

**Toast to His Majesty the Emperor of Japan in anticipation of his 67<sup>th</sup>  
birthday on 23 December 2000**

**Consular reception at official Japanese residence  
4 December 2000 6.00pm**

**Chief Justice Paul de Jersey AC**

Consul-General and Mrs Kai, Minister, Speaker, Your Honours, Your Grace, ladies and gentlemen,

I am most honoured to propose this evening a toast to His Majesty the Emperor of Japan. As well as being rightly revered, His Majesty is an effective ambassador for the Japanese people, and beyond that an enduring symbol of beneficial continuity.

Recent history has been marked by events of extraordinary drama, some of them fortunately with powerful potential for the good of mankind. The fall of communism and the Berlin wall are good examples. Yet we still see a world riven by turbulence. Significantly with the approach of Christmas, one may starkly contrast the Bethlehem of two millennia ago – where an influx of visitors meant there was “no room at the inn”, with the Bethlehem of this first year of the third millennium: “closed” for reasons of political necessity.

Examples of the insecurity and instability of the modern world proliferate: the alarming escalation of conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians, the AIDS epidemic in Africa, even the embarrassing irresolution in the US elections result, and the apparently major electoral problems within our own immediate community; ...and the Windies remain no match for the Australians!

Yet in a turbulent world we are buoyed by some enduring, very positive features: friendship between great States is one of them. This State's relationship with the great nation of Japan is a prime example. The vibrancy of that relationship was well illustrated during the visit to Queensland in late September this year by the Governor of Saitama Prefecture.

From my own aspect, I am especially encouraged by the increasingly judicial overlaying of the traditionally largely trade-based relationship between Queensland and Japanese prefectures: this may be seen through not infrequent visits of Judges and regular exchanges of judicial wisdom.

I congratulate the Consul-General and Mrs Kai on their enthusiastic assumption of the important responsibilities of their role in this State, and we all thank them for that, as well as for their fine hospitality this evening.

May our friendship mature and long endure, with consequent benefit to our peoples. And as we treasure the friendship which bases our relationship, we recall that other great enduring symbol of continuity and stability. Revering His Majesty the Emperor, let us drink to his health, anticipating the 67<sup>th</sup> anniversary his birth on 23 December.

Ladies and gentlemen: "His Majesty the Emperor of Japan".