

REGINALD JOHN TUBBY

Condolence Motion

THE SPEAKER (Mr M.W. Sutherland): I give the call to the Premier on the condolence motion —

That this house records its sincere regret at the death of Reginald John Tubby and tenders its deep sympathy to his family.

MR C.J. BARNETT (Cottesloe — Premier) [2.02 pm]: Reginald John Tubby was born in Geraldton in 1924 into a family farming at Gutha in the Shire of Morawa. He attended Gutha Primary School and gained his leaving certificate at the Narrogin School of Agriculture. In 1943, at the age of 18 years, he enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force as a leading aircraftsman, serving in the Northern Territory before being discharged in 1946. In that year Reg Tubby married his wife, Marjorie, and took over an abandoned farm, Bundaleer, at Gutha. He farmed successfully for the next 30 years while actively serving the community on the Morawa shire. He served as president of the local branch of the Farmers Union of WA and of the Morawa Boy Scouts Association for 15 years. He joined the Morawa branch of the Liberal Party in 1949 and represented it at conferences. He was an active member of agricultural societies and ex-service organisations, and served on the management committees of the Morawa golf and bowling clubs.

Reg Tubby in 1953 was elected to the Shire of Morawa at the age of 29 and was to serve until 1976—with four years as deputy president and nine years as president. After the resignation of Sir David Brand in August 1975, Reg Tubby was one of eight candidates for Liberal Party selection for the seat of Greenough. There was considerable satisfaction when Reg Tubby was selected as he was seen as the outstanding Liberal candidate. In the by-election held on 1 November 1975, he gained 45.2 per cent of primary votes and a final majority of 920. At four subsequent general elections, Reg Tubby retained Greenough with absolute majorities as large as those obtained by Sir David Brand. Even in the elections of 1983 and 1986 that were very comfortable Labor victories, he enjoyed the support of over 70 per cent of Greenough electors.

Having relocated his home to Geraldton, Reg Tubby expanded his involvement with community organisations in the midwest. At the 1986 election, his wife, Marjorie, almost succeeded in winning what had been the safe Labor seat of Geraldton. Reg and Marj Tubby were very much a team, reflected by their joint results at what was Reg's last election. Reg Tubby did not seek selection for Greenough at the 1989 state election and Kevin Minson was chosen as his successor. In his last year in the Legislative Assembly, he was joined by his eldest son, Fred, who was elected to the seat of Dale at the by-election on 7 May 1988. Only once before had a father and son served together in the Legislative Assembly.

In his retirement Reg Tubby was most active in the midwest community, serving as president of the Geraldton Probus Club and as a member of the National Seniors Association and the management committee of the Geraldton Queen Elizabeth Seniors Centre. In 2000, at the age of 76, he and Marj returned to Perth. At the end of his life, he was a resident of Grandview Aged Care in Joondalup.

On behalf of members, I express our condolences to Mrs Marjorie Tubby; to their sons, Fred, Ian and Jeffrey, to their daughter, Joy, and to their partners; and to their 10 grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren. The members of the family are in the Speaker's gallery and I extend my personal sympathy to you. Reg Tubby was a really terrific guy with a very close and strong family.

MR M. MCGOWAN (Rockingham — Leader of the Opposition) [2.05 pm]: On behalf of the opposition, I pass on our regards to the Tubby family here today in relation to the passing of Reg.

Reg was born in 1924 and he passed away in October last year at the age of 91 years. He served as a member of Parliament for the electorate of Greenough from November 1975 until February 1989. Prior to that, he served in the Royal Australian Air Force: he enlisted in 1943, served in the Northern Territory and was discharged in 1946. He returned and took over an abandoned farm at Gutha in the Shire of Morawa, and farmed wheat, sheep, cattle and pigs. Members can imagine how difficult that life would have been—to undertake that sort of pursuit would have been a very hard life and involved a lot of hard work.

He joined the Liberal Party in 1949. He was a member of the Morawa branch and was on the Morawa shire council from 1953 until 1976, shortly after his election to Parliament. He spent nine years as shire president, and four years as deputy president.

He served in a whole range of roles in the local community. He was a member and president of the local branch of the Farmers Union of WA, a member of the Primary Industry Association and a member of the WA Farmers Federation. He was a justice of the peace; a member of the Returned and Services League of Australia; president of the Morawa Boy Scouts Association; member of the advisory committee of Morawa District High School; patron of the St John Ambulance Historical Society of Australia; Geraldton president of the Gutha Tennis Club; patron of the Morawa and Kalbarri Golf and Bowling Clubs;

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member and president of the Geraldton Probus Club; member of National Seniors Australia; member of the Geraldton Queen Elizabeth II Seniors and Community Centre; member of the Royal Association of Justices of Western Australia member of the Midwest Woodworkers Association; member of the Bush Fires Board; and member of the Chapman Valley Football Club—as well as becoming a member of Parliament and serving the Liberal Party in this place for that length of time.

I want to quote Reg's final speech. He spoke on his departure from this place in a valedictory speech. After serving here from 1975 to 1989, he said —

My only regret about Parliament is the age at which I came here. It is probably good to make a contribution based on one's experience, but it is rather late in life to do so at 53, as I did, when most members are leaving the House at that age today. Certainly if I had my life again I would come in much earlier. ... I greatly appreciate the support that I have had from my family, particularly my wife Marj. All of our family had left home before I came to Parliament, and she has spent many occasions at home on her own, yet she has never grizzled. I certainly appreciate the wonderful support that she has given me.

...

It has certainly been a pleasure to serve a term in this great institution of Parliament—an institution which I greatly respect. I only hope that during the time that I have been in this Parliament I have set an example, as closely as possible, of following the tradition of Parliament and behaving as I believe a member for Parliament should behave, showing respect for this great institution.

In this same speech, he outlined that he was very proud of the fact that his son Fred was most likely going to be elected at that election in 1989. As was mentioned, both Reg and his son Fred had served in Parliament together in one term. There was also the prospect of Marj—Reg's wife and Fred's mother—serving in Parliament at the same time as both Reg and Fred, which would have created a record in Westminster Parliaments around the world had it actually come to pass—which it very nearly did.

In the house today we have Reg's widow, Marj; Reg's daughter, Joy, and son-in-law, Bob; Reg's son Ian and daughter-in-law Betty; Reg's son Jeff and daughter-in-law Leonie; and Reg's son Fred and daughter-in-law Joan. On behalf of the opposition, we pass on our regards for Reg. Everyone has commented, and his final speech indicated, what a fine, upstanding gentleman he was.

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Parliamentary Secretary) [2.10 pm]: I rise to offer my condolences to the family of Reg Tubby, from myself, on behalf of the National Party, and also from the people of the electorate of Moore. In 2008, the former seat of Greenough was abolished and most of the area covered by the seat went into the seat of Moore and about half the population went into the seat of Geraldton, in the old Shire of Greenough. Morawa, where Reg came from, in Gutha, is certainly part of the electorate of Moore today.

Reg Tubby passed away aged 91 years. He was the loving husband of Marjorie for 69 years; father to Fred, Ian, Joy and Jeffrey; grandfather of 10 and great-grandfather of 18. He was born in Geraldton in 1924 and lived all his life in that area. He attended Gutha Primary School and Narrogin School of Agriculture. As we have heard, he was in the RAAF during World War II. He joined as a teenager and served as a leading aircraftman in the Northern Territory between May 1944 and July 1944, before being discharged after the war, in 1946. He then took over an abandoned farm at Gutha, and continued farming there until 1976.

Reg Tubby put 23 years into local government; serving firstly on the Morawa Road Board and then the Shire of Morawa council, with nine years as president and four years as deputy president. His commitment to his local community, I think, is beyond question. He was a shire councillor; justice of the peace; member of the RSL; patron of the St John Ambulance Historical Society of Australia in Geraldton; member of the Bush Fires Board; member of the Farmers Union of WA, which later became the Western Australian Farmers Federation; president of the Morawa boy scouts; patron of the Morawa Golf and Bowling Club; and a member of the Chapman Valley Football Club, as we have heard, and the Gutha Tennis Club, to name a few. He also sat on the advisory committee of the Western Australian College of Agriculture, Morawa, which is a very important part of the fabric of the northern midlands. He was a member of National Seniors Australia and served on the management committee of the Geraldton Queen Elizabeth II Seniors and Community Centre.

His political career took off in 1949, when he joined the Liberal Party. He was elected member for Greenough on 1 November 1975 in a by-election. He held that seat for nearly 14 years, until 4 February 1989. During that time, he served as Deputy Chairman of Committees from 1980 to 1983 and was a member of the Library Committee from 1980 to 1989. His son Fred continued in his footsteps and was Liberal member for Dale between 1988 and 2001.

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On behalf of the National Party and the people of Moore, I offer my sincere condolences to his family here today.

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah) [2.13 pm]: I would like to pay my respects to the late Mr Reg Tubby, whom I met in Three Springs in 1986. I had been posted to Three Springs Primary School in my first year as a teacher. I was very, very impressed and certainly very appreciative of Mr Tubby when he came to the school in the first term of that year to introduce himself to the new teachers. Three Springs Primary School had had an influx of five new teachers; one male, being me, and four females. You can imagine the excitement of the males in the town with that news. They were not so excited when they saw me! However, I was really touched and appreciative when Mr Tubby came to the school and particularly that he asked about the new teachers who had been appointed. He came into the staffroom and was really interested that we had been posted to Three Springs Primary School. As the local member, he welcomed us, but he also encouraged us to take part in the community. I always remember him saying to us, “Get to know this community and embrace this community, because they will embrace you, if you do that.” I always remember those comments from him. Over the next three years, while I was there—I did not realise until now that it was his final term serving in the Parliament as the member for that area—he made numerous visits to the primary school. I simply say thank you to him and certainly to his family, and pay my respects for him being, I suppose, what we would call an old-style politician, a person who understands their community and, in this case, in my case, made me feel very welcome in the new community that I found myself in. I offer my condolences to Mrs Tubby, the family and the extended family on his passing.

MR I.C. BLAYNEY (Geraldton) [2.15pm]: I would like to pay my respects to Reg’s family. All the time that Reg was the member for Greenough, he was my local member and he was always extremely respected in the community. I also pass on the respects of Kaye Marsh, who worked as Reg’s electoral officer and still works as my relief electoral officer in Geraldton. I represent, population wise, about half the old state seat of Greenough, which, of course, has now gone. My boundaries are the same as the old Shire of Greenough, which has also gone. One day, with population increase, I hope to see the state seat of Greenough restored, but I am afraid we will probably never get the Shire of Greenough back again.

I noticed an interesting parallel between Reg and my father. My father, similarly, took over an abandoned farm in 1946 and he served in the Army, in the Northern Territory. Reg, of course, returned to Morawa to take over Bundaleer. I remember hearing Reg on the radio at home—nobody else has mentioned this—talking about how he lived in a tent when he brought his new bride home to Morawa. Believe me, anyone who has been out at Morawa at that time of year would have a lot of respect for a newly married lady who returns to live in a tent at Morawa. It must have been a pleasure to have any house after that.

I recognise that Reg spent 23 years serving in local government and was, of course, a 49er when he joined the Liberal Party. He took over the seat from Sir David Brand, who was one of our most respected and esteemed Premiers. People might not realise that when we talk about the Farmers Union of WA, the Primary Industry Association and the Western Australian Farmers Federation, we are effectively talking about the same body. It has changed its name a number of times. Both of us served in that organisation. He was a justice of the peace, member of the RSL and served for 15 years with the boy scouts in Morawa. He was a member of many sporting clubs and numerous organisations when he moved to Geraldton. Like our former Speaker Grant Woodhams, he was a strong supporter of the Chapman Valley Football Club. He was really respected and loved in the electorate, and on behalf of my family and our community, I would like to pass on my sympathies to his family. It was a life well lived.

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

Question passed; members and officers standing as a mark of respect.