



Speech by

**Mr T. SULLIVAN**

**MEMBER FOR CHERMSIDE**

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Hansard 3 March 1999

**ADDRESS IN REPLY**

**Mr SULLIVAN** (Chermside—ALP) (4.10 p.m.): I rise to speak in this Chamber in the Address in Reply. I acknowledge that we are replying to the Governor's address under the current status of a constitutional monarchy, and I will continue to work within the current framework while it remains so. However, I also indicate to the Governor and to the people in my electorate my desire for Australia to become a republic. Later in the year, I will be voting accordingly when the referendum is put before us.

I am disappointed that our Prime Minister, John Howard, has dragged his heels. With his approach he has tried to drag Australia back from the next millennium into the 1950s. He has done everything possible, such as appointing certain people to the Constitutional Convention, to slow down and to white-ant any change that would bring about a republic. I am disappointed in his retrograde steps. I hope that the people of Australia will move to change that. The question that he proposes to put, of course, has been worded in such a way as to introduce about five or six elements—all of which are opposed by some people. I believe that has been a deliberate attempt by the Prime Minister to undermine the republican cause. It is a shame that he does not see that Australia has grown up as a nation and can stand on its own feet.

Since this Parliament last met there have been a number of significant developments within the Chermside electorate. I will take a few minutes to detail some of them. The Chermside historical precinct is in the process of being established. This has been a combined effort of the Chermside and Districts Historical Society, the Kedron-Wavell Services Club, the Kedron-Wavell RSL sub-branch, Westfield, and local, State and Federal parliamentarians from both sides of the political divide in the Chermside area. The plan is to build on an already established area in 7th Brigade Park near the eastern end of Banfield Street where the old sea scout building is located. The sub-branch president, Jim Whalen, and volunteer workers did a tremendous amount of work to improve what was in recent years a dilapidated building. A Maori cultural centre has been established in that building.

In a very moving ceremony a few weekends ago, the traditional Aboriginal people of Australia and the Maori people of New Zealand, through their representatives, and the local community had a wonderful gathering where together we shared each other's culture and spiritual experience. This area will be for community use. There are currently major proposals to relocate a drill hall that had connections with the 9th Battalion of the 7th Brigade. That drill hall would be relocated within the historical precinct in the 7th Brigade Park.

The third element of the precinct would be the relocation of the original classrooms of the Chermside State School. The school was closed a few years ago when the population dropped to fewer than 60 students. The original school buildings are going to house the Chermside and Districts Historical Society. This building would then be used as a resource for the local community and for the schools and other groups within the area to access local information. It has been a tremendous, cooperative effort from a range of people: politicians from the conservative and Labor side of Parliament and community groups of all sorts have worked together to try to advance the community. I congratulate and encourage everyone involved in that process.

I thank the Wavell Heights Uniting Church under the leadership of Reverend Bob Warrick for their annual Christmas lights program. Standing high on Rode Road at Wavell Heights and looking back over to the city, the display of lights that were erected there over the Christmas period were not only an

inspiration to the local people of Wavell Heights but also literally shone their light to other people on the north side of the Brisbane. I thank them for their efforts.

The Wavell Heights Neighbourhood Society is a significant community group within the Wavell Heights area. With great pride and a sense of sadness, the community farewelled and thanked a gentleman who has given 47 years of unselfish service to the local community. Keith Boden has been the honorary manager of the society for almost five decades. He, his wife and friends have been working with the Wavell Heights Neighbourhood Society since its inception. It was almost like a second job for Keith; virtually every morning and every afternoon when he was working he would attend to jobs around the neighbourhood centre. Since his retirement from the paid work force, he spent part of every day at the centre assisting the many groups who use it. The hall is one of the few community halls in the Kedron-Wavell Heights area available for hire, and Keith attended that. As well, groups such as the scouts, the guides, the pigeon club, the orchid society, the karate club and the creche and kindergarten association located on the site off Edinburgh Castle Road. Keith has been a marvellous example to the rest of the community. I know that Councillor Kim Flesser and Federal member Wayne Swan join with me in congratulating and thanking Keith for his great service.

A second phase to the significant Kidspace program was also completed since I last had the opportunity to speak in this House. Under the leadership of the Lions Club of Aspley, but again with tremendous community support and the support of the business community—particularly Westfield at Chermside and Baker and Staff—a roof was put over the play equipment. Some people might think that that happens in our local kindergarten—one needs half a dozen parents to roof the equipment. I explain to the House that that Kidspace area houses about 300 children at a time. The roof alone cost \$70,000. That community playground won the Lions national award for community participation. It won other awards from the Brisbane City Council for its contribution to community development and to community recreation. It is a significant structure, not only in terms of recreation for local families but, in fact, we found that during the closure of the Kidspace area when the roof was being put on, families came down from Toowoomba, the Ipswich area, Redcliffe and the near north coast to have birthday parties and other gatherings with their families. Again I congratulate particularly Terry Hampson, who not only marshalled the forces of the Brisbane City Council's Parks North but also his colleagues from the Lions Club of Aspley to bring to completion that tremendous project.

The south-western boundary of the Prince Charles Hospital has an area called Beneke's Bush. It is part of the only original bushland in the northern suburbs of Brisbane. For the past four years, Councillor Terry Hampson—a very dedicated environmentalist—and I worked with Neighbours of Huxtable Park, Men of Trees and other local groups to retain Beneke's Bush for future generations. Because of the redevelopment of the cardiac facilities at Prince Charles Hospital, it was not possible for the department or Ministers to give a final answer until they knew what shape the hospital development would take. With the final plan having been settled on in recent times, it then came down to the hard work of dotting the i's and crossing the t's to work out exactly what would happen.

I am pleased to have been at the ceremony at which the Health Minister, Wendy Edmond, and Councillor Terry Hampson signed a voluntary conservation agreement which will protect that property for the next 99 years. I thank the Minister who is beside me, Rod Welford, for the efforts of his department and the contribution and support that they gave to bring about the VCA. I believe that it has been a win/win all round. The Neighbours of Huxtable Park have indicated that they would be prepared to do work in that part of the area which will not be needed for medical or hospital services. It will provide not only a buffer for the heavy traffic on Webster and Rode Roads but also a beautiful outlook for patients who are recovering from cardiac medical services. I thank all of those people involved and believe that those four years of hard work have ended in an excellent result.

As well, we have seen at the Prince Charles Hospital the recent opening of the extended care facility that replaced the old Jacaranda Village. I do not know how the nurses continued to work in Jacaranda Village in the past couple of years. They were dilapidated old buildings and it was extremely difficult for families and for the patients who needed extended care. Having spoken to some families recently whose loved ones have died in the extended care facility, they have nothing but praise for the staff, for the facilities and for the provision of first-class palliative care to people who are suffering from an incurable disease and who are in their last days.

Another facility which, again, was good in its time is the mental health unit, the Winston Noble Unit. Over the past couple of decades, it had deteriorated significantly. The medical and nursing staff faced a tremendously difficult task in trying to provide up-to-date mental health care for people in buildings that were designed in the 1950s. The recent opening of the new mental health clinic has meant that the staff will be able to treat patients in a world-class facility.

I do not wish to delay the House further so I conclude by saying that I am pleased to have regular contact with a number of schools and community groups in my area. The work that they are doing is significant and I will take the chance later in the year to detail some of that work—whether they be the Bernie Brae Senior Citizens or the Kedron-Wavell Services Club, and I will be speaking about

their involvement in the World Firefighter Games at the next sittings. There is tremendous activity going on in what is a very small electorate—only 13.5 kilometres. It is packed with activity and is a major regional centre on the north side of Brisbane. It is certainly the focal point for commercial and community activity.

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