



PARLIAMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

INAUGURAL SPEECH



Mr Ian Douglas MacLean, MLA

(Member for Wanneroo)

Legislative Assembly

Address-in-Reply

Thursday, 13 March 1997

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ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

MR MacLEAN (Wanneroo) [11.22 am]: It gives me great pleasure to be in this place today to give my first speech in this House.

Mr Marlborough: We are delighted the member is here as well.

Mr MacLEAN: They told me the member for Peel is a clown, so it is okay.

Mr Speaker, I congratulate you on taking up that position. Knowing that you are a former teacher, I hope that you will not be reminded too much of your former occupation from the Chair. It is with great pleasure that I support the Address-in-Reply. I will continue the tradition of thanking those people who assisted me to come to this place. Specifically, I thank my campaign chairman, Mr Ray Halligan, who spent many hours in the campaign office doing the odds and sods jobs that allowed me to keep busy out on the road. I thank Mr Mick Nanovich, who is a former member of this place. He was an inspiration. His knowledge of the workings of this place and of the area of Wanneroo were invaluable to me. He was a great support to me. I thank not only Mr Tony Whight but also and, more importantly, his wife Dot, who excused him from painting the house during the election campaign so he could work with me.

The new seat of Wanneroo resulted from splitting the old seat of Wanneroo to become the seats of Joondalup and Wanneroo. Whereas Joondalup reflects the new in that it is nearly all urban, Wanneroo reflects not only the old, with traditional land use in market gardening and pastoral pursuits, but also the new with large areas of urbanisation in Clarkson, Merriwa and Neerabup, as well as established areas such as Marangaroo and Landsdale. I can remember when Marangaroo was no more than banksia woodland.

The history of Wanneroo commenced with the early settlement of this colony in the 1800s. Wanneroo was a cattle grazing area. The high watertable and lake lands provided good grazing for cattle, even in the driest of weather. Wanneroo very quickly became a food bowl for the new and growing area of Perth. Vegetable and salad growing became extremely important, even though in those days it took a full day to travel from Wanneroo to the Perth markets. The growers would leave late at night, or in the early evening, to avoid the heat of the day and sometimes not reach Perth until the following afternoon. The track, as Wanneroo Road was then, was no more than sand. In later times it was paved with jarrah log ends. These could be seen in Wanneroo Road until recently, especially around the Dog Swamp shopping area where on hot days the asphalt receded into the cracks of old log ends. That resulted in the removal of the old log ends and the construction of a new road, leaving very little evidence of the old Wanneroo Road.

Market gardening is a major industry for Wanneroo, and the area has produced some tremendous leaders in that industry. Wanneroo was the first site of a frozen vegetable plant in Western Australia. The plant was run by Mr John Crisafulli, who has been farming the same area for 40 years. He and his family now grow what are possibly the best cut flowers

available in Western Australia. Wanneroo's climate is very suitable to strawberry production. Strawberries make up a major part of the industry. Strawberries are also a very high export earner for Western Australia, to not only South East Asia - strawberries eaten in the best restaurants in Hong Kong and Singapore probably come from Wanneroo - but also the Eastern States. That annoys them tremendously.

Wanneroo is changing. East of Wanneroo Road is earmarked for development into the twenty-first century. Many of the smaller market gardens are being developed as housing projects. This is both sad and exciting for people in the area. It is sad because it is changing the character of an area that has existed for over 100 years, and exciting because it brings new potential to an area that has been a Cinderella to the Joondalup based Wanneroo City Council for 17 years. The rapid urban growth in Wanneroo has created problems. As I said earlier, I can remember when the suburb of Marangaroo was no more than two houses and banksia bushland; it is now a fully developed urban area. The area of Landsdale was market gardens and little else. It is now a thriving suburb. The development of the Crisafulli property east of Wanneroo Road will provide housing, schools and parkland. That will end some 40 or 50 years of primary production on that land. Development will not end there.

It is envisaged that in the future the town of Wanneroo will have a population of over 50 000 people. That will be a centre in its own right. It will not be the major centre for that area. Joondalup and Alkimos are both regional centres. At the moment Alkimos has a population of eight people.

Rapid urban growth exacerbates the problems that people experience in normal life. Transport has become a major problem in this area because many of the connector roads are developer driven. Because councils are unable to fund or forward-fund the development of these roads, which was the practice in the past, major connecting roads are left unmade. This has caused considerable problems to the transport industry, which finds roads are going through areas that are not designed for bus services.

The rapid growth in population in the Wanneroo area has placed a tremendous strain on the education system. The schools in Clarkson and Merriwa, which is just across the road, have an enrolment of almost twice the normal school population, and it will continue to grow in the future. Although both schools are new - less than 10 years old - the population in those two suburbs is bursting at the seams. The Education Department has been extremely proactive in its endeavours to ease the overcrowding problems at schools. With the help of developers, it has extended the very successful schools in houses project into Neerabup, a new suburb, and into Mindarie. In Neerabup Homeswest acted as the developer and assisted with the provision of the houses. In Mindarie the Fini Group of Companies was very active in seeking approvals and building houses. Because this system of providing schools in new areas has been so successful, it is envisaged that it will extend into other areas to ease the burden on the permanent school base.

Many problems have been brought on by the skip-style development; that is, approvals have been issued to develop new suburbs which skip areas. Large areas of bushland at some stage in the future will be urban development. That has resulted in Connolly Drive, a connecting road, having large gaps in it, although it should continue to Joondalup.

At the last election the State Government showed that it was ready, willing and able to extend the Mitchell Freeway. It is my hope that by the end of this term the freeway will reach Burns Beach Road and that that construction will continue to Kinross, Clarkson and Merriwa. If Connolly Drive can be forward-funded and constructed, it will ease the pressure felt by residents in that area who are seeking the building of a freeway. The population in that area may not support the expenditure required to build a freeway, but would definitely support the

development of Connolly Drive. Again, Connolly Drive is a developer driven road which will be extremely important in the long run, as well as the short term, but the developers are unwilling to fund it because they are unwilling to bring on their subdivisions. As the local council is unable to forward-fund these developments, it may be in the best interests of the State if the Government were to come to an agreement with the developers through LandCorp, the Government's land development arm.

Marmion Avenue is another developer driven road which is extremely important to people in the northern suburbs, in particular those at Yanchep and Two Rocks. Once Marmion Avenue reaches the south end of Yanchep, that area will no longer be the sleepy hollow it is now. Although many people will be upset that it is no longer a fishing village, many more will applaud the ability to travel to Perth without the long detours to Wanneroo Road. To travel from Yanchep to Joondalup or to a major shopping centre in the city away from Wanneroo means people must travel 16 kilometres to Wanneroo Road, down to Burns Beach Road, through Joondalup and onto the freeway to Perth - quite a detour. When Marmion Avenue is extended, it will mean a drive straight down that road to connect with the freeway.

Given the rapid development in this area over the past 20 years, I feel it is a very good time for all of us to take a deep breath and look at how the development has taken place and how it should take place in the future. This is a planning matter which many people are unwilling to take on. Is it fair to our youth - our children and our children's children - to allow the urban sprawl to continue? Would we be better off following an English system which allows village construction, although the villages are connected with main roads? Should the developers be required to build community facilities, or only interim facilities such as schools in houses and make available other areas that could be used for community purposes?

These problems have never been addressed. If members were to go to areas like Clarkson and Merriwa, which grew almost overnight, where people have had to endure a lack of provisional services for the past 10 years, they would be surprised as well as disappointed. The community there lacks some of the basic requirements that people in more established areas feel are necessities. In Wanneroo it is not unknown for parks to go unreticulated for some time; however, it is always disappointing that people buy into these areas with expectations of green ovals, schools and shopping centres. Perhaps the developers should be more careful when their glossy brochures are put together because the expectations that some people have are sometimes shattered overnight.

I do not intend to take up very much more of the time of the House. Mr Speaker, I thank you and the House for its indulgence during my speech. I also thank the people of Wanneroo. The majority that I received was very pleasing. It was a very hard seat to win. It is not what most people would call a blue-ribbon Liberal seat. It will take a lot of work for me to maintain it, and I intend to do that. I have been in the area for 16 years, if not in Wanneroo. I have represented the area on the local council. I know the people in the area. It is a tremendous thing for me to represent them, to take them into a new era. In four years when we go back to the polls I am sure the people of Wanneroo will re-elect me because I have been in the area and have worked for them, as I fully intend to do.