



Speech by
Jim Pearce

MEMBER FOR FITZROY

Hansard Tuesday, 22 May 2007

FREW, MR A

Mr PEARCE (Fitzroy—ALP) (10.13 pm): Tonight I want to pay tribute to Alastair Frew, the news director for WIN Television for 18 years from 1989 to 2007, who has recently resigned and moved to Brisbane. Alastair has had an innate ability at talent spotting those with potential, having a hand in training many promising young journalists who have gone on to achieve statewide and national recognition. All those journalists had to do was accept the challenge, put in the hard yards and take advantage of the opportunities that came their way.

Some of the big names include Karl Stefanovic, the host of the *Today* show; Leila McKinnon, who is now the Los Angeles correspondent for Channel 9; Lisa Millar, the ABC TV Washington correspondent; and Ann Kruger, who is now an ABC International newsreader. There are journalists working in news and current affairs programs on every television station in Australia who have been employed and trained by Alastair during his time at WIN in Rockhampton. For example, at Channel 9 there is Neil Doorley, Lisa Honeywill, Karen Huf, Matt Dunstan, Sally Eeles, Alison Fletcher and Renee Mickelburgh; at Channel 7 there is Gemma Haines, who is a political reporter, and Nick Etchells; at Channel 10 there is Kristin Devitt, Max Futcher, Daniel Barty and Amber Muir; at the ABC there is sports reader Ian Eckersley and Bridget Smith; and at SBS there is Leroy Ah Ben.

Some of WIN TV Rockhampton's former journalists are employed in Australia's leading current affairs programs. For example, at *A Current Affair* there is Peter Stefanovic and Majella Wiemers; at *Today Tonight* there is Karen Cooper, who is a producer, and Rodney Lohse; and at *Brisbane Extra* there is Margueritte Rossi. Many have found success overseas, for example, Bridie Barry, who worked for ITN in London and who is now back in Australia working for Sky in Sydney; Selena Downes and Kylie Thompson, who are working for the BBC in London; and Kieran Toohey, who is in Moscow working for *Russia Today*. Many have gone on to work for newspaper and radio stations throughout Australia. Others are freelancing or have become lecturers in media studies.

So for a lot of successful stars in media today, love him or hate him, much of their success can be attributed to the efforts to Alastair Frew and WIN TV Rockhampton. For the record, Alastair has identified the new star performer to come out of Rockhampton. Based on his record, that person is sure to be a winner. I have no intention of disclosing that person tonight, but I look forward at some time in the future to being able to tell that person that they were the one whom I referred to here tonight. I thank Alastair for a job well done and for putting Rockhampton on the map as the No. 1 training centre for Australian TV personalities in the media.