

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

Resumed from 13 May on the following motion moved by Ms L. Dalton —

That the following Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's speech be agreed to —

To His Excellency the Honourable Kim Beazley, AC, Governor of the State of Western Australia.

May it please Your Excellency —

We, the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the speech you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

MR P.C. TINLEY (Willagee) [12.12 pm]: It is a great pleasure to speak in the Address-in-Reply at the request of the Leader of the House. It is always good that experienced members of this place should, without notice, rise to their feet and speak in a general debate about any matter that is of interest to them, particularly around our electorates. I pick up where I left off yesterday in my contribution to the debate on the Supply Bill 2021, around the agenda that individual members of this place ought to have as they develop through their experiences here. Some bring that agenda with them; some develop that agenda once they are here. Mostly, it is a combination of both those things. Members have a preconceived set of ambitions before they arrive in this place. Some of those are somewhat dashed. Others are emboldened and enhanced as we learn more from both our colleagues and the experience of being here and focusing all day, every day on the role of being a local member. We find ourselves contributors to the wider narrative of this place, on areas we are either required to look into by the responsibilities given to us through committees or the electorate—the people who come and see us—or through our own experiences in life.

The seat of Willagee has been in my care in an electoral sense since 2009. It has been a great journey for that community and, of course, for me personally. We have seen the boundary change several times. Most members have felt the effects over that period—certainly over the past 10 years—as significant boundary changes have seen a variation in the margins for each of those seats, to a greater or lesser degree. At various times, Willagee has included the whole of Kardinya and parts of Murdoch, Melville, Spearwood and Hilton, as its boundaries have moved and shifted around the major arterial roads. However, inside that community, edged by the ribbons of bitumen that form the seat of Willagee, a great story is going on—that is, the contribution that individuals in our community are making. We will not read about them in *The West Australian* or hear about them too broadly or too widely. It is up to us to make sure that we, as individual members, champion their cause and, in equal measure, acknowledge and celebrate the contribution of those people.

I would like to identify a couple of those in the heart of my electorate, in the suburb of Coolbellup, a 70 or 80-year-old suburb. It is quite an oasis. It is designed in very much the old style of a grid with large verges, big parks and now very mature trees. It is a lovely garden suburb. However, it also had in its day a significant low socio-economic grouping that caused a great deal of challenges for the community, but also a great number of opportunities. The concentration of that low socio-economic grouping allowed us to concentrate our efforts on supporting them. A significant proportion of the suburb was, and still is today, covered by social housing, and that has evolved as the building stock has changed over time. The people who support the community in Coolbellup are a unique group. There was something of a change in that suburb as people migrated to it because of its value.

[Quorum formed.]

Mr P.C. TINLEY: I will continue my comments.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members, can you be a bit careful not to walk in front of the speaker. You can do so now since I have said so. Thank you.

Mr P.C. TINLEY: It blurs my vision! The suburb of Coolbellup is a tremendous addition and has long been in the seat of Willagee. To reiterate, it is a lovely old garden suburb that has had its fair share of challenges and a reputation, but that reputation has changed markedly as the demographic has changed. Right across the seat, but certainly in Coolbellup, in the four years since the last election in 2017 there has been about a 25 per cent turnover. About a quarter of that suburb has changed over. Going back to two terms ago, that would be easily half the suburb as well again, on my rough estimation. In the demographic change, young families have sought the value that comes from the housing stock in that enjoyable garden suburb. Some challenges in education were identified, as these young families seek an education for their children. This has happened through the good efforts of activist mums, if I can use that term, who were not satisfied with the local school not servicing their needs and their family's needs.

Of course, the Coolbellup Community School is the amalgamation of two older schools in the suburb. They were amalgamated under previous minister Alan Carpenter, but for some reason the reputation of Coolbellup

did not translate despite building a new school. A lot of young families found themselves moving across into the neighbouring suburb of Samson, which had a school with a great reputation and still does today. The younger cohort that moved into the electorate and into the suburb championed the local school and wanted to find out what was wrong with it, given it was not getting the enrolments that surrounding suburbs led us to believe it should. The kindergarten class, for example, was only ever half subscribed. There was no particular reason for it other than reputation, so they started the Cooby Now group, as it is called, which is a residents' association. Under the guidance of people such as Katie Atwell, Pip Brennan and Jane Burnett, who got in behind and joined the P&C, the reputation of that school has been supported and lifted to now equal any of the surrounding schools. It is that sort of local community support—local energy, if you like—that makes it very easy for me, as a local member, to get behind and support them. We did that in several electorates, particularly around capital works building programs and additions to classrooms. We assisted in highlighting the challenges around the early learning centre and its need for resources, with quite some success.

That Coolbellup community group and the Coolbellup Community Association have gone on to do some outstanding things that have taken a lot of time and a lot of effort—for example, running a Cooby Fest, as they call it. One of the largest parks in the area is used to create basically a community festival—a fete, if you like—on a grand scale. I am pleased to say that it will be coming back again this spring under the leadership of Pip Brennan. Pip will be known to many in here as a health consumer advocate who is highly respected across the state. She happens to live in Coolbellup and brings that level of intensity and leadership to the community to make sure that people understand the value of gathering in the community. That is a really good example.

The other spin-off that is worthy of me raising, as I have done before, is the work of Gary Allen. We will not find him on the front page of *The West*. Gary started a group called Cooby Cares in his own backyard for the redistribution of food, furniture and clothing. In fact, I am told that a neighbour moved into his street and reported him to the city for being a hoarder, but the neighbour had to be educated that it was just the warehousing of furniture and goods that Gary redistributes around the neighbourhood, right through to South Lake, Bibra Lake, over to Hilton and so on. He does an outstanding job with his team. Even through COVID we were able to find some additional money. It is a good example of where a little bit can go a long way. A few hundred dollars here and there to supplement the food parcels they were handing out, particularly during the height of the COVID era, was an outstanding use of resources and contribution to the community. I will be forever in their debt because they have been very supportive of me in making sure issues are brought to bear for me to consider. It has been, quite frankly, an armchair ride.

The other singular feature of my electorate since I became a member and came into this place has been the advent of Roe 8. Roe 8 has been one of the most contentious issues east of the freeway. On my side of the freeway, or west of the freeway, there is absolutely no doubt that every individual understands the value of the Beeliar wetlands, which, with the Swan coastal plain, form an aqualung, if you like. When we link all the lakes from north to south on the Swan coastal plain, they are an essential component not just for wildlife but also in filtering the water supply, groundwater, groundwater drainage and the hydrology of the whole Swan coastal plain. The idea that we are focusing singularly on the Beeliar wetlands does not do a decent service to the contribution of all those other lakes. The community is very impressed and happy with the determination of the government from the 2017 election onwards, when an election commitment was made to extinguish the Roe 8 reserve and preserve Beeliar wetlands as a class A reserve for time immemorial.

It has been confected by various people opposite as a road that is absolutely necessary to deliver the freight link we need. I want to make sure that we continue to reinforce the issue here, as I do in the community. It has been put to people in suburbs around the formerly proposed Roe 8, and also Roe 7—if we go east of the freeway—that this is part of a vital freight link to the Fremantle port. However, in reality, most people who are for this road support it on the basis of traffic. Traffic management and freight management need to be carefully separated when appropriate so that we can understand the nature of the challenge. Somebody who bought a house on Leach Highway and then proceeded to think all the traffic issues on Leach Highway were directly linked to the absence of Roe 8 and Roe 9 have been sold a pup, quite frankly. The Liberal Party has been completely morally bankrupt in the way it has prosecuted its arguments for Roe 8. Its members have made people believe that all their traffic concerns would be alleviated by putting in one road—a road to nowhere, I might add. The argument falls very, very sharply when we talk about Roe 9 and the final kilometre going into a single-entry port. Nobody wants to talk about the cost of delivering Roe 9. The member for Bicton and the member for Fremantle are well versed in what it means for their communities. Quite frankly, we have allowed the whole debate about getting a world-class competitive port—a single port for bulk cargo into Western Australia—to be hijacked in this way.

The reality is that when Captain Stirling floated up the Swan River and threw a line over a tree, and O'Connor blew open the port, it was a very different time. When I grew up around Fremantle and went to John Curtin Senior High School with all the children of fishing families, wharfies, lumpers and crane drivers, it was a very different environment. Now, the land use is inconsistent with the enabling infrastructure needed to support a port. Quite often,

the number talked about regarding the capacity of the port is on the basis of only the number of boxes that can be moved across the wharf and the number of ship movements in and out. It does not pay regard to the cost and implications of upgrading both road and rail infrastructure to support that port. Never should we have a conversation about Roe 8 that does not include the Liberal lies around the issue of ports and their enabling infrastructure. There was no plan from the Barnett government on how it would cover the last kilometre and no costings were done. There was a general view that we would have to upgrade the Stirling Bridge, known euphemistically as the “new traffic bridge” in Fremantle. That alone raised numbers in the order of \$50 million, \$100 million, \$150 million and \$450 million—they were very rubbery. Traffic would then have had to go through five sets of lights to get to a link into a single-entry port, which would never meet world standards for efficiency.

We were very happy in Willagee to see a commitment from the government for an outer harbour and the work undertaken there. When I had the fisheries portfolio, as minister I became very close to the issues around the environmental factors in Cockburn Sound, and maintaining, enhancing and supporting fish stocks and the environment. When we talk about the outer harbour, we must make sure that we put into context the imposition of additional infrastructure that could be developed by taking a thoughtful approach to the environment and, in fact, by using methods to enhance the environment.

However, we cannot redress some 70 or 90 years of heavy industrial use. We can make inroads into it, but the Kwinana strip is the one place in Western Australia where we said in a planning context that we would place all our heavy industry. We must have regard for the environment in which we are nesting the new port facility and take the opportunity the infrastructure spend affords to improve the seagrass and the pink snapper nursery and to preserve the amenity that is the truly wonderful harbour of Cockburn Sound as a body of water and its interaction with the land.

None of these things in the electorate of Willagee are unlinked. It sits nested in the surrounding communities of Fremantle and Jandakot, with Bicton and Bateman to the north and Cockburn itself to the south. Often there are competing pressures. The suburbs along the Swan River, including Fremantle, Bicton and Bateman, are land constrained. Land abounds in the south in areas such as Cockburn right through to Kwinana where opportunities for residential and industrial purposes are being pursued by those cities to ensure that they provide a future for Western Australia and Western Australian jobs. There will always be a clash of competing interests about how we undertake infrastructure, particularly in the southern suburbs.

[Member’s time extended.]

Mr P.C. TINLEY: Another thing to note is that the City of Perth is 147 kilometres long. It is longer than Los Angeles and more dispersed than many other capital cities in the world. It is a point of mismanagement, in my view, over successive generations. Until now, we have not taken seriously the urban infill that is required to arrest that ever-increasing urban fringe and all the concomitant challenges and resources that are required to deliver services. I remember Treasury talking about how much it costs to deliver all the services to a new subdivision, including policing, health, utilities, sewerage, water and electricity; it is a significant cost. A business would look at how it could leverage the existing infrastructure and investment.

Many governments ago, there was an ambition to attain 47 per cent infill. Unfortunately, we loaded that onto local governments and in a lot of the southern suburbs, the local councils met their commitments to that type of density only by developing a bunch of battleaxe blocks. For example, in the suburb of Palmyra, one of the worst-affected suburbs, there is row after row of A, B and C battleaxe blocks with concrete driveways down the side. The trees have been chopped down and the canopy ripped out to make space for more cars. That is counterintuitive to what we should be doing around density. The truth is that the target of 47 per cent infill will be met by thoughtful infill and density development around villages. The suburb of Willagee is a good example. It has a main road. It is a classic type of development for the suburbs within a 10 or 12-kilometre ring of where we are standing now, such as Redcliffe and Balga. They all have a central road running through the town with a shopping strip, with shops such as an IGA; hopefully, a medical facility such as a GP clinic or that sort of thing; and a school, a library and a recreation centre. That certainly is what characterises the suburb of Willagee and many older suburbs. They are the places where we need to deliver density. A walkable catchment with a 450-metre radius is the best opportunity to increase density. It will not be done by developing high-rise apartments; it will be done by developing two and three-storey walk-ups of 20 units over three-quarter acres. Those sorts of developments are very deliverable and do not impose too much on the built-form environment. In fact, if done well, it adds to the amenity of the central village in those types of suburbs. They are well worthwhile doing.

The other heavy lifting will be done by Metronet and the Metronet precincts over the coming years as they fill out and are populated to create the type of environment that we know we need around train stations to ensure that we activate the public transport network and create an appropriate amenity in concentrated village-like areas. Thoughtful design is absolutely essential to doing that.

We can look at remnant land, of which Roe 8 is a very good example. When it is extinguished as a result of legislation that will go through this place, it will probably mostly return to its natural state at the point at which it reaches Stock Road. We do not often talk about Roe 9, which was established and became a remnant as a result of the extinguishment of the eastern bypass by a former Labor government that decided it was inconsistent with the land use—I agree—to build a freeway through those suburbs to cut to Fremantle. Roe 9 represents what I would call a greenfield site in a brownfield zone. It is, in large part, undeveloped. There is a great opportunity to get it right and make sure that through a proper consultation process we have a good mix of regenerative natural environment and shared access through bike paths. Of course, some traffic management will be required to ensure that the area has supporting roads. Each of the intersections—for example, the corner of Stock Road and Roe 9, the Forrest Road link, and also the intersection of Carrington Street and Roe 9—offer enormous amounts of acreage that can be activated and developed in a thoughtful way to uplift those areas and create the sorts of villages I am talking about to make the connection between the coast and the wetlands an accessible and enjoyable experience. The members for Fremantle and Cockburn, no doubt, and I, along with other members, will be championing Roe 9 to ensure that thoughtful design is inclusive of the surrounding communities. I always thought that design by inquiry was a good approach. That is best led by local government. The City of Cockburn is a highly capable city with very professional staff who have the capacity to engage with the community and work out the competing interests and decide what is the best use of that land. I look forward to working with them over the next four years to support the ambitions of all those local authorities, in tandem with the City of Fremantle.

In my final few minutes, I will turn now to talk about something that has been dear to my heart since becoming a member of the Labor Party. Like others, I joined the Labor Party for many reasons. I believe in teams and I believe in collectivism. I believe that the collective can do what the individual cannot. That has been the formation of the Labor Party in so many ways. Certainly, the industrial wing of the Labor Party has been the nursery and prosecutor of that idea, in large part, for over 100 years for the benefit of working people to ensure that their lives are made a lot better. The political wing of the Labor movement, the Labor Party itself, of which I am a very proud member, approaches the idea that we do not just support the status quo. Generally, conservatives might be identified as typically defending the status quo. I am not saying that they cannot undertake reform. The reform of the Australian gun laws is a good example when immediate crisis-driven reform was taken advantage of and we got a good outcome for all Australians. But when we look at the history of the Labor movement, both the industrial and political wings, we can see that change is what characterises who we are. To have an enduring commitment to that in the future, we need a place for dangerous ideas. None of the structures of the major parties has the capacity to articulate, debate and determine some very dangerous ideas that would ordinarily be controversial. It is very difficult to do it in government, certainly for a minister. The nature of the media cycle that we are presented with is that a minister can say something of a thought bubble, if you like, about a particular area that they are involved in, and by six o'clock that day it must be enshrined as policy or walked away from as a backflip; that is the debating time that we have now—from discussion of a matter until its close.

I was talking to the Governor around the time of the sad passing of Bob Hawke. He said that he thought Bob Hawke was probably one of the last leaders in Australia who could open up public debate, not have to have it closed by six o'clock in the evening, and have ongoing debate to build the consensus that is required for change. Change in the modern world now is ever more difficult, particularly with the advent of social media and the challenges it puts on misinformation and getting the story right. People do not want to go to the second and third order consequential conversations that are had when contemplating a particularly significant change, and it is very difficult, although not impossible, to do that through platforms like social media, which we have to embrace.

I have always felt that in Western Australia we have been poorly served by the thinking architecture resident here. We have no CEDAs or Grattans based here. Quite often, the Grattan Institute reports are not applicable to Western Australia, particularly the reports on energy. Often, an energy report from the Grattan Institute will be focused on the network arrangements of the eastern seaboard, with no regard to an isolated market like ours. I have always felt that we need a good, general public policy institute that is independent. I look forward to working with a few individuals who are very keen to see a similar thing. I also note that there are some great models here. The Perth USAsia Centre run by Gordon Flake is probably one of the foremost think tanks that interprets the world in a Western Australian context. He has made a magnificent contribution to how Western Australia sees itself in its time zone, in the region, and its competing challenges. I am very keen to see a genuine, independent think tank that is available for all to air and debate dangerous ideas for the sole purpose of progressing what it is to be Western Australian and advancing this state to create a world that our kids and their kids will inherit that they can be proud of, which is very much in the tradition of a progressive organisation like the Labor movement. On that note, I will conclude by thanking everyone for their indulgence this afternoon. I am now going to lunch.

MR S.J. PRICE (Forrestfield) [12.42 pm]: It gives me great pleasure to contribute to the Address-in-Reply debate. It takes me back to a couple of weeks ago when this first kicked off with the Governor's speech in the other place, followed by the high-quality inaugural speeches given in this place by all the new members. It was outstanding to

listen to the experiences that led everyone to being here. In conversation with the member for Willagee recently, I remarked how the 2021 group of members is very impressive. I thought our 2017 group was pretty good, and the 2013 group was not bad at the time either, but the group that has come in after the 2021 election is exceptional and I really look forward to watching them grow, develop and contribute to the best interests of this state over the next four years. We are extremely fortunate to have such strong representation from the government in this chamber.

Mr P.J. Rundle: It can only go downhill from here.

Mr S.J. PRICE: It will go a long way to make sure that Western Australia continues to prosper because if we have to rely on the opposition for anything, we will be in a whole world of hurt, member for Roe.

It was really interesting to listen to the member for Willagee and what he said about housing density, infill and development. As we all know, the cost of housing and the availability of affordable housing within the state is something that continues to be a challenge. We all have development proposals or activities going on within our electorates; my electorate in Forrestfield is no different. As the crow flies, Forrestfield is 15 kilometres from the city. It might take people a little longer to get there than they think because they have to drive along Orrong Road, which certainly needs a lot of work, but it is close. The part of the electorate that I live in in Wattle Grove is probably 20 kilometres from the city. We have semirural blocks there that range in size from half an acre to three or four hectares. It is so close to the city and it is incredible and really beautiful. It raises the conversation about what we will do going forward.

The easy thing to do is to chop up land and create 300-square metre blocks, but, as the member for Willagee mentioned, we can do density wrong by cutting down the trees and squeezing in as many houses as we can. As a result of doing this, the canopy across the state has declined over the years. That is certainly not what we want to see happening. The conversation about maximising profit on a property is a difficult one to have. People will buy a larger property thinking that they are going to subdivide it, make it smaller, make some money out of it and move on to something else, but that takes away the opportunity for someone to move into the area and enjoy and experience the beauty of it as it is. There are areas where it can be done, and if it is done right, it fits in with the local amenity. We have continued to develop land north and south of the city, and the member for Willagee mentioned a distance of 147 kilometres, which is almost beyond belief. We need to take a little control back because developers buy a block of land, develop it and then expect the government to put in the infrastructure for people to access that land. We do not have a lot of control over that process. There are challenges in that going forward.

This government is putting in place transport infrastructure to improve the ability of people to get from A to B more efficiently and more safely, which, unfortunately, is what we have to do, especially around my electorate with the number of major transport routes that pass through. The Tonkin and Roe Highways pretty much split my electorate right through the middle. I previously mentioned one of the upgrades to Tonkin Highway at Hale Road, but the next intersection along, with Welshpool Road East, is either the first or second most congested intersection in the state; it is an absolute shocker. A bridge will be put there as well. The third upgrade along Tonkin Highway will be at Kelvin Road, with the creation of a new intersection. These things have all been spoken about. As with most of the big infrastructure projects, they will be jointly funded with the federal government and will have a significant benefit for the travelling community. Three sets of lights will be removed from the south to north journey along Tonkin Highway, which will certainly decrease the travel time. An interesting tidbit of information is that the lights at the intersection of Hale Road and Tonkin Highway in Forrestfield are the first set of lights a driver encounters after leaving Geraldton to drive south along the new NorthLink WA from Muchea to Tonkin Highway; the sooner those lights go, the better.

Due to Forrestfield's proximity to the airport, a heavy logistics industry can be found in the area, so a lot of investment has been put into intersections—such as the one between Roe Highway and the Great Eastern Highway bypass, and the one at Abernethy and Kalamunda Roads—the rail bridge on Abernethy Road and the duplication of Abernethy Road past the Forrestfield industrial area. That is designed to increase efficiency, reduce congestion and allow freer traffic flow through the area.

One of the things I am really keen to do is get heavy vehicles off that part of Kalamunda Road that runs through the suburb of High Wycombe between Abernethy Road and Roe Highway. I am working with the local government about what we can do to slow down the traffic on that road to make it a bit of a main street. As it stands now, the suburb of High Wycombe is split in two by this ugly road through the middle of it. If trucks are made to travel more slowly through that area, they will have to go around and use the infrastructure that has been put in place for them, which is the right thing to do.

As I mentioned, the Kalamunda Road–Roe Highway intersection has just about been finished. A big jarrah tree has been left at that intersection. That is a tree that I saved. I was out there doorknocking one day, and someone said to me, “What about the tree?” We measured that tree—we googled it; there is a formula—and we came up with an age of about 360 years. I said to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads that they cannot cut it down, and the intersection was built around the tree.

Mr V.A. Catania: I thought you would have chained yourself to the tree!

Mr S.J. PRICE: Ha-ha! I normally like to cut things down, but I thought I would save this one! If people go past that intersection and see a big tree sticking out in the middle, that is why it is still there.

A lot of investment is going on in the area that will make a huge difference to people's travelling times and safety as they head through the area.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

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