

Mr Alan Carpenter; Mr Matt Birney; Mr Paul Omodei; Mr Terry Waldron; Ms Dianne Guise; Mr Rob Johnson;
Mrs Judy Hughes

MR MICHAEL NANOVICH, MLA

Condolence Motion

MR A.J. CARPENTER (Willagee - Premier) [12.03 pm] - without notice: I move -

That this house records its sincere regret at the death of Michael Nanovich and tenders its deep sympathy to his family.

Michael Nanovich was born on 18 June 1931, the son of Kosta Nanovich and Maria Stupin. Michael was educated at Osborne Park Primary School and Perth Technical High School and followed his father into the vegetable-producing industry. Michael Nanovich served on the Shire of Wanneroo, serving two years as deputy president and a further six years as president. He was an enthusiastic contributor in a number of northern suburbs community organisations, including Lions and Rotary, and was also president of the Wanneroo Agricultural Society. As a young man, Michael played football for Osborne Park, winning the team's fairest and best in 1950 and again in 1951. In 1951 he also won the Essex Medal for the fairest and best in the Amateur Football Association. Michael also played league football for Subiaco in 1952, and through his life continued to be a patron of over 40 sporting and local groups. Michael Nanovich joined the Liberal Party in 1973 and was elected member for Toodyay in March 1974 and was, following a redistribution, elected as the member for Whitford in 1977 and again in 1980. He served as a member of the Joint House Committee from 1979 to 1982, Deputy Chairman of Committees from 1981 to 1982 and government Whip from 1982 to 1983. Mr Speaker, on behalf of all members of this house, I extend our deepest sympathy to Michael's wife, Marie, and her family.

MR M.J. BIRNEY (Kalgoorlie - Leader of the Opposition) [12.05 pm]: Mick Nanovich will be remembered as a conscientious member of this Parliament, as a community leader who oversaw the beginnings of massive development of the northern Perth suburbs and as the first Western Australian with a Croatian surname to be elected to the Legislative Assembly. Mick Nanovich was born and raised in Osborne Park and continued his father's occupation as a vegetable grower. As a young man he was a keen footballer who won fairest and best player awards and who played league football, as the Premier said, for Subiaco in 1952 - well and truly before I was thought of.

On moving to the Wanneroo shire he enthusiastically participated in a range of community organisations, including through charter membership of Rotary and Lions and presidency of the Wanneroo Agricultural Society. Aged 32 in 1963, he was elected to the Shire of Wanneroo, serving two years as deputy president before a six-year term as shire president. The early 1970s saw the Shire of Wanneroo transformed from a country town and rural community which was on the fringe of the metropolitan area and which had always been a part of solidly rural electorates. Entire suburbs, such as Greenwood, Padbury, Hillarys, Craigie and Girrawheen emerged from bushland or market gardens and grew rapidly. Mick Nanovich provided his community with practical and effective local government leadership at this crucial time.

The Liberal Party was delighted when Mick Nanovich nominated and was selected in 1973 to contest the radically redrawn seat of Toodyay. This was composed of the Toodyay shire, the Swan Valley and the Shire of Wanneroo. Nominally a country seat, its enrolment of 16 000 already exceeded that of most metropolitan seats. Winning Toodyay by just under 600 votes, Mick Nanovich was one of several new Liberal MLAs whose victories in marginal seats delivered victory to Sir Charles Court's government in 1974.

Mick Nanovich was a loyal and well-liked member of the Parliamentary Liberal Party and a strong representative for the new northern suburbs of Perth. A redistribution of boundaries abolished Toodyay and created the seat of Whitford, equivalent to the current seats of Hillarys, Kingsley and Joondalup. This remained the fastest growing seat in the Legislative Assembly. As the patron of over 40 sporting and other community groups, Mick Nanovich was re-elected by large majorities in 1977 and 1980.

In 1982-83 Mick Nanovich served as government Whip and in 1983 contested in the new seat of Joondalup, the inland section of the Whitford seat. Despite the efforts of Mick and his team, the strong electoral tide of that year saw his defeat in Joondalup, along with severe defeats in other north suburban seats. In a continuing unfavourable electoral climate he unsuccessfully recontested Joondalup in 1986. However, he remained a loyal and active member of the Liberal Party and other community organisations in Wanneroo.

The Liberal Party expresses its appreciation for a hardworking member of Parliament and a fine citizen in Mick Nanovich. Our condolences go to Mrs Marie Nanovich and her family.

MR P.D. OMODEI (Warren-Blackwood) [12.08 pm]: It gives me great pride tinged with sadness to be able to speak today in memory of Mick Nanovich, whom I regarded as a close friend and certainly a giant of a man in politics in Western Australia, both at state and local levels, and also in agri-politics. Forgive me if I go over

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some matters that have already been said. Mick Nanovich's father was Kosta Nanovich, who was a Macedonian. He came to Western Australia in 1926. He then married Maria Stupin, who was a Croatian from Dalmatia. They came here and settled at Leederville in the metropolitan area.

Mick left school at the age of 15, like many people with his background in agriculture and horticulture. This brings back memories of some of my upbringing and that of some of my forebears. In 1954 Mick married Marie Sarich, who was an Osborne Park girl and whose family had shifted to Perth from Kalgoorlie at the time of the riots. They had five children: Michael, Marian, Malcolm, Tania and Michelle. We know that Michael was tragically killed in a motor vehicle accident only a year or so ago. Young Malcolm now runs the family empire. In 1960 Mick and Marie bought a 20-acre property at Warwick Road and shifted there in 1961. It was right opposite the late Albert Facey's property, which is of some fame. Mick has said in some of his stories about Wanneroo that Warwick Road was a peaceful no-through road and that Marie and he used to sit out the front of their house at night and all they could hear was the gentle pop, pop, pop of the diesel motors in the distance. Things have changed a lot since those times. The poultry farms that were around that area have certainly changed. In 1973 they sold that property on Warwick Road and bought in Wanneroo. They then established the vegetable garden there, which is now quite a large enterprise.

Mick was very active in local affairs. He was involved in the parents and citizens association, the Wanneroo Agricultural Society, the Wanneroo Football Club and the Wanneroo Country Club. He stood for local government in 1963 and won that election, and he remained unopposed for the next 12 years. In the meantime he was also a member of the Market Gardeners Association, and a director of United Crate Exchange and United Markets. He and his brothers Jack and Peter ran a tremendous empire in the vegetable growing area. Mick was then elected president of the Shire of Wanneroo and stood for six years unopposed. At about that time in the 1960s only 2 200 people were living in the shire, and there were only 16 homes in the Wanneroo town site. However, the issues were the same as they are today; namely, power, transport and roads. Mick was very concerned about what was not happening in Wanneroo. Mick is quoted as saying -

I don't know whether they couldn't see what was happening in Wanneroo, or if they just didn't want to see. Politicians had ignored Wanneroo for far too long, although, I can't criticise Les Logan, who was then Minister for Local Government and Town Planning. I reckon Les was superb.

That shows that Mick actually put his opponents on a pedestal as well.

A lot can be said about Mick Nanovich. He was a big man, but a gentle man, with a firm handshake. He always made definite eye contact, but he always had a twinkle in his eye. We all know what Whitfords Beach looks like now. However, there used to be some shacks at Whitfords Beach. The then shire gave the owners of those shacks two years to remove them from the beach, but it had a bit of trouble with some of the owners. To quote Mick again -

We had given the owners extra time, but in the end one man bogged it down. He was a former Crown Prosecutor. He started to use legal arguments, but it didn't do him any good. We went to his shack, removed his gear, took it to the Council Depot, and bulldozed the shack down.

That says a lot about Mick's style. To quote Mick again -

I believe we did a good job on the council. We made some errors, of course we did; we were only human, but we had a good reputation and we got things done. The council staff took a genuine interest in their departments and their community. And that was good.

As I have mentioned, Mick was elected to state Parliament as the member for Toodyay. At that time the electorate of Toodyay included the Wanneroo town site and most of the Wanneroo shire. In 1977 the seat was abolished following a general redistribution of boundaries, and the new seat of Whitfords was created. Mick lost his seat in 1983 with a swing against the then government. Mick was highly regarded by all the members of the Liberal Party. He was a great Liberal stalwart in the northern suburbs. I spoke to Mick only a few months ago at the vegetable growers conference. We had a really good discussion about the old times and about how times have now become more difficult for farmers because the terms of trade have changed. The Nanovich family is still running an excellent venture in Carabooda and is producing a huge amount of high quality horticultural produce for the markets. I understand the family is planning to move to Lancelin to expand its enterprise. Our hearts go out to Marie and the children, in particular Marion, Malcolm, Tania and Michelle. We hope they will accept these statements in this Parliament as a tribute to their patriarch and the leader of a great family. I am very sad at the passing of Mick Nanovich, and I hope his family will follow in his footsteps.

MR T.K. WALDRON (Wagin - Deputy Leader of the National Party) [12.13 pm]: On behalf of the National Party members, I offer our sincere condolences to Michael Nanovich's family, and his friends. I did not have the

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pleasure of knowing Michael Nanovich. However, I certainly know a lot about his achievements. From the fine words that have been spoken in this place today by the previous speakers, Mick was obviously a terrific man who contributed greatly to the Parliament, local government, sport, his community and his family. I again offer our sincere condolences to the Nanovich family

MRS D.J. GUISE (Wanneroo - Deputy Speaker) [12.14 pm]: I join with other members in recording the Parliament's sincere regret at the passing of Michael Nanovich, or Mick as we knew him. Mick Nanovich was a well-respected member of the Wanneroo community. Mick was a market gardener by trade. Mick and his family moved to Wanneroo in 1960, and he stayed there for the remainder of his life. As an early member of the Wanneroo community Mick was representative of the resilient pioneers who worked hard to make a life for themselves and their community. Mick made an enormous contribution to the development of Wanneroo as we know it today. The efforts of people such as Mick have made Wanneroo a unique place in which to live. Those members who were fortunate enough to go to Mick's funeral would have seen the response of the many different parts of the Wanneroo community that represented all the facets of Mick's life. Mick was closely associated with the shire and then the City of Wanneroo. He served as an elected member of the council for 13 years, two of these as deputy president and six as president. He then went on to serve in the Parliament as the member for Whitfords in the 1970s and early 1980s. Although Mick and I shared a somewhat different political perspective, he was always willing to listen and give advice, and I appreciated that very much.

As members opposite have said, Mick was very passionate about the Wanneroo area and the industry in which he worked and which he served so well for many years. What I most remember about Mick is his love of life and his wonderful sense of humour, which I am sure he needed at the times of tragedy that his family suffered. Mick was able to rise above all that and still have an abundance of joy to give to those around him. The reason that Wanneroo is able to boast a rich and diverse history is due mainly to the efforts of people such as Mick Nanovich. I join with members in thanking Mick for his wonderful contribution to our community, and I extend my sympathies to Marie and the family.

MR R.F. JOHNSON (Hillarys) [12.16 pm]: I had the great honour of representing the people of Whitfords as the Liberal member after the late Mick Nanovich. Mick was a great person. My first introduction to Mick was when I joined the Liberal Party in about 1989 and attended my first meeting of the Liberal Party Moore division. Mick was very feisty and had strong views about how the Liberal Party should be run. I remember one thing he used to say -

Ms M.M. Quirk: Did you listen to him?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: This is a condolence motion.

When it came around to preselection time, Mick always used to say, "Anyone who stands for preselection for the Liberal Party should be capable of becoming a government minister." I am very proud to say I have lived up to that expectation. Mick and I did not always agree on everything that went on within the Liberal Party, but I had huge respect for Mick. As has been said by the member for Wanneroo, the Nanovich family was one of the pioneer families in Wanneroo, together with the Crisafulli and Trajanovich families, and many other people. I developed a wonderful friendship with all those people when I came to live in Western Australia from the United Kingdom. The Crisafullis in particular, who were very good friends of Mick Nanovich at the time, not only took me into their home and their hearts but made me one of their friends, and that friendship remains to this day. Mick was highly respected by all the people in Wanneroo, whether they were Liberal supporters or Labor supporters, because of his views. It was in recognition of the tremendous work that Mick did for both the shire and the City of Wanneroo, and in becoming a member of Parliament, that he was made a patron or a vice-patron of many of the local sporting clubs and associations. People are awarded these positions only when it is clear that they have worked very hard for their local community. Mick did that unstintingly for many years. He was vice-patron of the Sorrento Surf Lifesaving Club and patron of the Mullaloo Surf Lifesaving Club, and until a couple of years ago he was still attending most of the meetings of those clubs. As I have said, Mick was held in the highest esteem by many people. There are not many people like Mick Nanovich in our society. People like Mick are unique individuals, and they should be recognised for the tremendous commitment they show to the people in their community. Mick did that for many years. Therefore, it is only fitting that this Parliament record its respect at the passing of Mick. I join with members in offering my condolences to Marie and the Nanovich family. I am very proud to be part of this condolence motion.

MRS J. HUGHES (Kingsley) [12.20 pm]: Mick Nanovich was a gentleman in every sense of the word. I came to know him as a councillor in the City of Wanneroo, and he was a very well respected member of the community. He was also a former shire president and a member of Parliament, and he became a freeman of the City of Wanneroo. He will be sorely missed for many years. It was fortunate that Mick's portrait was able to be painted recently as a testament to his service, and to acknowledge him as the very special person he was. He was

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much loved by the city and its people. I send my sincerest condolences to his family and his friends, and trust that Mick's contributions in all his roles - as son, husband, father, politician and community advocate - will always stand as a true reflection of his beliefs and his work. I know that his passing will bring much sadness to many, and that the City of Wanneroo will miss him on every occasion on which the freemen get together.

The SPEAKER: I ask members to rise and support this motion by observing a minute's silence.

Question passed, members standing.