

[Thursday, 18 August 1983.]

MR BRADSHAW (Murray-Wellington) [4.07 p.m.]: Mr Speaker, I congratulate you on your appointment as Speaker to this House. I know you will carry out the job with the dignity the position deserves.

As the new member for the Murray-Wellington electorate, I wish to make mention of the two former members who represented Wellington - the Hon. June Craig - and Murray - the Hon. Richard Shalders.

Both members represented their respective electorates with distinction and the State of Western Australia as Ministers. To follow in the footsteps of June Craig and Richard Shalders will certainly be a big job. I will represent Murray-Wellington to the best of my ability to justify the confidence the electors have placed in me by electing me as their member.

I wish to thank the electors of Murray-Wellington and I will serve them without prejudice.

Mr Speaker, I also wish to thank the people who helped me during my election campaign. Mr Ernie Taylor not only gave me encouragement during the campaign, but also, as my campaign chairman, worked hard to ensure that the campaign ran smoothly. My campaign committee members also worked hard and I thank them for the effort they afforded me. Friends of mine in the electorate who also helped in so many ways, I thank.

I would also like to thank my wife, Beverley, for the dedicated work that she put into the campaign, and for her tolerance and wholehearted support.

Members of the Liberal Party branches in my electorate who, firstly, endorsed me for the election and then, secondly, came to the fore when called upon, I sincerely thank.

The Murray-Wellington electorate is of considerable area and consists of the Murray, Waroona, and Harvey Shires. I am extremely fortunate to be able to represent an exciting developing electorate; an electorate I love and for which I will work with dedication to maintain the high quality of life in the area; an electorate which consists of prime farming land and ranges from rural to the mining industry with a wide range of other interests in between.

The dairy industry for many years was the backbone of the electorate and still holds a high position in the area.

The Honorary Royal Commission held last year investigated the needs of this vital industry for the future. Some of the recommendations are currently being studied by the Minister for Agriculture and are about to be put to the industry for approval.

I believe it is vital that milk quotas be open to negotiability with several restrictions such as maximum milk quotas, with a review each year or two.

Beef production is also a major industry in Murray-Wellington from the raising of prime beef to abattoirs such as E. G. Green & Sons, an export licensed abattoir. These abattoirs are spread throughout the electorate and contribute to employment and, in some cases, to export dollars.

The beef industry is one which needs consultation between all parties involved, such as producers and beef processors, to bring stability to prices. The up and down prices in past years leave the beef farmers in despair as they are unable to budget from year to year.

The uncertainty of prices received by farmers together with the droughts and fires in the Eastern States has led to a drastic reduction in cattle numbers and the prediction by the Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation that Australia will be unable to fulfil the overseas quotas this year.

The alumina industry has had a stabilising effect and the imminent opening of the Wagerup and Worsley refineries will bring further development and prosperity to the Murray-Wellington electorate.

One of the problems associated with massive development is the lack of infrastructure costs. Roads need to be upgraded and facilities provided to cope with the increase in population. Much lip service is given to infrastructure costs. However, Mr Speaker, that is generally where the "buck" stops, leaving the local shire councils anguishing.

It is high time a more equitable system was promulgated to help shires provide the necessary facilities when major industry is thrust upon them.

I do not wish to give the impression that I am against progress and development, particularly in this phase of high unemployment; but a land use study of areas such as the Murray-Wellington electorate is essential. As mentioned earlier, this is prime farming land and therefore should remain so. Murray-Wellington in general should remain as broadacre farms, not subdivided for farmlets or used for industry.

Australia has limited prime farming land and Murray-Wellington is fortunate in that respect; but in time to come this land will become even more vital for intensive food production, such as market gardens.

Other industries I wish to mention which are of no less importance in my electorate are tourism and forestry. Tourism, which is universally recognised as a valuable source of employment and dollar earner, needs a shot in the arm in Murray-Wellington. The area has all the ingredients to attract tourists, from historic buildings and the Hotham Valley railway in the Murray Shire to dams in the Waroona and Harvey Shires, and crabbing at Australind.

It is pleasing to see the Murray Shire Council in conjunction with other interested groups, such as the racing and trotting clubs and the Chamber of Commerce, is combining to promote its district. However, the under-rated tourist potential of Murray-Wellington needs to be promoted by a joint approach to the question by the Murray, Waroona, and Harvey Shires, together with other interested bodies.

Under a carefully planned programme, the Murray-Wellington electorate, with its proximity to Perth, is ideally situated to take advantage of the tourist industry.

Laporte Australia Ltd at Australind could not go without a mention. Laporte effluent has been the subject of much debate over the last year or two. The PWD and Laporte are doing a splendid job at present with the Laporte waste. I have inspected the disposal ponds on the peninsula. This is the most efficient and the cheapest way of disposing of the effluent at the present time. When the ponds are exhausted, they are filled with sand and regeneration of the vegetation is instigated. In fact, the regeneration is superior to the natural vegetation.

It is unfortunate that spills due to breaks in the pipe from Laporte to the peninsula do occur from time to time, but safeguards are taken to try to reduce these unfortunate breaks. Perhaps a trough placed under the pipe could act as a further safeguard, if a break does occur, to stop the leakage into the estuary.

With over 300 people employed at Laporte plus the multiplying effect, Laporte is an industry that needs the encouragement and support of all concerned.

It was stated during the election campaign by the new member for Mitchell that he would investigate the resiting of this industry. I know that, if Laporte had to move there is a grave risk that the company would close its operations in WA with the devastating effect of many hundreds being forced onto unemployment benefits. I just wonder how far that investigation to resite Laporte has gone or was this another "pie in the sky" promise during election time to gain political advantage?

The "Bunbury 2000" concept cannot go without comment. "Bunbury 2000" is a set of plans and items which was already in place before 19 February. I agree that the south-west should be promoted; however, there are few new ideas in "Bunbury 2000". The concept is dependent basically on the alumina industry. If "Bunbury 2000" means promoting Bunbury and not the region, I oppose the concept. The South West Development Authority which is promoting "Bunbury 2000" is tremendous, but I feel it is overserved by bureaucrats who will implement the scheme.

In this country, where water is a priority, the decision by the new Federal Government to abandon the new Harvey weir and Harris dam was a great disappointment. In particular this was so with the Harris dam. Because of the high salt content of the Wellington dam water, the water from the Harris dam was to be used to shandy down the Wellington dam water. The new Harvey weir would ensure water for irrigation in the Harvey irrigation district in times of low rainfall, and in future years when the area is under intense food production.

School bus operators were dealt a body blow early this year when out of the blue they were told the system would be changed. Living in the country, I have had contact with a large number of school bus operators, and they are a caring, dedicated band of people. They are not overpaid and have the best system and record in Australia. I believe the basic principle of previous agreements should carry on.

Another area in which I believe the State Government should exert pressure is the removal of one of the inequalities regarding school teachers. I am referring to a Federal Government area and an anomaly which should be rectified.

A school teacher who owns his home, on being transferred to another school, leases or rents his own home, on which income he must pay tax. He is in a situation where in the new teaching position he pays rent which is not tax deductible. I believe this band of dedicated people should have the benefit of either not being taxed on the house they rent out or have the rent they are paying deemed a tax deduction. In my view, they should not be taxed at all on the rent they receive, as they suffer enough with the transfer and the possibility of living in a house not as comfortable as their own.

Over the last 18 months, the residents of Australind have been deprived of one of the basic necessities of life; that is, good quality drinking water. With salt levels over 1 000 parts per million, apart from the unsavoury taste, and plants in the garden dying, there is the question of effect on health. I refer now to an article in the *South*

Western Times of Thursday, 23 June 1983, under the heading "Australind water a health threat". It quotes the Harvey District medial officer as follows -

Bottle-fed babies and people with heart problems, high blood pressure or kidney complaints could all be suffering because of the high salt content of the water.

He goes on -

"It is at an undesirable level and would affect the health of certain people," he said.

"Besides it smells and tastes awful. I won't even use it to make tea or coffee."

I implore the Government to install a treatment plant in the Australind area as soon as possible. In this day and age, there is no need to be deprived of one of life's basic commodities; that is, quality drinking water.

Unions are essential for people in all walks of life and I would be first to support their existence. However, over the last 10 years the unions have fought for and gained wages and conditions far beyond what the community can afford. Now is the time for moderation by the unions, until our productivity is again competitive in the marketplace.

The wages pause gave some hope for a recovery and I find the recent increase in Government charges abhorrent. How can we expect a recovery when the Government has the 10 per cent increase syndrome? Here is one of the sources of inflation. Smaller Government is the only way to go. Australia has 25.4 per cent of its work force employed in the public sector. This percentage is one of the highest, if not the highest, of the western countries.

I find the current price hike for service charges to the people of Western Australia disgusting. Most people in the community were prepared for a wages pause, but when SEC charges rise by 15 per cent, bus and train fares increase by 33 1/3 per cent, and so on, and there is no guidance from the Government, all we can expect is union unrest and demands for higher wages creating more unemployment, even less competition in the marketplace, and therefore more unemployment.

Small business - the greatest employer in Australia - also needs encouragement and help. It is high time for a user-pays system to eventuate. Why should small business be the collector of taxes? All Government service charges are at a higher rate for business, with the gross rental value leading to unrealistic costs to small business; for example, the proprietor of a 2½ metres square kiosk in a city arcade, with no running water, has to pay \$800 a year in water rates. Payroll tax or employment tax should be removed. I believe with lower service charges and no payroll tax, the long-term benefit would be more employment. Unemployment should be the priority of everyone and every Government. The long-term socioeconomic results are frightful.

Unemployment appears to be here to stay, but by implementing the previous recommendations of user-pays for Government services, and the abolition of payroll tax, more people will be employed in small business.

I firmly believe for the sanity and self-respect of unemployed people on social security benefits that they should give service for pay. If people are unemployed for long periods, they eventually become unemployable and grave socioeconomic problems develop. By providing work for money received, the unfortunate unemployed will have more self-respect and will lead a happier life, and this will reflect in greater stability in the homes of the unemployed.

It is time that Governments throughout Australia govern instead of being hypnotised by the vocal minority of the radical "greenies". The Franklin-below-Gordon River dam in Tasmania is an example of what can happen. An impenetrable area would have been opened up to the public creating a tremendous tourist attraction. The best form of power produced is hydroelectricity, and the dam would have meant that no fossil fuels were wasted unnecessarily, with no pollution, and a great deal of employment.

In New South Wales over 500 jobs in forest management have been lost due to pressure by "greenies" - this report appeared in *The Australian* of 2 June 1983. In Western Australia, despite strong support from the people who should be recognised - the Forests Department - the "greenies" again won out to the detriment of employment and the Shannon River Basin is to be declared a national park. I believe many people have forgotten that we mortals are a part of the environment - many people are losing sight of this fact. I am not saying that people should just go and destroy, but in the examples I have mentioned, there is overwhelming evidence against the "greenies" or conservationists.

I must show my disappointment at the Labor Government's first five months of Government. Firstly, I refer to the election promise to contain prices while there is a wages freeze. Within a short time of taking office up went government charges, not one, two, or three per cent, but an average of 15 per cent. Our Government members sound like an echo of the Federal Labor Government when they say, "We were left with a massive deficit". I ask members, is \$14 million massive in a \$2 billion turnover?

The second reason for my disappointment is that the main problem in our community is not being addressed - perhaps it has been put in the "too-hard" basket - that is, unemployment.

The two main problems facing the hard-hit working people and the unemployed have been forgotten. Instead we have introduced legislation such as the excessive prices legislation, and the increase in the tobacco tax - all of which could have waited for more important legislation. The previous Liberal Government did attempt - maybe too late - to help employment with its job bank. It is time the Government started on important legislation; it should not dally on lesser legislation.

The Labor Party policy on the granting of Aboriginal land rights and the resultant Seaman inquiry concerns me greatly. I believe the Labor Party's policy on Aboriginal land rights is discrimination in the extreme and will create our own form of apartheid in this country. Much of the South-West Land Division is held freehold and there is great concern by landowners in my electorate as to what the inquiry will be recommending. There is a genuine threat that parts of their properties will be lost under this Government's announced policy.

[Applause.]