



PARLIAMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

INAUGURAL SPEECH



Mr Paul Miles MLA
(Member for Wanneroo)

Address-in-Reply Debate

Legislative Assembly

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ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

MR P. MILES (Wanneroo) [3.20 pm]: Mr Deputy Speaker, as the new member for Wanneroo, I thank you for the opportunity to address the house today. I begin by congratulating you on your appointment to the position of Deputy Speaker. It is a very highly honoured role, and I am sure you will discharge it with dignity and great fairness.

In the short time available to me, I would like to do three things: acknowledge the proud history of Wanneroo, touch on a few of the issues that obviously contributed to the level of support I received in the ballot box in September and, lastly, thank the many dedicated people who assisted me to gain the confidence of my community to the degree that, after a second attempt, they have placed their collective trust in me as their MP.

The electorate of Wanneroo is a diverse and colourful place. In its 114 square kilometres, there resides a veritable cornucopia of nationalities. In the main, Wanneroo residents are hard-working people who prize their freedom and to whom, more than anything else, I am forever indebted for their trust and confidence in electing me to this house to represent them. That is something I intend to do without fear or favour for all residents of the Wanneroo electorate, whether or not they voted for me. The outgoing member, Di Guise, was a good local member. I would like to put on the record my admiration for her work and acknowledge her real contribution to both the Parliament and the community of Wanneroo over the past seven and a half years.

Mr C.J. Barnett: Hear, hear! Well said.

Mr P. MILES: She has left large shoes to fill, but I am determined to do so. I wish her well in her life after politics.

Wanneroo has a long and compelling history. For many years, people would roll their eyes and look at people who said they were from Wanneroo way as though they were aliens. In the early days, people driving bullock carts would make the long trip of several days from the market gardens in Wanneroo to Perth and back again, stopping for a while to chat and share a few beers at the seven-mile peg in Balcatta. They were pioneering times and, in a way, I share that spirit. I too feel like a pioneer, especially at the moment. I want to see Wanneroo grow and prosper. I want to see the Wanneroo area modernised while retaining its heritage and character, and not become just another cookie-cutter city centre like many other places in Western Australia. I want this to be a central hub for local communities where people can gather and enjoy themselves and even debate in the spirit of community involvement. Many people in the chamber today will know that I have been heavily involved in community life for a long time. I am a councillor representing the north ward of the City of Wanneroo, and have been an official on many school and community bodies. In its catchment

area, Wanneroo has 12 schools with a further two secondary schools in the pipeline. Given it has such a large school population, I am particularly passionate about furthering the education excellence in the electorate. These students are the future of Wanneroo, and I believe they deserve the best educational opportunities available to ensure their future success. Wanneroo is a rapidly growing area that will need sensible guidance in the provision of additional educational and health services in particular.

My life did not begin in Wanneroo; I was born in the United Kingdom. My parents, Beryl and Alan, migrated to Australia and Perth in 1970. We came with my two sisters, Lisa and Jane, and we lived in Cedric Street, Balcatta, which is why the seven-mile peg amuses me. It was not long before we moved to Girrawheen where my two brothers, Adam and Matthew, were born. Sadly, my mother, Beryl, passed away several years ago as a result of a brain tumour. I am sure she would be a proud woman today if she were still with us. My father, Alan, is living in Scarborough, and my brothers and sisters and their families are scattered around the world from Kalbarri, Toodyay and Mandurah to Thailand, where my brother, Matthew, is a factory manager and lives with his wife, Nong, and their two boys.

I now have two children, Anna, 20 years old, and Jacob, four years old. I also have a two-year-old grandson, Mark. The thing that scares me the most about coming to this place is that I might somehow become too busy and inadvertently neglect my family. I can say from the outset that I will not let that happen. Family is too important to me, just as it is to most of the electors of Wanneroo who sent me to this place. I have seen the effects of that sort of over-commitment. While I pledge my 100 per cent effort to the people of Wanneroo, I trust they will appreciate that, like them, I have competing priorities. I will represent my constituents, the residents of Wanneroo, without fear or favour. I will listen to people's concerns and I will act. These are the pledges I make to them today.

I want to thank my campaign team and the many helpers who assisted, such as Des and Norma Power, who I acknowledge are now recorded in my memory, if not the *Guinness Book of Records*, as the fastest letter stuffers in the world after stuffing some 14 000 letters in one week. To Sue and Les MacDonald, Sherryl Stiles, Gary MacLean, Douglas Valeriani and Michael Mischin—soon to be Hon Michael Mischin, as a Legislative Councillor-elect—and to the guys who gave up their morning sleep-ins to wave corflutes on street corners, and everyone else who assisted with the campaign effort, my sincere thanks. Without their unwavering support during the recent lightning election campaign, I would not have hoped to be where I stand today. To my darling wife, Shelly, and her family, without whose help and support I would never have been able to do this, I send a very heartfelt and very public thank you. She is in the gallery. Other people helped me; they know who they are, but they prefer not to be named in this address. To them I say thank you. I might be originally a Pom, but after nearly 40 years living in this magnificent state, I know a thing or two about Aussie-style mateship and how to thank everyone who has stood by me all these years. I also thank the Liberal Party team at Menzies House—Zac Kirkup and Ben Morton included—for their unstinting support and confidence in me in the lead-up to the campaign in the midst of the action when things got serious.

During the election campaign it became obvious to me that a number of local issues require urgent attention in Wanneroo. I intend to go into bat for them immediately. Among them are several vital matters that the previous government seemed to have deemed unimportant in the grand scheme of plans for new sports stadia, museums and entertainment centres for central Perth. I hope the new government will pay more attention than its predecessors did to the outlying areas of the metropolitan area such as Wanneroo. To give just a few examples, I refer to three matters that arose during the campaign; there are many others, but time will not permit me to complete the inventory. Firstly, there is a very dangerous and growing problem in Banksia Grove with children crossing an increasingly busy Joondalup Drive extension. This road bisects the suburb, and is a major feeder road for trucks travelling to and from Great Northern Highway to Wanneroo Road via Neaves Road.

In the past 12 months one child, an eight-year old girl, has been hit by a truck and badly injured—she remains so even today. More accidents will surely follow unless traffic lights or some other traffic control devices are installed at that stretch of the road to ensure safe passage for children, seniors and people with disability crossing from one side of the suburb to the other. I will continue to fight for this matter to be addressed for local residents.

Secondly, in east Wanneroo, it is more than eight years since the WA Planning Commission was asked to review concerns relating to the time it has taken the WA government to provide zoning certainty for landholders. That situation and the Western Australian Planning Commission's study have been bogged down in red tape for all these years; in fact, there is still no end in sight to the WAPC's deliberations. As a result of the previous government's negligence, east Wanneroo landholders are still in limbo about what they can do about their properties in the future. Some landholders have told me they are unable to start new ventures, redevelop existing properties or even sell up in some cases, because of the former government's dithering and its apparent disdain for the people of east Wanneroo. I believe that landholders in east Wanneroo deserve far better. Therefore, I will fight to have the review of east Wanneroo's zoning laws fast-tracked and, if necessary, to have the matter taken out of the hands of the WAPC altogether, if it cannot get the job done, and be given its own focus by the new government. Landholders need certainty in relation to their rights over their properties. They should have had that certainty. They deserve it, and I will go further: as a member of a new Liberal government, I will fight to ease the nightmare of bureaucratic red tape that surrounds this and so many other issues in Wanneroo.

I have been concerned for some time about the perils faced by residents of two lifestyle villages on Wanneroo Road, Ashby, when exiting and re-entering their villages. There is considerable danger for the large numbers of seniors accessing Wanneroo Road daily from both Pineview and Lake Joondalup lifestyle villages. Suitable road treatments need to be carried out urgently before a tragedy occurs. After consultation with residents, I am committed to fighting for a better solution to the current unsatisfactory and unsafe situation. Main Roads has effectively said that nothing can be done to protect residents from potentially fatal accidents when turning onto or off Wanneroo Road. I find that very hard to accept. Something must be done to make these intersections safe. In any event, rest assured that I will not simply accept that there is nothing that can be done. I will take up the fight for permanent, safe and workable solutions to allow the residents of both these lifestyle villages to leave and return to their villages in safety.

In closing, may I just reiterate what an honour and a privilege it is to finally get up in this place and speak out on behalf of the people of Wanneroo. Mr Deputy Speaker, it will not be the last time you hear from me. I can assure you of that. I can also assure you, and the voters of Wanneroo, that I take their confidence very seriously. They have decided to move on and elect a new local member of the Western Australian Parliament. I am determined to make sure that their faith in me is justified. The pioneers who built Wanneroo back in the first years of settlement in this tough and uncompromising part of Perth would expect nothing else. Again, I thank my family, colleagues and supporters for sticking with me thus far along this tremendous journey. If you will excuse the parting pun, Mr Deputy Speaker, there are lots of Miles left to explore over the next four years! I trust that, with the support of the good people of Wanneroo, we can move forward together to a new era of prosperity and fulfilment. I, for one, am committed to that course.

[Applause.]
