



**PARLIAMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

**INAUGURAL SPEECH**



**Mr Trevor Sprigg MLA**  
**(Member for Murdoch)**

**Address-in-Reply Debate**

**Legislative Assembly**

**Thursday, 31 March 2005**



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(Member for Murdoch)

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#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

##### *Motion*

**MR T.R. SPRIGG (Murdoch)** [12.39 pm]: I am very conscious of the time and the fact that the luncheon adjournment is scheduled for 20 minutes from now. As members can see from my build, I have not missed too many luncheons! I will make sure that the house goes to lunch on time.

#### APPRECIATION

Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, for the opportunity to address the house. I am extremely privileged to represent my constituency, as I am sure other members are with theirs. In my case, it is Murdoch. I follow two icons of politics in Western Australia, namely Barry MacKinnon and Mike Board, who represented the electorate and made outstanding contributions over a long period. I make a vote of special thanks to the Liberal Party and to Arthur Marshall, the retiring member for Dawesville, and to Hon Colin Barnett, who persuaded me fairly strongly to put my hand up and put my neck on the line in this quest. I thank them sincerely for that. I also thank the preselection panel. It is arduous going through the preselection process, as I am sure other members have noticed. My campaign team was absolutely terrific. My campaign chairman, Trevor Wright, is in the gallery today. I thank Trevor and his team. I give a special mention to John Bonser, my treasurer, who could not be here today, as well as to my secretary, Cheryl McKeating. She worked tirelessly to make the campaign successful. I also thank Keith Rowe, my booth coordinator, who was a candidate for preselection. He opted to help me in my quest to win the seat. I thank the rest of my team and the fundraising team, who did a fantastic job. For that, I am eternally grateful. On polling day I had 120 volunteers, which may well be a record for some electorates. All the volunteers did a fantastic job. Like the member for Serpentine-Jarrahdale, I also thank the staff of Menzies House. The most special thanks of all goes to my wife Lyn, who is in the gallery today. I thank her for all her support. I thank my sons Jarrod, Travis and Brett and my daughters Sharon and Natalie as well as my sons and daughters-in-law. Some of them are a bit too far away but the moral support I received from Sharon and Natalie was great - one is in Dampier and one is in Azerbaijan! I also thank the lights of my life, my six grandchildren, for the fantastic moral support I got from them. I also thank my mentors in this quest - or operation if you can call it that - particularly Mike Board, the former member, Hon Simon O'Brien from the Legislative Council, and, of course, Arthur Marshall.

#### THE CAMPAIGN

I will tell the house a little story. I have been around for a while and have had some life experiences but I have never before campaigned politically or knocked on a door in a campaign. I used the usual spiel on the sixth door I knocked on back in September last year. I said that I was Trevor Sprigg, the Liberal candidate for Murdoch in the upcoming state election. The householder interrupted me and said, "You have no hope, mate!" I hesitatingly said something about him voting for the other side. He said he had been a member of the TWU for 37 years and had voted Labor all his life and would continue to do so. What is more, he said, he barracked for South Fremantle! I said something along the lines that it was great that he had a choice. However, he offered me his hand and said, "Good luck to you anyway, mate." I thought that was fantastic.

#### BACKGROUND

I was born and bred on a farm in a little place called Wagin in the upper great southern. As the member for South Perth has mentioned, as a baby boomer times were not always easy. A couple of families were living off the farm. From the age of six or seven years, I had to do farm chores before and after school. I had to milk the cows and things like that. I am indebted for my upbringing to my mother and father. My mother, who is going on 90 years of age, is in the gallery today. I am indebted to her for everything she has done for me. I wish my father could be here but he passed away 13 years ago. My upbringing was fantastic.

My first experience of politics was listening to debates between Robert Menzies and Dr Evatt and Arthur Calwell. In those days, some debates were held on the backs of trucks. They were public debates. I was taken with the wit and sharp retorts of Robert Menzies. He became something of a cult hero to me, so much so that, sometimes, I felt so sorry for Dr Evatt and Mr Calwell that I barracked for them in some of the debates! Another hero in politics for me was a gentleman called Crawford Nalder. He was a Country Party member from our local area in Wagin. He was a renowned gentleman and a fantastic servant of this house. I was reflecting on the debates I listened to in those days. On the farm on which I was living, we had a lighting plant that serviced both houses. At times, the battery would run down a little bit and I could not listen to the radio. I thought that lighting plant would have been useful recently in the electorate of the member for Serpentine-Jarrahdale as well as some of the northern suburbs!

### **SPORT**

It seems that my destiny was to be involved in representing people somewhere along the line. I have had a lifetime of doing that. I was a school prefect in primary school and high school. I was a student counsellor at university and a teachers' union representative. When I first started playing league football at East Fremantle a players' representative was needed on the committee. I was the last person cowering behind others so I got the job! I remember lobbying for things like soap in the showers and cold squash after training. It is a far cry from what the players lobby for now. I have served many sporting bodies and I am very proud of the three life memberships that I have achieved with the East Fremantle Football Club, the East Fremantle Cricket Club and the Fremantle and Districts Mercantile Cricket Association. Arthur Marshall pointed out to me that I am the fifth East Fremantle footballer to become a member of Parliament in Western Australia. The others were Sir Ross Hutchinson, Jerry Dolan, John Tonkin and Arthur Marshall.

### **THE ELECTORATE**

I will speak a little about the electorate of Murdoch. It is bounded by Leach Highway in the north, Karel Avenue in the east, Hope Road in the south and North Lake Road in the west. It has the very middle class suburbs of Kardinya, Winthrop, North Lake, Bateman, Murdoch, Bullcreek, Leeming, Rossmoyne and Brentwood. It is a great place in which to live. It has a lot of small business operators. The electorate has 17 schools. Two of the schools, Rossmoyne Senior High School and Leeming Senior High School, are in the top 10 schools in Australia as of 2004. Like the member for South Perth, I have big school maintenance issues in my electorate, particularly at Rossmoyne Primary School, which has had its application for capital expenditure funding in for two years but has not heard anything yet. That situation should be followed up. Murdoch University and St John of God hospital are in the electorate. Something else we are very proud of is the Bullcreek Leeming Junior Football Club, which has produced a Brownlow medallist in Simon Black, an AFL captain in Ben Cousins, as well as several outstanding AFL and East Fremantle footballers.

### **REFLECTIONS ON THE HOUSE**

Speaking of football, it reminds me that I was lucky enough to sit in the coaches' box with Mick Malthouse for three years, as chairman of selectors with the West Coast Eagles. In one of the very first games during which we sat in the box, one of the other selectors got a bit carried away and lost his cool and started shaking his fist at the umpires. Mick, who is regarded as being somewhat humourless, is not really so. In a very stressful situation when the game was very tight in the last quarter, Mick said to Tim Gepp, "Cool it, Geppy, there is only enough room for one lunatic in this box!" Looking at some of the activities in this house over the past few days, it is obviously bigger than a football coaches' box - there is room for more lunatics!

### **LOCAL ISSUE**

The electorate of Murdoch has a major problem with the roads in the area and safety on those roads. Leach Highway and South Street are now almost impossible to traverse, particularly in peak hour. Roe Highway stage 8, which has been rejected by the Labor Party, just has to be brought back onto the agenda, or some sort of solution found. I was gratified to hear the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure talking this morning about the Tonkin Highway bypass and the value of it. Surely she must realise that the same thing needs to happen with Roe Highway.

### **SHADOW RESPONSIBILITIES**

I was also thrilled to be selected as the shadow spokesperson for sport and recreation, because team sport has taught me the life values that I hold dearest; that is, loyalty, passion, mateship and working towards a common goal. No-one should be denied this. I suppose sport is the high-profile area of that portfolio. However, as pointed out by our leader, recreation is equally important. The member for South Perth referred to the ageing population. These days we need

community recreation facilities so that people can have a swim, a gym work-out, a game of badminton, tennis or squash, or even just walk the dog in some cases. Therefore, we must make sure that those facilities are maintained.

I guess one of the other issues in that area is childhood obesity. I get very angry with my children or grandchildren, who seem to sit at the computer keyboard or the game console all the time. Because I resisted the temptation to buy a video recorder for many years, I said to my children many years ago that I would rather see them out on the road throwing rocks at tin cans or something like that than sitting in front of a video recorder watching a video.

As the shadow spokesperson for sport and recreation, I certainly feel that it is our job to develop some policies that will become important when we are in government again and, I guess, to do a tagging job on the Minister for Sport and Recreation. Tagging was not very fashionable in football in my day, when I was chiefly a defender. However, I have learnt that the tagging role means that obviously a person has some accountability for his opponent. I pass on to the Minister for Sport and Recreation that I will be tagging him everywhere he goes, even when he goes out for hamburgers!

### **BELIEFS**

I have some philosophical beliefs that I would like to briefly share with members. I see a problem with our modern-day society. The human resources gurus of the world suggest that at age 45 everyone is history, on the scrap heap and phasing down to retirement. I must tell the house that I think I am far more experienced and better equipped to deal with the issues of life now at age 58 than I ever was at 45. We have to encourage our youth and support our small businesses. I think the work-for-the-dole scheme is terrific and should also be expanded, if possible. Maybe it is time to have another referendum on daylight saving. Not many people these days get to walk out of the office or their businesses at five o'clock.

In conclusion, I know that I face a huge challenge, but I make this commitment to the electors of Murdoch: I will represent them with loyalty, courage, enthusiasm and innovation so that Murdoch continues to provide a safe and happy family environment.

[Applause.]

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