



Speech by

CARRYN SULLIVAN

MEMBER FOR PUMICESTONE

Hansard 4 April 2001

FIRST SPEECH

Mrs CARRYN SULLIVAN (Pumicestone—ALP) (5.12 p.m.): I am pleased to stand here today as the elected state member for Pumicestone to support the motion moved by the honourable member for Broadwater and seconded by the honourable member for Burnett.

What a great honour and privilege it is to represent the people of the new seat of Pumicestone in this 50th Parliament. I dare say I have gone over this speech in my head 50 times! I understand that the people of Pumicestone have placed great faith in me and I will do my very best to represent them at this level of government.

I extend my congratulations to all those members elected on 17 February 2001, in particular to the Speaker. Parliament has indeed made a wise choice, and I look forward to a good working relationship with everyone here for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

I acknowledge the members who have already spoken and I congratulate them on the quality of their maiden speeches. Maiden, indeed! As I look around the room I am delighted by the sight of so many women colleagues. For me it is indeed a great occasion, and I am pleased to be here to see it. Because of the importance of these speeches I can guarantee that I will be in this chamber to listen to them all. They will become a most valuable and accurate public record in this place.

I am no stranger to Parliament House. It holds many memories for me. Of course, I was sitting in the gallery 11 years ago on 27 March 1990, when my husband of 20 years, Jon, delivered his maiden speech. I acknowledge my husband, who is in the gallery here today, and let members know that he has moved on. He is now the site manager of the Woodford Folk Festival, an event that everyone should see.

When I mention my husband the words 'dedicated' and 'hardworking' always spring to mind. I would like to thank Jon, because I would not have made it here without his constant help, support and, of course, lots of patience. His shoes will be hard for me to fill in this place. He takes a size 10! He was one of the most prolific speakers in the House and could deliver a speech off the cuff on any subject with only 10 minutes notice. I am not Jon, but I trust that one day he will be able to say, 'You're doing okay.'

While frequenting this place I got to know a number of parliamentarians very well. I must admit that they were all willing to help me when they could, and I need to make special mention of four of them. Dean Wells, Paul Lucas and Mike Kaiser did more than could have been expected whenever I asked. They became familiar with Pumicestone by going out of their way to visit it during the campaign and often sent me information that I could make use of. Dean Wells dramatically changed the outlook of the Bribie Island Primary School by replacing an ancient asbestos roof with a brand spanking new one.

The honourable member for Lytton is here with us today, elevated to the ministry with my full support. Mike is not, and I will miss his dedication, his knowledge, his help and his genuine love of politics and the Labor Party. I take this opportunity to wish Mike and his family all the very best for the future.

Of course, the fourth parliamentarian is one to whom we on the government side owe a great deal. He led us to victory at this year's state election. And what a stunning victory it was! Premier Peter

Beattie: I thank you for helping me to become a member of your Labor government, and I hope that I can become a worthy member of your team.

Others must be mentioned in relation to Labor winning Pumicestone. I enjoyed a long and busy campaign and my husband, Jon, and two daughters, Casey and Tai, were very understanding. Without their love and support it would have been difficult to keep focused on the task at hand. I also thank my mother-in-law, Pat, and my sister-in-law, Jan, for the constant positive advice they gave me. I acknowledge my two daughters and Jan, who are also in the gallery today, along with Casey's friend Justin, who learned very quickly that if you hang around the Sullivan household long enough you will get involved in any number of political activities.

I applaud the efforts of my campaign team: Bill Allison, Peter Boyd, Clyde Ford and Marilyn Saxby. Between them they did the bulk of the work that I could not do myself and sacrificed their time whenever asked. Julia Hartman provided me with free office space during the entire campaign and her staff were always very helpful. I am indeed privileged to have friends of this calibre.

My campaign manager, John Van Leent, kept telling everyone what an easy job he had because everything was always so well organised, but he spent many hours doing those jobs that not many of us wanted. He, like me, discovered that letterboxing could be quite dangerous in some parts of Pumicestone, with rather big dogs roaming freely. He finally decided, and wisely so, that any house with big dogs already knew how to vote. Members of John's regular early morning walkers, including Richard and Susan Hetherington, the Sheppard family—Margaret, Tony, Stephanie and Dominique—Dick and Janette Watts, Pal Karsai and Ron Flemming, to name a few, deserve a big thankyou.

All the other members of the Bribie Island branch also deserve my gratitude. Those older members, including Doreen Robertson and Trixie Hansen, who wanted to be part of the campaign every step of the way but could not for health reasons, kept my spirits up by remaining positive about Labor's chances of being re-elected. Shirley Keong, who recently had open heart surgery, said on the night of the election when asked by the local media what she thought of the victory, 'I'm so happy. This win has made me forget I'm an invalid.' That summed up the feelings of everyone that night who was involved in the campaign.

No-one worked harder than the staff at the ALP state office. To Milton and his team: I thank you for your efforts. Stephen Beckett, our federal Labor candidate for Longman, ensured that we had a steady team of federal Labor shadow spokesmen who kept us informed of relevant federal issues. During the state campaign they initiated a petrol price inquiry and petition. Labor was, and still is, the only party interested in reducing petrol prices to a level that would benefit all Australians.

To the many people outside the Labor Party who assisted during the campaign, I give my thanks also. There is an old saying: what goes around comes around, and it is interesting that I met two of the nicest people while campaigning. I was fortunate to meet Carol Burns—of *Prisoner* fame; she played Frankie in the long-running Australian drama—and her husband, Alan Lawrence, as a result of delivering Meals on Wheels to Carol's parents, who happen to live on Bribie Island. Carol offered to launch my campaign, and I will always be grateful to her. I acknowledge Carol, who is also in the gallery today. After the brilliant maiden speech performed by fellow actor and member for Clayfield, I only wish I had asked Carol to write mine.

The local media deserve a mention here, and I am pleased to say that they gave all candidates a fair run. It is one of the few avenues we have to promote our message to the wider electorate.

Finally, to my late parents, Keith and Ivy Lill, who would have been very proud had they been able to be here to witness this day—they both instilled in me the values of honesty and hard work, and it is those values that have helped me so far and will continue to help me with the tasks ahead.

The electorate of Pumicestone was created for this election by the division of the previous seat of Caboolture, which my husband, Jon, held as the state Labor member from 1989 till 1998. The honours board outside this chamber is sounding a little bit like a law firm, with Sullivan, Sullivan, Sullivan and Sullivan—although not all of us are related. As far as I am aware, we are the first husband and wife team to have served in the Queensland parliament, serving similar areas; although when Jon was first elected, his seat of Glass House covered about 2,600 square kilometres. Pumicestone falls entirely in the Caboolture Shire, and it covers a mere 331 square kilometres—far smaller than Jon's old electorate and some of the existing ones—but it is one of the fastest growing areas in south-east Queensland. Its boundaries extend from Lagoon Creek/Pumicestone Road in the north to include the townships of Toorbul, Donnybrook and Meldale. It follows the coastline south to include Bribie Island and Beachmere. It runs from Ullman Road across the Bruce Highway to Buchanan Road, crosses Morayfield Road to Walkers Road, and includes Morayfield to the Caboolture River. It follows the railway line back to Lagoon Creek to include a large section of Caboolture East. Within its boundaries lies the peaceful township of Ningi, bordered by Ningi Creek, natural bushland and several estate developments.

As a local touring guide suggests, Pumicestone is town and country. It has very diverse environments, from densely populated areas, to laid-back, sprawling, rural lifestyles. In areas such as Toorbul, Meldale and Donnybrook people enjoy an idyllic lifestyle of peace and quiet, barely affected by urban pressure and only an hour away from Brisbane. The residents have a major community of interest with Bribie Island, which is a stone's throw away across the Pumicestone Passage. Yet to travel to Bribie is about a 40-minute hike. Many residents have expressed concern about this, and pressure is mounting to construct a road which is a dedicated road from Pumicestone Road through to the Bribie Island road. This would be beneficial to both areas.

Bribie Island is the single biggest populated area in my electorate. Much of the development is concentrated there, with a number of estates under construction both on and just to the west of the island. A bridge of less than one kilometre separates Bribie Island from the mainland. In the past, electorate offices—both state and federal—have been located to the west of the Bruce Highway; but now, for the first time, there will be one on the eastern side. Plans are under way for Premier Peter Beattie to officially open the first Pumicestone electorate office on Bribie Island in the near future.

Pumicestone Passage, which separates Bribie Island from the mainland, was first recorded by Captain James Cook in 1770 but was not named by him. It was, in fact, Matthew Flinders who gave rise to the name Pumicestone in 1799. The passage is restricted to recreational fishing and is a safe environment for other water and boating activities. Those who live on the island have access to the passage, the ocean beach and to the 20 per cent of land dedicated to national parks. Something for everyone! Beachmere has similar assets; it is a smaller coastal town offering excellent fishing and aquatic activities and is only 45 kilometres from Brisbane.

Pumicestone residents have the same needs and desires as the residents of any other electorate. They want to live in a safe environment, have a secure job and expect fair treatment and easy access to high-quality government services. It is a bricks and mortar area with strong emphasis on infrastructure, such as roads, education facilities, affordable housing, health facilities, police and emergency services. It is those needs and desires that I will be lobbying strongly for each day of my first 1,000 days in office. I will be pursuing vigorously all those promises made before the election, especially the police shopfront at Morayfield. There is a crime problem, and the shopfront will go a long way towards curbing it.

I am pleased to record my profound gratitude to this government at being selected to the four caucus committees that I am not only passionate about but have some experience with. Roads, environment, local government and tourism were all areas of interest to me when I was a councillor on the Caboolture Shire Council. Even though I did not recontest my division in 1994, I kept abreast of those issues and often became quite vocal, along with other individuals and groups, on matters relating to those areas. These interests I believe will place me in a good position to be able to use the committees to focus on the concerns of Pumicestone residents and get them addressed.

At this point, I would like to acknowledge Lynette Devereaux, Caboolture Shire councillor, who has worked with me and the Morayfield community to help implement the state government's Community Renewal Program in that area. And what a wonderful initiative this is. Community renewal is not only restoring pride in Morayfield, it is giving young people an opportunity to gain skills which will assist them in finding permanent jobs.

I mentioned that Pumicestone was town and country. That is why I accepted an appointment on the Queensland Rural Council, chaired by the honourable Minister for Primary Industries. I am pleased to say that this council will concentrate on working directly with rural Queenslanders, focusing on positive outcomes for our regions. I am only one of 13 state government MPs on this council, and I am keen to work with the others, particularly those whose electorates border Pumicestone—the honourable members for Glass House and Kurwongbah, Carolyn Male and Linda Lavarch—to advise the chairman, in consultation with rural committees, about concerns and issues affecting them and suggesting strategies and initiatives to benefit them.

It is the International Year of the Volunteer, and I wish to place on record my heartfelt thanks to the many individuals and groups within the Pumicestone electorate who give their time, money and effort freely, usually to protect or help someone less fortunate than themselves. I recently attended a local community forum where people were being acknowledged for their voluntary work. One volunteer put it in a nutshell when he said, 'When you work you give your head and your hands; when you volunteer, you give your head, your hands and your heart.'

It is hard to single out any one person, but no-one will begrudge me listing those groups with whom I have had direct contact and dealings. These are: Caboolture Drug Awareness Team; Meals on Wheels; Bribie Island Community Arts Centre; Bribie Island Voluntary Community Help; Neighbourhood Watch; Neighbourhood Centre; Bribie Island Safety House; Bribie Island Toc H, Bribie Island branch; Bribie Island Air Sea Rescue; Woorim lifesavers; school P&Cs; senior citizens groups; and service clubs, including the Apex Clubs of Bribie Island and Caboolture, the Crest Club of Bribie Island, the Lioness

Clubs of Bribie Island and Beachmere, and the Lions Clubs of Bribie Island, Pumicestone, Beachmere and Morayfield. I look forward to working with these groups to provide benefits to those less fortunate in the Pumicestone electorate. I am certain that the word 'equality' has been mentioned in this chamber before. And with so many new Labor members, I dare say it will be mentioned a lot more.

I would like to draw honourable members' attention to the plight of a group who are indeed less fortunate than we are. They are foster children. I have friends who were, prior to the GST, foster parents. They are no longer, because of the cost involved, over and above the government subsidy, in caring for those children who are often placed in foster care with nothing—no belongings—and it is left to the foster parents to supply everything. I understand we are a low-tax state and that our population compared with other states is not high. But it is up to us here today to provide these children and others like them with equality of opportunity.

As I drive through Pumicestone, I see Jon Sullivan's achievements. Some of them are the result of hard-fought battles, like the Caboolture Hospital, which was promised by the Nationals for 12 years but was finally built under Labor in 1993. Jon successfully lobbied for a new primary school at Banksia Beach and for the Caboolture East fire station and ambulance, and was instrumental in attracting a number of government offices to the area. His fight to get passing lanes on the Bribie Island road is well documented. And if David Hamill were still here, he would remember receiving constant taped footage of hold-ups which people experienced daily on that road. Pumicestone now has a new list of priorities, and I will fight as hard as my husband did to ensure that my constituents get a fair deal for their area.
