



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR MARYCHOODORE

Hansard 5 November 1992

FIRST SPEECH

Miss SIMPSON (Maroochydoore) (5 p.m.): While I am probably one of the few—if not the only—speakers to have presented a true maiden speech in these hallowed halls, I remember well the characters and history of this Parliament over the last 18 years. There has been a rich tapestry of colourful characters who have contributed to the strength and uniqueness of this State. Queensland is different, and Queenslanders are different. But it is no sin to aim for excellence and not be tied to the philosophical shirt tails of a debauched socialist Canberra.

I was born a Mallee girl and grew up a proud Queenslander. One could hardly be more a Queenslander after being shoved through a 7-foot-high window in the Bellevue when someone's parent forgot the key. That is something that Mick Veivers could not achieve. I am not a cynic. I stand here because, like my colleagues, I have a bright vision for the future. I have a vision of greater things for my Queensland and for my electorate of Maroochydoore. If apathy is the enemy, then cynicism is its best mate, and there has never, never been a cynic who has ever changed the world for the better. I believe that children should not have to endanger their lives merely by walking alone to the corner store, and that women and men should not be living in fear in their homes. Our young people should be free to dream dreams and use their God-given abilities to be the best in worthwhile and fulfilling jobs. Our senior citizens need the assurance that we still honour their contribution to society and that they, and their carers, will not be forgotten. As well, let business people—people who risk failure in order to succeed—be hailed as heroes and encouraged to brave new innovative frontiers. If we want to see a community that fights back against spiralling crime and unemployment, then it is time for the prophets of cynicism and mediocrity to take a hike. For too long, socialist Labor Governments in Australia have institutionalised mediocrity through excessive regulation, taxation and an antiquated union movement and industrial system.

My electorate of Maroochydoore is the jewel in the crown of the Sunshine Coast. The Electoral and Administrative Review Commission's choice of a name is a misnomer, because the Maroochydoore electorate really covers the Maroochy region. It extends from the Blackall Range. The Maroochy River moves down past Cooloolabin, Yandina, Bli Bli, the north shore areas of Pacific Paradise, Maroola and Mudjimba, and then the more populous centres of Maroochydoore, and Mooloolaba. The Maroochydoore electorate is a family tourist destination with enviable surfing and swimming beaches. Nearly all of the Sunshine Coast's sugar cane land is located in my electorate. My electorate also boasts the world's largest ginger factory, which has collected an impressive array of export awards. I believe that the experience that this industry has gained in value adding on rural produce makes it an outstanding example for others to follow. As a tourist attraction, it adds a third dimension to primary production and manufacturing. There is so much potential in this area of value adding upon our renewable resources such as those produced by rural industry. We need to make the Government see that the future of committing real funds to this area of research and support is worthwhile. There is a need to make more than just a token gesture. The Maroochydoore electorate not only boasts fine crops that boost our export dollars but also likes its tourists to keep returning. To this end, outstanding local branches of the surf lifesaving movement, as well as the helicopter rescue service, help our tourists to enjoy their holidays safely. The rescue

helicopter service operates as the most cost-efficient in Australia and provides medivac facilities to areas far beyond the boundaries of the Sunshine Coast. No tribute can be too high to these heroic operators who often brave shocking conditions to help save lives on the beaches, in the mountains and forests and on roads, as well as from ships at sea. The quality of this service is second to none and the fact that two surf lifesaving clubs in my Maroochydore electorate have also spawned eight Olympians highlights the quality of the service of the rescue organisations in my Maroochydore electorate. I believe that as a tourism area, the Sunshine Coast needs a massive overhaul of the award structure to give flexibility to employ the young as well as more senior workers. I think it was John F. Kennedy who said that the best form of social welfare was a good job. If the choice was theirs, the vast majority of the 16 per cent of unemployed people on the Sunshine Coast would agree and would willingly opt for a job rather than receive unemployment benefits. The union movement's original aim to protect the worker from exploitation is a valid one, but the passage of time has meant that only a select group of workers benefit from ridiculously rigid awards. In other words, now, the unions—and their political sidekicks—do not represent the nonworkers, who are the unemployed.

Excessive regulation is another mark of the present socialist Government in Queensland. Building subcontractors must be wondering why the Government hates them so much. I can tell them why. It is because brickies, plumbers, carpenters and all those other trades people are small businesspeople. By the sweat of their brow, they feed themselves and their families and another level of bureaucracy—yes, bureaucracy, which is Queensland's growth industry and is proudly sponsored by the Labor Government at taxpayers' expense. Under Labor, the Premier's staff has increased by 74 per cent and the Cabinet staff has increased by 2 000 per cent. Money to establish new schools is a lot harder to come by than a Wayne Goss staffer. The Maroochydore electorate has one State high school of 1 400 students, with a projected school population of 2 000 within six years. That is grossly unfair to the students and staff and will turn this school into a sweat shop. Where is the equality of education about which the Government has been talking? A new high school must be built on the coast now if there is to be any hope of avoiding a catastrophe.

When a State Government's top heavy bureaucracy is the major growth area during a recession, other things have to suffer, and that has been the lot of our public hospitals and road network. Significant roadworks will finally be undertaken in my electorate next year, but every single project is running years behind schedule because Labor won Government in 1989. The public has not been fooled. The Kunda Park Road 120 upgrade was supposed to have been well and truly completed by now. Labor put the project back three years. It has chopped a year off that period, so the completion of the project will now be two years late. The upgrading of the Nambour-Bli Bli road was an election promise of a previous Labor candidate, who went on to win in 1989. The road did not get upgraded, but in 1993, some work of a fairly minor nature is to be undertaken within another electorate in the town of Nambour. The danger points on that road remain.

To rub salt into the public wound, during Labor's first term—after initiating no major road projects in what is now the Maroochydore electorate—the Premier, Wayne Goss, then issued election material claiming to be undertaking major roadworks, but two of the roads were, once again, outside the electorate. However, I am pleased to acknowledge that the Government has put a priority on duplicating the Nambour bypass and removing the black spots which have claimed far too many lives. In contrast to that, the Yandina highway deviation was supposed to be built by 1990, but it has now been put back to 1996. The route has been resumed and notices of resumption have been issued. More than a million dollars in real terms has been spent on shifting numerous community buildings, which all happened substantially in the term of the previous National Party Government. This was done to avoid the road wiping out approximately 20 buildings. Through another consultative process last year in addition to the 1980 public meetings, the town and district residents again indicated they wanted the road built where it had been planned. In fact, an astounding 43 per cent of households responded to the voluntary survey. The responses were not collected under duress. To gain an understanding of the response to this survey, one has to look only at the 1992 election of people to the Board of Teachers Registration. There was only a 15 per cent response, and that was considered to be good. In the case of the official Yandina highway survey, people posted or returned their survey forms to the post office where the forms were put into a locked ballot box and opened only in the presence of a scrutineer. Prior to that survey being taken, well attended public meetings were held. Debate raged in the newspapers. A scale model was put on display for two months in the town, plus a mosaic—an aerial photograph. Queensland Transport Department documentation on the height and width of the proposed central route was continuously displayed in the town and supplemented at a public meeting by a panel of experts. The official survey was returned with a response of 68 per cent in favour of the resumed central route. I support the findings of this survey of the people. The Minister has also made a decision to uphold the resumed central route.

A more recent survey undertaken by a group with the express interest of changing the resumed route to a bypass route was done without scrutiny and, as it was conducted on people's doorsteps, resulted in considerable confrontation, which is not reflected in the unofficial surveys' dubious results. I have had people coming to me who have signed the forms for this survey but have since found out about the misrepresentations that were used to coerce them into signing, such as their children having to cross a 10-lane bitumen highway in order to get to school and the road being two to three metres higher than the Main Roads documented specifications. In summary, this new highway deviation should be built immediately for the sake of public safety

with additional consideration being given to proper landscaping and the establishment of parklands, such as those boasted by Gympie around its museum. Further delay is inviting tragedy.

On the issue of the Sunshine Motorway, I can inform the Parliament that the residents of my electorate are only too aware of Labor's broken promises. In 1989, people went to the polls believing Labor's election promise to remove the Sunshine Motorway tolls. After the election, Labor took away one toll plaza and put back two instead. Next year, the Labor Government will go one worse by making the Pacific Paradise/Marcoola/Mudjimba residents pay for a road that they cannot use or access properly. This will all happen despite Premier Goss having written to these people in a letter in 1989—"As the most frequent users of the toll bridge, residents north of the river will pay a disproportionate share of the cost of the motorway and Noosa Shire's proposed new road systems."

The Government has now ruthlessly abandoned these people who believed them and trusted them. The same area also experienced terrible flooding in February. I believe it is imperative that the Sunshine Motorway Stage 2 be designed in a way that will not complicate flooding problems in my electorate. It is also crucial that work be undertaken in the Maroochy North Shore area to alleviate serious drainage problems which have exacerbated flooding in the area. The people who live in the area are ordinary battlers who do not have the cash to pay exorbitant rate increases. I believe that the Government should consider making a special grant to the council in this area specifically for undertaking major works. The \$2m wasted on the rash sale of the so-called Joh jet by the Goss Government would have gone a long way to starting to fix some of these problems. It would also have funded many small, community-based police stations—which brings me to my next point.

In the Sunshine Coast Police District, breaking and entering offences have soared 216 per cent under the Labor Government. The Maroochydore electorate is still a wonderful place in which to live and to visit, but the police simply need more support. The proposal to introduce shopfront police stations has some merit, but I suggest that a far better community policing initiative would be a return to a decentralised police stations system with community-based cops whom the public know. Smaller police stations located in housing areas where the community knows its local officer and vice versa is the best form of community policing. To achieve this aim, I believe police stations are needed in Bli Bli, Mooloolaba, Pacific Paradise/Mudjimba and Yandina. Police officers also need to know that they do not have to fear CJC investigations when crooks make clearly malicious threats to report them to the CJC. This does not serve justice to the police or to the public.

Recently, the issue of asbestos in school classrooms has been brought to public attention. In view of this, I will be seeking an answer from the Government about whether it is true that an asbestos check is being undertaken in the parliamentary complex with the eventual aim of removing the substance. If this is so, will the Government do so at the expense of enforcing a similar policy within the State Education Department for children in schools? The parents in my electorate would be very interested to know the answer.

In conclusion, I state that I am here to work and to be a servant for my electorate. I am grateful to those who elected me and to those who helped by working with me during the campaign. I look forward to working very hard to serve the people of my electorate without fear or favour and without deferring to people's political beliefs.