

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

Resumed from 22 May.

MR MURRAY (Collie) [12.24 pm]: Mr Speaker, I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your election. It is with pride that I stand here today as a Labor Party representative to speak on behalf of the people of the Collie electorate.

However, before I continue, I must thank the many people and organisations who worked very hard to make this possible. First, I thank the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union for its support over many years. It first put to me the idea of becoming a representative of the Collie electorate. Some of the people from this organisation who always assisted me and to whom I am truly grateful for their help include Keith Peckham, Jim Davidson, John Sharpe-Collett and Jock Ferguson, along with many of their colleagues. I wish to thank them for their guidance and encouragement.

The Collie Coal Miners Industrial Union of Workers is another organisation that has assisted not only me, but also many other people in achieving their goals. The union is one of the most community-minded groups around, and each year donates substantial financial assistance to many local charities and welfare groups. While thanking the union for its support, I congratulate its secretary, Gary Wood, along with its president, John Borlini, for their support of the Collie community as a whole.

I thank Hon John Cowdell for his support to our local branch, for which we are grateful. The help he gave me was certainly welcomed. Also, the time and efforts of the many booth workers and behind-the-scene workers were much appreciated.

I give special thanks to my colleagues at the Griffin Coal Mining Company Pty Ltd and my workmates at Wesfarmers Coal Ltd for their help. I will always be indebted to them for the many times that the trades covered for my absence or arranged shift swaps to allow me to attend another of those endless meetings. Maybe - just maybe - now that I have been elected, references to Alf Bussell will cease. Yes, it is the third time I have stood for the seat of Collie, and many people have wondered why.

Over the past eight years I have seen the erosion of workers' rights under the third wave legislation and the decimation of the work force in the coal mines and in public utilities such as Western Power. I have witnessed most public services being shifted out of country towns and relocated in regional centres, such as Bunbury or Albany, with no thought at all for the devastation and hardship it causes to the many people who are unable to drive or who do not have the financial resources to travel 60 to 100 kilometres to access government utilities. All this and hardly a word of protest from anyone in the conservative Government.

Before each election took place, it seemed to me grossly unfair that promises of grand proportions were touted for the coastal strip, yet inland towns like Boddington, Boyup Brook, Balingup, Donnybrook and Collie received very little, again without any protest from the conservatives in government. In fact, at one stage they called it a social dividend. This situation, along with the Labor Party including the basic needs of society - namely, health care, education and policing - as a major part of its election platform, certainly inspired me to work harder than ever in my attempts to become the member for Collie and to add a strong and loud voice for the forgotten.

The health system must be treated with respect and be maintained at a level that is world class. The people who work in these systems should be treated with dignity and respect in recognition of the tasks they perform, and the hospitals must be upgraded to reflect today's standards. It is no longer accepted that the "she'll be right" attitude is good enough for the health system or our hospitals. All people in the health system can be assured of my total support in their quest for better systems that will satisfy their needs.

The education system must also be high on the priority list, with an all-out effort to encourage the youth of today to study and work at attaining high achievement levels. However, it must be remembered that not everyone can be at the top, and consideration must be given to those who may wish to study in the hands-on industries that are very important in our society.

We must be forever aware of our changing world, listen to our teenagers and students, and realise the pressures they feel when asked to perform at the levels required today. It has been said many times that they are our future, and rightly so, and support must be provided accordingly.

Then there is the policing of our great State, which by world standards allows us to live in comfort and safety. However, we can do better and take away the fear felt by the elderly and the young by being strong in demanding higher levels of accountability from all areas and not accepting a lower standard just because someone else has. I do not think it is right that in some areas police are being replaced by security guards to

control crime. This will cause problems in the future due to ownership and accountability, and I strongly support the recommendations for more police on the beat.

I welcome Geoff Gallop's commitment to take government out of the city and to ensure decisions are made that reflect the needs of all Western Australians. However, I remind all members that, although country people support the concept of one vote, one value, they must have avenues in which to participate in decisions that affect their quality of life. I will endeavour to assist the Government to achieve that aim by ensuring the voice of the Collie electorate is heard strongly in Parliament.

As a long-time country resident of Collie and shire councillor for more than 12 years, I believe I have the background and experience to be able to speak on behalf of country people from all walks of life. Although I acknowledge that country people cannot have all the services provided to city folk, a few of the basics would be more than welcome. The basic services that people in the city take for granted but are not readily available to country people include doctors, banks, public transport, Homeswest and Centrelink services. Country people are generous to a fault and in general do not grizzle much. However, as the recent state election indicated, country people are now standing to make their voices heard. The Labor Party's success in gaining so many "unwinnable" seats in the regions - including mine - demonstrates that country people have had enough. The introduction of the goods and services tax had a huge impact on people in the regions when many were forced to shut the doors of their small businesses and trading firms because of the multiplying effect of this unfair tax, which even the most conservative country people are cursing. The failure to listen to country people by many of our politicians, including some of my colleagues, has created a huge gulf between the Western Australian people.

The latest statistics on the section of WA that receives the most income indicates that people in the bush do it hard. Some areas have an average annual income of around \$23 000. When they take from that money for food, petrol, school fees and the like, apart from the cost of buying a house, there is not much left. Farmers have waited ages for flood and drought relief. The federal minister has told some that their applications have not been sighted and, therefore, not processed. What are they supposed to live on? What effect does that have on small and large businesses in the area? They shut their doors and move away to a much more pleasant environment where services are available and where they may be able to get a job that would pay reasonable money to afford them a less heartbreaking life. In my electorate which has gold, bauxite, coal and mineral sand mines together with broadacre farming, viticulture, aquaculture, horticulture, timber and a blossoming tourist industry, the variations between small and large businesses are huge. All these industries need avenues through which they can express their opinions, can be listened to and can be supported; I intend to do just that.

The electorate of Collie has the potential to become a major tourist attraction. A railway line connected to Dwellingup could service Boddington, which has plans for a free-range zoo. Moving further south, Collie has a new national park and motor sports complex. The national park needs to be expanded and there is still much work to be done at the motor sports complex. However, people are working hard to make sure it will happen. Across from Collie, in Donnybrook, the residents have worked hard to shed the tag of the ugliest town in WA. It is now a town which people love to visit because of its diversity and its displays of produce in the new attractive main street. Down the road in Boyup Brook is Harvey Dickson's Country Music Centre, WA's home of country and western music. Further south is Balingup, a town famous for its plum port. It is never short of ideas to promote itself to attract people to the region and away from the coast. I know this speech sounds like an episode of *Getaway*, but one starts to get the idea of the potential of the electorate as a tourist attraction. It is my intention to further expand on the ideas of many people in the electorate and encourage further development of the tourist industry until the Collie electorate becomes the place to be.

My home town of Collie is currently struggling. It is the only town in the south west which recorded a decrease in population of more than 1 500 in the last census period. Although some politicians would like to see Collie disappear forever, that will not happen. I say to members who do not know where it is or have not travelled far enough to have visited the area, it is 200 kilometres south of Perth, with a lovely drive over the ranges into a town that has changed dramatically in the past six to seven years. With that remark, I welcome the Shire President of Collie, who is in the public gallery today. Her presence indicates the commitment she has given to the area. There have been changes not only in the mining and energy industry, but also in the town's physical appearance, with major works being carried out to transform it to fit its new image under the banner of the "Collie River Valley". The Shire of Collie should be congratulated for its efforts to make the town and its surrounds a pleasure to live in or to visit.

Mr Speaker, like other members before me, I shall give a brief and much edited outline of my personal history. Growing up in the small town of Duranillin, my education centred mainly on rabbit traps and a good dog. However, thanks to my parents' insistence, I attended the local school, which had one teacher and 14 students. The teacher taught all levels from grade 1 to grade 7 and also helped a few students with high school correspondence lessons. Most of the students were children of migrants who lived next to the railway line in

tents or in railway houses. I remember being proud of being able to swear in languages that included Italian, Polish, Nyoongah and Dutch; not something mum and dad were proud of. That was multiculturalism at its best. Sure, we had our scraps but they were never about where we came from or what colour our skin was. If only the rest of the world would follow that small school's example; they are fond memories.

When I was 11, we moved to Collie and my education continued in the state school system until I achieved the junior certificate. I then entered the work force as an apprentice mechanic and came under the guidance of a likeable character called Wally Geldert, to whom I am indebted. It was because of his constant insistence that I completed my apprenticeship. I then went off in the exciting 1970s to the north - Dampier, Karratha and Port Hedland - doing construction work with plenty of money and a variety of jobs. These jobs helped fund my wedding along with an extended trip to Europe. When my children were born my priorities changed. There was no more moving from one job to the next or being carefree and travelling the world. My wife and I wanted to make a home for our family and we decided to settle in Collie. I then started work in the coalmines in 1977.

As a person who has worked in the coal industry for 24 years, I have seen changes that still have not been fully acknowledged by many people. During the time I worked underground for 10 years, I witnessed changes from shovel or scoop to bobcat loaders through to mechanical miners. When the underground mines closed, it was the turn of the open-cut mines to modernise. Trucks that carried 110 tonnes were replaced with trucks that carried 300 tonnes, and loaders were replaced with electric shovels that loaded 100 tonnes in one bucketful. Gone are the so-called good old days when there were two shifts, seven-hour working days, early knock-offs, sickies galore and, if we were short of a dollar on a back week, we could hit the boss for a sub to carry us over to the next payday. That may sound like a good thing; however, we should not forget the number of underground miners who lost their lives or suffered horrendous injuries. Thankfully, times have changed. Modern and professional attitudes adopted by the coal companies and their workers have seen the production of coal increase from 4 060 tonnes per man in 1990 to 9 109 tonnes per man in 2000 - a remarkable achievement - and injuries reduced to a figure below the industry's standard. The mining industry has indicated its willingness to change its methods to survive, yet has not been given the credit it is due.

Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons, coal is currently out of favour as the preferred supplier of power. However, it must be remembered that coal has stood the test of time, both financially and supply-wise, while other sources of power generation have been tried and failed. For many years Collie supplied the majority of WA's electricity without major failures or blackouts caused by industrial action or a lack of fuel.

Many members have forgotten the shambles of the 1960s when Sir Charles Court's Government decided that using oil to produce electricity was the way to go. Against loud protests from the then Labor member for Collie, Tom Jones, the Court Government went ahead and converted the State's power stations to oil-fired. That caused much grief to the Collie community: 600 miners were retrenched, leaving 350 homes empty and the closure of 26 shops and one hotel. Back then a block of land could be swapped for a pushbike. Later, came an oil crisis, up went the price of oil and the power stations, being too expensive in their production of electricity, converted back to coal at a huge cost to the WA Government and the community.

I hope we will not see history repeat itself with the use of gas as the preferred fuel at the expense of coal, as I foresee the same problems of supply and price recurring, especially as the federal Government is conscious of its need to maintain the world parity price of gas. The lessons of deregulation, which go hand in hand with fuel supply contracts, should be learnt.

One need look only at what has happened in New South Wales, Queensland and New Zealand., where electricity either failed altogether, or business and householders were given limited power on a rotational basis while they converted to the tried and trusted systems of before. Just last week America was thrown into chaos when power generation and distribution systems failed across the country. In California, the electricity shortage forced an 80 per cent increase in the cost of household power. It is believed that the Californian Government may be building a case to confiscate privately-owned power plants due to profiteering by these private companies, which closed power plants to limit generation and thus raise prices.

Western Australia must be extremely careful in its selection of future power suppliers. I repeat that coal-fired power generation has been a reliable supplier for this State over many years. Over the long term it has proved to be the cheapest source of electricity in Western Australia. The issue of greenhouse emissions is a much-touted excuse. Again, there is strong evidence that when gas is compared with coal from the source at the wellhead to the final burning stage at the turbine, there is hardly any difference in greenhouse emissions. This is due to Collie coal's low sulfur content and lack of methane gas, which makes it a unique energy supply.

Over the years, the Collie community has been promised numerous power stations by various political leaders. However, in all honesty, the only coal-fired power station built in recent years was built by a Liberal Government, and even that was too small to produce the required economies of scale. The community has been loyal in its vote for the Labor Party with a strong belief in a Government with a social conscience. Only time

will tell, but my constituents can rest assured that I will leave no stone unturned in my efforts to secure the future of Collie and surrounding regions.

In finishing, I take time to thank my family and friends who have been extremely supportive and understanding over the years. I thank my mother and father, who manned the booth at Mayanup, where we received two votes. I think they are still looking for those two people! Thank you; those two votes were very important. I thank Bruce Roberts, who is not exactly family, but over the years, as Collie ALP branch secretary, has been someone I could rely on to talk to and on whom I could also vent my frustrations at times. I thank Bruce for his strong support and advice. I thank all branch members for their endorsement of my nomination and for their help over the elections. Finally, I thank my family. It was a long road, but we got there.

[Applause.]

MR BOWLER (Eyre) [12.43 pm]: Before I commence my speech, I recommend that the many members who, sadly, were not in the House when my colleague on my right, the member for Southern River, gave his impassioned address three weeks ago get a copy of *Hansard*. The member has thrown down the challenge to all members, and I hope they read his address in *Hansard*. I have come up with a possible solution to the member's challenge, and others may think of an even better solution. If they do, we will have more people like Paul Andrews walking the streets of Western Australia.

My address is dedicated to my late father, Jim Bowler. Dad, it has been a long time since I left home that night, and so much has happened since then. Now that I reflect, almost all of it has been for the better. Possibly the only disappointment has been the fact that you died so young and have not been around to meet Mary Anne and our five boys. Yes! Five wonderful boys. They are in the gallery. I remember the look in your eye, dad. I know that warmth, pride and love that was there for me would have been there for them also. The first was James Mansell John Bowler, born on Easter Thursday 1980. He was wrinkled, slimy, hair everywhere, and some would say ugly. But I thought he was so damn perfect, that I said to Mary Anne - who was lying there in no condition to object at the time - that we had to call him Jim after you, dad. She agreed. Over the next 10 years, Daniel, Luke, Sam and Joseph were born. Each was just as ugly, and just as perfect, and now each just as handsome; hence the phone calls from the girls.

The whole world has changed, dad. As I said, the girls now call the boys. I know you were always so accepting and knowledgeable about technology, but you would not believe the changes that have taken place. Sadly, as far as lifestyle goes, some are for the worse. The first big personal change came the year after you left - the day after my twenty-first birthday when I started as a cadet journalist at the *Kalgoorlie Miner*. It was as a journalist that I covered the issues that were important to the people of the goldfields. That led me here to the State Parliament, because after reporting on those issues for 30 years, the next step is to find solutions; or even better yet to stop the issues and the problems from developing in the first place. I believe that the best place to do that is here in the State Parliament.

Yesterday was budget day, and I remember you always listened to the ABC broadcast of the federal budget, paying special attention to what was being done about decentralisation. I remember how it had its own place in the budget - up there with defence, education and health. In the last decade, Governments have not even paid lip service to that any more. The gap between the city and the country has never been greater, and while economists and bureaucrats will argue otherwise, proof is in the pudding - people are not going from the cities to the country; they are going in the opposite direction.

It is funny how fate can lead one in a particular direction. It was early 1974 and Gordon Dann, a journalist mate from *The West Australian*, and I were on our way to the Palace Hotel for a Friday night hit out. Gordon wanted to get some food first - a lining on the tummy, so to speak - so we went to the Vienna coffee lounge. It was there that Gordon met an old school friend of his. She sat down with us. With her was a first-year-out schoolteacher called Mary Anne Pires. I fell in love. She was so serene, so beautiful - she still is; and two years later we married. Ian Taylor was our best man. Mum loved Mary Anne, even if she did occasionally mix up the name - Mary Lou, Annabelle, Ann Marie, you name it - anything but Mary Anne. But I am glad Mary Anne got to know mum before she died the following year.

A couple of years later Shack Evans died suddenly while in office as the state member for Kalgoorlie, and Ian Taylor got the Labor Party endorsement and won the seat in a landslide. He went on to become a successful local member, Deputy Premier, and, at one stage, leader of our great party. We are still the best of friends and he came back to Kalgoorlie-Boulder for the last week of my campaign and also to help the former member for Kalgoorlie, Megan Anwyl.

The eighties saw me become involved in community life for the first time, first as a director of the goldfields football league, where I quickly came to admire the sense of public duty and service displayed by the league's

president, Doug Krepp. He taught me a lot, both as league president and later as city councillor, where I observed how he acted and kept an open mind on the issues. At one stage, he was president of the local branch of the Liberal Party. That did not stop Doug from helping me, and I wish to pay tribute to his guidance. Doug also made the comment to me one day that we work to live, we do not live to work. He was referring to the massive changes in workplace reform in the goldfields, once the most unionised industry in the State, but now, I hazard a guess, the least unionised.

Dad, you would not believe the changes that have taken place in the mining industry. I have no doubt that some unions may have gone too far in the 1980s, but the cycle has swung back too far the other way. The union award system has gone, and in its place are individual work contracts for which the worker, supposedly, has a choice. An example of that is a miner whom I coach in basketball. He is a goldfields guy, who is married with two kids. He was working an eight-hour day underground, an hour's drive from Kalgoorlie and an hour's drive back home - a 10-hour day. He was offered an individual work contract for a 12-hour day. That meant 14 hours a day. He responded to the offer by saying that he had a family and he wanted to get home, that 10 hours was enough for him and that he could not be forced to sign. He was told that he was right, but he would now be transferred to the Pilbara - so much for choice.

Extended rosters of 12-hour shifts have led to fly in, fly out arrangements. I call it the cancer of the bush. The pity of it is that it was a Labor Government that allowed it in the first place. It has become far more widespread in previous years under the Liberal Government. There is a place for fly in, fly out arrangements at remote mine sites but not close to towns like those in my electorate such as Kalgoorlie-Boulder, Kambalda, Norseman, Coolgardie, Southern Cross, Leonora, Leinster and Laverton. If the mining operations are close to those towns the work force should be based in those towns. If that trend is to be turned around, changes will be needed to the federal fringe benefits tax and companies need to be given other incentives - some possibly by the State Government - to base their work forces in country towns. As the member for Eyre, I will be a friend of the mining industry; heaven knows that the industry needs every friend it can get. I will be a strong supporter of mining, but mining has to be a strong supporter of the towns from which it gains its wealth.

I recall the day I met a German tourist at the top end of Hannan Street and he asked me whether all the mines were still open. I said, "Yes." He said, "Where's all the wealth gone?" I felt ashamed. He was right; where was all the wealth?

I want to tell the House about a recent trip with my party leader, Dr Geoff Gallop, to the super pit on the golden mile. We were driving in four-wheel drive vehicles and I asked the foreman about the hours that the workers worked. The site is on the doorstep of Kalgoorlie-Boulder. The foreman pointed to one individual and told me that he worked a 12-hour day. I asked about the roster. I was told that he worked one week on day shift and one week on night shift, and he had the following week off. He loves the week off because he can then go to Perth and spend his money. I asked what he did with his child at school and his wife at home while he was in Perth spending his money. He told me that not many married people worked there any more. I thought, no wonder. I asked what the workers got paid an hour. He did not answer that question directly. He told me that workers can earn \$65 000 a year. Although that is a fabulous salary for an unskilled worker, people no longer go to Kalgoorlie-Boulder to live but only to save money and leave. I asked him how long he had lived there. He told me it was only four months. I felt like my friend the member for Innaloo who, as a lawyer, can say, "I rest my case." I do not need to say any more; he said it all for me.

To turn around that attitude we need to make Kalgoorlie-Boulder - and in fact the entire goldfields - a better place in which to live. I want to make it a place where families want to live; not just because of employment prospects but also because of the quality of life. The people there are special; they are doers, they are friendly and they welcome strangers. It is true that some of the facilities and services do not match other regional centres and it is about time the region got back some of the wealth that the German tourist noticed was missing. In that regard I will work to ensure that our Government implements the range of promises it made to the goldfields during the election campaign. One such pledge - number one on the list - is the development of a grass golf course that was initiated by the previous Government. Other pledges I am looking forward to seeing fulfilled in the next four years include measures to increase the number of police officers on duty. More police officers are needed and that need is illustrated by the fact that the former member for Eyre, Julian Grill, had his house broken into last night. I had the unfortunate duty of calling Lesley Grill on a mobile phone and informing her that her house had been ransacked.

I am looking forward to the development of a new recreation centre in Kambalda; a public swimming pool in Leonora; and a safe house in Laverton. Women in Warburton and other parts of the central reserve have to fly over Laverton and all the way to Kalgoorlie to get to the closest safe house. That situation is wrong and I hope the new safe house in Laverton will overcome the problem. There will hopefully be a new community centre in Norseman and improved youth facilities in Kalgoorlie-Boulder. A lot of the developments are aimed at improving the appearance and quality of life in the goldfields. In that regard, I intend to take an interest in

fostering other projects. I was a founding member of the Gribble Creek committee, which is a major environmental rehabilitation project that is turning what was once an eyesore into beautiful parkland in the centre of the city. That work must continue, and so must the excellent work of Doug Krepp in creating a nature reserve at the top end of the creek at a place called Karlkurla Park. Karlkurla is the Aboriginal word for silky pear and that name led to the name of Kalgoorlie.

Another group I helped form was SOS - Save Our School - which has already ensured that all years of the Western Australian School of Mines remain in Kalgoorlie-Boulder and that the world-renowned institution continues to expand.

Although it sounds a bit far-fetched, I would also like to see a man-made beach, complete with waves rolling onto white sand. There could also be some palm trees. People have been saying to me for years that Kalgoorlie-Boulder is the best place in which they have ever lived; it has great character and the people are friendly but the one thing it lacks is a beach. I cannot take Kalgoorlie-Boulder to the beach so I will have to bring the beach to Kalgoorlie. One of the commitments of the Labor campaign was to spend \$50 000 for a feasibility study. It is not rocket science; I understand there are about 40 such beaches around the world and I do not see why there cannot be one in Kalgoorlie-Boulder.

The next step will be to improve the standard of education in the region. It is a major reason that families leave the goldfields. Families leave when children are about to enter primary school, high school or year 11. Members who have been following the inaugural speeches may have noticed the members for Geraldton and Kalgoorlie. The three of us attended Eastern Goldfields Senior High School. It may indicate that all is well, but first appearances can be deceiving - especially in the member for Kalgoorlie's case. I have covered education in the goldfields as a reporter for 30 years and I have built up a mental picture of highly paid and highly resourced teachers. Government after Government, Labor and Liberal, stated that special funding would be given for this and that and that they were great for throwing money into the region. However, I could not reconcile all the money being spent with the terrible results of TEE students. They were almost always in the bottom 10 to 15 per cent of the State. A teacher at Eastern Goldfields Senior High School informed me that, on a per capita basis, that school was the cheapest high school in the State to run. The reason is the high number of first-year graduate teachers; the wages bill is more than \$1 million less than for similar sized schools in Perth. I feel like asking for a stop to the generous extra payments that are being given and for the region to be given the same as is given to schools in Perth. Parents in my electorate are in the top income tax bracket in Australia. As far as education goes, they do not get their fair share of funding. With the Federal Government's new funding formula they will receive even less.

Another challenge facing the Government is resolving native title. Native title was often blamed by the previous Government for all the problems facing the mining industry, especially the big drop in greenfield exploration. Native title has not helped but it is not the main cause. The main cause is the bearish share market and a worldwide downturn in exploration, especially for gold. If native title were the sole reason, why was exploration so vibrant and brisk until 1998-99 when native title was introduced as far back as 1992? I recognise that some of the impediments must be overcome. After eight years of Liberal confrontation and conflict, this Government will do far better with its approach of conciliation and consultation. As the member for Eyre, I will continue to pester and hound the ministers responsible to ensure that the process does not bog down. I will make recommendations to the ministers about a group called First Goal, which brings together three claimant groups from the north eastern goldfields: the Wongatha, the Koara - pronounced Gwarda - and the Wotha. First Goal is a well thought out concept and I expect it to become a blueprint for similar claimant groups throughout Australia. I hope a number of ministers will meet representatives of First Goal during the State Cabinet's forthcoming visit to Kalgoorlie.

Another issue is the cost of water. As a child growing up in Kalgoorlie-Boulder I was continually told about the world-famous goldfields water scheme - C.Y. O'Connor's pipeline. The pipeline is almost 100 years old and has paid for itself several times over, yet commercial users in the goldfields pay \$1.94 a kilolitre compared with 70c a kilolitre in Perth. It is the same water that falls from the sky onto our State, but the cost of it is 70c in one place and \$1.94 in another. That is ridiculous and it is a rip off.

I mentioned earlier the challenge from the member for Southern River, on my right. As members heard, he is one of the lucky recipients of an organ transplant. He said that many more lives could be saved if there were more donors. My suggestion is that at birth, parents should be asked whether they want to register their child to be a donor. The incentive to do so would be that if everything else was equal on, say, medical grounds, the person listed as being a donor would receive an organ before another person of similar age. Once these children turn 18 they can make up their own minds about whether their names remain on the list. I am sure many will choose to do so. Some may say that is coercion. I do not care, as long as it saves more lives. As I said, others may suggest better schemes. As has the member for Southern River, I urge members to go for it.

Finally, I pay tribute to and thank the many people who helped get me here today. They are epitomised by Bill Finn, a retired prospector, who sat all day under a tree outside the town hall in Bullfinch so that I could get 11 votes. By the way, that is nine more votes than Mick Murray's parents received; and I thought Bill was doing badly. He was very proud of those 11 votes. It is tiger country down in Bullfinch and I out polled the Liberal Party candidate, so it was fabulous. Do members know what? The week after the election Western Power cut down Bill's tree. I am sure that in four years time Bill and his lovely wife Elsie will be back outside the hall, but perhaps next time under an umbrella. They are in the public gallery and I am sure Bill cannot wait for me to finish so that he can return to his beloved Bullfinch.

My predecessor, Julian Grill, deserves special mention. During 24 years in Parliament he was described by a former national secretary as the best constituent member of Parliament in Australia he had come across. He was described by farmers as the best Minister for Agriculture they had the privilege to work with. He was roundly regarded as the best Minister for Transport of his generation. He is the man behind Bunbury 2000 and the redevelopment of East Perth. Sadly he blotted his copybook three days before the end of his term with an article that had simply got out of hand from him. However, one mistake in 24 years does not a bad MP make.

His wife Lesley also deserves special mention for not only supporting Julian for all those years but also making the Labor Party in Kalgoorlie-Boulder at the time the strongest in the State and for always being there with a smile and a wonderful little giggle. She did the same throughout my campaign.

To the rest of my committee, Lorna Sharp, Paul Browning, Graham Reside, Marg Mason, Eddie Rochester and Charmaine Cragan; my booth captains, Bill Dixon in Southern Cross, Ben Clark and Trudy Smith in Norseman, Kim Chance in Marvel Loch, Rosemary Pettit in Coolgardie, Neil Higgins in Kambalda East, Bob Beeson in Boulder, Bert Davis in Laverton, Garry Kemp in Leinster, Stephan Grill in Leonora and Vic Bermingham and Mick Valentine in Kambalda West and their many, many friends and supporters, especially Neil Gill, a lifelong friend who helped me on election day and the previous days, I say thank you. I am truly humbled.

Well, Dad, it is time to go. I just want to say that I campaigned on the slogan "I love the goldfields" and that despite its faults, foibles and deficiencies - some of which I have outlined here today - it is the best place in the world. You taught me to love the goldfields and I will never forget that. You taught me to put more into my world than I take out to make this a better place. If you or mum were here today I know you would be proud of me. I also know that you would love Mary Anne and the boys as much as I do.

[Applause.]

MR DEAN (Bunbury) [1.04 pm]: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. As have so many members before me, I offer my congratulations to you. Obviously I extend my sincere thanks to the people of Bunbury who have seen fit to place their trust in me as their elected representative over the next four years. The voters of Bunbury are an educated and discerning group. They know about politics and have been at the cutting edge of politics for the past 50 years as a marginal electorate. They know how to get results. They know about performance management and sometimes they are unforgiving.

In looking for inspiration for this inaugural speech I did my research via *Hansard* and picked up on an overwhelming theme of members' aspirations for their electorates. They set out in detail the ills of their electorates and how they would cure them by adjustment to economic and social policy. I do not wish to go down that path. I have a clear vision for Bunbury based on intervention at a local level. By fulfilling that vision, Bunbury will be further boosted as the premium capital country city.

First, I am tertiary trained in macro and micro economics having gone through the rigours of economics and agricultural economics at the University of Western Australia. Having done so I subscribe to the Schumacher theory that "small is beautiful". Lasting reform will come easily only if attacked at the local level.

Bunbury is a microcosm of Western Australia, but unlike other small towns it has produced some remarkable politicians over the past 100 years. It can lay claim to three Premiers. I refer to Forrest, Newton-Moore and Mitchell. Newton-Moore and Forrest were also members for Bunbury. One thing not remembered is that Newton-Moore spent 14 years in the House of Commons. As the fourteenth member for Bunbury I shall remind our Government what the people of Bunbury have come to expect from their Labor representatives. Moving from Bunbury as a whole to individuals, there exists an endless list - a bit like John Bowler's list - of those whom I must thank. Over the past seven years those people have guided my progress from city councillor to local member.

First, my wife Kathleen, who is in the Speaker's gallery, and who has suffered a lot for my dreams over the past 26 years from my early days at Narrogin, where I was membership officer for the Australian Labor Party, to the high and exalted position I occupy here today. Being in the Labor Party in Narrogin in post-Whitlam years was a pretty thankless task. Through it all, she never lost faith in my ability to reach my aspiration to sit in this place.

She believes greatly, as does every dedicated teacher, that everyone should be given the chance to achieve his or her dreams. This has been my dream.

I also acknowledge my children, who are not here today because they choose to be studying. Well done, suckholes! When we left each of the schools to which we were posted my wife was pregnant. We stopped shifting when we got to Cunderdin and the pregnancies stopped at the same time. There must have been a cause and effect there somewhere. Thank you, children, in your absence for being understanding, particularly over the past eight years while I have pursued my dreams.

My second personal and heartfelt thanks go to a now unemployed person, Bob Thomas, former MLC, whom I regard as a friend, mentor and confidante. After I lost preselection for the seat of Bunbury in 1996 it was Bob who convinced me it was the best thing that could have happened, although I could not see it at the time. He said I would be seen as a survivor for 2001. I think his favourite saying at the time was "Keep your powder dry".

During the federal election of 1998, while running an invincible race against the richest man in federal politics, he and I devised the strategy and the lines to win the seat of Bunbury in 2001. Labor won that seat 18 months ago. From that point we continued to campaign and we shall continue to campaign for the next four years. Thank you, Bob. Without your influence, neither I nor the member for Albany would be here today.

Without doubt, the major political giant of Bunbury in the past 30 years has been Ern Manea, a politician of such stature and skill that he has remained aloof from the party political process. I had the pleasure to serve three years as a councillor with Ern Manea when he was Mayor of Bunbury. He is a remarkable man with an intellect as big as his ambitions for the seat of Bunbury. We meet very few men of this character during our lifetime. I am eternally grateful that he has been part of my life. Secondly, I acknowledge Judy Jones, the current Deputy Mayor, another councillor of whom I must make special mention. Her recall of people and circumstances of postwar Bunbury matches that of Dr Manea.

Moving directly to my election result, I must express my sincere gratitude to Lois Anderson, Greg White and Roy Scaife, who were my combined campaign managers. Two of them are in the audience today. Their tireless work is now deeply appreciated. I also thank Eileen O'Sullivan for her work throughout the transition phase between 1997 and 1999.

As other elected members have given a brief description of their pre-parliamentary lives and the influences that have propelled them to where they are today, I offer the following thumbnail sketch. I, like the majority of members here today, am classified as a baby boomer, but I have my doubts about the member next to me; she is probably from the X or the Y generation.

Ms Radisich: I am the baby of the House.

Mr DEAN: Baby boomers have been handed a great mantle of freedom and liberty. Born, bred and educated in Nannup, I am the son of a successful small businessman and compassionate mother. During World War II, my father spent some time in northern Italy as a member of a partisan group. That experience had a lifelong influence on not only him, but also his three children. That influence even went to the point that my older sister was named Fenesia, after one of his female partisan friends. When he came back to Australia he could speak an Italian dialect fluently, and was immersed in the food - if not the culture and the religion - of that region.

Nannup as a mill town was often the first stop for migrant workers. It was quite common for a special bond to develop between the migrant mill labourers and my father, based on a common linguistic background. My childhood was ideal, and we lived off the riches of the Blackwood River valley. I never wanted for anything. I obtained a very sound education at Nannup Junior High School and finally moved to the University of Western Australia. It was not until some 25 years later, when I came across a comment from Neil Kinnock, that great British Labour leader - who posed the question: why was he the first person in 10 000 generations of his family to attend university? - that the enormity of what I had done finally dawned on me. This achievement only helped reinforce my belief in the Australian Labor Party and the socialist ideals it stands for.

My father, having spent some time as a prisoner of war, knew well the value of life and individual liberty. I value those ideals and they will form part of my guiding force over the next four years. As with a lot of other people in this place today, I am also a product of the Whitlam years; not only did Gough save me from conscription, but also he gave me a free education. I know, for example, that the fees and charges at the University of Western Australia in 1972, pre-Gough, were 40 per cent of my father's taxable income for that year.

I have arrived in this place following a series of complex coincidences. I describe myself as a conservative social democrat, and the current Labor Party is a large enough family in which my beliefs can rest securely. I have faith in the Labor Party to guide us through the challenging times ahead.

I now move directly to the vision for Bunbury. It is a bit of a cliché, but members should see Bunbury now. On 15 December 1982, Phil and David Smith released the Bunbury 2000 plan, and we heard today that Julian Grill was part of that plan. It was a far-sighted document, the consequences of which are still being felt today. One central piece of that document was the urban revitalisation of Bunbury, including the railway stations, the oil storage tanks and the No 1 sewage treatment plant. That final chapter will be commenced when \$100 million is spent over the next 12 months on two hotels and a village square in the northern end of the town. The establishment of a five-star hotel will further enhance Bunbury's reputation as a tourist destination.

The Bunbury 2020 plan is now superimposed on the Bunbury 2000 plan. Under this agenda a Labor Government will actively encourage private enterprise to locate and grow in the south west. It will protect Bunbury's unique environment and improve the lifestyle of the community. It will put in place a program inspired and developed in consultation with the local people of Bunbury. The previous Labor Government did the hard work for the physical infrastructure in the Bunbury 2000 program. However, the Bunbury 2020 program is centred on social and lifestyle issues, and I will now focus on a few of those projects.

I refer, firstly, to the appointment of a Minister for Peel and the South West. I congratulate Hon Jim McGinty on taking up that position. It is leadership at cabinet level for which the south west has been crying out for the past eight years. A wealth of goodwill is felt for the minister at the moment because the people now feel valued and understood. Secondly, one of Dr Manea's and Bunbury 2000's finest achievements - the establishment of the Edith Cowan University - will continue to grow under a Labor Government. The Government will establish a chair of regional development at ECU. Over the next five years regional development will not only be practical, but also will have a true empirical base.

Another significant development during the Bunbury 2000 program was the provision of a regular, reliable, Perth-style bus system. I am happy to say that a good man by the name of Dave Adams has been providing this service throughout the south west over the past decade, through South West Coach Lines and Bunbury City Transit. It has been a welcome addition to our cosmopolitan outlook. However, this needs to be reviewed, and to that end another election commitment has already been honoured - two weeks ago. Estill and Associates Pty Ltd, consulting engineers, ran a workshop a fortnight ago which focused on the transport vision as outlined in the Bunbury 2030 and Bunbury 2020 programs. In the near future, I hope to have the outcomes of that seminar to present to Hon Jim McGinty for implementation.

More examples are contained in our vision for Bunbury 2020, but I cannot leave without expanding on three of my pet projects: They are the new electronic library, a regional social museum and a call centre. These are multimillion dollar collaborative deals with our great partner, the City of Bunbury. It is inconceivable that Bunbury, as the premier country city - sorry, Albany - with a rich tapestry that dates back to 1836, does not have a social museum. It has King's Cottage, but it really needs a museum of a magnitude that takes in not only Bunbury but also the hinterland. Bunbury has existed over the past 165 years, not as an island but as a focal point between the expanded hinterland of the south west and the rest of the world. The museum committee of the Bunbury City Council has already approached me with a method to build and operate the museum, and I have passed this request to Hon Jim McGinty. I will push for this item to be achieved well within the first half of my term.

A single telephone number for government agencies - a call centre - will be established, as it fits in well with our stated aims of decentralisation and regionalisation. A major call centre already exists in the Bunbury central business district. Very few people know it is there and it is of national significance. The Centrelink call centre already employs 300 people on two floors of the Bunbury Tower and provides a service all over Australia. Bunbury has the telecommunications technology to support such single telephone number call centres but, more importantly, it has the skilled work force to fill such positions. Once again, this is another example of the clean, green industry which I am keen to support.

The role of the environment and the failure by the previous Government to grasp the clear aspirations of the people of Bunbury are a large part of the reason I am standing here today. One issue that drew me to local politics was a report written by the member for Vasse, Bernie Masters, on three blocks of tuart forest known as blocks 301, 302 and 303 West Withers. I take the opportunity to congratulate the member on his report. It was a first-class piece of scientific endeavour. In the public consultation process the people of Bunbury sent a clear message that they did not want West Withers touched. As the member for Vasse pointed out, it was a quality piece of tuart woodland that needed to be preserved. I made a submission during the public consultation process early in 1993-94, and piggybacked into the city council on that issue. The travesty is that after eight years, the West Withers tuart forest is still not safe from development. It has not yet been placed in an A-class reserve.

During the past three years, an adjacent forest, the Shearwater tuart forest, has emerged as an equally vital issue. This forest, owned by Homeswest and the City of Bunbury, is well worth preserving. A large grass roots organisation grew up in Bunbury to preserve this forest. It had its culmination in a petition organised by Mr

John Sherwood, Ruth Taylor, Brendan Kelly and Phil Smith of the South West Environment Centre. That petition had nearly 4,000 signatures. A clear public statement was made for its preservation. The petition suffered an inglorious ending when the local member refused to accept it - another nail in the coffin.

I must take time to personally thank John Sherwood, Phil Smith and Bernard Bischoff for being a major driving force behind the environmental movement in Bunbury, particularly their role in the Shearwater preservation. They have the ability to organise, mount and sustain a movement that has brought many environmental benefits to Bunbury and the surrounding areas. When the ocean to Preston River park becomes a reality, it will owe its existence to John, Phil and Bernard.

Throughout my doorknocking, it became perfectly clear that the preservation of old-growth forest was a major vote-changing issue. Having been raised in Nannup, this was for me a change of paradigm that took some time to come to grips with. During the six months leading up to the election, I was not a popular person in the front bar of the Nannup Hotel. I said at all times that the Labor Party would not desert those people, and I am more than happy to report that, as a result of the \$1.4 million spent by this Government to bring the Nannup timber mill up to a value-adding stage, I can now think and drink in peace at the front bar. This is truly a win-win situation. The electors of Bunbury are happy that the Labor Party has fulfilled its election promise and the people of Nannup now have a viable future.

A second major environmental plank that surfaced during the “phoney war” in the 12 months leading up to the election was the issue of the Back Beach, an issue in which the former Deputy Premier is well versed. The Back Beach is a well-kept secret. It is free of stingers, and warm enough to have a substantial swim, unlike the beaches to the south of us. It is not a cliché to say that the people regard the Back Beach as an icon. Messing with their beach is messing with Bunbury. However, it is at a point, due to population pressures, at which it does need restoration work. As a former chairman of the city council’s Back Beach enhancement committee, I have had a special interest in it. At one stage the committee released a plan for restoration that was firmly rejected by the people of Bunbury. Therefore, we went back to the drawing board. However, it was such an important issue that it was hijacked by the State Government in 1996, and then it set off on its own path to self-destruction. As happened in the case of the Shearwater tuart trees, a group of concerned citizens rose as one to protect their icon. I must make special mention of Ross Ranson, Erol Barrett and Mike Smith, who were in the vanguard of the group of citizens that took the fight to the Government and won - another nail in the coffin. The people of Bunbury rejected groynes as an option to conserve their beach. This Government has committed itself to preserve the funding of the Back Beach, and works will commence shortly in the Rocky Point area. As with Shearwater, the people cried out and were ignored for a long time. However, people power won in the end, and that is another reason I am standing here today.

It would be remiss of me not to mention state education in my inaugural address. Having spent 23 years as an educator, 11 of those as deputy principal at Australind Senior High School, I can only shout from the highest hilltop my deep and unwavering admiration for everything my colleagues are doing in state schools. This is particularly in the case of teachers in primary schools, where the advent of student outcome statements and curriculum frameworks has magnified an already difficult and time-consuming vocation. I call on the Minister for Education to reassess the present position on curriculum frameworks, particularly in the light of the proposed new upper school curriculum. Teachers are tired and need to consolidate.

My progress through the Education Department of Western Australia over the past 23 years has been an enjoyable one. With a degree in agricultural economics, I moved to agricultural colleges, where I could put my farming frustration to theoretical use. At Narrogin Agricultural College in 1978 and 1979 I taught farm economics, and during my eight years at Cunderdin I taught sheep husbandry to a fair number of people who I hope are now successful central wheatbelt farmers. At Narrogin I met two Labor people who were the most influential in moving me towards a political career - my head of department, Dennis Doust, and his wife Pam. Dennis was one of the most decent human beings I have ever met. As my mentor, he helped me and my wife through my initial years of teaching. Dennis Doust was president, secretary and treasurer of the Narrogin branch of the Australian Labor Party, and, as I have already said, in post-Whitlam years in rural Western Australia, that was not a pleasant thought. He was a man of great values and principles, to such a degree that he left teaching in 1986 and became a full-time Uniting Church minister. He is currently posted at Pingelly.

The Bunbury electorate has two very good senior high schools and a first rate Catholic college, where Hon Jim McGinty received a very good grounding in the classics. Having spent three years on the board of the Catholic college, I know it is run with the best interests of students in mind. Also in my electorate there are five state and two Catholic primary schools. I know many of the staff at those schools, and I know first-hand that their work is their life. During the last four years, parents have been fighting to maintain the status quo with respect to the structure of these schools. It has not been an easy task, but common sense has prevailed. It is not a process that this Government will put its people through. My presence here is another consequence of the consultation process that the previous Government failed to carry out - another nail in the coffin. Bunbury and Newton

Moore Senior High Schools are starting to show their age. I am keen to continue with the refurbishment of Newton Moore Senior High School, and to implement a building program for Bunbury Senior High School. This will be made possible by a joint effort of the Government and the City of Bunbury to develop reserve 9997 on the Back Beach, which will provide an excellent athletics track, not only for Bunbury Senior High School, but also for after-hours use. This will be another unmistakable sign that there exists a real partnership between this Government and the Bunbury City Council. Bunbury has a number of primary schools, which, when built, served the community well. However, in the age of student-centred learning, their 1960s structure is deficient. One such school is Bunbury Primary School. Built in 1962, it served its purpose well when textbooks and teacher-centred learning were the go. The needs of the new millennium are vastly different. Teachers must now tackle such diverse issues as drug education, student sexuality, growth development, values education and pastoral care. To cater for such a diverse curriculum, such things as sick rooms, wet rooms, purpose-built specialist rooms and open classrooms to facilitate collaborative learning must be built, and all those older schools lack these facilities. Why spend millions on new schools when the basic structure already exists? Not only does the physical structure exist, but also a culture of the school already exists in many cases that has come from the hearts and minds of the parents and the local community. Bunbury primary is an ideal site to convert a school from the mid-twentieth century to the twenty-first century. It could become a true lighthouse school.

Education is dear to the hearts of many people. Investments made today will be paid back many times. This Government has correctly identified that concern, and quarantined education from funding cuts. The average age of teachers continues to increase. As with nurses, we need young, vibrant people to take up the challenge. The profession must reinvigorate. However, I do have grave concerns about the unintended sex bias that is creeping into the profession, particularly in primary schools. Research needs to be initiated to establish why young males are no longer seeking to become primary school teachers. They are a dying race.

No mention of Bunbury could be made without a significant comment on the role of the Nyoongah people in its development. The Nyoongah people of Gomburrup, which is the Aboriginal name for Bunbury, proved to be, according to Lieutenant Henry St Pierre Bunbury in 1836, a civilised, peaceful and very curious people. Up until 1850 the majority of the total population of Gomburrup was Nyoongah. Throughout the early Wadjela history of Bunbury, relations with Aboriginal people were complex. The interaction of two incompatible cultures, stimulated by need and the desire to coexist, places us where we are today. Overall, it has not been a happy and desirable outcome. We have arrived at a situation today in which the local Nyoongah culture, language and beliefs are making a substantial resurgence. As with most Wadjelas, I did not have a great deal to do with Nyoongah people while growing up in Nannup. However, while I was on long service leave in 1991, I had the opportunity to work with two Nyoongah sisters, Rose Whitehurst and Merelda Hardy, in their business, Wanandi Enterprises. I was employed by them to instigate homework classes, stretching from Brookton to Busselton, and I came to know and respect the great difficulties under which their culture is operating.

In 1994 the Bunbury City Council, of which I was a member, signed "A Commitment to Nyungar People", and I would like now to read that document into the record. It states -

The City of Bunbury acknowledges that Nyungars were the first people of this area and have survived Wadjela (Non-Aboriginal) settlement for more than two centuries

The arrival of Wadjelas brought massive changes to this land and to its indigenous people

For its part, the City of Bunbury acknowledges and grieves for the loss by the indigenous people of their land, their children, their health and their lives

We acknowledge the right of Nyungars to live according to their own values and customs, subject to law, and to mutually respect Nyungar special places

The Council supports Nyungars and Wadjelas working together towards a treaty or other instrument of reconciliation which promotes a greater understanding of Nyungar and Wadjela peoples history and culture in our community

This Council recognises the positive contribution made by Nyungars and looks forward to a future of mutual respect and harmony

That document is once again signed by that great man, Dr Manea, and Alice Bennell and Phyllice McGuire, two elders of the Nyoongah people. It is dated 6 September 1994. Once again, Bunbury City Council is far ahead in the game. I make special mention of Steve Hill, an excellent history teacher, who is also a city councillor. He was one of the driving forces behind that commitment.

Where to now for the Nyoongah people? I think there is light at the end of the tunnel. Carey Park is home to Djidi Djidi Aboriginal School, a primary school with a current enrolment of about 100. The school teaches mainstream Wadjela education as well as Nyoongah culture and language. The school is prosperous and stable

and the children are delightful; however, it is only a start. There is a compelling reason to insist that the study of Nyoongah language and culture be transferred to the tertiary education field. A generation ago, only about 20 people knew and understood the language. Thankfully, this has changed. I would like to see the implementation of some form of tertiary studies of Nyoongah language and culture. The Bunbury campus of Edith Cowan University would be an ideal site, and it could easily collaborate with Djidi Djidi so that lifelong learning is truly achievable. I am happy to report that one of the Government's achievements has been the opening on 19 April of the Nyoongah Language And Culture Centre Keeping Place. It will revive and preserve the Nyoongah culture. It is a start, but it does not diminish my call for tertiary studies in that field.

I move onto electoral reform. I am the member for one-third of Bunbury. The greater city of Bunbury is about 65 square kilometres. The Australian Electoral Commission identifies the City of Bunbury as covering an area of 22 square kilometres. I look forward to representing the entire city under a system of one vote, one value. I look forward to the placement of Rathmines, Carey Park and Kinkella Park fairly and squarely in the electorate of Bunbury. Any person who says he could not handle the additional workload should not enter politics. The Premier has given a guarantee that Bunbury will be retained as a seat, and I look forward to representing 100 per cent of Bunbury, not just 33 per cent.

The Labor Party made many promises to the electorate in the run-up to the election. However, one promise I could not make was to a teacher at Australind - I told him at the time it was not kosher - to call for a royal commission into umpiring standards against St Kilda Football Club. I say to Keith that I am sorry; but I cannot do that in this place.

In concluding, I refer to my opening remarks. The people of Bunbury are politically aware. They base their judgment on performance and, in one way or another, they have been giving the correct call for the past 50 years. The people will judge; the people will decide. When it is time to look back, in either four, eight or 12 years, I wish to be able to let the people of Bunbury know that I arrived and achieved to my maximum. I want them to abide in the words of one of my favourite authors, St Paul, when he wrote to Timothy -

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

[Applause.]

MR WALDRON (Wagin) [1.33 pm]: In rising to present my maiden speech, I feel extremely honoured, humble and proud to represent the Wagin electorate and indeed all Western Australians. It is a large responsibility and I look forward with positive enthusiasm to meeting that responsibility and doing the best I possibly can for the people in my electorate and Western Australia. I sincerely acknowledge my predecessor, Hon Bob Wiese, for the outstanding contribution he made to this State and particularly to the people of the Wagin electorate over the past 14 years. A former Minister for Police, Bob was a tireless worker who operated with great honesty and integrity and always had the people of his electorate and Western Australia in mind. Through my election campaign and my experiences over the years, I know how highly regarded Bob was and still is throughout our region and across Western Australia. I also recognise Chris Wiese, Bob's wife, for her outstanding contribution and her total and loyal support of Bob over the past 14 years. They were very much a team. Bob has left me extremely large shoes to fill, which I will endeavour to do to the best of my ability, always knowing that I will be satisfied and proud if, at the end of my period as a parliamentarian, I am as highly regarded and respected as Bob Wiese is today. I sincerely thank the people of the Wagin electorate for putting their confidence in me. I say to them today that I will work extremely hard and endeavour to give them the best representation possible. I also thank the National Party and my election campaign committee for their great work and support over the past year, especially my campaign committee chairman, Doug Fowler; my treasurer, Mary Graham; and all other committee members. I thank also the National Party state director, Jamie Kronborg, for his efforts and guidance; all my National Party colleagues; plus the many other people who assisted me. I mention also the people in the National Party branches in my region for their great work and support over a sustained period. I also thank very much the management and staff of the West Australian Football Commission and the Western Australian Country Football League for their great understanding and encouragement over the past 12 months, in particular Jeff Ovens, John Lussick, Ken Baxter, Grant Dorrington and Ian Taylor, who has already been mentioned here today. I especially thank Ian for his guidance while I sought election.

The electorate of Wagin comprises 11 shires, plus the town council of Narrogin. It stretches from Wandering in the north to Tarin Rock in the east, Broomehill in the south and Darkan in the west. My electorate houses two major regional centres: Narrogin and Katanning. It also houses a number of smaller towns and many more smaller community centres. The region is very much reliant on agriculture and associated industry and business, although there is a definite move in the region towards greater farm diversity and the introduction of new industries when economically possible. However, both these areas will need further state and federal government support, which should be provided via research and, in some instances, venture capital. Although farming is still the economic backbone of our region, the number of farms and farming families has decreased.

The majority of the population is now involved in a variety of occupations and is much more multicultural. At this point I acknowledge the contribution of the Nyoongah people and the large role they have played in my region. I have had a good relationship with the Nyoongah people over the years through my schooling, business and sporting activities, and I have developed many friendships with them. I look forward to continuing to work with them in my new role. I also congratulate all those people who have, either recently or over the years, come to my region from other countries. I recognise the great contribution they have made to the region. Although we have historically been an economically strong and sound region, we have been through one of worst farming seasons in memory and, combined with other seasonal circumstances such as drought, frost and low commodity prices, the region has experienced a severe economic downturn. A reasonable to good farming season in 2001 and improved commodity prices are critical to the future of the region, the people in the region and the State. Most of my region has experienced some good opening rains this year, but the eastern areas have not had that as yet. Those farmers will be looking for that over the next few days.

At this point I provide the House with a brief personal background. I was raised on the family farm at Jingalup, a small place in the Wagin electorate about 20 kilometres south west of Kojonup. I am a very proud Jingalup-Kojonup country person. I attended a small two-room school at Jingalup - the mighty purple and golds - before attending Hale School, where I was a boarder for seven years. After completing my leaving, I returned to the family farm for just over a year before returning to Perth, where I worked in the insurance industry and furthered my football and cricket career. This six-year period included a year working and playing sport in Adelaide. I returned to Kojonup in 1975 and for the next 15 years worked in rural real estate, selling farms, businesses and houses across the region. We ran our own real estate business out of Kojonup and I later managed Elders Real Estate southern area operation out of Katanning. We also ran the farm until it was sold in the mid 1980s. In 1990, I followed a passion of mine by working in regional sports development - in particular, in cricket and football development. That led to my appointment as general manager of the Western Australian Country Football League in 1992. I held that position until the state election.

I am married with four daughters and now reside in Narrogin, which is central to my Wagin electorate and the site of my electorate office.

During the preselection process and the election campaign, many people asked me, "Tuck" - my nickname - "why do you want to get involved in state politics?" That is an excellent question and one I feel I should answer here today. I have three main reasons for getting involved: first, I have always represented Western Australia and, in particular, country Western Australia with great passion - whether it be in business, sport or in my previous role of developing and managing country football - and I want to continue that representation in this Parliament. Second, over the past few years I have worked very closely with the Government, government agencies and many politicians. Having watched government agencies and politicians at work, I felt confident that I could do the job and represent the people. Third, being a country person who has also spent a great deal of time in the city, I have witnessed first-hand and have been very much aware of the many inequities that exist between the city and the country. I wanted to get involved in state politics to redress those inequities. Those inequities exist in many areas, such as health services, the education arena, banking and communication services, fuel pricing, cultural and sporting opportunities, transport services and so on. With the support of my electorate and the National Party, I will strongly represent the interests of country people in ensuring that those inequities are kept to a minimum.

I feel very strongly that in everything we do we must remember that we are dealing with people, real people. Those of us on all sides of politics sometimes forget or do not take fully into account the effect of the decisions we make. Our decisions can change dramatically how people live their lives and in some cases where they live their lives. This brings me to an issue and a reality that concerns people in country Western Australia; it also concerns me. I refer to being able to maintain strong rural communities in Western Australia. These communities should be able to provide excellent facilities, services, opportunities and security for our families. Many of our smaller country towns are struggling to survive, and even the larger towns and bigger regional centres face many challenges. The breakdown of rural communities directly affects people and, in particular, families. This poses our greatest challenge and it is pivotal to Western Australia's future. We must maintain strong rural communities. We must support our farmers to ensure they remain viable, as in a high percentage of rural Western Australia, farmers still provide the economic backbone of our communities. We must also support the mining industry, because it is vital to those communities in which it operates. However, I have some concerns about the effect of 12-hour shifts on families, sporting life and our communities generally. Of course, the fly in, fly out arrangement does nothing to enhance local communities. We must find innovative ways to sustain jobs in industries and services we now have in our country communities. We must also find innovative ways to create new jobs, because ongoing and new employment opportunities are the key to maintaining and growing our communities. We can achieve this by attracting and supporting new industries. The pilot oil mallee plant being established in Narrogin is a good example of such innovation. We must also ensure that we maximise the number of government contracts awarded locally, thus providing a boost to local economies. We

must maintain and increase the number of government agencies in our country communities. Those agencies provide local services to the people and boost the local economy. It is a two-way arrangement. We must also continue to expand the tourism industry in rural Western Australia. Many country communities are working very hard individually to achieve that goal, and I could cite some fine examples in my region. However, those communities will need further assistance and guidance to work together to coordinate tourism development properly throughout country Western Australia. While many good initiatives have been implemented in tourism, we must have a coordinated approach to realise its potential. The proposed new leisure rail project is an ideal example of an initiative that, with support, will bring great benefit to southern rural Western Australia both from an economic and an employment perspective.

We must encourage and support our existing small businesses. We must assist and work with small business operators so that they can expand their operations and, thus, ensure their role as employers providing greater security for our people.

Of course, to encourage people to remain in our communities, we must provide facilities and services. I refer in particular to health and education services. The provision of those services in my electorate has improved greatly over the past few years, thanks very much to the efforts of the coalition Government. We must attract, look after and retain the people required to work in these service areas; that is, the doctors, nurses, health professionals and teachers. Providing attractive and fair conditions of employment and modern accommodation are key areas that must be addressed. It is important to provide equitable educational opportunities at the primary and secondary levels and also at the tertiary level with TAFE facilities, universities, technical colleges and so on. Banking services are also essential. With major banks pulling out of many country centres, I strongly support the establishment of community banks in country towns, which, with local community involvement, can ensure a local service. The Bendigo Bank and other financial institutions that deliver personalised, local banking services will always be supported.

Telecommunications services are vital to our country towns. Better Internet access, a wider mobile telephone network and maintenance of the telecentre network are essential. Mobile phone coverage is very unreliable outside the major towns. In fact, if members were to ask country people what "CDMA" stands for, they would respond, "Call didn't matter anyway." I am hopeful that the agreement secured by the former Deputy Premier Hon Hendy Cowan between Telstra, the Commonwealth Government and the State Government will overcome this problem, at least in the south west land division, and that the recently announced federal funding package will also assist in this area.

Adequate and accessible police services must be retained and improved in country Western Australia. Given the increase in drug-related crime, law and order is an important issue in rural areas, and particularly in major regional towns. We must also have access to police in our smaller communities. Those communities need, want and will support one-man police stations. Transport services and well-maintained roads are also important factors in supporting strong rural communities.

While everything I have mentioned is vital, it is also important that people in country communities have access to sporting, recreational, cultural and other social opportunities. People will not remain living in a town if they cannot enjoy themselves socially. Although that is true of people of all ages, it is particularly so of young people in country Western Australia. Mention has been made already today of young people leaving our country centres. That movement concerns me. We must provide facilities, services and social activities to ensure that our young people stay and work in the country and, at the same time, enjoy their lives. We must also ensure that our families have security and opportunities and that our elderly people can retire in these country towns, close to their families and knowing that they have local access to social and health services.

We must support and maintain sporting, cultural and recreational facilities in our country towns. In this, the year of the volunteer, I especially acknowledge the efforts of volunteers. I recognise the fantastic and important role they play across our State. I support the role they play in many areas including sport, recreation, culture, social groups and the various activities that are essential for people to enjoy a normal social and active life, especially in country Western Australia.

All those activities play a crucial role in the physical and mental health of country people. It is extremely important to be involved in physical and social activities that take us away from the everyday business and financial pressures that we face. Physical and social activities give us a chance to take time out to relax, socialise, enjoy ourselves and recharge our batteries. It is important to do that because of some of the huge stresses that have been placed on people over the past couple of years.

I will refer to the values that I see in team sport and team activities. Team sports and group activities are important. I am positive that being in a team environment enables young people to become better community members by helping them to gain self-esteem and accept discipline and responsibility. Whatever team activities

we play, we learn that we rely on others and that others rely on us. Team sports teach us responsibility that helps us throughout our lives.

It is also essential that we retain the successful progress rural WA program that was introduced by the former Minister for Primary Industry, Monty House, and, in particular, the WA rural leadership program that has greatly helped outstanding young country Western Australians prepare to take on leadership roles within their own country communities. That is important for the future of those communities, and it is of great importance to the youngsters who will take those benefits with them through their lives.

Earlier, I mentioned that the decisions this Parliament makes affect real people. Any decisions we make that affect country communities must be made carefully and we must always keep the people of those communities strongly in our minds. I am extremely confident that most rural communities can and will survive. I have great faith in the resilience of country people. I have seen them get back off the ground to fight again. However, they will need to make a committed effort, which I know they will do, and receive support from local, state and federal Governments.

I will refer to some specific areas that I intend to pursue on behalf of my electorate and the people of Western Australia. My constituents repeatedly raised some issues during the election campaign over the past 12 months or so, including the mounting mental health problems encountered throughout country Western Australia. Those problems occur largely because of seasonal conditions, isolation, drugs, alcohol, financial pressures and a real sense or a perception of being forgotten about. Many other factors also contribute to the problem. I am concerned that we need more mental health professionals in country areas to assist these people. We also need help for those health professionals because they are under enormous pressures and have heavy workloads; they too are suffering and need our assistance.

We must ensure also that the fight against salinity continues and that we assist in better land care and water management. More money from federal and State Governments is required in this area for ongoing research and to assist farmers and land care groups in their on-ground activities. The farmers and land care groups have led the fight against salinity. Assistance for research and on-ground activities must also be given to Agriculture Western Australia and the Department of Conservation and Land Management.

Road safety is a big issue that has been raised with me on a number of occasions. I have been involved with country football and the belt-up campaign that we promoted in the country. That campaign made me aware of the issues of road safety. Too many people, often young people, are injured or killed on our roads each week. We need more research into the causes of, and methods of reducing, this continuing carnage. I am particularly concerned at the number of deaths and injuries on our country roads in Western Australia. Although I do not feel that a blanket reduction in the speed limit is the answer, we must look into different road classifications. It may be appropriate to have different speed limits on different road standards; for example, a lower speed limit on gravel roads. Perhaps this is only one area of road safety, and we must continue to examine the overall approach. It is imperative that we build on existing driver education and training, to ensure that new young drivers are well prepared when they first drive on our roads and that they can drive safely.

It has become apparent to me since talking with people on election day, and also through my own observations, that the handing out of how-to-vote cards at polling places should probably cease. It is a huge waste of material, money and people's time. The voting public tell me that they are fed up with being harassed by all and sundry at the polling places. It appears to me that most voters either take everybody's how-to-vote card or none at all. We should stop this wastage by putting how-to-vote cards for all the candidates in each electorate in a prominent position. Boards should be displayed inside and outside the polling place and in each polling booth. It is time we treated the voters as the intelligent people they are.

In the interests of a fair go, I ask all members to consider carefully any new legislation dealing with one vote, one value and changes to the electoral boundaries. We must ensure that whatever changes are made, the country people, who are already greatly disadvantaged in many ways, at least have a fair and equitable say in the governance of our State; that is all they ask.

Before I close, I sincerely thank my family. I thank my father and late mother very much for their guidance and love, and for giving me every opportunity in life. I am honoured and thank them greatly. I thank my two sisters, Delphine and Rosemary, and their husbands, Peter and Brenton, for their love, assistance and encouragement. I thank also my wonderful wife, Noelene, for her love. She is a great lady who has given so much to our family. I thank also my four fantastic daughters. The member for Eyre said that he has five sons. I have four daughters - maybe they will get together one day! I thank Jemma, Kelly, Bonnie and Jessica for their love and understanding and for putting up with dad. They make my life fun and they are the most important people in my life.

I conclude by congratulating the Speaker and you, Madam Deputy Speaker, on your appointment. I look forward to working hard and representing the people of the Wagin electorate and the people of Western Australia to the very best of my ability. I also look forward to working with all members of this House for the future growth and success of our great State. I look forward to working for the people whom I am proud and honoured to serve.

Debate adjourned until a later stage of the sitting, on motion by Mr Marshall.

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