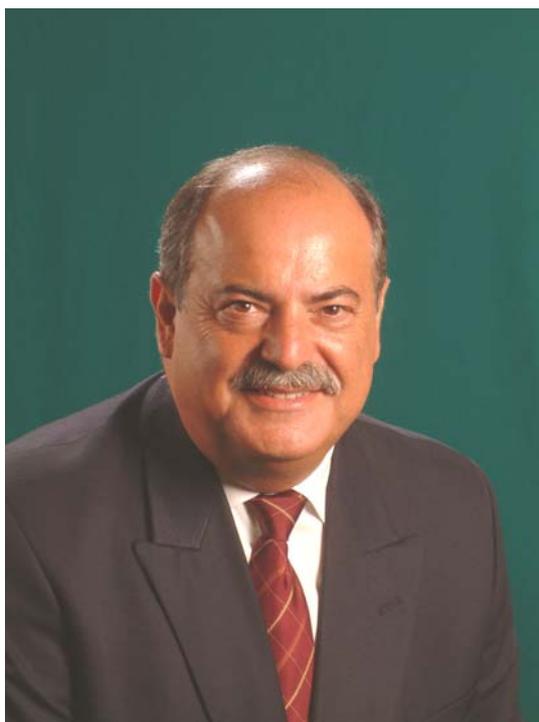




PARLIAMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

INAUGURAL SPEECH



Mr John Castrilli MLA
(Member for Bunbury)

Address-in-Reply Debate

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 30 March 2005

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ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

MR G.M. CASTRILLI (Bunbury) [3.14 pm]: I am very proud and honoured to be the representative of the people of Bunbury in this historic place. I thank the people of Bunbury for having the trust and confidence in me to faithfully represent their interests and to work hard to secure much-needed government services and infrastructure for Bunbury and its people. These are issues that I will expand on a little later. Trust and hard work are values ingrained in me from my infancy. My father, Antonio, arrived in Australia in 1952.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will the member in the house or the person in the gallery who has the mobile phone turned on, please turn it off.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: Two years later my mother, Michelina; my sister, Teresa; and I joined my father from Roccamandolfi, which is a small village in the Molise region of Italy. My father arrived in Australia not knowing the language or the customs, but he knew how to work. He also highly valued the freedom that democracy gives its people and how precious that freedom is. It is something of which he constantly reminds our extended family. My parents experienced extreme hardship in their early years. It is hard to imagine the sacrifices that they and many other people like them made to achieve their goal of eventually migrating to our democratic nation and this magnificent state of ours. Without their sacrifices I would not be standing here today, and I have much pleasure in publicly thanking them in this building that enshrines democracy.

I would also like to thank my wife, Loretta, and daughters Lisa and Deanna for their love and support. They, like many families of other non-metropolitan members, understand the times that we will be apart during my period as a member of Parliament. Often I think that many people take for granted these personal sacrifices that our families experience as a result of our being members. I would also like to thank my brother, Frank, and sister-in-law, Debbie, and my sister, Teresa, and brother-in-law, Geoff, and their families for their tremendous and ongoing support over the past years.

I record my appreciation of the hardworking campaign committee and the many volunteers who assisted in my election result. I particularly wish to make special mention of my campaign manager, Mr Gary Brennan, who was outstanding and played a major part in my campaign. I had a fantastic team who were dedicated and focused, and I thank them sincerely. Another person I wish to acknowledge is my business partner, Mr John Gray, who for 12 months or more ran our business

single-handedly. This of course allowed me the freedom to be on the campaign trail when I needed to be. I thank him sincerely for his patience and support.

I acknowledge the political differences that exist in this chamber. However, I believe it is important to observe that we all have much in common, and I look forward to those times when we combine the collective knowledge, skills and experience of all members, regardless of their political persuasion, to achieve better outcomes for Western Australia, because I believe that fundamentally that is what we are here to do.

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for having the confidence in my capacity to accept the responsibilities of a shadow ministerial portfolio. I also thank the Minister for Local Government and Regional Development for his cooperation in giving me access to the Department of Local Government and Regional Development.

I had the honour of being the Mayor of Bunbury for nearly eight years until my election to state Parliament. I acknowledge that in the past some observers have suggested that Bunbury receives more than its so-called fair share of government spending. That is not quite right, may I say. It is a fact that Bunbury and the greater Bunbury population have, in national terms, grown substantially over the past two decades, and will continue to grow as more and more projects come on stream in the south west. We know of the expansion plans of the Worsley joint venture and Alcoa's Wagerup refinery, and of the proposed power station near Collie. The recently announced Bunbury international racing circuit will attract thousands of visitors to Western Australia and the greater Bunbury region once racing commences. The economic spin-offs of hospitality infrastructure and technical infrastructure will be quite staggering. I am very proud to be associated with this project, having first invited Mr Roberts to consider Bunbury as the perfect location for his vision.

During my time as mayor I gained a sound understanding of matters that are important to the Bunbury community. During my campaign for election I gained further insight from individuals and representative groups within the Bunbury community on matters that must be resolved - some immediately, and some over time. I will now touch on some of the key outcomes I will seek for Bunbury over the next four years.

MENTAL HEALTH

According to the Bunbury Mental Health Consumer/Carer Reference Group, the urgent mental health priorities for Bunbury and the near region include a fully operational mental health clinic and additional professional staff. Although I had an understanding of the mental health problems of the community before my campaign, I had limited understanding of the extent to which mental health affects our community. According to the reference group, approximately 50 per cent of the population either suffers from mental illness, or are the carers or family members of someone suffering some form of mental illness. We have all read and heard of the tragic deaths of parents and children through murders and murder-suicides. I sometimes wonder whether these incidents could have been avoided. These are difficult matters for all of us. One of my goals is to contribute in a positive way to providing more assistance for Western Australians suffering from mental illness, and their carers.

HEALTH MATTERS

Remaining with the subject of health matters, the state of Western Australia built a first-class health campus at Bunbury and co-located it with St John of God Health Care. While St John of God Health Care has flourished without controversy, the public health system seems at times to be in crisis mode. I was appalled to hear of some of the experiences of patients, nurses and doctors in the Bunbury public health system. I will be pursuing these matters, together with my colleagues from the greater Bunbury region, to identify remedies and secure them through this place where necessary.

GOVERNMENT'S ELECTION PROMISES FOR BUNBURY

I applaud the government's election promises for Bunbury, because they were very similar to coalition pledges made during the recent election campaign. I look forward to the promises being fulfilled, including the following -

Bunbury Port Access Road

The funding of the construction of the Bunbury port access road, which will remove many trucks from potential conflict with passenger vehicles along the current roads into and adjacent to the Bunbury port. Both the former coalition government and the Labor government have been aware of the need to construct this access road, due to the increasing number of trucks carrying a variety of products into the port for export. I commend the government for its pledge to construct this road.

Bunbury Back Beach

Along with many other Bunbury residents, I am pleased to see the start of the civil construction that will complete the Bunbury Back Beach upgrade project. Dating back to the previous coalition government, this project will transform the Back Beach into a precinct where families can enjoy a landscaped beachfront in relative safety. Importantly, the Back Beach will be more protected from the destructive storms that occasionally erode much of the coast in that area.

UPGRADING OF LOCAL HIGH SCHOOLS

The government's pledge to substantially upgrade Newton Moore Senior High School and the Bunbury Senior High School is also welcome. Apart from the administration centre and the performing arts centre, Newton Moore Senior High School is a very tired complex. The financial commitment by the government will result in long-overdue works being carried out. When I visited the school last year with the member for Cottesloe, I was appalled to see the water damage to ceilings and walls. The new high school at Dalyellup, also pledged by the government, will accommodate many students currently attending Newton Moore. Hopefully the issue of overcrowding, and students being accommodated in transportable buildings, will become a thing of the past for Newton Moore once the Dalyellup school is in a position to accept high school students.

I look forward to the physical upgrades of the Newton Moore Senior High School adding to a positive school environment for students, teachers and parents. I know that the teachers of the Bunbury Senior High School - one of my former schools - are also looking forward to the pledge by the government to build a new library and student amenities area.

THE BUNBURY OUTER HARBOUR REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

The Bunbury outer harbour redevelopment project, initiated by the City of Bunbury several years ago, is another exciting project for the greater Bunbury area. The former port installation area, which 12 years ago contained large fuel storage tanks and a waste water treatment plant, has been transformed into a world-class residential development. The excellent resources of the state government agencies, including LandCorp, the Bunbury Port Authority, what is now the Department for Planning and Infrastructure and the City of Bunbury, have combined to achieve the outcomes that we see today in the form of Marlston Hill. This redevelopment has received national recognition through development awards. I am very confident that the same partnership that transformed Marlston Hill, together with other key stakeholders in the private sector, will achieve terrific outcomes with the outer harbour redevelopment, should it prove viable. I will constantly inquire of the government about the progress of these projects and keep the Bunbury electorate well informed on their status.

A SMALL BUSINESS BACKGROUND

Coming from a small business background, I am aware of the varying impacts that government decisions have on the ability of small business to get on with the things that small business does

well; that is, create economic growth, which in turn generates employment and capacity within our society to enjoy many of the important social aspects of our community. I am aware of the impact of excessive taxes, fees and charges and the impact on projects of delays caused by unnecessary bureaucracy. I look forward to bringing that experience into debates to assist members in their consideration of these important matters prior to making decisions that could be damaging to our small business sector. I acknowledge that I have much to learn and I look forward to benefiting from the experience of other members in areas with which I may not be familiar. I prefer to get things done through building partnerships and working with people to achieve great outcomes.

I reflect on politicians of various persuasions who were great statesmen and women for Western Australia. These people had the respect of Parliament and citizens whilst retaining their dignity and getting on with the job of representing, to the best of their ability, their constituents and electorates. I hope that I can walk in their shadows. Earlier I spoke of the sacrifices that my parents made to migrate to this magnificent state and country. It is at times like this that I reflect on those sacrifices and consider my broader responsibilities to do the very best that I can for the current and future communities of Bunbury. In doing so, I hope I can also contribute to the wellbeing of Western Australia.

Finally, I extend an invitation to all members and their families to visit Bunbury. I will gladly host them while they view the changes and meet with the community to understand the issues and suggestions on where we can assist and also to hear from those involved in the exciting plans for Bunbury over the next few years. I thank the house for this opportunity to address the members.

Amendment to Motion

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: In conclusion, I move -

To add to the Address-in-Reply the following -

but regrets to inform Your Excellency that the Gallop Labor government has failed to ensure proper standards of community safety and accountability to the people in regard to the Western Australian prisons system.

[Applause.]
