

# Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 13 April 1989

THE SPEAKER (Mr Barnett) took the Chair at 10.45 am, and read prayers.

## PETITION - STOKELY RAILWAY STATION

### *Passenger Service - Continuance Request*

DR GALLOP (Victoria Park) [10.47 am]: I have a petition couched in the following terms -

To the Honourable Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly duly assembled in Parliament -

We, the undersigned, request that the railway station named Stokely on the Armadale line will remain open for passenger service.

The petition bears 37 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

The SPEAKER: I direct that the petition be brought to the Table of the House.

[See petition No 9.]

## PETITION - YANCHEP NATIONAL PARK

### *Amenities - Deterioration*

MR MacKINNON (Jandakot - Leader of the Opposition) [10.48 am]: I have a petition couched in the following terms -

To the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia assembled, your humble petitioners sheweth:

- 1: There is widespread concern about the decline in the standards of amenity at Yanchep National Park.
- 2: Therefore it is requested that the State Government take immediate steps to prevent further deterioration of the National Park, and in particular that:
  - (i) the continued availability of the swimming pool for use by the public be guaranteed;
  - (ii) that irrespective of the Draft Management Plan, the gardens and enclosures for native animals be restored to their earlier state;
  - (iii) that an independent Board be set up to manage the tourist facilities in the Yanchep National Park.

As in duty bound your petitioners will ever pray.

The petition bears 6 441 signatures and I certify that it conforms to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly.

The SPEAKER: I direct that the petition be brought to the Table of the House.

[See petition No 10.]

## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY - SIXTH DAY

### *Motion*

Debate resumed from 12 April.

MR READ (Murray) [10.50 am]: Mr Speaker, I take this opportunity to offer my congratulations to you on your re-election to your position. I am sure you will continue to guide the affairs of this House with fairness and impartiality. I also congratulate the Premier for leading the Labor Party to a historic third term and what should be 10 years of Government. The people of Western Australia no longer look on the Australian Labor Party as the alternative Government but rather as the natural choice for Government.

My campaign, undoubtedly like most others, was a most arduous and taxing one. I take this



opportunity to thank publicly all those involved. In particular I thank my wife, Kerry, who demonstrated enormous patience as well as support in an area entirely new to her. My sincere thanks are due to my family, who all worked extremely hard, and, of course to my campaign team, who guided my campaign and devoted much of their own time to the cause.

I would be remiss as a new member of Parliament and as a son if I did not pay some tribute to my father, the former member for Mandurah, John Read. John Read was elected to the seat of Mandurah in 1983, unseating the then Minister for Housing, Richard Shalders, in what can only be described as a shock result. He was determined from the start, as are most new members, to work as hard as he possibly could for his constituents, and provide the best possible representation for the electorate of Mandurah.

His achievements over the years demonstrated his commitment to the electorate and I will briefly outline some of his major achievements since 1983. Millions of dollars has been spent since 1983 in researching and moving to solve the problem of the algae weed growth in the Peel-Harvey Estuary, a problem which prior to 1983 had been ignored for the most part. All of this research will culminate in the construction of the Dawesville Cut which will commence later this year, and I will say more on this subject later in my speech.

A major addition to the town of Mandurah has been the magnificent courthouse and police station complex. The police station now holds 22 general duties officers, including a newly appointed forensic specialist, and two officers with the Criminal Investigation Branch. This initiative was sorely needed, when one considers that only a few years ago the Mandurah Police Station was located in a tiny building with only a handful of staff and the courtroom was so small that people waiting for their cases to be heard had to queue outside the building in full view of the people using the busiest street in Mandurah. An \$18 million cultural centre has been proposed for Mandurah, to which the Government has already committed some \$4 million. The building of the first stage - the senior citizens' centre - will commence in May and local seniors will soon have access to one of the best senior citizens' facilities in the country.

Other major achievements in which John Read had a hand include funding for the extensions to the Mandurah aquatic and recreation centre, four lane highways from Mandurah to Pinjarra and Mandurah to Falcon, a bus service between Mandurah and Pinjarra, additional air-conditioned Transperth buses to and from Perth, a new Coodanup High School, a new women's refuge, and a commitment for two new primary schools at Falcon and Greenfields. These are but a few of the many achievements of John Read since 1983. All of these achievements add up to a dedicated and committed parliamentary representative who put his electorate and constituency ahead of all else. In his maiden speech in August 1983 he said -

One area of concern to me over the years during which I have followed and been involved in politics is the view of politicians held by the general public.

He went on to say -

Our actions must always be guided by what is in the best interests of the people as a whole and not by what is in the best interests of a small group.

John Read always worked by this philosophy and I think he went a long way towards improving the image of parliamentarians on both sides of the political spectrum.

Government members: Hear, hear!

Mr READ: I move now to matters of my electorate. The electorate of Murray was revived in the recent redistribution after being abolished in the 1982 redistribution when it was replaced by the electorate of Murray-Wellington. The Murray electorate was first formed in 1890 and has since had eight parliamentary representatives, the most notable of whom was Sir Duncan Ross McLarty who was Premier of this State between 1947 and 1953. One point worth noting is the fact that until now the seat of Murray had never had a Labor representative since its formation in 1890. I recognise the responsibility that now rests with me and I am anxious to convince those people who supported this Government and me, as well as those who did not, that the right choice was made by Western Australians on 4 February 1989.

The Murray electorate is approximately 1 900 square kilometres in size and has a population of about 23 000 people, although this is very hard to calculate due to the enormous growth



rate being experienced in the area. It takes in the northern, southern and eastern aspects of the town of Mandurah as well as the Murray Shire in its entirety, which includes the towns of Pinjarra and Dwellingup - Pinjarra being one of the oldest towns in Western Australia. The main source of employment in my electorate is Alcoa of Australia Ltd, which employs about 1 500 people at its Pinjarra and Wagerup sites.

Mr Speaker, the Government's past achievements within my electorate are many and I will draw some of these achievements to the attention of the House. I am fortunate to have two hospitals in my electorate - the older Murray District Hospital in Pinjarra which recently underwent over \$1 million worth of upgrading, and the marvellous new Mandurah Hospital which I was fortunate enough to inherit in the last redistribution. The Mandurah Hospital in particular is a credit to the Government and also to the local hospital board which was instrumental in its being built. The new Coodanup High School, which I have mentioned briefly and which was opened this year, is a tribute to the designers and is an example of the modern design which is now being incorporated within our education system. This school, which currently caters for year 8, will within five years operate as a full senior high school. Two new primary schools are scheduled to open in 1990 and I take this opportunity to state publicly that the Government's commitments in this area have in no way whatsoever changed.

Recently I had the pleasure of opening the Joblink project in Pinjarra on behalf of the Minister for Employment and Training. This project amply demonstrates the Government's commitment in reducing unemployment in our State. Recent employment figures indicate the huge success the Government is having in this area and I am confident it will continue to do so.

Homeswest accommodation in the Murray electorate has dramatically increased since 1983. In fact, since then 204 units of accommodation have been built in the area with a further 69 being built this financial year. In the same period leading up to 1983 only 71 units were constructed in the area. This Government will continue to construct as many homes of this type as possible to provide affordable accommodation for those in most need. It is for this reason that the Government's stamp duty rebate will be of tremendous assistance to first home buyers in my electorate. I can assure members that \$80 000 for housing and \$33 000 for land will purchase good quality properties in the Mandurah-Murray area.

Mr Speaker, the Peel Inlet and Harvey Estuary play a large part in the lives of the people in my electorate, and in no other way is the commitment of this Government to the area more clearly demonstrated than in the case of the Peel-Harvey Estuary. The Peel-Harvey system is a shallow coastal lagoon of approximately 133 square kilometres, or 12 100 hectares. It is estimated the system contains some 160 million cubic metres of water. The algal problem in the Peel Inlet dates back to the mid 1960s and became much worse in 1973 when the *nodularia* weed first bloomed. It is this weed which feeds on the phosphorous flowing into the estuary and which emits a foul odour when it drifts onto the shores and dies. This has an adverse effect on residents, fishermen and tourists alike. Experts say the estuary is dying; clearly, urgent action is needed. The main strategy in managing this problem will revolve around estuarine management and management of the catchment areas to reduce the phosphorous input. Each year about 143 tonnes of phosphorous enters the Mandurah-Murray system. The objective of the management strategy is to restore the Peel-Harvey system to a clean, healthy and resilient system. It currently falls far short of this. Management of the estuary itself will involve weed harvesting in the Dawesville channel. The Dawesville channel, or Cut, will cost approximately \$40 million to build and will take about three years to complete.

It will vary in width from 150 metres to 200 metres and in depth from 4.5 metres to 6.5 metres. Spoil material from the cut will be used to recontour the adjacent land. For members who do not know, the Dawesville channel involves a direct cut between the estuary and the sea. The Dawesville channel will do three things -

- (1) It will greatly increase the level of phosphorous leaving the system. At present twice as much phosphorous enters the system as is lost to the sea through the Mandurah channel.
- (2) It will make the estuary more marine in nature and thus more resilient.



- (3) It will make the estuary waters more salty, hence more unsuitable for nodularia growth.

The aim of the catchment management program is to reduce the phosphorous input to the system from 143 tonnes to a maximum of 85 tonnes. This will be done by -

- (1) Modifying the fertiliser usage in the catchment area;
- (2) conversion of land use in the catchment area to forestry usage, especially in areas with sandy soils where leaching of phosphates occurs to a much larger degree; and
- (3) control of point sources such as piggeries, sheep holding yards and market gardens, which together contribute over 10 per cent of the phosphorous to the system, and also a moratorium on further clearing in the area.

I want to make absolutely clear that in no way are farmers being blamed for this problem. In most cases farmers have been very cooperative in dealing with the Department of Agriculture in respect of this matter, and this cooperation will need to continue for these measures to succeed - and I am sure it will.

The Dawesville Cut must succeed, but it must go hand in hand with a catchment management strategy. I am pleased the Government continues to recognise its responsibility in this area and its commitment to commence construction of the Dawesville Cut later this year was welcome news to the residents of the Murray electorate. As a result of the magnitude of this project and the obvious changes it will cause in the local area, I have decided to form a residents' committee which would have access, through me, to all relevant information pertaining to the Cut. I would like to be sure that all local residents are kept fully informed regarding the construction of the cut and will have input to those managing the project. I am determined that the lifestyle enjoyed by local residents will be disrupted as little as possible because of the Cut.

Another very exciting proposal for my electorate is the proposal to construct a Western Australian College of Advanced Education campus for environmental studies in the area. I see this college, with its environmental expertise and extensive facilities, as an ideal base for management of many of the environmentally sensitive areas within my electorate; namely, the Peel-Harvey system and adjacent wetlands, the coastline itself and the beautiful Yalgorup National Park which abuts the proposed project area. I intend to have talks with the college in the very near future along these lines should the project proceed. It has come to my attention that interest has also emanated from Bunbury in respect of this college, but I respectfully assure my colleagues, the members for Bunbury and Mitchell, that I am determined to keep this facility in Murray.

I would now like to move from local issues to a more universal issue - that is, our ecological and environmental problems. I will briefly draw these matters to the attention of the House. These problems are directly linked to our huge population, population growth and the development we in the western world continually undertake to improve our standard of living. In third world countries this mostly occurs through genuine economic necessity and is done to service huge national debts, and provide a meagre living for their millions of people. The world population is set to increase from 5.2 billion now to more than 6 billion next decade, and the problems I am about to describe will only increase. The problems are ones most of us are familiar with - the Greenhouse effect; depletion of the ozone layer; global warming and climatic changes due to this; huge deforestation of tropical rainforests in order to open new farmlands; massive erosion of valuable top soil to the point where millions of tonnes of top soil are washed into the sea each year - and this problem is very pertinent in Western Australia, as is the salinity problem - reduction in usable water supplies; inefficient waste disposal methods and many others I could mention.

I will not go into details about these problems as I am sure most members are aware they exist, and certainly do so to some extent in Australia, but I urge all members to become familiar with these issues. It is too easy to become emotional about these issues - for example, the incident which occurred in Tasmania - but we cannot afford to deal with these problems in that manner. Too much emotion from both sides of the argument will not get us anywhere; sensible, rational debate must be encouraged between developers, ecologists and environmentalists. However, ultimately it is up to Governments and Parliaments to lead the



way. We must work on solutions to our problems with soil erosion and with solving waste disposal problems; we must continue to legislate chlorofluorocarbons out of existence, as well as other such measures. Most importantly we must encourage an acceptable balance between the economic development necessary for our survival and the preservation of our natural resources and environment, which are also necessary for our survival.

We must offer economic incentives to developers to participate in environmental programs. I commend the Government's initiatives along these lines; namely, the efforts being made in cooperation with farmers to grow Tasmanian blue gums on their properties as a cash crop. I was pleased to find that research is being done at a Queensland university into genetic engineering of trees, which could result in trees that grow 20 per cent faster than normal within the next three to five years. A 100 per cent increase in growth rate should be possible within 10 years. Not only can the growth rate be improved, but also trees specially designed for a certain application such as timber and woodchipping can be grown. The net outcome of such research would be to reduce significantly pressures on our national forests and increase returns to the industry. Research such as this must be encouraged, and I welcome Government and industry support in these programs.

In conclusion this issue is now bigger than individual politics, the economy or any other issue members might like to name. The buck stops here; decisions made in this and other Parliaments will be the deciding factor in determining the future of certainly our country and our planet. We must consider the interests of the world as a whole and not just the interests of small groups.

Finally, I congratulate all new members of Parliament and I thank those who have made me feel welcome - particularly the staff - in this place. I agree with the advice of a member opposite who stated that we should not take ourselves or each other too seriously in this place, but certainly we should take our responsibilities to our constituents very seriously.

I thank all members for their attention.

[Applause.]

**MR GRAHAM (Pilbara) [11.07 am]:** Mr Speaker, I add my congratulations to those given by other speakers on your re-election to the Chair. I suppose I should also commend you on your eyesight, and being able to see down to the back back-benches. It is possible that my friend from Northern Rivers and I are the only two people in the House who actually enjoy a division because it gives us the ability to get down into the House to see what is really happening.

I rise today with great pride to give my maiden speech as the inaugural member for the newly created seat of Pilbara. That seat was created after the recent redistribution of the old seats of Kimberley and Pilbara. I put on record my appreciation of the member for the former electorate of Kimberley and the present member for Ashburton, for the way in which they have serviced their electorates and their assistance to me both during the campaign and since. I know that assistance will continue and I appreciate it. Those two members have put an enormous amount of work into their electorates, but they were hampered in their ability to service the north west because of the sheer physical size of the electorates. Two members of Parliament were servicing approximately half of Western Australia. The redistribution has made the situation much more sensible, and I am left with an electorate roughly the size of Victoria to service.

I would also like to put on the record my thanks and appreciation to all the people who assisted me in my campaign. There are too many of them in too many towns to mention, but to all of them, including my family - and particularly my mother who made the effort in the last week of the campaign to hop on a bus to come to Port Hedland and give me a hand - I give my heartfelt thanks. Every member of this House knows that the people who involve themselves behind the scenes in election campaigns put in an enormous amount of work for their respective political parties and candidates. In the case of the Pilbara a lot of work and effort was rewarded with a clear victory in the seat. Although I have collectively mentioned the assistance given to me by people, I must make particular mention of two senior members of the trade union movement without whose help and encouragement I would not be here today.

I refer to Jack Marks, the secretary of the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union, and to Joe Keenan, the secretary of the Australian Workers Union. I thank them for their friendship and