



PARLIAMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

INAUGURAL SPEECH



Mr Jan Norberger, MLA
(Member for Joondalup)

Legislative Assembly

Address-in-Reply

Wednesday, 17 April 2013

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ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

MR J. NORBERGER (Joondalup) [6.29 pm]: Madam Deputy Speaker, it is an honour to deliver my first speech to the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia tonight. I begin by congratulating you on your appointment to the position of Deputy Speaker of the house and I also congratulate all those who were elected or re-elected on 9 March.

To be afforded the privilege of representing the people of Joondalup, such a diverse and progressive electorate, is humbling to say the least, and I sincerely thank the people of the electorate of Joondalup for their faith in me to be our community spokesperson in this Parliament. I may at this point also acknowledge my predecessor, Mr Tony O’Gorman, who served the community of Joondalup for over 12 years. Whilst we may have differed in our vision for Joondalup’s future, there is no denying that Mr O’Gorman cared greatly for our community and its many establishments. I wish him and his family all the very best for the future.

The electorate of Joondalup covers approximately 30 square kilometres, taking in the suburbs of Craigie, Beldon, Heathridge, Edgewater, Connolly, Joondalup CBD, Joondalup and parts of Currabmine. The electorate is bounded by Whitfords Avenue along the south, Marmion Avenue along the west and Mitchell Freeway and beautiful Lake Joondalup along the east. The northern boundary is a combination of Moore Drive and Burns Beach Road.

Sir Charles Court laid down his vision for the north west region of Perth in 1976. As part of that vision, he saw a deliberately planned city centre with an accompanying transport network as a key component. Today Joondalup is rapidly realising this vision, having been voted the world’s most liveable city by the United Nations in 2011. Much has been achieved but many more opportunities still await fulfilment. Joondalup is a city on the move. Within the context of this financial year alone, close to \$1 billion worth of commercial projects are approved, committed to, underway or completed. Likewise, within the surrounding suburbs a new generation of young families are making their home in the area and contributing actively to local community groups, sporting clubs and schools.

Many significant institutions help to define the character of Joondalup. The key aspect of Joondalup’s identity is rooted in the Joondalup Learning Precinct. This dedicated area of the city is home to Edith Cowan University, the West Coast Institute of Training and the Western Australia Police Academy. These institutions are constantly evolving their provision of innovative and quite often class-leading educational outcomes to Joondalup and indeed to the state. Joondalup’s reputation as a hub for education and training goes beyond the borders of the Learning Precinct. Organisations such as the Motor Industry Training Association and the National Electrical Contractors Association along with many other specialised registered training organisations call Joondalup home and service a diverse range of industries.

The schools of Joondalup—be they primary or secondary, public or private—are outstanding establishments of educational excellence, and I pay my respects to the outstanding group of principals, teachers, staff and volunteers who work so very hard to offer our children the best possible start in their academic life.

Joondalup is also home to a vibrant retail business scene crowned by Lakeside Joondalup shopping centre. With the impending addition of Myer and many more specialised stores to this modern shopping centre, Lakeside Joondalup will soon be the largest shopping centre in Western Australia. Health and related specialist services are another key component of Joondalup. At its core lies the outstanding Joondalup Health Campus which is, as a result of this state government's recent investment of \$393 million, one of the largest hospitals in the state. The campus employs more than 2 500 staff, boasts 650 beds and is soon to be home to a unique clinical school run in conjunction with some of the state's leading universities.

I also make mention of the recently opened Shenton House, a unique collaboration between the Anglican Church of Australia and Perth Radiological Clinic, boasting state-of-the-art cancer treatment facilities as well as cardiology and sleep disorder consultation suites. Investment in hospitality and tourism within Joondalup is exemplified by the significant investment made by Joondalup Resort as it nears completion of its state-of-the-art function centre. This is in addition to the already award-winning resort and golf course. The \$11 million function centre will accommodate up to 400 guests and will be a valued addition to Joondalup. Add to all this a vibrant business park, entrepreneurial small business people and a growing cafe and restaurant culture, and it is easy to see why Joondalup has become the commercial heart of the north west metro region. But institutions, businesses and facilities on their own do not make a community. Indeed, they are tools, amenities and places of employment, but the real heart of any community lies in its people. Joondalup benefits from not only a diverse range of age groups but also a diverse range of cultures. A large proportion of our community was born overseas, with a strong contingent from the United Kingdom, Europe and a growing number from South Africa. Joondalup is filled with vibrant and talented people. Throughout my campaign, I was continually inspired by the drive and aspiration that permeates the community around Joondalup. The electorate is blessed with a broad mix of tradespersons, professionals, self-employed people, active stay-at-home parents and community-involved retirees. The people of the electorate of Joondalup are also avid volunteers, supporting parents and citizens associations, school boards, local sporting clubs, community groups and a wide variety of charitable organisations. I cannot stress enough how humbling and honouring it is to be the representative for such a delightful community in the Western Australian Parliament. I am truly proud to be a part of the Joondalup community.

Looking at Joondalup through the lens of high-level policy requirements, a high-growth community such as Joondalup has obvious needs in the areas of transport, health, education and employment. Given the fact that Joondalup is a hub for commercial, educational and health services in the northern suburbs, transport is of critical importance. The widening and extension of Mitchell Freeway along with further investment in rail and associated infrastructure will ensure that Joondalup remains accessible and capable of necessary future growth. Ensuring that bus services throughout the area remain networked with other public transport services as they evolve is also critical. A key advantage of becoming the capital city of the northern suburbs is the ability to offer jobs locally. By supporting the ongoing commercial development of the city centre and surrounding business precincts, an ever-growing number of people will be able to find fulfilling employment opportunities much closer to their homes, whilst at the same time enhancing the services and amenities available to residents of the northern suburbs. I am delighted that the state government will be developing substantial commercial premises in the city to accommodate upwards of 500 public servants. It is my hope that this initiative is just the beginning of government and private enterprise fully realising the opportunities available to them in and around Joondalup. Joondalup is home to a vibrant collection of small businesses, each of which provides local services and local employment opportunities. I feel strongly about supporting small businesses by reducing bureaucratic red tape and unnecessary regulatory

burdens. As such, I look forward to being a strong advocate for this state's outstanding small business sector.

The issue of law and order certainly featured heavily in the feedback I received from my community. The sense that offenders are dealt with too lightly by our courts was a repeating theme. I believe that the strong re-election of the Liberal–National government serves as a strong mandate to introduce tough laws against crimes of violence and hooning to name but a few. Our communities are looking toward their elected members on this important issue, one which is in our power to address.

Western Australia is facing a decade of unparalleled opportunity but also significant challenges. Although we certainly are a state rich in natural resources, we must ensure that we excel in other key enterprises also, such as agriculture, tourism and science. I am looking forward to lending my support and experiences to the Liberal–National government as we strive to place Western Australia in the best possible position to capitalise on our opportunities and address the challenges.

As I embark on this new chapter of my life in respect to the work I will undertake in my electorate and the Parliament, I reflect on the unique journey I have taken to arrive at this point. I arrived in Perth with my family at the age of seven from Hamburg, Germany. Like so many others, my parents, Lothar and Baerbel, chose Perth because of its exceptional climate, pristine beaches and the many opportunities this maturing state and capital offered to newcomers. Along with my two sisters, Sabrina and Susanne, I grew up around Joondalup, where I attended school, played in local sports clubs and attended church. I watched how Joondalup matured and grew around me from humble beginnings of barely a building or two and a small Wanneroo Hospital to the bustling city it is today. Soon after graduating from high school at Prendiville Catholic College, I enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force, a decision with which I credit many of my subsequent successes. My time in the Australian Defence Force matured me, and taught me discipline and esprit de corps. I served our nation for six years and honourably discharged from the RAAF with the rank of corporal. In 2001 I moved to East Timor to run a number of companies owned by an Australian couple in Darwin. My time in East Timor was magical. This beautiful country with its beautiful people stole a part of my heart. Running a business in such a fast-paced emerging economy was unlike anything I had ever undertaken before. I truly believe that I learnt more about business in three years there than I could have picked up in a mature economy in six. East Timor is also special for the fact that it was there that I met my wonderful wife, Mira. Here was someone with the most generous heart and determined will I had ever met. Mira and I married in 2005, just prior to the completion of my contract. When we returned to Perth, we settled straightaway in my familiar home of Joondalup. By March last year our family grew by one with the birth of our son Daniel, whom you may hear in the public gallery tonight! As exciting and varied as my career and life has been, nothing can compare to the blessing of becoming a father.

My return to Perth saw me take up the position of state commercial manager for Toll Priority, part of the Toll group of companies. Working for Australia's largest logistics company, with an excess of 30 000 employees, allowed me to benefit from the commercial discipline and rigour with which such organisations operate and indeed thrive. For the last five and a half years I have had the opportunity to not only live locally but also work there too. As group general manager of a local training and recruitment business I was delighted to take a small family-owned business and see it develop over the years to a point where we employed over 120 staff. As a company we focused on working within Western Australia's growing resources industry and in doing so I was able to travel throughout the state and work with many wonderful Indigenous communities. I treasure dearly this time and the friendships I made along the way. Working so closely with some of the state's largest mining houses highlighted to me the intrinsic value and

benefit that our resources industry affords our state. I am looking forward to working with the government to continue promoting investment in this important sector of our economy. I am proud to bring with me to this Parliament a diverse and distinguished career in the corporate sector. Having managed organisations both large and small, here in WA and indeed overseas, I have had the opportunity to work in the aviation, logistics, training, recruitment and resources industries. I gladly bring to bear upon my new role as a member of this chamber the experience gained through these positions.

Ultimately though, my desire to serve my community in Parliament was not a result of my professional career but rather a broader continuation of another passion, which is volunteering. I have enjoyed serving my local community in a number of ways over the years, be it in support of local events, festivals and functions or through helping local church initiatives and mentoring emerging business leaders in the community. I enjoy helping people and I see my role as a member of this Parliament as an important continuation of that philosophy—helping the people of my electorate, and indeed of Western Australia, in the best way I can.

In regard to my personal beliefs, I am a passionate defender of the family unit, and believe that stable, supported and happy families are the bedrock of any society. Governments can, and indeed should, provide good services and good policies but can never replace the important function of a loving family. I am deeply grateful to have grown up in a loving family environment. It was not perfect but then again no family is; however, it was grounded in love and built upon respect for our parents and society as a whole. I believe in the undeniable value and worth of every person and believe that everyone has something to offer that society needs. I am proud to live in a country that is inclusive and welcoming of diversity. Let government provide the framework by which people can achieve their own destinies, not create an environment of dependency.

I believe strongly in supporting those in our community who require assistance or support, but our focus should be on building up the individual to a point at which they are able to, wherever practical, support themselves and eventually support others.

The process of presenting oneself to the community in the lead-up to any election is simply not possible without the help of dedicated family, friends and volunteers. I feel blessed to have had so many people offering their time and resources over the last 12 months. There are far too many to name here now but it would be remiss of me to not mention a special few.

To my wife, Mira, I owe a debt of gratitude that I doubt I can repay in just one lifetime. Her support, love and understanding have provided me with faith and energy beyond my own capabilities. To my whole family, each of whom helped me in their own unique way, I say thank you. To my good friend Ian Goodenough, who mentored and encouraged me throughout this journey, I say thank you. To the support of countless friends, community volunteers, members of the Liberal Party and parliamentary colleagues, I say thank you. Also worthy of special mention are David and Cindy Harding; Albert and Cecylia Jacob; Senator Michaelia Cash; Hon Michael Mischin, MLC; Hon Peter Collier, MLC; Carlo and Niki Hormozi; Kate and Ryan Johnson; Dave Anson; Josh Antram; Michael Strachan; Nicky Cook; Bec Walton; Kate Burns; Peigi Farquhar; Mandy Fougere; Tony Penna; Beth Hewitt; Patrick Vuillat; Ross Slater; Stephan Kruger; Sherryl Paternoster; Peter Ramshaw; Cam Sinclair; Shane Ball and Tony Brooks. Finally, I make a special mention also of my friend Paul Olckers.

In closing, my sincerest desire is that I will represent our state and my community with the utmost energy, integrity and passion. I do not take the office that has been bestowed upon me for granted; but rather, in humility and gratefulness, I set forth to serve my community to the best of my ability.

I wish all of my fellow members the very best for the thirty-ninth Parliament and beyond, and thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker, for the opportunity to share my opening address this evening.

[Applause.]
