your own experience, Mr. Speaker, that it is not practicable to compete on such terms. If a more equal basis for loan raisings were approved, we should not have the spectacle of Lord Mayors, Mayors, Shire Chairmen and others going hat in hand to lending authorities trying to raise loans under less attractive terms in an endeavour to provide sufficient finance to complete urgent projects. Apart from that, travelling costs and the high cost of advertising the large number of loans would also be avoided, and that would represent a big saving to local authorities.

Whilst still developing the problems confronting local governments, let us examine the Commonwealth Aid Roads Grant to local authorities. A very acceptable amount of money is made available for road construction and the provision of road-making plant under the present formula for the allocation of this fund. However, under the present system grants from the fund are made to Government instrumentalities. I suggest that consideration be given to allocating a proportion of the grant direct to local authorities. Might I suggest that a pool of loans funds be established for semi-governmental and local authorities projects, particularly for cases where delayed delivery of plant or materials is in evidence?

Let me again give an example of this problem as it confronts Toowoomba at the present time. We have initiated a long-term plan to provide Toowoomba with sufficient water in years to come and a start has already been made on the Perseverance Dam project. However, under the present system we must have loan funds available before orders can be placed for the delivery of necessary piping for reticulation. Even though there is a delivery delay of anything up to two years with these pipes, the Toowoomba City Council is not permitted to place the order until sufficient loan funds are available. Surely such a state of affairs should not be permitted for longer than is necessary.

Hon. members will realise that councils have to borrow money for such definite projects. Once the money is raised for a specific project it cannot be spent on any other. It means that considerable sums are tied up in watertight compartments for lengthy periods to the detriment of other local government works which could be carried out without delay. Moreover, when we are successful in raising loan moneys in a field of very stiff opposition we are also faced with the problem that lending authorities generally expect us to take up the loans within a reasonable period otherwise they lose interest on their money. On the other hand, if a central pool of loan moneys were created the activities of local authorities would not be so restricted by long-term projects because loan moneys could be made available as equipment became available. It would also tend to expedite works.

As a precedent for this proposal I refer to what happened a few years ago concerning loans for roadmaking plant. At that time plant was not readily available. Instead of every council holding loan funds for proposed road-plant purchases approval was given for councils to incur approved commitments and the loan was made available as soon as delivery could be made. This should apply generally to the problem that now confronts local authorities throughout the State.

My reference to the City of Toowoomba is merely by way of example, but it is equally applicable to cities and towns extending from Coolangatta as far as Cairns, and again throughout the central and western portions of the State, from Cunnamulla through Central Queensland, Longreach, Winton and Mount Isa. Naturally my thoughts turn to my own city of Toowoomba and at this stage might I say that the people of Toowoomba deem it an honour that their representative should be selected to move the Address in Reply.

This is an historic occasion in the parliamentary history of Queensland. For the first time in 25 years a new Government take office. We thank the people of Queensland for their confidence in electing us in such great numbers.

We will justify that confidence by governing the State in a truly democratic way, with a constant desire to serve the great mass of the people.

I have not had any parliamentary experience and perhaps I may be forgiven if, at times, I depart from the traditional practice of parliamentary procedure. However, there are certain thoughts I should like to express for consideration by the Premier, one of which was brought to mind when I referred to democratic government.

First of all, I have been greatly impressed by the apparent need for "All Party Committees" to function under the various Ministers. I do not know whether such a practice has been previously adopted in Queensland, but with it I can visualise more democratic government. I support any move to include hon. members of the Opposition on such committees because I believe it will help the Government to bring down legislation acceptable to the people. For too long now the only function of the Opposition has been to oppose when such talented hon. members might well serve on these Committees. I humbly suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the Premier give earnest consideration to my suggestion.

Very few people have the opportunity to see Parliament as an institution, to see it function, and to have the opportunity of seeing and meeting men in public life. They occasionally read their speeches and see their photographs in the Press, but they never have an opportunity of meeting them or get-

ting to know them. Many hon. members never see Queensland and never get to know the State.

Many hon. members have travelled widely and really know this State. They are well acquainted with local problems in far-away districts, but they are insufficient in number to support a tolerant and sympathetic understanding of them with a view to eliminating them. Is this really in the best interests of the people of Queensland? I do not think so. There are a number of methods by which it could be overcome, and to which I think a wise Government should give careful consideration. One is to bring public men under the observation of the people by holding Cabinet meetings in various centres. The people would have a greater opportunity of observing the men who guide the destiny of Queensland. Much is said about democracy being on trial but democracy can function best when the people are given greater opportunities of observing the workings of Parliament, and the members of Parliament actually engaged in the government of their State. Such a move would be of great value to democracy. It would tend to arrest the growing desire for New States. We well remember a controversy years ago regarding a referendum, the effect of which could have brought about a unification of government in Australia. I recall the late Mr. E. M. Hanlon's remarks when he referred to the inadvisability of one Government's administering every State. He said, "The Trouble with the Government in Canberra is that every time they look to the North they seem to get the sun in their eyes." There are some northern people who say the same thing about Brisbane. It may well be that by taking the Government to the North on occasions we will consolidate a single Queensland outlook and so help the people of the North to realise that, after all, this Government is their Government just as they are the Government of the people in southern Queensland. I commend these suggestions to the Government for their earnest consideration.

One matter that calls for urgent consideration lies in the field of education. We are well aware of the need for high schools in many cities. Apart from providing adequate playing fields, they should offer hostel accommodation for pupils from surrounding districts. I would suggest to my Government that consideration be given to hostel accommodation on a five-day week basis. There are many pupils, sons and daughters of the people who have built the great agricultural industry, and it is our duty to give them the opportunity of securing a good education. Of course, high schools could not be built in every city and town, but at least we could make hostel accommodation available in the larger centres. Again I have in mind the subnormal children's training school in Toowoomba, a project with which I have been intimately concerned. The Government should accept greater responsibility for the adequate training facilities for these children who, through no fault of their own, are

denied normal good health which so many of us enjoy. I am also conscious of the fact that there is a distinct absence in Queensland of schools which, for want of a better name, could be termed opportunity schools. Such schools could serve a very useful purpose in the community in developing backward children who are at present denied the extra time needed to teach them. When I say that they are denied the time, I hasten to point out that no blame can be attached to either the education system or the teachers themselves. These children are quite normal but, because of their slow assimilation, they sooner or later lag behind their classmates. It is obvious that a teacher cannot devote extra time to them at the expense of the progress of the other pupils. I was gratified to hear this afternoon that an opportunity school is to be established in Townsville. I trust the Minister for Education will see that opportunity schools are established at other cities throughout the State. Therefore I suggest to the Government when they are considering each phase of the education system that they do not overlook these important factors. In the quest for further development of the State we must not lose sight of the fact that one of the first considerations must be the development of our youth, who, after all, will be the citizens of tomorrow.

In the programme of health there is still need for greater facilities and I trust that in due course consideration will be given to that. The Minister for Health has already shown his very keen desire to become acquainted with local problems in all cities and towns. He has already visited Toowoomba and he has assured me that he will visit many other cities. It will become apparent to him that some provincial and country hospitals are totally inadequate to meet the demands of increased population. Many patients come from surrounding districts for hospitalisation and treatment. The hospitals are not only inadequate, but they are also outmoded. They may have served their purpose in the past, but the time has arrived to provide modern structures that will cope not only with our present needs but also with the future population. The high cost of maintaining obsolete buildings will be obviated.

In conclusion I express the hope that every hon. member who speaks in this debate will respond to the inspiration so evident in His Excellency's Opening Speech. Each has a varied background of experience but none with a monopoly of knowledge or ideas.

Parliament and the State demand that each give of his best in thought and hard work, with sympathy at all times for everybody and tolerance for our opponents.

I ask that the debates be conducted on the highest plane and with a dignity that will become a Parliament of Her Majesty. In this spirit I offer my humble contribution.

I appreciate the great kindness extended to me by my colleagues in asking me to move this motion. I value also the tolerant manner in which hon. members opposite have received my remarks. I commend the motion to the House.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. HODGES (Nash) (4.3 p.m.): It is with pleasure that I second the motion so ably and eloquently moved by the hon. member for Toowoomba.

I endorse his expressions of loyalty to Her Majesty. I suggest also, if acceptable to the State or Commonwealth Government, that an invitation should be extended to Lord Altrincham to visit this country so that we can assist him to adopt a more loyal attitude towards Her Most Gracious Majesty.

Mr. Aikens: We have enough bogdies in the place without bringing him out.

Mr. HODGES: On that score the hon. member can go back to Mundingburra.

The electorate of Nash that I represent is approximately 126 miles north of the capital. I have been honoured by the people of the Nash electorate in being elected as their representative. It has been a hard task to get Liberal representation for that electorate—its boundaries include three suburbs of the city of Maryborough, approximately 70 miles north of Gympie. The electorate contains much high and low fertile land suitable for all types of primary production but is sadly lacking in secondary industries and such Government favours as have been extended to certain other towns and cities. The electorate is of crazy design, so obvious to all, but it is hoped that in the future it will be designed according to community interest, not political considerations. As it is a primary-producing area its greatest enemy is drought. Every member of this Assembly, every worker in the State, has to realise that his job depends on the productivity of the soil. The remedy for drought is water conservation not necessarily large irrigation schemes like those in the north, but individual efforts by farmers could be subsidised by the Government and assisted by the Department of Irrigation and Water Supply. It would need help and co-operation from the Departments of Agriculture and Stock, Main Roads, Department of Irrigation, and Local Authorities. Individual efforts require the co-operation of these departments; they must learn to work in harmony with one another. Such a scheme is necessary. The loss sustained by dairymen in this district because of drought during the three months ending 30 June, 1957, amounted to approximately £90,000, apart from stock losses. That is good enough reason why any Government should seriously consider such water conservation schemes.

Employment should be stabilised through Local Government as much as possible and

migrants should be assimilated through local government bodies. They have the organisation to gainfully employ labour and developmental expenditure. Such bodies are quick to see the lag in employment where no secondary industries exist.

We in the Gympie end of the Nash electorate must have the benefit of port freight rates similar to those extended to the northern end of it. These rates are not contingent upon the establishment of a port because Toowoomba and other towns have the benefit of port rates.

I am sure that every hon. member knows that the first gold that went into the treasury of this State came from the Gympie goldfields in the Nash electorate. Being a gold-mining area most of the land tenures are Miners' Homestead leases, but the time is ripe to permit the holders to convert to freehold. Associated with these is a need for a more reasonable assessment of land valuations by the Department of the Valuer-General.

In my electorate there is a large tract of land known as the "Wallum." "Wallum" implies waste, but that is not so. Reliable authority has it that with modern agricultural science the wallum lands, if thrown open to private capital on a freehold basis, would quickly justify their existence and worth. Reforestation, too, must take its place in any plan for the development of the State.

There is definite room for improvement in Queensland's system of hospitalisation. I should like to see an open house to all doctors in Queensland so that they could follow their child and pensioner patients into every part of a public institution. I except, of course, student-training hospitals. Early and late life are both very big problems.

It is very encouraging to me—and I am sure to every Queenslander—to know that the Premier and his Deputy have displayed such vision and wisdom in establishing a portfolio to promote the development of this great State. Already actions have spoken louder than words. In view of the overseas capital invested, and being invested, in South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales at the expense of Queensland, the time will come when this type of aid coming into Australia will need to be restricted because of the drain that outgoing dividends will make on our overseas credit balances. Queensland, with its exports of wool, meat, wheat and sugar dominating the scene, has a favourable balance of exports over imports, whereas New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia have deficits. In fact, Queensland contributed 68 per cent. of Australia's overseas balances during the last 12 months. If, during the last 10 years, Queensland had encouraged industry and capital to this State and had kept pace with her sister States, we should not be in the position in which we

find ourselves today, without enough secondary industries to combat the threat from our sister States to depart from the system of uniform taxation. Uniform taxation is definitely to our advantage, but there is no wonder that New South Wales and Victoria contested its validity. They both have huge secondary industries that can bear taxation to provide subsidies for the maintenance of primary production, as is done in the United States of America. If our sister States demand the return of taxing powers, Queensland should counterclaim the right to use the surplus trade balances that she earns for Australia.

What I have said can be illustrated more clearly by bringing the matter within the circle of a family with four sons. One of the sons—Queensland—earns profits but hands them over to his three brothers—Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales—to use for the betterment of themselves and their families, to the detriment of Queensland and his family.

Until secondary industries in Queensland can do the job that they do in the United States of America, the primary export industries that I have previously mentioned, which are of great importance not only to Queensland but to the whole of Australia, must dominate the development scene. If necessary, they should receive Commonwealth support in some acceptable form.

I have listed three ways in which, in my opinion, Queensland has lagged in development over the past 10 years. The first is its inability to attract and build up sufficient population. On the figures, four States are ahead of us, Western Australia leading with an increase of 27.3 per cent. as against our 19.1 per cent. In the last five years only 8 per cent. of Australia's total intake of migrants from abroad became domiciled in Queensland.

The second is that sufficient investment capital has not been forthcoming either from local public and private investment or from an inflow of foreign capital. Large-scale public and private investment will be necessary if Queensland's enormous potentialities are to be fully exploited. Queensland has not shared very considerably in the total of foreign investments in Australia. The Queensland-British Food Corporation failure damned the State as a field for investment in similar ventures. That is something we have to live down.

The third is that Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia have seized the initiative in obtaining the establishment of new secondary industries and their associated skilled immigrant technicians. The southern States have not been backward in selling themselves or in offering facilities to entice secondary industries there. In the establishment of factories over the last 10 years, Queensland has sadly lagged behind every other mainland State, the increase being 23.6 as against 34.3 for the highest State in the

same period. Queensland's factory output, on the over-all Australian figure, has fallen back by 1.1 per cent.

As to secondary industries open to development in Queensland which could attract overseas capital, I think that, in view of the distance from the large Australian internal markets, those most suitable for further development are probably those allied to the processing of raw materials already produced in the State and whose establishment is warranted by local demand. The setting up of factories to supply the markets of South-East Asia may bear further investigation, too. Manufacturing industry seems inescapably linked with raw materials such as sugar, butter, cheese, meat, fruit, cotton, tobacco, timber and wool, many of which are processed near where they are grown. There has already been heavy capital investment in those industries and their expansion will depend on agricultural and pastoral development. Methods being tried by the Federal and Western Australian Governments with the Chase Syndicate could perhaps be tried in the Wallum area, the brigalow belt and the Channel lands. Results will depend on three things—

- (a) Making possible the freeholding of living areas within the large tracts of land (84 per cent. of the total area of the State) now held under various forms of Crown tenure;
- (b) Research into further possible land use and methods of clearing and pasture-growing; and
- (c) Adequate transport arrangements.

However, the most attractive prospects of obtaining foreign capital for secondary industries, would seem to be in the development of the rich mineral resources in the North and North-west of the State.

As long as sufficient power and adequate transport are made available American and British investors, who are attracted to the extractive industries, can perhaps be interested in the further development and processing of the proved mineral deposits in these regions. Uranium, copper, and lead offer further possibilities for processing, although treatment plants and refineries are already under construction or in operation. If cheap hydro-electric power, water, and port facilities can be provided bauxite would offer opportunities for processing the ore to separate the alumina and for the establishment of a plant to produce aluminium.

Beach sand concentrates also provide possibilities for further development. Fundamental to any expansion of secondary industry is adequate power. Rural electrification plans would need to be stepped up together with all-round better transport facilities allied with a growth in the population. Rural research and more exploratory work for mineral resources could then set the stage

for sound, but quicker, industrial expansion. Overseas capital investment can be encouraged by Government action to ensure that local facilities will be available and adequate, and also by active solicitation. Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia have, through their Agent-Generals and by delegations of businessmen and Government representation, actively sought new industries for their States.

There are many other matters that I have left unmentioned but the development of Queensland is predominant in my mind.

In conclusion, let me say that I am proud to be associated with the new Government because I am sure that their approach to the many problems will be as statesmen thinking of the next generation, not as politicians looking to the next elections. As this Assembly gathers here let us seek the blessings of our Divine Creator that we might seek in some way to build in Queensland something of the spirit that moved in the heart of Christ.

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Debate, on motion of Mr. Wood, adjourned.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier): I move—

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

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 4.26 p.m.
