

[Thursday 30 March 1989.]

**MRS EDWARDES** (Kingsley) [2.54 pm]: It gives me great pleasure to be able to speak in this debate as the first member for Kingsley. I take this opportunity to congratulate all new members and other members who have been re-elected. My address will focus fundamentally on two areas: Firstly, a general profile of the Kingsley electorate; and, secondly, the reasons for my entering politics. Before going further, I take this opportunity to thank my family, especially my husband Colin and my eldest son Warren, and to acknowledge the efforts of the many people and organisations who worked so hard and in such a professional and efficient manner to ensure that I would stand in this place today and make this speech.

The Kingsley electorate, previously part of the Joondalup electorate, was established in the 1988 redistribution and encompasses the suburbs of Greenwood, Kingsley, Warwick and Woodvale. The electorate is situated in the northern part of the new North Metropolitan Region and is located within the City of Wanneroo local government area. It is geographically located between the Freeway, Ocean Reef Road, Wanneroo Road and Beach Road.

Kingsley is a young community with 51.8 per cent of the population being under 24 years and nearly 80 per cent being under 40 years. The 25 to 39 age group is the most predominant - 28.6 per cent - and the under 18 age group represents 45.5 per cent of the population. The 50 year age group - 9.2 per cent - represents less than one half of the metropolitan average of 20.8 per cent.

Australian born persons form the largest proportion of the total population by far with those born in England being the second largest group. Overall, Kingsley does not have a high proportion of non-English speaking people. The State's average of 27.5 per cent of the electorate's people were born overseas. People born in England - 12.9 per cent - form the largest group. The suburbs of Kingsley, Woodvale and a small section of Greenwood house a larger than average number of English born people. Italians are the most common non-English speaking community - 1.5 per cent. There are only six areas, mainly on the eastern side of the electorate, which have greater than the Australian average of 1.7 per cent. Greenwood and Warwick have large areas in which more than 75 per cent of the population are Australian born.

Thirty-one per cent of Australians who have left school have some post-secondary qualifications. Those with tertiary qualifications form a small percentage of those who have left school. The Kingsley electorate has fewer people in the "not qualified" category than the State's average. Over one third of those who have left school in the electorate have some post-secondary qualifications. The most significant areas are: Management, which totals 6.5 per cent, nearly 50 per cent higher than the metropolitan average; manufacturing 7.6 per cent; architecture 3.5 per cent; medical 3.4 per cent; education 3.3 per cent; engineering 2.3 per cent; and service 2.3 per cent. Of those who are qualified, the majority have either a trade or some other form of professional qualification.

The most common type of family in Australia, the couple with children, totals 44.6 per cent with those without dependants totalling 41.3 per cent. Single parents constitute a further nine per cent. Couples with dependants totalling 63.3 per cent and without dependants totalling 28.3 per cent make up over 90 per cent of all families in the Kingsley electorate. This is six per cent higher than the Australian or State average for that group of categories. The figures for single parents with dependants - 6.2 per cent - and related adults - 2.1 per cent - are very low and are only two-thirds and one-third respectively of the metropolitan average.

The total number of families with dependants totals 68.5 per cent, a figure that is significantly higher than the State and metropolitan figures and identifies Kingsley as a young electorate. Having regard to this, the higher than average number of families with dependants means that many of the families have a very low income surplus as most of their available income is used in establishing the family home. The electorate has an exceptionally high level of home ownership - 87 per cent. Approximately nine out of every 10 private dwellings are owned or are being purchased.

Rental accommodation which totals 9.7 per cent is less than half that of the metropolitan area which totals 25.2 per cent. Monthly mortgages in Kingsley represent more than 60 per cent of the private dwellings which is 1.7 times the metropolitan average of 35.3 per cent. The higher density of

mortgages occurs in the suburbs of Kingsley and Woodvale, reflecting the later development of those areas.

It is interesting also to note that, in terms of vehicle ownership, Kingsley has a high level of motor vehicles per dwelling with a district average of 1.7 vehicles per dwelling, 13 per cent above the metropolitan average. A total of 62.3 per cent of the electorate has more than two vehicles per home which is 15.7 per cent higher than the metropolitan average.

Within this context, it is interesting to note that Kingsley is located in the fastest growing local government area in Australia. Since 1970, the City of Wanneroo has grown from having a population of 4 645 to having a current estimated population of 151 640. There has been an increase of almost 50 000 in the last five years. Building licence figures indicate that the rate of growth is continuing. In 1985-86, 2 635 applications were made totalling \$122 700 144. In 1987-88, 3 478 applications totalling \$200 755 824 were lodged. With this rate of growth the city's population is expected to exceed a quarter of a million soon after the turn of the century. What this means for my electorate, which is part of this rate of growth, is that there is a tremendous need for a number of important services and facilities for the residents of Kingsley.

Issues such as overcrowded schools, inadequate transport services, a need for more child care facilities, a need for more police officers and a lack of recreational facilities are just some of the concerns my constituents have asked me to bring to the attention of this place.

I decided to enter politics to continue my commitment to the community of Kingsley. My commitment spans many years in a broad spectrum of organisations ranging from small business, recreation, arts, child care, youth and tourism to family support groups. This community work has been recognised by the State Government with my appointment as a representative of the community to the State Planning Commission Commercial Consultative Committee and the Northern Suburbs Rapid Transit Study Advisory Committee.

I have very clear commitments in the areas of the family, youth, law and order, transport, education, the elderly and small business. I am committed to the preservation and protection of the family. In my view there is no more important social unit than the family because it is the basis upon which individuals develop and are able to determine their future. Family life teaches all of us about love, mutual respect, tolerance and cooperation. These principles are the very basis of healthy relationships inside and outside the family unit.

As part of my deep concern for the preservation of family life I founded, in my electorate, the Wanneroo Family Support Group for victims of child abuse and their families. The goals of this organisation are -

- (1) To undertake community awareness programs.
- (2) To provide a referral service to ensure access to professional counselling.
- (3) To provide support to the victims of child abuse and their families.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank officers from the Department for Community Services for their advice and assistance which I have received in establishing this group. I have discussed some social aspects of family life. However, there is a need for incentives in the form of programs that provide real financial support and encouragement to families.

Since the 1960s birth rates have plummeted to below what population experts call the natural replacement rate. To keep a population stable families should average 2.1 children; we are running at 1.8 children. Unless the decline is reversed the average age will be raised, social security payments will become colossal and there will not be enough young people in the work force to adequately keep our country moving forward.

I support the introduction of income tax splitting to allow families to have a choice. Taxation deductions for children must be increased and taxation deductions must be allowed for at least a percentage of mortgages.

I am committed to assisting the youth in my electorate. From my experience as a member of the management committee of the YMCA it was obvious that the traditional forms of recreation and activity may not be what the youth of today want. This was evidenced in organised sport by the large drop out rate by young people between the ages of 13 to 17. We have a responsibility to provide for the future of all children to ensure they reach their full potential and individual self esteem. We need to sit down with our youth and listen to their needs or we will face monumental problems, some of which have already resulted in huge social costs.

I have over some time, in conjunction with the local recreation associations in my electorate, been trying to secure a drop-in facility to be jointly managed by the youth and the recreation association for the purposes of providing an alternative style of recreation. This facility will, I hope, provide a positive alternative to the lifestyle currently being experienced every Friday and Saturday night by some youth from the suburb of Kingsley who congregate at the shopping centre and the adjacent reserve to drink and use drugs. Having witnessed at first hand the benefits of community based youth oriented organisations, I am of the view that organisations such as the YMCA and the Jesus People Youth and Community Services are much closer to young people than Government departments and are, therefore, better equipped to provide services and support to the youth.

Major recreational facilities do not exist in the Kingsley electorate. The Greenwood-Warwick area had, until three years ago, a recreational centre known as the Bini Shell located in Penistone Reserve, Greenwood. This facility had a high user rate and was the focal point for the recreational activities of many groups. It was closed on the order of the Department of Health as a result of the collapse of a similar structure in New South Wales. Unfortunately two years passed before the order was lifted and consequently many recreation groups disbanded or dispersed to facilities well outside their area of community interest. Others have had to endure the use of demountables which have proven to be less than adequate for many activities.

I understand the Government, through the Minister for Sport and Recreation, has established a working party consisting of officers from both the department and the City of Wanneroo to examine the number of facilities that are required and their most suitable location. I welcome the initiative by the Government and hope that the suburbs of Greenwood-Warwick and Kingsley-Woodvale will benefit as a result of the working party's deliberations.

I am committed to ensure the protection of persons and their property. Penalties relating to crimes against persons and their property are iniquitous and require a serious review. It is, in my view, grossly unjust when assaults are classified as misdemeanours and the offence of stealing is classified as a crime. Misdemeanours, if heard in the Court of Petty Sessions, can receive a maximum penalty of only six months. This review, together with the need for increased police presence against the backdrop of a rapidly growing population in the northern suburbs, is essential if the issue of law and order is to be addressed seriously. Despite efforts in my electorate through Neighbourhood Watch and Industrial Watch, the lack of police back-up in many instances reduces the effectiveness of these schemes. I welcome the Government's commitment to increase the numbers of police officers and trust that manning levels at the Warwick Police Station will reach a level where it will be able to effectively cope with the increasing demands being placed on it.

The public transport system within my electorate needs an overhaul for the purpose of being more responsive to the needs of the people. Young people in general and young mothers at home with families are particularly isolated due to limited bus routes. Rather than public transport being available in a north-south direction, it needs to be rerouted to allow for people, for example, in Greenwood to have easy access to such places as the Wanneroo Hospital, Wanneroo Water World, Kingsley and the Hillarys Boat Harbour. I ask the Government to seriously consider a circular bus route or east-west routes so that different parts of the City of Wanneroo can be linked together.

I welcome the Government's commitment to develop a rail system which will service the residents of the northern suburbs and I accept the Premier's offer to be on hand next year when the northern suburbs railway line is officially opened. Three years ago I led a deputation to the then Minister for Transport seeking a railway service, so naturally I am particularly pleased that northern suburbs' residents will soon be able to commute by rail. However, I remind the Government that because the Mitchell Freeway does not operate as a freeway during peak periods there is an urgent need to establish

a contra-flow lane for buses until such time as the rail service is developed. I offer this as a constructive suggestion to the Government.

In education I am committed to ensuring that literacy and numeracy skills are rightly restored as the most important component in our education system. There is a need for further preschool facilities for four year olds in my electorate. I trust the Government will develop a coordinated policy between all the facilities presently providing preschool education for four year olds and allow sufficient resources to be allocated to provide two half days a week for all four year olds whose parents seek this. Further, my constituents would like the Government to ensure that all five year olds are provided with a place in a preschool or preprimary centre on a non compulsory basis and at a centre of the parents' choice which, in most cases, is the school at which the child will attend for the continuation of his education. I would appreciate positive initiatives to both these problems in my electorate.

I welcome and thank the Government sincerely for committing itself to building two primary schools to be opened by 1990 and I refer to the North Woodvale Primary School and the Dalmain Primary School in Kingsley. I trust the Government will also closely monitor and has a contingency plan in place for another high school to cope with increasing student numbers over the next five years at the Woodvale High School. I also put the Government on notice that I look forward to its honouring the other commitments it gave my electorate during the last election. Those commitments were: The Woodvale Family Centre to be opened in 1989; the Woodvale High School stage four extensions; the Kingsley Family Centre to be opened in July 1989; a rapid rail transit system; \$2 million to the City of Wanneroo to upgrade recreational facilities; and the "Kings Park" of the northern suburbs - a 1 500 hectare park comprising Lake Goollelal, Beenyup and Wallubuenup Swamps, and Lake Joondalup.

I represent Kingsley because I am part of Kingsley and share with my constituents their concerns, uncertainties and aspirations for the future. I look forward to a long and successful parliamentary career with my prime objective of servicing the residents of the Kingsley electorate to the best of my ability. I thank members for giving me the opportunity to speak in this debate. I trust my comments have been constructive and that members now have some understanding of the Kingsley electorate.

[Applause.]