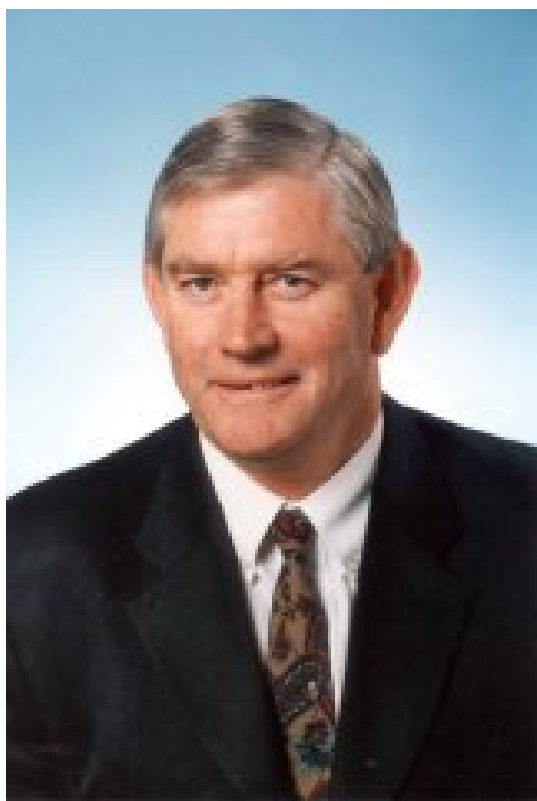




PARLIAMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

VALEDICTORY SPEECH



HON JOHN FISCHER, MLC
(Member for Mining and Pastoral Region)

Legislative Council

Valedictory Remarks — Motion

Thursday, 19 May 2005

Legislative Council

Thursday, 19 May 2005

HON JOHN FISCHER (Mining and Pastoral) [5.23 pm]: I must admit that Frank has covered a lot of ground, but I have often wondered what I should say in a valedictory speech, that is, apart from saying thank you to the 104 000 Western Australians who elected three One Nation members to this Parliament in 2001 and also to the many others who have helped us since we have been here. I hold the view that the uncertainty of small parties being re-elected, especially to the Legislative Council, should have dictated that anything we wanted to say was put forward well and truly prior to our last day.

I find myself regretting that this is not the case in my situation, as there are many other issues in the Mining and Pastoral Region in particular that certainly need to be addressed. However, I shall need to leave those issues to others as my time in this place has come to a conclusion.

I will make one reference, however, to the ideological make-up of this house in reflecting on a comment made not unkindly by Hon Barry House in his contribution to the Address-in-Reply. He mentioned that the 2001 preference distribution with One Nation was similar to the National Party preferencing the Greens (WA) in the South West Region at the last election. An article by Joe Poprzeczny that recently appeared in the newspaper, put a slant on things that perhaps need correction. One Nation was not a coalition partner of the Liberal Party. We were last at that time on all the Liberal Party tickets. I think the arrangement with the National Party preferencing the Greens, and the situation with One Nation were totally different; in fact, there was certainly no mutual appreciation between the Liberal Party and One Nation. As I say, we were last on the Liberal Party ticket in every seat in the state. Hon Derrick Tomlinson even thought it necessary to peruse *Mein Kampf* to try to understand our philosophy. I genuinely hope that Hon Derrick Tomlinson did not find too many similarities between the philosophy in *Mein Kampf* and our philosophy. I think it was the result of a media beat-up of the worst kind. As I said in my maiden speech, it did not really upset me but I thought it was extremely rude to the 104 000 people in Western Australia who voted for a smaller party, basically because they were sick of the actions of the two major parties.

I agree with Hon Norman Moore's recent comments in this house regarding the future of One Nation and the difficulty with it being under conservative control. I have no hesitation, and certainly have a pride, in saying that I consider my philosophy that of a conservative nationalist. I very much regret our past mistakes regarding preferences. I believe they will have a detrimental effect on the future of politics, especially conservative politics, in this state. I sincerely hope that issues, such as the National Party preferencing the Greens, do not happen again in the near future. I do not believe that this state can afford further radical interference by groups such as the Greens, any more than it can from fanatical religious movements. I make no apology for the fact that my views are of that nature. The future we are facing with free trade agreements with nations such as China will make life more and more difficult, especially for the agricultural sector, and they will make it more and more difficult for us to adequately distribute the wealth of Western Australia.

Having got that off my chest, I take this opportunity to thank Hon John Cowdell, President of this chamber, and Laurie Marquet, who is absent, for the help and assistance they have proffered to my colleagues and me during our brief time here. I thank all the members of this house for the debates in which we have all taken part. I wish many of those debates had not occurred. However, that was the will of the house and must be taken as the will of the people who elect the members of this house.

I also thank my two colleagues Hon Frank Hough and Hon Paddy Embry. Frank and I have had a very good relationship over the six years he mentioned. I cannot remember us having a disagreement. If we did have a disagreement, one of us very wisely walked out and thought about it for a while so we could have a beer afterwards. I thank Frank and Paddy for their friendship, help and assistance during my time in this place.

I thank the parliamentary staff for their excellent work. That has been adequately expressed by the members who made their valedictory speeches before me. No-one could disagree with the compliments that have been paid to staff. Finally, I wish all members, both those who are retiring and those who are staying on, all the best for their future. I hope all achieve what has been set out for them through their political philosophy or outside Parliament. It has been a pleasure to work here. I have enjoyed it very much. Thank you.

[Applause.]
