



Queensland Schools' Constitutional Convention Banco Court Friday 18 February 2005, 9am

**The Hon P de Jersey AC,
Chief Justice**

Your Excellency, Professor Lavarch, Mr Laurie, ladies and gentlemen...

I am very pleased the Convention is again being held at the Supreme Court, and I am delighted to welcome you all to the Banco Court, especially of course Her Excellency the Governor.

While momentous work is regularly accomplished in this courtroom of such grand proportions, I may be pardoned, I think, for expressing some reservation about the fabric – the excellent portraiture aside. But today you students will I am confident inject a vibrancy which will obliterate any misgiving about our precious orange colourings.

As I mentioned, momentous judicial work is regularly carried out in this courtroom. As recent examples, the trial of Mr Long in relation to the Childers backpacker fire proceeded here, as did the appeal which led to Ms Hanson's release from custody. Today the courtroom will experience a rather different debate.

The judiciary jealously protects its basic separation from the executive arm of government. I expect that will emerge today in your consideration of the executive role. I must say I agree with the implicit view of those who framed the theme of this year's convention: I suspect most Australians' appreciation of the executive is rather scant – its composition, its powers, how it operates; yet its power is immense. Indeed, governments have been criticized for dispatching too much governing by means of the executive. Certainly less can be known of the detail of its work, than characterizes the legislative branch of government, not to overlook the judicial arm which works under the continual potential of the glare of publicity.



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But enough from me. We are privileged to have with us this morning to open the Convention, the person who heads the executive arm of government in this State, Her Excellency the Governor of Queensland Ms Quentin Bryce AC.

Since being appointed Governor in the year 2003, Her Excellency has displayed what to many people was unsurprising – that is, an acute concern to encourage and facilitate younger people to attain their potential, to expand their horizons, to lead lives which are not only useful, but interesting as well. One need only read the vice-regal news on the Government House webpage to witness Her Excellency's dedication to this goal – among a plethora of others of benefit to the people and the State. And as I say, especially significantly today, in view of your theme, is the circumstance that Her Excellency presents as head of the arm of government you will be discussing.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am honoured to introduce Her Excellency the Governor...