

Appendix 1

The Speakers of the Queensland Parliament, 1957–1989

John Henry Mann ('Johnno')¹

(Speaker, 10.10.1950 to 3.8.1957)

John Henry Mann was born in Rockhampton in 1896. At the age of fourteen, he left his school in Mount Morgan and worked in a variety of manual jobs (as a cane cutter, meatworker, stockman and wharfie) before moving to Brisbane during the Depression, where he was active in several unions. He attended the Workers' Education Association and equipped himself with skills and a profile that helped in his election to the Queensland Parliament for the Australian Labor Party in the 1936 by-election for the seat of Brisbane.

Mann was an enigma—regarded by some as a generous benefactor (in his early years in the Parliament, during the late 1930s Depression, he bequeathed a significant portion of his parliamentary salary to the poorer residents of Spring Hill), and by others as a tough and fierce opponent. He belonged to a diverse range of extra-parliamentary organisations, including the Caledonian Society and the Royal and Ancient Order of Buffaloes. 'Johnno' Mann was a passionate advocate for the disadvantaged but also a great hater, with Jack Egerton, then ALP President and President of the Trades and Labor Council, one of his prime adversaries. Adversarial politics suited Mann, who was never afraid of a fight. In 1950, it looked as though Mann might be dumped from the Parliament, when he almost failed to win preselection for his own seat—securing renomination only after a six-hour debate at the Labor convention held in Toowoomba. Mann would go on to stay in the Parliament until 1969 when he retired as one of the longest-serving members (33 years, one month and 13 days).

Mann was Chairman of Committees between 1944 and 1950 before being appointed Speaker of the Queensland Parliament, a position he held for seven years (1950–57). He ran the Office of the Speaker with 'forceful dignity'. Reminiscing on his years in the chair, Mann advised: 'you never forget you're the boss, and you never let anyone else forget you're the boss.'²Mann realised

¹ John McCulloch's earlier research on Speakers of the Parliament was drawn on for these portraits.
² <<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/aspg/papers/981105.pdf>> (viewed 30 March 2009).

early on in his political career that to survive in Queensland politics you had to tackle allegations head-on and he was not averse to using the media to state his case.

Mann's reputation as a drinker and gambler was legendary. After Mann's retirement, a minister in Frank Nicklin's government remarked 'there were few crimes [Mann] has not, at some time committed' (*Sunday Sun*, 14 January 1973). The most serious allegation was that Mann had been involved in a corrupt tendering process in relation to sewerage contracts at Redcliffe. A royal commission subsequently exonerated him.

Don Lane (Lib., Merthyr) remembered in his speech during the motion-of-condolence debate after Mann's death in 1973 that he was "'fair dinkum" to his mates. He was open handed towards his friends and constituents, and if any were "down and out", or destitute for money or help in the home, he would be the first to give assistance from his own pocket.' Opposition Leader, Jack Houston, recalled:

[H]is name constantly crops up here, if not in personal references then certainly in references to decisions that he made during his many years as Speaker...He would fight strenuously if his point of view differed from that of others, but, once the fight was over, 'Johnno' was happy to say, 'Let's go and have a beer together'...He was a person who passed through this Parliament and whose name, deeds, and even legends, will be remembered when most of us have been forgotten. (*QPD* 1973:vol. 261, pp. 2643–44)

One extra-parliamentary decision of Mann's—to transport a racing greyhound in the Speaker's limousine (which was subsequently involved in an accident)—seems, however, unlikely to be repeated.

While facing numerous controversies during his period in the Parliament, Mann was a survivor who emerged relatively unscathed. Humour was his principal armour and was often on display during tough questioning in and out of the House. During one election campaign an opponent attempted to smear his name by suggesting he had spent Christmas Day at the pub rather than with his family. At his next electoral meeting, an outraged Johnno waved the pamphlet alleging this wrongdoing, exclaiming 'this is a damn lie...I didn't leave my family on Christmas Day. It was New Year's Day!' His vote increased at the next election (*Sunday Sun*, 14 January 1973).

Loyalty and mateship were important to Mann. This was evident in 1972 when he resigned his life membership of the ALP after what he described as the 'lopping of three heads' when the ALP withdrew the endorsement of

three sitting members: Ed Casey, Col Bennett and Merv Thackeray. Years later, Russ Hinze reflected 'he was a great bloke and a hell of a good Speaker' (*QPD* 1987:vol. 306, p. 2886).

Mann lived only four years after his retirement in 1969, dying at the age of seventy-three in Brisbane.

Alan Roy Fletcher ('A true gentleman')

(Speaker, 27.8.1957 to 15.6.1960)

Alan Roy Fletcher was born in Pittsworth in southern Queensland in 1907. He was educated at the state school in Pittsworth and Scott's College in Warwick. In 1934, following in his father's footsteps, he began running a dairy farm and grain-growing property at Mount Tyson. Later he bought a 400-hectare property at Mount Russell, which had been owned by the late James Tyson. His interests in grain growing led to his being a director of the Queensland Cooperative Milling Association—a position he held until his election as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

His career in politics began in 1945 when he was elected to the Pittsworth Shire Council. He was Council Chairman for nine of the 10 years he served as councillor. He was elected Country Party Member for Cunningham in March 1953, a seat he held continuously for more than 20 years until his retirement in December 1974.

Fletcher became Speaker on 27 August 1957, after the election of the Country-Liberal Government; he was the first non-Labor Speaker since 1932. According to Jack Pizzey, Fletcher was considered a 'man of sound judgment, ready wit, impeccable character' and was held in high esteem by both sides of the House (*QPD* 1957:vol. 220, p. 3). He took on the role of Speaker with 'a high sense of the dignity, traditions, and responsibilities of the office' (Lack 1962:627). He was regarded as having tremendous respect for the institution of parliament (*QPD* 1957:vol. 220, p. 4) and, according to Lack (1962:627), 'maintained the scrupulous impartiality implicit in the office of Speaker, and strictly enforced the observance of the rules of debate'.

Under Fletcher, the standard of decorum and dignity of parliamentary proceedings were considered to have attained their highest levels for many years. His keen intellect, sound judgment and even temperament were qualities that stood him in good stead in his role as Speaker. Even though he served only one term as Speaker, Fletcher's firm control of debates in the House encouraged much improvement in members' behaviour. He was consistently firm yet courteous.

He held the position of Speaker until 15 June 1960, when he was appointed Minister for Lands after the re-election of the Country–Liberal Coalition. Adolf Muller had resigned from the Lands portfolio and Fletcher, having had a great deal of experience in land and agricultural practice, was chosen to take his place. According to Lack (1962:627), he was reluctant to relinquish the Speakership.

He was Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation from 1960 to 1963 and then Minister for Lands from 1963 to 1968 under Nicklin's Premiership. When Jack Pizzey succeeded Nicklin as Premier in 1968, Fletcher stood for the job of Deputy Leader of the Country Party, but was beaten by Joh Bjelke-Petersen. He stood again when the latter became Premier later the same year, but a relative newcomer, Ron Camm, was preferred.

Fletcher served as Minister for Education and Cultural Activities in Pizzey's ministry, from January 1968 to Pizzey's death in July 1968. He held the same position in the Chalk ministry (1–8 August 1968) and then in three successive Bjelke-Petersen ministries until his retirement in December 1974. As Education Minister, he was responsible for introducing preschool education into Queensland (*QPD* 1991:vol. 320, p. 1732).

David Eric Nicholson ('The Cannonball Kid')

(Speaker, 23.8.1960 to 22.5.1972)

David Eric Nicholson was born into a farming family in New Zealand in 1904. He was educated at public schools in the small rural town of Masterton before qualifying as a motor mechanic. He was a keen sportsman and his passion for competitive cycling brought him to Australia in 1925. He graduated from cycle racing to motorcycle speedway racing and was the first rider in Australia to ride the 'Wall of Death' at the Brisbane Exhibition. In a farewell poem entitled 'The Carnival of Thrills', written for his racing friends in 1926, he signed himself 'The Cannonball Kid'. His daredevil lifestyle was often referred to later when he became Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

Nicholson settled in Queensland in 1934 and ran an electrical business in Caboolture for 22 years. He joined the Country Party in 1937 and in 1950 contested a party plebiscite for the seat of Murrumba, north of Brisbane, which he won against seven other candidates. He held that seat with a sizeable majority for 22 years.

He became Speaker on 23 August 1960, a position he held until his resignation on 25 May 1972, which was a record term. In his speech nominating Nicholson for the Speakership, the Minister for Education, Jack Pizzey, referred to him as 'a man of irreproachable character, quick decision and steady nerve' (*QPD*

1960:vol. 227, p. 3), the latter description presumably referring back to his days as a motorbike speedster. Pizzey believed that he had a high degree of the sense of fair play and impartiality—attributes eminently suitable for a Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. At the time of nominating Nicholson for the Speakership, Pizzey expressed confidence in his ability to maintain the decorum and dignity of the House (*QPD* 1960:vol. 227, p. 3). Nicholson was elected but not before some political grandstanding occurred. Two other members of the Coalition were nominated by the outspoken Ted Walsh (QLP, Bundaberg) after a marathon two-hour discussion. Harold Taylor (Lib., Clayfield) was the first Coalition member nominated by Walsh (*QPD* 1960:vol. 227, p. 18), but this was speedily rejected by Taylor himself, who was at pains to point out that he had not approached Walsh with nomination in mind and did not want to be regarded as a ‘nasty rodent’. Walsh then nominated his second choice, Eric Gaven (CP, Southport), on the grounds that Gaven had been beaten by only one vote when Fletcher won it in 1957 (*QPD* 1960:vol. 227, p. 19; Lack 1962:580). This final attempt at point scoring failed when Walsh could not secure a seconder. Nicholson was then elected unopposed.

Before becoming Speaker, Nicholson had considerable parliamentary and committee experience. During the thirty-fifth Parliament (27 August 1957 – 3 March 1960), he was Temporary Chairman of Committees, acting as Chairman of Committees on many occasions. He was also Deputy Chairman of the Housing Committee and a member of the Education, Health and Works Committee. He had been a member of the parliamentary committee investigating youth problems and in 1958–59 was the government’s representative for the Australia Day Council.

Once Speaker, Nicholson continued to learn about parliamentary processes and was nominated in 1961 as Queensland’s representative to attend a course in parliamentary practice and procedure, conducted by the UK branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. Under his guidance, Parliament House was restored and the Legislative Assembly chamber completely remodelled.

As Speaker, Nicholson defended the system of asking questions on notice, considering that ‘a full and complete answer the morning after [was] better than a half answer off the cuff’ (*Courier-Mail*, 24 April 1965). He later became concerned that the introduction of questions without notice meant that question time had degenerated from a ‘fact-seeking and finding session into a slanging match’, which brought little credit to the Parliament (*QPD* 1970:vol. 254, p. 767). He did not consider it appropriate for members to read from prepared notes when answering questions without notice—questions were to be concise

with only sufficient working to make them clear and the answers were expected to be of a similar quality. He frequently appealed for 'sanity and decorum in the House during question time'.

Nicholson was not a Speaker who stifled debate and he allowed members of both sides of the House to have their say. He had the reputation of being a 'career Speaker' (*Courier-Mail*, 15 October 1970), preferring to remain as Speaker rather than accept a post in cabinet. He was proud of his success in lifting the status of Speaker and was a stout defender of the British parliamentary system. When questions were raised in the House about his involvement in party politics, he distinguished between his role as Speaker in the House and his right to participate in his party's activities outside the House. He stated that while he occupied the chair he did so in the capacity of Speaker, and while he was controlling the conduct of the business of the House, he also acted in the capacity of Speaker (*QPD* 1970:vol. 254, p. 1259). At other times, however, he proved he was not afraid to enter the political fray in his capacity as a party member, and was part of a deputation of Country Party MLAs that visited Premier Bjelke-Petersen to invite him to resign as premier in 1970 (Hughes 1980:120).

Nicholson resigned as Speaker and Member for Murrumba on 25 May 1972, having been the longest-serving speaker in Queensland parliamentary history. He was considered to be a strict, yet very fair Speaker but also a 'government man' (*QPD* 1989:vol. 312, p. 5517). He received a knighthood in 1972.

William Horace Lonergan ('Bugger 'em Bill')

(Speaker, 2.8.1972 to 28.10.1974)

William (Bill) Horace Lonergan was born at Cloncurry in north Queensland in February 1909. The son of a miner and publican, he was educated at schools in western Queensland before working in various parts of the state as a railwayman, miner, outback worker, construction worker, hotel keeper, car dealer and postmaster. He eventually took up sheep selection and settled at Mundingburra in Townsville.

Lonergan made several attempts to enter parliament. He unsuccessfully contested the seat of Haughton for the Liberal Party in 1950, before joining the Country Party and unsuccessfully contesting Flinders at a by-election on 12 March 1955, and again the next year. He was finally rewarded, winning the seat of Flinders in north-western Queensland in 1957, having defeated a former Labor Prime Minister and Minister for the Army (Frank Forde) by one vote. After Forde lodged an appeal, the Elections Tribunal declared the poll void. In the subsequent by-election, Lonergan finally won Flinders by more than 400 votes. He held the seat until his resignation in October 1974.

Lonergan became Speaker in August 1972 in quite extraordinary circumstances. The Coalition parties had agreed that James Houghton was to be the new Speaker after the resignation of David Nicholson. Houghton was nominated by the Minister for Primary Industries, Vic Sullivan (CP, Condamine), and his nomination was seconded by Mike Ahern (CP, Landsborough) (*QPD* 1972:vol. 259, p. 3). In a sensational show of defiance, however, Lonergan, who was at the time the government whip, arranged his own nomination on the floor of the House by two of his Country Party friends, Roy Armstrong (Mulgrave) and Val Bird (Burdekin).

It has been suggested that some members of the Liberal Party did not trust Houghton after his decision to leave the Liberals and join the Country Party in 1962. In the final vote, Lonergan won 47–32 (*QPD* 1972:vol. 259, p. 14). He was quoted as saying that he was not taking on the Speakership for himself, but to gain some recognition for the northern part of Queensland, which he considered had received a ‘raw deal on representation in Cabinet’ (*The North Queensland Register*, 15 July 1972). Lonergan’s electorate, based on Charters Towers, covered more than 155 000 square kilometres, and he often ran up close to 64 000 km a year driving around it, often camping by the roadside in his travels.

During the two years he served as Speaker, moves were under way to build the Parliamentary Annexe (*QPD* 1981:vol. 284, p. 1359). Lonergan was keen on the idea of the new building and took a great interest in how members’ needs and requirements could be met.

Some years later, during a long debate in the House on a vacancy of the Office of Speaker, Ed Casey (ALP, Mackay) referred to Lonergan as an unpopular Speaker who was not considered very fair. To others in the House, however, he was known affectionately as ‘Bugger ‘em Bill’, which was said to be indicative of his attitude generally, although could have resulted from his early days in the Parliament when he shared a room with Roy Armstrong and reportedly used to scoop all the mail that had piled up on his desk and throw it in the bin with a dismissive ‘bugger ‘em’. Although he was not the first choice of the government in 1972, he proved himself to be a true government man, leading Casey to conclude that Labor Party members regretted that they had ever helped elect him (*QPD* 1989:vol. 312, p. 5517).

Lonergan resigned as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and Member for Flinders on 28 October 1974 due to ill health. He died in Townsville in June 1981. In the motion of condolence on his death, he was referred to as one of the ‘true characters’ to have passed through the Queensland Parliament. He was a man of the people, a battler and a man who was prepared to fight for what he believed in (*QPD* 1981:vol. 284, p. 1359).

James Edward Hiram Houghton ('Big Jim')

(Speaker, 29.10.1974 to 4.7.1979).

Born in 1911 in Sydney, James Edward Hiram Houghton was the son of a stationmaster. He was educated at Humpybong State School at Redcliffe in south-eastern Queensland and at Brisbane Technical College. He worked as a bank officer for 19 years with the Commercial Bank of Australia. After serving in World War II, he became a real estate agent in Proston.

His political career began in local government when he was elected as the first Mayor of Redcliffe in 1955. He entered state politics in 1960 when elected as Member for Redcliffe. Initially, he held the seat as an independent after failing to get Country Party endorsement. Then, after a brief flirtation with the Liberal Party, he joined the Country Party. Later he would explain that he had grown sick of sitting on the cross-benches 'like a mangy dog'! Houghton was appointed secretary of the parliamentary Country Party from 1963 to 1972 and was a member of various parliamentary committees. He was Chairman of Committees from 1969 to 1972.

Houghton became Speaker on his second attempt on 29 October 1974—a position he held until his retirement from the Parliament in July 1979. His election as Speaker was not without incident. His nomination was moved by Premier Bjelke-Petersen and seconded by the Treasurer, Sir Gordon Chalk. The Labor Party was not prepared to accept Houghton as Speaker and nominated their member for Sandgate, Harold Dean. It was alleged by the Labor Member for Wolston, Evan Marginson, that the Speakership had been held out as a bribe by the National Party to the Liberal Party in return for its agreement to an early election (*QPD* 1974:vol. 263, p. 1678). In an attack on the suitability of a member of the Labor Party as Speaker, the maverick North Queensland Party's sole member, Tom Aikens, referred to the requirement for the Speaker to have 'honour, probity and courage', suggesting that a member of a party that supported the 'legalisation of abortion, prostitution, homosexuality and homosexual prostitution' could have none of those attributes. It should be noted that Aikens was not referring specifically to Dean, whom he considered to be 'a man of sterling character and of not little courage' (*QPD* 1974:vol. 265, p. 1679). In the ballot that ensued, Houghton was elected 42 votes to Dean's 29 (*QPD* 1974:vol. 265, p. 1680).

During his term as Speaker, Houghton was involved in considerable controversy. In May 1978, a serious conflict arose between him and Bjelke-Petersen over the use of members' domestic travel entitlements. When it was disclosed that some members had been converting domestic travel vouchers to obtain overseas tickets for themselves and their wives, Houghton said that he had approved

these arrangements but subsequently banned the practice while a joint-party committee looked at the provision of overseas travel. The Auditor-General, in the meantime, found that there had been misuse of government funds by past and present members from all parties. The Premier said that he would legislate to prevent misuse of parliamentary funds and threatened to dissolve the Parliament if the legislation did not pass. The Speaker threatened to resign if cabinet attempted to interfere in the domestic affairs of the Parliament. This was averted, but a subsequent amendment to the *Financial Administration and Audit Act* established the Premier's responsibility for parliamentary appropriations (Hughes 1980:121).

Opposition members tended to regard 'Big Jim' Houghton as a fair Speaker, a fine man but a Speaker who 'fulfilled the Government's wishes' (*QPD* 1989:vol. 312, p. 5518).

Houghton resigned from the Speakership and the Parliament in July 1979.

Selwyn John Muller ('Here to serve the government')

(Speaker, 7.8.1979 to 17.10.1983)

Selwyn John Muller was born at Boonah in south-eastern Queensland in October 1918, son of the Country Party Member for Fassifern, Adolf Gustav Muller. After his education at Kalbar State School and Boonah High School, he became a grazier at Kalbar, later chairing the Fassifern branch of the United Graziers' Association. He was also chairman of the Kalbar branch of the Country Party and a member of the Boonah-Kalbar Show Society. During World War II, he served in the Australian Imperial Forces in the Middle East and New Guinea.

He was elected to the seat of Fassifern on his father's retirement in May 1969 and became secretary of the parliamentary Country (later National) Party in 1972, a position he held until 1979. He served on various government committees before becoming Speaker on 7 August 1979, a position he held until his retirement from the Parliament in October 1983. In seconding Muller's nomination for Speaker, Deputy Premier, Dr Llew Edwards, referred to Muller as 'a man of the greatest integrity, honesty, fairness and justice' (*QPD* 1979:vol. 279, p. 3). His election was opposed by the opposition, who nominated Kev Hooper, Member for Archerfield, but after a lengthy debate, Muller was elected Speaker by secret ballot 54 to 23 (with three informal votes) (*QPD* 1979:vol. 279, p. 32).

During his Speakership, according to Des Booth (NP, Warwick), Muller was 'noted for his tolerance and common sense' and behaved in an 'unbiased way' (*QPD* 1983:vol. 292, p. 15). This was not an opinion shared by members of the Labor Party, who considered that his loyalty was to the government, not to

the House (*QPD* 1989:vol. 312, p. 5518). During a debate on the Speakership in 1987, Labor's Tom Burns referred to Muller as being 'National Party to the bootstraps', a Speaker who had made it clear that his job was to interpret the rules of the House to suit his party bosses (*QPD* 1987:vol. 304, p. 14). In 1989, Ed Casey also said of him: 'He was a very honest man. He was so honest that, after he was elected and taken up to the Speaker's chair, he said "Thank you, members, for electing me. I am here to serve the Government"''. According to Casey, that is exactly what he did (*QPD* 1989:vol. 312, p. 5518). In fact, Muller is quoted as saying that it was his 'responsibility as Speaker' to apply the wishes of the government he represented (*Courier-Mail*, 8 August 1979).

In his role as Speaker, Muller was considered by members of his own party to have contributed to advancing the cause of parliamentary procedure (*QPD* 1983:vol. 292, p. 15) despite the fact that to others he appeared to 'lack concern about the fate of the parliamentary institution' and did not have an understanding of standing orders (Coaldrake 1989:70). Coaldrake suggests that the sacking of Terry White, a senior Liberal minister, in August 1983 could have been averted if Muller had understood a point of order raised by Deputy Premier Edwards. Muller refused Dr Edwards' call for a division after a motion without notice moved by a Liberal backbencher in favour of bringing forward discussion on the possible establishment of a public accounts committee (*QPD* 1983:vol. 291, p. 142). White was accused of breaking cabinet solidarity when he supported the motion, which apparently enraged the Premier and Deputy Premier.

A few days later, there was further evidence of Muller's lack of understanding of parliamentary procedure. He disallowed a matter of privilege to take precedence over all other business, a ruling that was considered to be politically expedient for a Coalition government in disarray (Coaldrake 1989:71). The Opposition Leader, Keith Wright, had risen on a matter of privilege but Muller had refused his call, instead allowing Premier Bjelke-Petersen to recommend the indefinite adjournment of the sitting of the Parliament.

Those actions confirmed the concerns about 'executive domination of State Parliament' raised by politicians at the time of Muller's election to the Speakership (*Courier-Mail*, 8 August 1979).

Muller resigned as Speaker and Member for Fassifern in October 1983.

John Herbert Warner ('A nice bloke')

(Speaker, 22.11.1983 to 18.9.1986)

John Herbert Warner was born in Sydney in November 1923. Educated at King's School Parramatta, he served in the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) during

World War II in the Pacific and in the United States. He was made an honorary life member of the Warwick Show and Rodeo Society and was a member of the Royal National Association Brisbane and Toowoomba and a member of the Toowoomba, Downs and United Services Club. Before entering politics he was a farmer.

He was Secretary of the Darling Downs division of the National Party from 1972 to 1974 and in December 1974 became National Party Member for Toowoomba South. Warner's main motivations for entering politics were focused on death—or more precisely the abolition of death duties. This was a personal fight for Warner after his family had been nearly forced to leave their farm after the death of his father. He remained in the Parliament long enough to see death duties finally abolished a decade later (*QPD* 1991:vol. 319, p. 908). Warner was also an advocate for introducing the death penalty for serious crimes, but despite his efforts, he did not achieve its reintroduction.

Before becoming Speaker, Warner was a member of the Parliamentary Privileges Committee and, from 1979 to 1983, was its chairman. On 23 November 1983, he was elected Speaker by secret ballot, winning 42–39 against the Liberal Party's nominee, Col Miller (*QPD* 1983:vol. 292, p. 18). He was Speaker until his retirement in September 1986.

From many contemporary accounts, he was considered much too kind and gentle a person to be an authoritative Speaker (*QPD* 1991:vol. 319, p. 906). In a debate in the House some time after Warner's retirement, Labor's Ed Casey referred to him as 'a nice bloke' but 'a bit of a disaster' (*QPD* 1989:vol. 312, p. 5518). Even one of his former National Party colleagues, Don Lane (1993:143), referred to him as 'by far the most hopeless Speaker' he had encountered. This comment came after a blistering attack on Lane, when Warner called him a 'turncoat' in cabinet for running a campaign to remove him as Speaker and replace him with Col Miller, a conservative Liberal member.

Warner's time as Speaker has been referred to as 'fairly controversial and torrid' but it was not an easy task to chair the first Parliament to assemble after the breakdown of the Coalition (*QPD* 1991:vol. 319, p. 908). He had trouble maintaining order in the House and at times appeared to be quite stunned by the antics and behaviour of some of the members. He was, however, noted for his courage in the party room. He was apparently very much a rebel inside the party room and was one of the people who, on numerous occasions, had the courage to stand up to the then Premier, Joh Bjelke-Petersen (*QPD* 1991:vol. 319, p. 911). According to Bob Katter (NP, Flinders), 'on a number of occasions, he sat down the Premier...and it took a lot of courage to do that' (*QPD* 1991:vol. 319,

p. 912). He was reported to have had great difficulties while Speaker because of his fair-mindedness, which was in conflict with the pressures put on him as Speaker in the House with respect to party loyalty.

John Herbert Warner died in Toowoomba in September 1991.

Kevin Rowson Lingard ('Joh's little mate')

(Speaker, 17.2.1987 to 25.11.1987 and 5.7.1989 to 30.11.1989)

Kevin Rowson Lingard was born at Miles in south-western Queensland in August 1942, the son of a sales representative. After attending Geham and Harlaxton State Schools and Toowoomba High School, he enrolled at the Brisbane Teachers' College and the University of Queensland, where he gained a BA, a BEdST and an Aed, majoring in history and political studies. Subsequently he taught at schools in Brisbane and Rockhampton. He was a master at a private school in Brisbane, and just before his election became the youngest ever high school principal at the newly established Kingston High School.

Lingard's inaugural address (*QPD* 1983:vol. 292, pp. 221–5) listed some of his achievements to date. He served on the State Government Boards of Adult Education and Special Programmes, was President of the Queensland Principals' Association, was a trainee teacher interviewer, was president of the Logan City Community Board of the South East Queensland Sports Association, a Queensland representative for rugby league and rugby union, a Brisbane A-grade rugby league coach and an ABC television and radio commentator. He was also a member of the Electorate Council and the National Party Education and Sport Policy Committees.

Lingard's parliamentary career began with his election to the seat of Fassifern in October 1983. The recently retired former Speaker, Selwyn Muller, had previously held Fassifern. Lingard took over the seat that had been held by Muller and his father for 48 years. In the Parliament, Lingard served in various capacities, including as a member of the Library Committee (1983–86), a delegate to the Australian Constitutional Convention (1985), delegate to the eighteenth Australasian Conference of Presiding Officers and Clerks (Cook Islands, 1987), a member of the Parliamentary Delegation to Pacific Rim Countries (1988), Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (Qld) Representative (Canberra, 1988; Barbados, 1989), President of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (Qld) (1989) and Parliamentary Representative on the University of Queensland Senate (from April 1989).

Lingard served two terms as Speaker (only the second person to do so—A. S. Cowley also having that honour a century before). His first term began on 17

February 1987 when he was elected after a long debate. His election as Speaker appeared to be a *fait accompli*, the suggestion being that he had been ‘anointed’ by the Premier (*QPD* 1998:vol. 304, p. 28). The National Party was governing in its own right and Premier Bjelke-Petersen had decided that Lingard was to be Speaker. Members of the Liberal and Labor Parties, however, nominated members of their parties against him. Nev Warburton, Leader of the Opposition, attacked Lingard’s lack of parliamentary experience and nominated Bill Prest, the Leader of Opposition Business in the House (*QPD* 1987:vol. 304, p. 10). The Liberals considered that their candidate, Bill Lickiss, was eminently more suitable as Speaker than either of the other nominations as he had considerable parliamentary experience, including two years as Chairman of Committees (*QPD* 1987:vol. 304, p. 22). In the secret ballot that ensued, however, Lingard had the numbers; he won 46 votes to Prest’s 30 and Lickiss’s 10 (*QPD* 1987:vol. 304, p. 34). Lingard and the Premier explained the three informal votes from National Party members as being due to human error (*Courier-Mail*, 18 February 1987).

In his acceptance speech, Lingard said that he was ‘determined to have strong control, strict discipline and impartiality’ (*QPD* 1987:vol. 304, p. 34). His speech appeared encouraging to both sides of the House. He said:

I warn the government that the Opposition must be allowed to play a constructive role, and it is my duty to ensure that that is continued. Similarly, the Opposition parties must not be allowed to impede the role of the Government in providing good government for the people of this State. (*QPD* 1987:vol. 304, p. 34)

Even though members of his own party later thought that Lingard had filled the role of Speaker with ‘distinction’ (*QPD* 1989:vol. 312, p. 5431), members of the opposition suggested that he had ‘knuckled under’ to the wishes of Premier Bjelke-Petersen (*QPD* 1989:vol. 312, p. 5518) protecting the government of the day and the National Party (*QPD* 1989:vol. 312, p. 5521).

Lingard’s first term as Speaker was relatively short; he resigned on 24 November 1987 during a historic dispute within the National Party. A close associate of Premier Bjelke-Petersen, he was appointed Minister for Health and Environment for a week in the dying days of the ninth Bjelke-Petersen ministry (25 November to 1 December 1987). When Mike Ahern replaced Bjelke-Petersen as Premier on 1 December 1987, Lingard returned to the backbench, where he remained until July 1989.

On 5 July 1989, Lingard was nominated again as Speaker after Lin Powell’s sudden resignation (*QPD* 1989:vol. 312, p. 5430). Powell was also renominated—by Wayne Goss, Leader of the Opposition, on the basis of his perceived independence as Speaker in the preceding years. The opposition regarded Lingard as far from

independent (*QPD* 1989:vol. 312, p. 5518). Premier Ahern's opinion of Lingard had apparently changed though. In nominating him for the Speakership, he referred to his 'proven track record and excellent parliamentary performance as Speaker' (*QPD* 1989:vol. 312, p. 5434). Other National Party members supported the nomination, referring to him as an 'excellent Speaker' (*QPD* 1989:vol. 312, p. 5473) and 'a man with great principles and great standards' (*QPD* 1989:vol. 312, p. 5448).

After a marathon 11 and a half hour debate, Lingard was elected Speaker at 3.25 am by a small margin: 42 to 40. It was suggested after his election as Speaker that he could rely on his National Party colleagues only when the party was in crisis (*Courier-Mail*, 6 July 1989).

He resigned as Speaker when the Labor Party was elected to power in December 1989.

Lionel ('Lin') William Powell ('I didn't come from a monkey')

(Speaker 2.12.87 to 5.7.89)

Lionel ('Lin') William Powell was born in Maryborough in Queensland in May 1939, the son of a schoolteacher. After his primary and secondary school education in Bundaberg and Brisbane, he attended Kelvin Grove Teachers' College and the University of Queensland. He gained a Trained Teacher's Certificate and taught at various schools in Queensland.

Powell entered the Parliament in December 1974, winning the seat of Isis for the National Party. He held that seat until 31 July 1989 when he suddenly resigned from the Parliament. His resignation caused the opposition to protest that a by-election be held as soon as possible to ensure the people of Isis were not without a local member. Powell then formed the New Conservative Party and unsuccessfully contested the seat of Isis as an independent in the 1989 general election.

During his term as National Party Member for Isis, he held two portfolios in Bjelke-Petersen ministries: Minister for Education (6 December 1983 to 25 November 1987) and Minister for Training and Technology (25 November 1987 to 1 December 1987). As Minister for Education, Powell had stood with the conservative right supporting calls for the teaching of creation theory in schools (*Courier-Mail*, 6 July 1989). In the debate on creation versus evolution, he had very strong views, appearing on television saying 'I know I didn't come

from a monkey'. He also resisted proposals for sex education in schools and was opposed to the re-employment of teachers with drug convictions (*Courier-Mail*, 6 July 1989).

Powell was elected Speaker on 2 December 1987 immediately after Mike Ahern had ousted Bjelke-Petersen as Premier. When Ahern became Premier, he was advised by Don Lane to nominate Des Booth (NP, Warwick) for the Speakership, on the grounds that Booth had defended Ahern against Bjelke-Petersen in the party room. It was well known that Powell was not in the Ahern camp (Lane 1993:221–5). Lane's advice was ignored, however, and in nominating Powell, Ahern said: 'I can think of no better candidate to respect this position than Lionel William Powell, and therefore I urge all members to support his nomination' (*QPD* 1988:vol. 307, p. 4736). Powell won the secret ballot, gaining 48 votes against the 30 for Clem Campbell (ALP, Bundaberg) and 10 for Bill Lickiss (Lib., Moggill). The next day, it was reported that he had been 'elected on the solid bloc vote of the National party members, with the support of the Premier, even though the two had often differed' (*Courier-Mail*, 3 December 1987). Powell was said later to have accepted the position of Speaker as a consolation prize after his cabinet place was terminated when 'the Ahern push had rolled Sir Joh' (*Courier-Mail*, 6 July 1989).

Powell resigned as Speaker on 5 July 1989 after government members of the House voted against him after he had asked the House to refer a letter from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Tom Burns, to the Privileges Committee (*QPD* 1989:vol. 312, p. 5430). The letter from Burns sought a Privileges Committee investigation into an answer given to the Parliament by Premier Ahern in which he denied that he had ever instructed his staff to encourage the homosexual lobby to make a public issue of AIDS education in 1986. At the time, Ahern was Health Minister and Powell was Education Minister.

Powell's resignation threw the Parliament into chaos. What followed was described in the press the next day as a 'night of uproar'. The House was without a Speaker and the Chamber filled with cries of 'out, out, out', 'shame' and 'you are destroyers of democracy' from the opposition benches (*Courier-Mail*, 6 July 1989). Reference was also made to the fact that 5 July 1989 was the day the *Fitzgerald Report* was to be debated. Burns suggested that it was fitting that the National Party used its numbers to dump the Speaker on that day (*QPD* 1989:vol. 312, p. 5449) and Goss was reported as saying that the National Party had 'got rid of Powell to install a National party "hack" to thwart genuine, productive debate on the Fitzgerald Report' (*Courier-Mail*, 6 July 1989; see also *QPD* 1989:vol. 312, p. 5435).

Goss's nomination of Powell as Speaker, seconded by the leader of the Liberal Party, Angus Innes, was referred to in the press the next day as 'an act of

calculated political mischief-making' (*Courier-Mail*, 6 July 1989). In support of the nomination, Goss said that Powell had proved his independence as Speaker in the preceding years (*QPD* 1989:vol. 312, p. 5435). Premier Ahern suggested that the nomination of Powell was a political stunt and had been engineered by the former Premier, who had 'used the Labor party and the Liberal party as agents of his own vindictiveness' (*QPD* 1989:vol. 312, p. 5431). Ahern nominated Kev Lingard, saying that he would 'grace the office of Speaker very creditably' (*QPD* 1989:vol. 312, p. 5432).

After 11 and a half hours of uncontrolled debate, Lingard was elected Speaker by 42 votes to 40. Powell handed back his commission on 31 July 1989 (*QPD* 1989:vol. 313, p. 2).