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CHAPTER XXXI

ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

(b) Forty years of Labour Dominance

Representative Government in Queensland had begun (and for half a century had continued) with an obvious domination of affairs by pastoral interests, vested in nominees of squatterdom, the “beef barons,” or the big business interests associated with them. As the social pattern changed, this landed or moneyed hierarchy became scattered, unco-ordinated, incoherent and, finally, nearly negligible. The rising cities and secondary industries, intrigued by the doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat, out-shouted and overwhelmed the splinter groups into which their opponents, shorn of constructive policy, had degenerated. Within fifty years, Labour, too, was to go through the same process of disintegration after achieving all (or more) of its practical objectives, and tacitly suppressing its more uncompromisingly socialistic aims. For the time being, however, social slogans seemed sincere, and there was much to be done. On 22 May 1915 when Labour swept the polls Australia had been at war since 4 August 1914; at the end of 1917 the Russian Revolution was to convulse the world; and in all countries men were already saying that world-wide revolution was soon inevitable—a sure indication that all men, indeed, were already fully involved in a great social upheaval and were seeking a way out. “We must,” they continued to say for twenty-five years, “organise our civilisation or lose it.” From these early mutterings Fascism, Nazism and Communism were to arise, and to leave the world a legacy of conflict as it sought a new equilibrium between the competing materialisms of “east” and “west.”

Labour’s Elaborate Programme

For the young Labour party of Queensland, however, the problems were immediate and local, and under the guidance of Thomas Joseph Ryan (the brilliant young lawyer who had entered Parliament in 1909) there began an elaborate programme of social and industrial reforms, modified by the experience gained by trial and error and by the personal interests (as in all parties at all times) of ambitious politicians and “hatchet men.”

William McCormack, who had entered Parliament in 1912 as
Labour Member for Cairns, was elected Speaker; Edward Granville Theodore was Treasurer and Minister for Public Works; and David Bowman (who had led the party for five years until, following a serious illness, he had resigned the leadership to T. J. Ryan) was Home Secretary. (Bowman died suddenly on 25 February 1916.)

Among measures introduced were an Act to establish the Arbitration Court; a Workers’ Compensation Act; a liberalised Elections Act providing for compulsory voting; an Inspection of Machinery and Scaffolding Act; a Factories’ and Shops’ Amendment Act; drastic changes in the land laws providing for the abolition of freehold tenure of land; and, the establishment of State Enterprises, as a result of which the State invaded the field of trade and competed with private enterprise. (The majority of these State Enterprises proved financially disastrous, a notable exception being the State Insurance Office.)

Three successive attempts to enact legislation abolishing the Legislative Council were frustrated by the Upper House. Under the provisions of the Parliamentary Bills Referendum Act passed by the Kidston Government in 1908, the Ryan Government submitted the question of the abolition of the Upper House to the decision of the people by referendum. The referendum was held on 5 May 1917, a decisive verdict against abolition being recorded.

In 1916 and 1917 the conscription issue caused disruption in the Labour Party in Queensland and in all Australia. Both T. J. Ryan and E. G. Theodore took a leading part in denouncing the conscription proposals of the Hughes Government, Ryan being the leader of the Anti-Conscription movement in Australia. After the failure of the first referendum on this matter, (October 1916) W. M. Hughes, who had broken away from the Federal Labour Party, carried on as leader of a “National Labour Party,” a fusion of Hughes’s “National Labour Party” with the Liberal Party, but soon appealed to the country. At the Federal elections in May he was returned to power, and launched a second referendum on Conscription in November 1917, pledging himself to resign if his Government were denied the power it sought.

A record crowd of more than 100,000 heard Ryan’s denunciation of Conscription from several platforms in the Sydney Domain. Hughes used the war-time powers of censorship to suppress the publication of anti-conscription speeches by Ryan and, under the powers of the War Precautions Act, by a military raid on the Government Printing Office in Brisbane attempted (unsuccessfully) to seize the issue of Hansard in which speeches by Ryan and Theodore appeared. When the Prime Minister challenged Ryan to repeat outside the walls of Parliament the speech he had delivered in the House upon the Conscription proposals, Ryan accepted the challenge; and, on 18 November, the day before the referendum poll, he repeated to an enormous audience in Brisbane the speech to which the Prime Minister had taken exception.
An abandoned selection at Chinchilla, Queensland, in May 1928.

The same view as above taken in October 1929, 17 months later, showing destruction by Cactoblastis Cactorum. The new fence is evidence of re-occupation.

PLATE LXVIII.
Ryan was prosecuted on a charge of having verbally made a false statement likely to affect the judgment of the electors, "namely, a statement to the effect that 109,000 men are left for the purpose of reinforcements." The case was heard and dismissed by W. Harris, P.M., at Brisbane, with £20 costs allowed against the Federal Government, and a second charge of "conspiracy" against Ryan, Theodore and others failed also, H. L. Archdall, P.M., discharging the defendants.

(During the campaign, the Prime Minister (W. M. Hughes) visited Warwick. While he was speaking he was struck by an egg thrown by a man in the crowd. He ordered his arrest, but a policeman who was present refused to act, asserting that he was a State officer and could not take orders from any other source. This incident resulted in the formation of the Commonwealth Police Force.)

At the election of 1918 Ryan again led the Labour Party to victory. In October 1919, however, he resigned to enter Federal politics. He was returned to the House of Representatives for West Sydney, and was subsequently elected Deputy Leader of the Labour Party. He died on 1 August 1921.

Abolition

Eventually, abolition of the Upper House was achieved by the Theodore Labour Government in 1920-21. The Lieutenant-Governor, W. Lennon, a former Labour Minister, appointed sufficient Councillors to give the Government an ample margin of votes, and irrespective of the decisive vote against abolition, at the referendum of 5 May 1917, the Labour members of the council, and the new nominees (colloquially known as "The Suicide Club") carried the second reading of the Abolition Bill by 28 votes to 10.

Since 4 July 1922, therefore, the Queensland Legislature has functioned as a single Chamber.

In August 1922 what became known as the "Brennan Bribery Case" startled the people of Queensland. Two journalists were tried at the Supreme Court before Mr. Justice Macnaughton, on a charge of having between 7 August and 14 August 1922 at Brisbane, "in order to influence Frank Tenison Brennan, then being a member of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland in his vote" upon a certain question which was then about to arise in the Legislative Assembly of Queensland, namely: "that the Government of Queensland does not possess the confidence of the Legislative Assembly, or of the electors of Queensland, offered to give Frank Tenison Brennan a certain sum of money, namely £3,500." etc.

The two men charged were convicted and sentenced to three months' imprisonment; and on 13 March 1925, Frank Tenison Brennan was elected to a seat on the Supreme Court Bench. (181)

A Gilbertian Side Issue

Apart from the "Brennan Bribery Case," the session of 1922 was prolific in drama or, perhaps, low comedy. As the result of an

(181) Our Seventh Political Decade, 1920-1930, by C. A. Bernays, deals at length with the Brennan bribery case, and is one of the sources from which much of the history of this period is taken.
epidemic of influenza, the Government was reduced to a working majority of one, exclusive of the Speaker, or Chairman of Committees. William McCormack, the Home Secretary, was in hospital; David A. Gledson, member for Ipswich, was ill in a bedroom in Parliament House. During the committee stage of the Agricultural Education Bill, Larcombe records, the Opposition refused to grant "pairs" to sick Government members. The two Opposition parties had put their heads together, and had also arranged that two semi-convalescent supporters should at a given signal swoop down upon the House, and put the Government to confusion. Bernays reports:

"The coup was cleverly stage-managed, but it was precipitated by Theodore unwisely enforcing the "gag," and thus irritating his opponents. He reckoned on a majority of one. He found himself, on the first amendment, in a minority of one. The Opposition parties carried a poor little amendment against the Government, and Theodore thereupon swore by all his gods to restore the status quo ante, even if he had to kill a supporter in so doing. Thenceupon he sent his two heaviest weights downstairs and ordered them to bring up the sick Gledson—dead or alive. He would vote him breathing or breathless, for there was nothing in the Constitution Act to prevent a dead member voting, so long as he had not been actually buried and his seat declared vacant! It was a very sick and emaciated man who was carried in, swathed in blankets and removed from side to side of the House according as necessity arose for him voting 'Aye' or 'No.' And to make matters more spectacular, a member of the Government party constructed a large red cross and hung it over the head of the sick member. The 'majority' then consisted of the Speaker or Chairman of Committees, whichever happened to be in the Chair; and these two officials valiantly gave their casting votes as required, and rehabilitated the Government:"

**The Proxy Voting Farce**

As a sequel to the embarrassment suffered by the Government (and the buffoonery that tended to bring the excellent institution of Parliamentary government into contempt) a Bill to amend the Legislative Assembly Act by making provision in certain cases for the voting by proxy of members of the Legislative Assembly, absent through ill-health, was introduced on 16 August. The non-Labour Opposition fought the Bill tooth and nail, no fewer than twenty-eight divisions being recorded; in twenty instances the Government had to depend on the casting vote of the Speaker or of the Chairman of Committees. On 17 August at midnight after the "gag" had been repeatedly applied, the Bill passed the third reading stage.

When the Legislative Assembly Act Amendment Bill, otherwise the Proxy Voting Bill, was presented to the Governor, Sir Matthew Nott, for the Royal Assent, His Excellency remonstrated strongly with Theodore against his demand that the Bill should be assented to forthwith.(182)

(182) *The innovation of Proxy Voting was trenchantly condemned by Professor Arthur Berriedale Keith in his "Responsible Government in the Dominions,"

The Message of Assent was received on Tuesday, 22 August 1922, and Bernays records that, immediately thereafter, Mr. Speaker Bertram produced three medical certificates and notifications concerning two Ministers (McCormack and Gillies) and J. T. Gilday. The following night, uproar ensued when the "gag" was applied during the Financial Statement debate. (Previously a Standing Order had been passed limiting debate on the Address in Reply to four days; this was accepted on the pledge, by Theodore, that full liberty of discussion would be given on the Financial Statement.)

"It was a sight for the gods to see the cynical Theodore sitting in division during the gag motion and saying with a sardonic grin, 'Mr. Chairman, I vote as a proxy for Mr. McCormack, Mr. Coyne, Mr. Gillies, and Mr. Gilday'."

Next night the furious Nationalist-Country Party section of the Opposition hired a public hall in which to deliver their undelivered speeches on the Financial Statement. Much good it did them or anyone else in those days of "political reform!"

Theodore, who had succeeded Ryan as Premier in 1919, held that office until 1925 when he resigned to contest a Federal seat. During his Premiership taxation was greatly increased to finance ambitious plans for land settlement, and also for irrigation and water conservation. Areas under sugar cultivation were increased. He introduced legislation to raise the rentals due from pastoral companies for leasehold properties. The companies, which had offices in London, claimed that the action of the Theodore Government was a repudiation of contract, and organised a financial boycott of Queensland. Theodore broke the blockade by borrowing in New York. He inaugurated central as well as local councils of agriculture, which were intended to improve standards of farming and methods of marketing, and to contribute to the greater stability of the rural industries.

In 1925 Theodore contested the Queensland seat of Herbert in the Federal House of Representatives, but was defeated by Dr. L. W. Nott. He succeeded in winning the New South Wales seat of Dalley in 1927. He was Treasurer and Deputy Prime Minister in the Scullin Ministry which took office in the Commonwealth sphere in 1929. He is chiefly remembered in that capacity for his premature attempt in the initiatory period of the debasement of the Australian pound, to introduce "fiduciary currency."

(1930 Theodore resigned his portfolio, following the setting-up by the Moore Government of Queensland of a Royal Commission to inquire into the sale to the Queensland Government for £40,000 of mines at Mungana which, it was alleged, were not worth more than £10,000. The Commissioner found that Theodore, while Premier in 1919, had conspired with others to defraud the Government of
Economic Progress

Meanwhile, the first decade of the 20th Century had seen considerable development of primary and secondary industries, and a notable event of 1909 was the first shipment of chilled meat for London. By 1910 Queensland was depasturing over 20 million sheep and over 5 million cattle. The wool clip totalled 139½ million lb., worth nearly £6 million (at that time). Over 94,000 acres were under sugar cultivation and 211,000 tons of raw sugar were produced. There were over 1,500 manufacturing establishments with an output of £15½ million.

In 1925 Greater Brisbane was created by the City of Brisbane Act passed in 1924. All local authorities were abolished within the area of Greater Brisbane, and provision was made for adult franchise without property qualification. (Adult franchise in local government elections had been introduced in 1920.)

The End of the First Labour Regime

The last of the Labour Premiers in the first period of Labour ascendency in Queensland was William McCormack, who had succeeded William Neal Gillies in October 1925 as next senior in the Labour hierarchy. The McCormack Government continued in office until May 1929 when the electors threw it out, the Country-National Party, led by Arthur Edward Moore (leader of the Country Party) replacing it.

The primary cause of the downfall of Labour, after fourteen years in office, was the hostility of the industrial unions, in particular, the A.W.U. and the railway unions, to McCormack and his Government. The McCormack Ministry determined to send, by rail, sugar from the South Johnstone mill (where a serious industrial dispute, attended by violence, had occurred between local cane farmers and the A.W.U.). The sugar was declared “black” by the A.R.U. and its members refused to handle it. When the McCormack Government decided to dismiss all members of the A.R.U. who refused to obey orders, the combined railway unions rose in revolt, and on Monday, 5 September 1927, the State’s entire railway system ceased running.

The Government, however, remained firm, and the strikers capitulated. Organised unionism, incensed by the “treachery” of a Labour Government, duly took its revenge. McCormack’s government was swept out of office by a political landslide as great as that which had swept it into power in 1915.

The Country-National Government, led by Arthur Edward Moore, had for Treasurer, Walter Henry Barnes, who had first entered Parliament in 1899. Other members of his ministry were Godfrey Morgan (Railways), Reginald M. King (Public Instruction and Public Works), William A. Deacon (Lands), Hubert E. Sizer (Labour and Industry), E. A. Atherton (Mines), Neal Macgroarty (Attorney-General), J. C. Peterson (Home Secretary) and H. F. Walker (Agriculture and Stock); Chas. Taylor was Mr. Speaker. The Government benches were notable for the presence of Mrs. Irene Longman, the only woman who has ever been elected to the Queensland Parliament.

A. E. Moore entered Parliament as Member for Aubigny in 1915, the same year in which the first Labour Government under T. J. Ryan assumed office. Contemporaries who entered the 20th Parliament at the same time included W. Forgan Smith (destined for a long term as Labour Premier), T. Dunstan, David Gledson, Frank Cooper, and J. Stopford (all destined to become Labour Cabinet Ministers, and in the case of Cooper, eventually Premier and finally Lieutenant-Governor); and George Pollock (destined to become Speaker in successive Forgan Smith Governments).

McCormack had resigned the leadership of the Labour Party after his crushing defeat and William Forgan Smith became Leader of the Opposition.

In its three years of office, the Moore Government, among other measures, restored freehold tenure, abolished State trading, and established a Bureau of Economics.

It was the Moore Government’s misfortune to enter office at a time when the effects of a world-wide economic depression were already being felt in Australia. Throughout its term it had to grapple with falling income, rising unemployment, and resultant widespread social distress. The Government, in its efforts to trim its sails to weather the economic storm, incurred inevitable unpopularity, and like many other Governments in this period of unexampled national difficulty, it paid the penalty. At the election of 1932 Labour, under Forgan Smith, returned triumphantly to power.

Moore was responsible for uniting the two sections of the Opposition (the Country Party and the Nationalists) into a coherent and co-operative political force. He was a man of fearless and transparent honesty. There was always something very solid and satisfying, very John Bull-ish about Arthur Moore; he was loved by his own political supporters, and admired and respected by his political enemies.

He continued as Leader of the Opposition until 1936, when he retired from politics, to be succeeded by Edmund Bede Maher (now Senator Maher), who had entered State politics in 1929, and now became Leader of the Country Party Opposition. H. M. Russell became Leader of the United Australia Party, having with him T. Nimmo and J. F. Maxwell.

Labour’s Second Rise

Forgan Smith builds a Record

Forgan Smith had won the Mackay seat for Labour in 1915, and had held the portfolios of Works, and Agriculture and Stock in
successive Labour ministries. After the victory of 1932, he entered upon a record-breaking career of nearly ten and a half years as Premier of Queensland, establishing a Queensland and Australian record by the time he resigned the Premiership in 1942 to become the first layman to hold office as Chairman of the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board and later Chairman of the Sugar Board.

The Forgan Smith Ministry attacked the cognate problems of unemployment and industrial stagnation by instituting a bold plan of public works, water and sewerage schemes, and building projects. Money was raised through the Bureau of Industry, which was established as a constructing authority.

State works implemented under this scheme were the Somerset (Stanley River) Dam, Mackay harbour improvements, and the Story Bridge across the Brisbane River. The magnificent University building at St. Lucia, considered to be the finest in the Commonwealth, was begun in 1937, and the faculties of medicine, dentistry and veterinary science set up. The State Electricity Commission, which set in train a co-ordinated plan of electrical development, was also established.

Frank Arthur Cooper, the sixth Labour Premier of Queensland, succeeded Forgan Smith as Premier and Treasurer, in 1942, and held office until 1946, when he was appointed Lieutenant-Governor.

Edward Michael Hanlon succeeded him. Hanlon, who had been elected Labour Member for Ithaca (a Brisbane suburban electoral seat) in 1926, became Home Secretary in 1932 when the Labour Party was returned to power under the leadership of W. Forgan Smith, and in 1935 reorganised the office as the first ministerial portfolio of Health and Home Affairs. Under his energetic direction a complete revision of all health and medical services was instituted and the hospital, mother and child welfare services, and the local government of the State underwent considerable expansion. The Brisbane Women's Hospital, the Dental Hospital and College, the Queensland Radium Institute, the Medical School at Herston, the Queensland Institute of Medical Research, and various hospitals at Townsville and several other centres were established or expanded.

In 1946 (after a brief period as Treasurer) he became Premier.

Free hospital services date from 1946 when, in co-operation with the Commonwealth, Queensland introduced the Hospitals' Benefits scheme providing for free in-patient treatment in public wards for all persons. (A referendum had transferred Health to the Commonwealth.)

During the period 1932-1946 Queensland undoubtedly led Australia in progressive medical and local authority organisation. During Hanlon's term of office, a number of large irrigation projects, including the Burdekin and Tully hydro-electric schemes, and the Mareeba-Dimbulah irrigation project were initiated. In 1948 he visited London as delegate to the Empire Parliamentary Association and in 1949, when he was responsible for obtaining a long-term contract with the United Kingdom for the purchase of Queensland sugar.

A crisis faced his Government in 1948, when a serious railway strike occurred. Hanlon handled the strike with firm resolution; he introduced the Industrial Law Amendment Act, which empowered the police to arrest pickets who refused to disperse. The strike collapsed within three weeks of the enactment of the anti-picketing Act. Two years earlier he had framed drastic emergency legislation to end a protracted strike of Brisbane meatworkers.

Hanlon's successor, Vincent Clair Gair, was destined to be the eighth and last Labour Premier in the second series of Labour Governments. Gair, who entered Parliament as Member for South Brisbane in 1932, held successively the portfolios of Labour and Industry, the Treasury, and was also Deputy Premier, before succeeding to office as Premier. However, a crisis was imminent.

Labour's Second Fall

In 1955-56 the hostility which had been developing between the Gair Government and the Queensland Central Executive of the Australian Labour Party flamed into open warfare, as a result of the refusal of the Government to implement immediately the demand by the Q.C.E. for three weeks' annual leave for all workers.

On 27 April 1957, the Q.C.E., which had reinforced its numbers by representatives of militant and left-wing unions (the result of a temporary alliance between Dunstan House, the A.W.U.-dominated headquarters of the A.L.P. and the Trades Hall) expelled the Premier from the A.L.P. Gair and nine of his ten Ministers (the exception being J. E. Duggan, Deputy Premier and Minister for Transport) thereupon formed the "Queensland Labour Party" and appealed to the country, following the defeat of the Government at the meeting of Parliament.

In the resultant election of 3 August 1957 the Gair Government, which had won the 1956 elections with a majority of 23 seats, was shattered, retaining (as the Q.L.P.) only eleven seats in all. The A.L.P. came back with 21 seats, but both Duggan, its leader, and Dr. F. C. S. Dittmer (its Deputy Leader) were defeated. The Country-Liberal Party won 41 seats, giving the coalition a majority of six (excluding the Speaker, A. R. Fletcher) in a Parliament of 75 members.

In 1958 J. Duggan successfully contested a by-election at North Toowoomba following the death of L. Wood, who had succeeded him as Leader of the Opposition. J. Donald, who had been elected Leader of the Opposition, resigned in favour of Mr. Duggan. Felix Dittmer was successful in the ensuing Federal Senate Election.

The bitterness of the opposing Labour factions is like that of the earlier groups at the breakdown of the Conservative Party fifty years ago. Like them, its objects achieved or abandoned, it had become unco-ordinated, and riddled with personal antagonisms, ambitions, and ideologies—inadequately apprehended but violently pressed.
The incoming government of G. F. R. (Frank) Nicklin, a combined Country Party-Liberal coalition (K. J. Morris, leader of the Liberals, being Deputy Premier and Minister for Labour and Industry) (183) has initiated a drive to demonstrate its capacity to stimulate Queensland's economic advancement. Its land policy and electoral reform proposals aim at reversals of existing conditions in directions antagonistic to party aims. The expansion and encouragement of industry, the attraction of overseas capital for investment in Queensland, and the elevation of tourism to a major industry are cardinal points of its general policy.

Its accession to power has coincided with the opening of the greatest mining era in the State's history. Major developments in that field have been the planned expansion of Mount Isa Mines, the Mary Kathleen uranium field, and the signing of a long-term agreement between the Government and a big overseas corporation for the exploitation of the extensive bauxite deposits of Cape York Peninsula.

A March Fly from Bundaberg

The comic relief that had attended the declining years of the Conservative Party at the turn of the century, through the nuisance tactics, the despotic abuse of privilege and the flippancies of various groups and individuals, had in parallel the declining years of Labour's second period of power, inter alia, in the antics of John Francis ("Bombshell") Barnes, of Bundaberg, who was elected in 1941 as a self-styled "Andrew Fisher Labourite," and held the seat until 1950, as an Independent.

At every opportunity he attacked the Government's policy with a deliberate (or unconscious) disregard for the rules of Parliamentary procedure and debate, demonstrating repeatedly the deficiencies in Parliament's powers of discipline so far as its members are concerned. Suspension, "docking" of salary, debarring from the precincts of the House, forcible removal from the Country Members' Lodge—even (on a specific matter) a special Act and imprisonment—failed to restrain his exuberance, or to estrange his electorate. Indeed, the electors of Bundaberg (and half Queensland) were convulsed by his provocative buffoonery. They found, perhaps, a certain vicarious delight in the way this gadfly stung the body of Parliament, which the rigid application of the two-party political system, direct Cabinet control, the impossibility of influencing policy by debate, the eclipse of the "back bencher" and a suspicion of spoils to the victors (and their electorates) had rendered inert and divorced from public affection or interest.

In his constant litigation with Parliament, Barnes conducted his own cases and distinguished himself by winning four Full Court actions, 30 out of 31 Supreme Court actions, and 30 out of 40 charges in the police court, brought for or against him. Ultimately an intensive local campaign unseated him at Bundaberg, and he was replaced by E. J. Walsh, a man of force and ability, who became Treasurer, gained great status within the government, and ultimately was to be a key figure in the faction fight which culminated in the collapse of Labour in 1957.

Forty Years in the Desert

The return to power of the Country Party-Liberal groups invites a brief outline of their history during their forty years of wandering in the wilderness, on a diet of legislative locusts and the honey of hope.

On 13 July 1915, following the success of the Ryan Labour Government, the Hon. J. G. Appel announced the formation of a Country Party, as a separate entity, while Sir Edward Macartney (Of the Nationalist group) became Leader of the Opposition. Later, between 1918 and 1920, W. H. Barnes and Charles Taylor led the Nationalists.

On 18 August 1920, W. J. Vowles, the new leader of the Nationalists, formed a new party to sit as the Opposition and to be called the Country Party. On 29 July 1924, however, A. E. Moore announced that, though they would work together under his leadership, the two Opposition groups would each retain their separate identity, offices, and organisation. In 1926, unity was again achieved and they fought the election as the Country-Progressive-Nationalist Party. On 30 May 1935 the unity of the Country and Progressive National organisation was affirmed at a meeting of the Council of the party.

On 5 March 1936 the State Country Party, allied to the Australian Country Party, was formed at Toowoomba and on 7 April 1936 the three National members surviving election formed the Parliamentary Queensland section of the United Australia Party, in the State House, under the leadership of H. M. Ruthven, M.L.A. Three months later, A. E. Moore (leader of the Country Party and of the Opposition) resigned and was succeeded by E. B. Maher, now Senator Maher. A proposal by the U.A.P. to merge was rejected by the Central Council of the Queensland Country Party, on 21 December 1940. In April 1941 unity between the Parliamentary members of the Country Party and the United Australia Party was once more achieved and it was announced that the joint party would be known as the Country-National Party. W. A. Brand and three others, however, resigned from the Country-National Party and formed a separate Country Party group.

At a meeting of the Country-National Party on 18 June 1941, G. F. R. (Frank) Nicklin was elected leader; and on 7 August 1941 the Queensland Country Party conference decided to continue as an independent organisations.

On 27 October 1943 a new political organisation, the Queensland People's Party, was formed by John (later Sir John) Beals Chandler, then Lord Mayor of Brisbane, who had also been elected as member for Hamilton, eight days previously. Among other members elected under the banner of Chandler were two members of the present Country-Liberal Ministry (K. J. Morris and T. A. Hiley), and a third (A. W. Munro) replaced C. G. Wanostrocht, when he did not contest the election of 1938. J. B. Chandler resigned his seat in 1947, and his successor, Bruce Pie, resigned from Parliament also in 1951.

In July 1949 the Queensland People's Party became the Liberal Party of Australia (Queensland Division), its present leader being...
K. J. Morris, Deputy Premier and Minister for Labour and Industry. C. G. Wanstall was elevated to the Supreme Court Bench, recently.

General Progress

The period from the Twenties to the Fifties was an era of great advancement in Queensland. By 1920 radio and aviation were coming into prominence. (On 12 July of that year copies of The Brisbane Courier were carried to Toowoomba by air for the first time.) The year 1922 also saw the birth of the famous aviation company of Queensland and Northern Territory Aerial Services (Q.A.N.T.A.S.) which, beginning with local flying in outback Queensland, has grown into an airline spanning five continents. On 2 November of that year the first air mail in Queensland's history was carried from Charleville to Cloncurry! The first passenger plane flew from Brisbane to Charleville in 1929.

A significant date in the progress of radio was the official opening of the Queensland Government's broadcasting station in the present Taxation Building on 2 August 1925.

A momentous era in mining began in March 1923 when a penniless prospector (John Campbell Miles) discovered silver lead at Mount Isa. Development of the field began in 1927. (On 4 May 1931, Mount Isa works treated the first skip of ore; the first blast furnace was blown in on 8 June the same year; and, on 19 June, the first consignment of silver lead left Mount Isa.)

By 1930 Brisbane could talk with London by wireless telephone (the first Queenslander to do so was the late Mr. R. Sanderson Taylor, Editor of The Brisbane Courier.)

The interstate railway from South Brisbane to Sydney via Kyogle was opened on 27 September 1930.

The Threat of Enemy Invasion

The entry of Japan into World War II on 7 December 1941, and the consequent involvement of the United States of America, which, up to that stage, had held aloof while Great Britain and the Dominions sustained Hitler's attack virtually alone, exposed Australia to the first real peril it had ever experienced, threatened Queensland with immediate invasion and occupation by Asian armies, and made America's own safety dependent on the stability of Australia as an Allied base.

General Macarthur, defeated and expelled from the Philippines by a lightning thrust long prepared by the Japanese, made common cause with Australia in this moment of mutual danger and, on invitation, followed Australia's General (later Field Marshal) Thomas Blamey to Brisbane and, ultimately, to New Guinea. He established his headquarters in Brisbane, and some two million soldiers were deployed through the State as occasion demanded. The population in and around Brisbane (including military personnel) rose by 1943 to one million, and this was enlarged, at intervals, by new drafts of soldiers, sailors and airmen, auxiliary forces, construction corps workers and others. The story has been told elsewhere. This wartime population and its needs, unparalleled in any other Australian State, gave a great impetus to industrial and economic development, especially as a result of the great shortage of consumer goods that ensued. Post-war progress in secondary industry was considerable and has shown a constant upward trend.

Queensland's secondary industries earn now (1959) more than £120 million each year, but primary industries continue to be the economic backbone of the State. Minerals produce more than £30 million yearly; while, in the past decade, an additional 800,000 acres have been put under crops, raising the total cultivated area to 2,600,000 acres. Grain production has doubled and sugar almost doubled. Tobacco output has trebled; pineapple production has more than doubled; beef also has more than doubled; and wool production has increased by 25 per cent. Queensland's annual wool clip is worth more than £50 million. With nearly six million head, Queensland has more than half the beef cattle in Australia, and her dairy herds, and the butter factories located along the entire eastern coast, produced in 1956-57 44,000 tons of butter, 7,000 tons of cheese, and 50 million gallons of milk for other purposes. But production is not enough: there is a law of diminishing returns that requires versatility in end-products. For example: More than 8,000 sugar cane farmers annually produce over a million tons of raw sugar but this year, with an internal consumption of 600,000 tons and an export quota governed by international agreement, it was necessary for cane equivalent to 200,000 tons of raw sugar to stand over, uncut. Such situations demand the enterprise and initiative that elsewhere profitably converts a surplus into by-products of great variety. The same applies to coal which has 1,500 uses other than the burning of it for a net 15 per cent. of its potential power!

As competition becomes keener for the trade of the areas vacated by Europe and not yet committed to America or the Soviets, what country could be better located than Queensland?