

*Introduction and First Reading*

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Court (Premier), and read a first time.

**GOVERNOR'S SPEECH***Distribution of Copies*

**THE SPEAKER (Mr Clarko):** Accompanied by the honourable members of this Chamber, I attended His Excellency the Governor (Sir Francis Burt, AC, KCMG, QC) in the Legislative Council Chamber to hear the speech which His Excellency was pleased to deliver to members of both Houses of Parliament. For the sake of greater accuracy, I have caused printed copies of the speech to be distributed among members of this Chamber.

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY***Motion*

**MRS van de KLASHORST (Swan Hills) [3.54 pm]:** I move -

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

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 Speaker, in moving the Address-in-Reply and delivering my maiden speech to this Parliament, I first congratulate you on your election as Speaker. We can all look forward to receiving the benefit of guidance based on your long parliamentary experience. My confidence is further strengthened by the knowledge that you share with me a background in the education profession.

In standing here as a new member, I remind myself of a remark attributed to Billy Hughes when a new Minister was making a less than brilliant debut in the Federal Parliament. Mr Hughes said that the Minister, "reminds me of an artificially inseminated cow. He knows that something wonderful has happened to him but he does not know exactly what it is and what he has to do about it." New members need not be any different from new Ministers. I shall do my best not to live up to that perceptive, if inelegant, description.

I take this opportunity to record my deepest thanks to the tireless volunteers who made it possible for me to be here today: My campaign director, Vic Watson; the campaign committee; and the branch members of the Liberal Party who were unstinting in their efforts. Special thanks are due to my husband, Frans, for his total and constant support.

Like a great many others in our community, we are migrants to Australia. I was aged 13 years and Frans was aged 18 years when this country became home to our respective families. We were, fortunately, later naturalised together. We are the parents of two sons both serving in the Royal Australian Navy.

Having left school at 15, I started work as an office girl. I then attended evening classes until I was 21, learning typing, shorthand and bookkeeping. By the time I left work to have my first son - people had to leave work when they were pregnant in those days - I was in charge of the office. Twenty-six years ago we moved to Gidgegannup with our two small sons to realise a dream of owning an orchard, and have been strongly involved in our local community ever since. Later I worked as a teaching aide at the Middle Swan kindergarten and at 37 years of age took up the challenge, went back to college and became a teacher. This led to my 15 year career as a teacher within the Swan Hills electorate.

I stand here as the second member for Swan Hills, an electorate created at the 1989 election. It is, however, a district with a long electoral history. Much of its area, the Swan Valley and the eastern hills, was previously in the district of Mundaring between 1974 and 1989, and before that in the seat of Toodyay. This has been a politically volatile area ever since it ceased to be mainly agricultural 30 years ago. It has had four representatives since 1959: Hon Jim Craig, a Minister in the Brand Government who held Toodyay for the Country Party until he retired in 1971; Mr Jim Moiler, who was a Labor member, first for Toodyay and

then for Mundaring in 1977; Mr Tom Herzfeld who held the seat for the Liberal Party until 1983; and, finally, Hon Gavan Troy the Australian Labor Party member. His helpful courtesy to me as the new member is appreciated. These gentlemen were all well regarded as hardworking local members, and I am conscious of the standard of service they have set.

Swan Hills also includes a large section of Midland together with Midvale and Middle Swan that were taken from the old seat of Helena and prior to that were in the former district of Swan. As such, this area was represented by a long line of ALP members: Mr Brady, Mr Skidmore and, latterly, by the present member for Helena.

Indeed, from 1924 until the last election the Midland area had 69 years of unbroken Labor representation. I am, therefore, proud to stand here as a pioneer Liberal member for an area too long taken for granted by one side of politics. I am equally proud to be the first woman to win the Legislative Assembly seat in the Midland and Hills area. Thankfully women are no longer regarded as a novelty in politics. I consider that we can bring new perspectives to representation and can be more sharply aware of the needs and concerns of people. It was my side of politics that gave Western Australia its first woman member of this House, or of any House of Parliament - Edith Cowan in 1921 - and its first and second women Cabinet Ministers, Florence Cardell-Oliver in 1949 and June Craig in 1977.

Representing a seat as diverse as Swan Hills brings a special challenge. Although most people will appreciate that the natural environment is a major aspect of the district, they may be less aware that it includes three separate water catchments and two distinct environments in the eastern hills and the wetlands of the Swan Valley. Different environments, of course, require careful individual management by decision makers in partnership with the people who have chosen to live there. So much of Swan Hills can be described as a green lung for Perth - a description that applies very much to the unique Swan Valley. The preservation of the Swan Valley from urbanisation matters greatly not only to its residents but also to Western Australians generally.

I have been elected not only as a representative with a deep personal commitment to maintain the environment of the Swan Valley but also as a member of a Liberal-National Party team with a firm policy of giving the valley special status in the metropolitan region scheme. We will ensure, through a Swan Valley preservation and protection Act, that the valley is preserved and that its boundaries are enshrined according to their definition so that, without reference to Parliament, there will not be again the threat of corridor development east of the railway line caused by self-serving redefinitions. Wetlands will be preserved and housing growth will take place in the kind of discontinuous villages we already know. This will complement the character of the Swan Valley instead of intruding upon it. Living space can be provided on properties for family members without wholesale subdivisions outside gazetted special rural zones. Rather than making pious statements about the desirability of encouraging continued viticulture and other rural activity, the Act will include "right to farm" principles to protect viticulture and the 150 table grape growers in the valley through zoning and by ensuring that no subdivision runs counter to that objective.

I also reaffirm my support for the Coalition's commitment to encourage and support the Shire of Swan in an investigation of changes to rating so that agricultural users of land are given a real incentive to maintain primary production. The Government has made this commitment, not because intense urbanisation of the Swan Valley will deprive the State of valuable tourist dollars, but chiefly because it will run counter to the deep wishes of a major local community. It is a key part of the Government's strategy for the Swan Valley that its development should proceed with the approval of the people who live there.

As the local member I attach special importance to the formation of a Swan Valley rural strategy group to represent the community in overseeing development. It means a break with past practices where residents, rightly, felt threatened by bureaucratic decisions. Our Minister for Planning has already begun this process and I commend him for his swift action. It is my firm intention as the member for Swan Hills to preserve and foster the rural character of not only the Swan Valley, but also all non-urban sections of the Swan and Mundaring Shires. Having lived on a rural property for 26 years, I fully appreciate the determination of many electors to maintain these holdings.

Very often they need to earn off-farm income to keep them going, but they represent a deep commitment in terms of effort. The situation in Swan Hills has a parallel in Europe where

for years smaller farms have been reliant on off-farm income. The big difference here in Australia is that we do not receive European Economic Community subsidies, but must stand on our own feet. Sensible development of these rural properties teaches conservation at the most effective and practical level. On our own property we made a decision to undertake only a parkland clearance, despite the extra work involved and the lower capacity for stock. We have collected and burnt only the deadwood. We have avoided energy-hungry electrical equipment where possible and we have grown our own vegetables. This has given my family a richer lifestyle. However, as the member for this seat it has also given me absolute empathy with those members of our community who consider themselves environmentalists and who have chosen to live in Swan Hills, as they see it in order to live in closer harmony with nature. They can all be assured that their concerns are my concerns.

In fact, many of these people do appreciate this. It was a gratifying recognition of this Government's environmental stance that it received 55 per cent of the final distribution of Green preferences in Swan Hills at the last election. I am also very conscious that the John Forrest and the Walyunga National Parks are within Swan Hills - the former being the oldest in the State and in the heart of the electorate. Whiteman Park, the result of more recent community effort, is on the western boundary, and half of the Mundaring Weir catchment lies on the southern boundary. In short, much natural heritage in the area is to be preserved for the sake of the entire Western Australian community. I intend to ensure that preservation with the full backing of a Government which believes absolutely, as I do, that sustainable development is the ally, not the foe, of conservation.

The communities along the Great Eastern Highway from Greenmount to Wooroloo, as do many of the farming areas further north, consist of little towns rather than suburbs. Each of them has its own distinct identity, and no fewer than 17 separate resident and ratepayer groups are within the Swan and Mundaring shires. This may involve more work for a parliamentarian, but it also means a strong sense of community exists throughout the electorate. It means that people have a greater awareness of their rights and of the possibilities for constructive action at local levels. The Government welcomes this kind of community input into decision making.

I have been an involved parent organising, working and raising funds for playgroup, school P & Cs, little athletics, cubs and scouts and moved, as the children matured, into involvement in many community and service groups. I know from experience and observation that local volunteers and volunteer groups are the fabric of society which form the chain that links our community together. Swan Hills is indeed fortunate to have so many committed people.

One district community within Swan Hills includes the Royal Australian Air Force personnel and its families at Bullsbrook who often need to find their feet in new surroundings. As the mother of two sons in the Royal Australian Navy, I have an immediate understanding of the concerns of families who are relocated. It is an understanding sharpened by the fact that I will soon have a daughter-in-law who will be a service wife and must face similar problems. New adjustments will be made by the Pearce RAAF and Bullsbrook community when the Republic of Singapore Air Force personnel and their families are stationed there. The benefits will be wider than the injection of more spending into local business. There will be enrichment of another kind as local children meet new classmates who come from a different culture and schools adjust accordingly. Our Minister for Education has been advised of the needs of the Bullsbrook District High School, and is taking steps to monitor the situation to make sure that all the children are not disadvantaged in any way.

As I mentioned earlier, I am the first Liberal to represent Midland in the Legislative Assembly since 1924. Together with Middle Swan, Swan View and Stratton, this urban area comprises 40 per cent of the electorate. It is a community made up of blue collar workers, small business people, white collar workers and age pensioners, as well as many people with special needs who are outside the work force. For all this, there is not a radical division between Midland and the remainder of Swan Hills. Midland is far more than just a suburban centre. People in Midland appreciate that the area retains something of the atmosphere of a big country town and remains a major rural service centre which attracts business from farming communities north and east of Swan Hills.

Midland has a strong future as a diversified regional centre with manufacturing and service industries soon to be joined by the Department of Land Administration head office. I am

proud to support the work of the Midland and Districts Chamber of Commerce and the Better Midland Council as much of this growth will result from local initiative rather than any kind of centralised planning.

A great many accusations have been made about the decision to close the Midland Workshops. Perhaps, more than anyone else, I am conscious that it was coalition policy to retain the workshops. I am very aware that this decision has caused concern and anxiety to the workers; however, I also know that the decision was not made lightly. I assure all members and you, Mr Speaker, that this event has most certainly made for a challenging start to my parliamentary career! In order to assist the people I represent - workers, their wives and children and sometimes their elderly parents - I am working with the Westrail special taskforce and with the Midland community to ensure that other positions can be found in the metropolitan area, many of them within Westrail where their colleagues are taking redundancy packages. It is also part of my role as a parliamentary representative to ensure that the land currently occupied by the workshops is put to constructive commercial use, providing direct and indirect employment for the Midland area. I am a member of the central Midland task force that has been formed by the Government and which has already held meetings and taken action to set the trend for the future of this land.

On a more positive note, I was delighted to be involved and able to report very soon after I was elected that the Government had resumed the Midland saleyards complex. This action of the Government has brought stability and permanency into the livestock selling industry as well as benefits to the local community and Midland businesses, including an increase in job prospects for the area.

As a former teacher with 15 years' experience, all of it within the Swan Hills electorate, and as member for the area, I am all too conscious of how useful the \$18m lost in the running of the Midland Workshops in the past 12 months would have been in upgrading the schools in Swan Hills. The staff and administration facilities at the Midvale and Swan View Primary Schools in particular are a disgrace, and it is not good enough. A tour of schools gives one a good illustration of the effects of financial mismanagement, where millions of taxpayers' dollars have been squandered, and who ends up paying the bill. Waste and incompetence have led to poorer facilities for dedicated, professional people and for the children of Western Australia. It is extremely important that schools are maintained on a regular basis and that the people's assets are kept in good condition. School maintenance has been neglected in the immediate past and the Minister for Education has been advised of the many educational needs of Swan Hills.

In my time at the Mt Helena Primary School, I knew at first-hand the problems of maintenance when only one faulty item in three could be repaired and my library filled up like a junkyard with unworkable equipment. In conjunction with the Minister and a Government committed to the importance of the education of our young people, I intend to ensure that, within the confines of the Budget, these schools receive the priority they deserve.

We can provide for better services and more jobs only through the creation of wealth produced not by Governments but by private enterprise operating under firm but positive overall management of the State. Already I have taken the opportunity of visiting the Pilbara to see at first hand a major part of the mining industry that is so great a generator of wealth and employment for Western Australia. During that visit I came to understand fully that support for industry is essentially a matter of environmentally balanced and careful sustainable development. I was impressed to see in the Pilbara the successful efforts made by mining companies to restore the landscape. I am pleased to be able to report that this same principle is upheld by a major employer in Swan Hills, Pioneer Concrete (WA) Pty Ltd, whose adherence to environmental rehabilitation and balanced development has been recognised with that company's winning a Greening Australia Award for conservation efforts.

A major reason that the people of Swan Hills, and of Western Australia, voted heavily in favour of change on 6 February was the issue of crime, and juvenile crime in particular. Nothing can devalue more quickly our relaxed rural lifestyle than the fear of theft or assault. I am confident that the Government will fulfil its undertaking to the electors, a promise not of harsh punishment but of due process. It is a mockery of justice when the probation system effectively allows offenders to evade punishment and commit further offences. It is that

which Western Australians have demanded be stopped, and stopped it will be. However, this reform will be only one step in a long process that I know is essential for a just and healthy society, the restoration of a sense of right and wrong and of personal responsibility for our own actions. Social theorists who have taught that morality is relative and that society must simply balance competing human wants have helped create a situation where dishonest and wicked actions are explained away as the results of social conditioning. People know better and expect better.

The role of Government in restoring honesty goes a lot further and deeper than reform of criminal law and juvenile justice. It means tackling problems at source with such support for our young people as the recent Government grant of \$10 000 for drug rehabilitation in Midland, a project which, among others, I have supported strongly since my election. I am appreciative of the interest and understanding shown by the Minister for Community Development in developing social infrastructure that assists people to help themselves. We have a duty to be honest and open in our decisions, to meet face to face with workers who are suffering because of the mistakes of Government and to show children in our schools by example that dishonesty not only attracts retribution but also is wrong. I am not the only teacher who in recent years has observed children questioning and sometimes disregarding standards of honesty because they see that these standards are being flouted by their elders and by the leaders of our community. We, in Parliament, are the ultimate role models and some in the last decade have forgotten this to the detriment of not only the State's finances, but also community standards. I have sought election through a desire to play my part in restoring ethical standards and in giving real power back to the people I represent, and I am confident that I can pursue this task as part of a Government with that same guiding conviction.

[Applause.]

**MR OSBORNE** (Bunbury) [4.18 pm]: I formally second the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Leahy.

#### CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES

##### *Appointment*

On motion by Mr Court (Premier), resolved -

That the member for Scarborough (Mr Strickland) be appointed Chairman of Committees.

#### DEPUTY CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES

##### *Appointment*

**THE SPEAKER** (Mr Clarko): I wish to advise members of the appointment of the following members as Deputy Chairmen of Committees: The member for Whitford (Mr Johnson), the member for Albany (Mr Prince), the member for Roe (Mr Ainsworth) and the member for Mitchell (Mr D.L. Smith).

[Questions without notice taken.]

#### ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE - SPECIAL

On motion by Mr C.J. Barnett (Leader of the House), resolved -

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, 22 June at 2.00 pm.

*House adjourned at 4.37 pm*

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