



Opening of Metropolitan Supreme and District Courthouse,
415 George Street, Brisbane
Friday 3 August 2012

The Hon Paul de Jersey AC
Chief Justice

It is my privilege, on behalf of the Queensland judiciary, to accept from you, Mr Attorney, the key to this courthouse. Your passing the key to me symbolizes the passing of the building into independent judicial control. Of course the building remains the property of the State, but it will henceforth rest within the care of the judiciary.

This symbolic act thereby emphasizes the independence of the judiciary from the other branches of State authority, the legislature and the executive.

It is appropriate and customary that we make reference to that fundamental precept on these occasions.

When the former Supreme Courthouse was opened in Brisbane on 2 September 1981, my predecessor, the 13th Chief Justice of Queensland, the Honourable Sir Charles Wanstall, described this ceremony in the following terms:

“King James regarded himself in authoritarian terms as the embodiment of the Divine Right to dictate, but his Chief Justice, Lord Edward Coke, boldly responded to this assertion in words that have become immortal: ‘Sire, you are under God and the law.’ And so commenced the struggle for the independence of the judges that was won in England in 1701, when the Act of Settlement finally established it. Today, the people of Queensland, the inheritors of that fundamental and priceless constitutional principle, will recognize in this simple ceremony its symbolic restatement as their enduring right.”

And it is a right which, I am pleased to acknowledge, the government of Queensland respects and promotes in the interests of the people.



Opening of Metropolitan Supreme and District Courthouse,
415 George Street, Brisbane
Friday 3 August 2012

I am honoured to accept, with gratitude, this fine courthouse, which will endure with magnificence to the benefit of the people of Queensland. It stands as a showpiece of the government of this stable and progressive democracy.

The lustre of what is an inherently memorable occasion is greatly enhanced today by the presence of Her Excellency the Governor, the Honourable the Premier, the Honourable the Attorney-General and other Ministers, the leader of the Opposition and Shadow Attorney-General, Madam Speaker, the Shadow Attorney-General of the Commonwealth, His Lordship the Master of the Rolls and President Designate of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom, the Chief Justices of Australia and New Zealand, my colleagues of the Council of Chief Justices of Australia and New Zealand, Lady Justice Hallett of the Court of Appeal of England and Wales, the Chief Justice of Hong Kong, Judges of the Supreme and National Courts of Justice of Papua New Guinea, the Chief Judge and her colleagues of the Council of Chief Judges of Australia and New Zealand, my fellow Judges of the Supreme Court and District Court and the Chief Magistrate.

Her Excellency will shortly open what is the most significant new public building in the Brisbane CBD since the Executive Building which was opened on 23 July 1971. Part of that significance rests in the reunion of the two courts: they occupied until 1929 the courthouse at 304 George Street, which was burned down in 1968.

I respectfully congratulate successive governments upon their commitment to the project.

Queenslanders at last have a metropolitan courthouse for their Supreme Court and District Court which appropriately reflects the high significance of the work daily accomplished in these courts. It is a courthouse which will serve, interest and inspire.

It is appropriate, in that State-wide context, that I acknowledge our indigenous fellow citizens whose forebears inhabited these lands prior to European settlement. May mutual respect and support characterize all our citizenry.



Opening of Metropolitan Supreme and District Courthouse,
415 George Street, Brisbane
Friday 3 August 2012

It is my great privilege and pleasure now to invite the Honourable the Premier to address us. Mr Premier...