Queensland

Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 3 AUGUST 1966

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Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. D. E. Nicholson, Murrumba) read prayers and took the chair at 1.57 p.m. in the late Legislative Council Chamber.

PRESENTATION OF MR. SPEAKER

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

GOVERNOR’S OPENING SPEECH

At 2 p.m. His Excellency the Governor came in state to Parliament House, was announced by the Sergeant-at-Arms, received by Mr. Speaker, and accompanied to the dais.

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

"HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

"You have been summoned to attend this, the First Session of the Thirty-eighth Parliament of Queensland, to consider important business of concern to the people of this State, which arose during the Third Session of the Thirty-seventh Parliament, and to consider legislative proposals which my Ministers have prepared for submission to the present Parliament."
"Since the last meeting of Parliament, a general election has been held, as a result of which the present Government was re-elected to office.

"I offer my congratulations to the new members of this Parliament on their election. I have no doubt that their participation in the current and following sessions will be of benefit to the welfare of the citizens and of great value to the progress and prosperity of Queensland.

"I welcome to this Parliament Mrs. Jordan, the Honourable Member for Ipswich West. Mrs. Jordan is only the second woman who has been a Member of this Assembly. I wish her success as a representative of our people.

"On March 17 this year His Excellency Colonel Sir Henry Abel Smith completed his eighth term as Governor of Queensland and he and Lady May have since returned to England. All Queenslanders are grateful to them for their outstanding service to this State and we look forward to a visit from them.

"On March 21 I had the honour to be sworn in as Governor. It will be the constant aim of my wife and myself during my term of office, to emulate the standards set by our illustrious predecessors and to make a real contribution to the welfare and progress of our State.

"The financial year ended on June 30 resulted in a deficit of $3,520,199 in the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

"Although the Commonwealth Government contributed $7.5 million to the State by way of special drought assistance, the indirect effects of the drought caused a considerable decrease in the revenues of some Departments. The total other receipts paid to Consolidated Revenue were $3.1 million less than anticipated.

"Although award variations granted during the year increased the State's salaries and wages bill by some 11 million dollars, expenditure generally was only $423,000 in excess of the budget provision.

"Trust and Special Funds receipts and expenditures increased by $26,851,000 and $23,774,000 respectively over the previous year, reflecting the continued increase in the tempo of State development.

"Loan raisings and repayments totalling $77,645,000 provided $77,595,000 to finance capital works of a varied nature.

"On February 14, 1966, governmental accounting procedures were changed to decimal currency and the transition was smoothly effected.

"Loans amounting to $18,066,379 approved by the Agricultural Bank during the financial year 1965-66 are again in excess of those approved in any previous year. Unfortunately the exceptional loan requirements of primary producers in this period have been caused mainly by drought.

"Revenue from Succession and Probate Duties, Gift Duty and Stamp Duty rose from $23,146,624 in 1964-65 to $24,770,184 in 1965-66. Stamp Duty collections accounted for more than 70 per cent. of the increase due mainly to the increased rate of duty on cheques which operated from December 1, 1965.

"On June 30, 1966, the State Government Insurance Office celebrated its Golden Anniversary. During this Jubilee year the Office established new records in the volume of insurance business in all departments, with a total premium income in excess of $38 million. The increase in new business in its Life Department is the highest ever recorded. Although loans to Local Authorities have been maintained, investments in industry now total $30 million, with $4.6 million in Queensland Co-operative Housing Societies. During the year plans were approved for the erection of a twenty-eight storey Head Office Building at the corner of Albert and Turbot Streets, Brisbane.

"In spite of adverse seasonal conditions, the Railway Department registered a very creditable operating result for the financial year ended June 30, 1966. Cash receipts attained an all time record level, and for the third successive year, an operating profit was recorded. Totalling $81,716,720, cash receipts were $1,903,374 greater than those of the preceding twelve months.

"An important contributing factor in this achievement has been the application of a modernisation programme highlighted by the progressive substitution of diesel-electric for steam locomotives.

"Considerable progress was made during the year on construction of a new railway line from Moura to Gladstone. Five contracts involving a total amount of $9,346,721 have been let. Seven diesel-hauled trains are now conveying coal over the existing 198 mile route at an annual rate of two million tons. It is planned that on the new line, trains consisting of three locomotives and sixty wagons will run, each hauling approximately 2,800 tons of coal.

"The designs for the new bridge to replace Victoria Bridge have been completed and tenders were called on May 28. The total cost of the work, including resumption and approaches, is estimated at $3 million. The structure will be of pre-stressed concrete.

"Favourable decisions have been received on submissions to the Commonwealth Government for special financial assistance with developmental projects in North Queensland."
During 1966-67 an amount of $4,500,000 is being provided for an interim Beef Roads construction programme. These funds will be used for the completion of works included in the current programme and for a start on new works, including the road between Dingo and Mt. Flora to serve Area Three of the Fitzroy Basin Brigalow Lands.

A request has been made to the Commonwealth for financial assistance to enable the Emerald Irrigation Project, estimated to cost $26,600,000 to be implemented.

Commonwealth agencies are collaborating with State Departments in the investigation of land and water resources and the potentialities for development in the Burdekin River Basin, the Gulf Area and the Peninsula-Mitchell River-Palmer Region.

The past year witnessed marked changes in the structure of our secondary industry and we can expect this pattern of development to continue. My Ministers are confident that, during the next few years, rapid industrial progress will be made in the fields of chemicals and fertilizers. It is expected the natural gas resources of the State will soon be exploited for industrial purposes, and that there will be further outstanding achievements in the development of industries based on the State's vast mineral resources.

An important feature of the major industrial developments of recent years, and of those in prospect for the future, is that they are based on natural resources which readily lend themselves to large-scale industrial complexes and associated industries. Such development requires substantial capital investment, but my Ministers are satisfied the necessary funds will be forthcoming.

The intake rate of British migrants through the State Migration Office continues at a high level. It includes an increasing number of professional men and tradesmen who are assisting to overcome existing shortages in skilled personnel.

During 1965-66 expenditure on capital electricity works again reached an all time high—$46 million. In the current year construction will be continued on the three major thermal power stations on coalfield sites at Swanbank, Callide and Collinsville, and the associated transmission and distribution works to convey the power to the consumers.

A second major power station of 480 MW at Swanbank, of which the estimated cost is $60 million, will provide Southern Queensland's electric power requirements up to 1974.

During the past year a sixth Regional Electricity Board representing eight shire councils was constituted in the Central West with headquarters at Barcaldine.

Facilities for shipping are being expanded and improved to meet the growing needs of the State's maritime industries. Construction of a shore-based pilot station for the Port of Brisbane is under way at the Mooloolah River. Work will commence in 1966-67 to provide a modern seagoing suction dredge for use in the maintenance and development of deepened channels at Brisbane and certain of the Northern Ports.

Substantial progress has been made on extensive port works at Gladstone.

Information essential to planning the development of the fishing industry is being provided under the research programme into the prawn and tuna resources of the State.

Significant highlights of the year's mining activities were the substantial completion of Mount Isa Mines Ltd.'s expansion programme; major development of Queensland Alumina Ltd.'s Alumina Plant at Gladstone; the start of developmental works on the Blackwater export coal field and commencement of construction of the Moura branch railway, and the bringing into production of the Alton oilfield.

In general terms, the year can be described as a period of progress on the one hand and consolidation on the other.

In the four years that the Land Development Scheme in the Fitzroy River Basin has been in operation, 1,033,101 acres (100 blocks) have been made available for new settlement.

Nearly 600 miles of new fencing have been erected, and construction of 60 miles of main roads completed. Approval has been given to the construction of 300 miles of subsidiary roads giving access to the main highways.

In April of this year the Commonwealth Government announced its decision to provide further financial assistance ($11 million) to the State to permit the development of about 6 million acres north of the Central Railway Line, in the area of the Mackenzie and Isaacs Rivers. Upon subdivision and re-design the area will produce 350 new blocks including retention areas.

During the financial year ending June 30, 1966, 46 blocks (1,362,303 acres) were made available for new settlement throughout Queensland in addition to blocks made available under the Fitzroy Basin Land Development Scheme. Action is in hand for the subdivision and opening of about 4,097,000 acres throughout the State for new settlement. This total area will provide 131 new blocks, 88 of which will be suitable for wool production and the balance, 43, for beef production.

An amount of $7.8 million was spent last year by the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission on investigation and construction of water conservation and irrigation works. Leslie Dam was completed, and initial storage should be available at Coolmunda next December. These, together with Eungella and Wuruma Dams, under construction, will increase storage capacity by 360,500 acre feet, equivalent to 68 per cent. more than the present volume.
“Assistance to land-holders under the Farm Water Supplies Assistance Acts was increasingly used. Advances made since inception of the Acts amount to $3,710,000.

“The irrigated area of the State totalled 281,000 acres at March, 1965, the value of production therefrom being equivalent to 10 per cent. of the value of all rural production, including wool and beef from the State’s total area of 426,880,000 acres.

“Throughout another bad drought year, the primary industries of Queensland have been assisted in drought mitigation by the full research and extension facilities of the Department of Primary Industries.

“Research investigation in the Brigalow belt will be greatly assisted by a modern soils laboratory opened at the Biloela Research Station.

“An expanded programme of development planning investigations will include a detailed land capability assessment in Area III of the Fitzroy Basin Land Development Scheme.

“Further assistance to the dairy industry is being provided by the establishment of whole-farm demonstrations in which it is hoped to show how the adoption of better farm techniques and economic farm management principles can improve production and raise net farm income.

“Queensland sugar producers now engaged in the west of a record crop of more than 15 million tons of cane, are presently confronted with a situation of extreme gravity.

“Latest information from the seat of the International Sugar Council in London lends some support to the view that both exporters and importers are displaying a more positive desire to negotiate a fully effective Agreement.

“However, the 1966 season at least will be one of great test.

“Expenditure from the Main Roads Fund during 1965-66 was $471 million, of which $26.1 million represented expenditure on permanent works and $6.9 million on the maintenance of declared roads.

“In addition, $4.7 million from special funds was spent on a system of “Beef” roads in the Gulf and Channel Country and on roads in the Fitzroy Brigalow Basin. Since July 1, 1960, the expenditure on these special road projects, which are of a highly developmental nature, has aggregated $20.3 million.

“Local Authorities received free grants to the extent of $5.4 million from funds administered by the Main Roads Department, for expenditure on roadworks of their own choosing.

“In 1967 new syllabuses in science and mathematics, modern in both content and approach, will be implemented in primary schools.

“New courses are being offered in secondary schools and existing courses modified in the light of the first three years’ experience of the new secondary organisation.

“In 1967 a new high school will be opened at Brisbane to cater for the growing population of the Sandgate area. The secondary departments now in existence at Caloundra, Mirani and Pittsworth will be converted to full high schools.

“My Government has decided to establish new Teachers’ Colleges in Townsville and Brisbane. Land is at present being acquired for these projects.

“In 1966 the opening of a new technical college at Eagle Farm allowed the withdrawal of 1,000 apprentices from the Central Technical College. Further perimeter technical colleges are under construction at Yeronga and Ithaca.

“In its second year of enrolment, the Queensland Institute of Technology has a total enrolment of 4,300 students. Building has already commenced for the Institutes of Technology in Toowoomba and Rockhampton.

“A complete re-organisation of courses offered at the Queensland Agricultural College is planned to commence at the beginning of 1967. Two new teaching blocks have been completed at the College and a third is under construction. The total cost of these three blocks will be more than $1 million. Work has commenced on the second new residential block.

“Greater numbers of aborigines are moving in family groups into the wider community. The provision of adequate housing is a key factor contributing to their integration into this community and the Queensland Housing Commission continues to work in close liaison with the Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs. Intensive building programmes have been undertaken in recent years in communities conducted by the Government and churches alike.

“The Aborigines’ and Torres Strait Islanders’ Affairs Act of 1965” was proclaimed in April, 1966. Numbers of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders who have acquired entitlement to enrol on the State Electoral Rolls voted at the last State General Election.

“Of the total expenditure of $21,630,001 by the Department of Works on buildings during the year, $12,890,337 was spent on education works representing 59.6 per cent.

“Seven new primary schools were completed. New High Schools were established at Oxley and Longreach. A total of 132 new classrooms have been completed at primary schools, and 60 new classrooms at High Schools and 41 at Secondary Departments attached to primary schools were provided throughout the State.

“During the year the Queensland Housing Commission completed 1,702 house units and contracts had been let or tenders called for a further 876 units. The Commission had houses under construction in 109 centres throughout Queensland. In 1965-66, 868 house units were acquired by home owners, and rental units increased by 834.
In 1965-66, 1,256 houses were provided through building societies from funds made available by Government loans and Government guaranteed loans.

Major hospital works completed during the year included a new 146 bed surgical block at Toowoomba, additional Nurses' Quarters and an additional ward at Ipswich, New Nurses' Home and Children's Ward at Ayr, additions to Nurses' Home at Cairns, new Outpatients' Departments and Dental Clinics at Bowen and Rockhampton and the Institute of Child Guidance, Brisbane. This Institute, the first of its kind in Australia, has provision for Outpatients and a Day Hospital for treatment of mentally disturbed children.

Projects under construction include a new Maternity Hospital at Dalby and a new Hospital and additions to Nurses' Quarters at Palm Island.

A new Ward Block is being planned at Townsville for children, and geriatric and psychiatric patients for which the estimated cost is $2 million.

The Health and Welfare Building which was opened in November, 1965, has provided excellent accommodation for the expanding activities of the Health and Medical Services of the Department of Health, and in particular, for the general public attending the Chest Clinic for X-rays and other tests.

Eight new Maternal and Child Welfare Centres, including a parent centre at Rockhampton, have been opened, and two more will be established this year.

Intellectually sub-normal patients will receive care and training in a special school under construction at Wacol, to cost $180,000.

The Queensland Tourist industry, which already is one of the major industries of the State, continues to increase year by year.

Subsidies amounting to $240,000 have been paid for additions and improvements to denominational Children's Homes.

In June the strength of the Industrial Commission was brought up to its maximum number of five Commissioners.

A modern Metropolitan Fish Market and Processing Factory is to be constructed at Colmslie at an estimated cost of $1 million. The present establishment at Stanley Street, South Brisbane, is now wholly inadequate for this purpose.

Plans have been completed for the construction by local authorities of 44 water supply projects estimated to cost $7,166,142 and 16 sewerage projects estimated to cost $2,785,363. There are now under construction 216 water supply projects and 67 sewerage projects estimated to cost $42,473,635 and $49,563,581 respectively.

The City of Brisbane Town Planning Act, passed in 1964, has now been proclaimed and provides the machinery necessary for the implementation and administration of the town plan for the City of Brisbane.

Recently, new or amending town planning schemes were approved for the Cities of Toowoomba and Warwick, the Town of St. George and the whole of the Shire of Pine Rivers. Twenty-three other Local Authorities including the Cities of Maryborough, Rockhampton, and Townsville, are at present preparing town planning schemes.

At the fourth meeting of the Australian Forestry Council in Brisbane in March, 1966, the Commonwealth Government offered long term loans to the States for increased planting of softwoods. It is estimated that these loans will amount to $20 million over the next five years. The Commonwealth offer would mean, in the case of Queensland, an increase in the annual planting rate from 5,000 acres to 10,000 acres.

In anticipation that Commonwealth Loan money will be available, the Department has taken steps to increase the rate of planting, and during the year 5,600 acres of new plantations were established, an increase of 600 acres over the figure for last year. Expenditure on Reorestation projects totalled $3,980,000 and provided employment for 1,263 men.

Road transport has played a significant role in assisting to mitigate the effects of drought by providing ready means for the movement of fodder and stock. For the movements involved, road transport fees amounting to $155,201 were waived during the year. This was in addition to an amount of $1,944,869 freight concessions also allowed by the Railway Department.

“My Ministers propose to review certain legislative provisions affecting road transport, principally relating to the liability and responsibility imposed on carriers in respect of the goods with which they are entrusted and also the improvement of the safety of loadings on vehicles. Another question to receive attention is the desirability of controlling and laying down standards for the operation of tow trucks.

“My Advisers are very appreciative of the loyal and effective assistance rendered by officers of the Public Service. The policy has been continued of giving officers of the Service the opportunity through seminars and conferences to associate with leaders of commerce and industry and this has resulted in a mutual appreciation of the common aims, objects and problems of governmental and business administration.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

Among the legislative measures which you will be asked to consider this session will be—

A Bill to Control the Distribution of Agricultural Chemicals from Aircraft and from Ground Equipment.

A Bill to Authorise the Execution for and on behalf of the State of Queensland for a Further Agreement between the Commonwealth of Australia and the Several States of the Commonwealth in relation to Housing.

A Bill to Regulate the Procurement of Photographs taken for Evidentiary purposes for the use of the Police Force of the State of Queensland.


"HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

"I pray that the blessing of Almighty God may rest upon your counsels."

His Excellency then left the Chamber.

Mr. Speaker announced that the sitting would be continued in the Legislative Assembly Chamber, where he took the chair at 2.33 p.m.

VACANCY IN SENATE OF COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

MESSAGE FROM GOVERNOR

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to report the receipt of the following message from His Excellency the Governor—

"ALAN J. MANSFIELD,

"Governor,

"Message No. 1.

"The Governor transmits to the Legislative Assembly a copy of a despatch which he has received from the President of the Senate of the Commonwealth of Australia, notifying that a vacancy has occurred in the representation of the State of Queensland in the said Senate.

"Government House,

"Brisbane, August 3, 1966."

(Copy)

"President of the Senate,

"Parliament House,

"Canberra.


"His Excellency

"The Governor of the State of Queensland,

"Government House, Brisbane,

"Queensland.

"Your Excellency,

"Pursuant to the provisions of section 21 of the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution, I have the honour to notify Your Excellency that a vacancy has happened in the Senate in the representation of the State of Queensland through the death of Senator Robert Duncan Sherrington, which occurred on the 16th March, 1966.

"I have the honour to be,

"Your Excellency's obedient Servant,

(Signed) "A. M. McMULLIN,

"President of the Senate."

In pursuance of the provisions of Standing Order No. 331—Casual Vacancy in the Senate—I propose to summon hon. members to meet in the Legislative Assembly Chamber on 11 August, 1966, at 2.15 p.m., for the purpose of electing a Senator.

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 2.36 p.m.