




Speech By
Joseph Kelly

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

Record of Proceedings, 4 September 2018

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (4.03 pm): I would like to start by thanking the Speaker for his leadership in starting each parliamentary week with an acknowledgement of the traditional owners. Australia should be proud of a history of this land which has held the oldest surviving cultures in the world, a story which continues to this day.

Earlier in the address-in-reply debate another member mentioned his support for Australia Day. I, too, remain committed to celebrating our nation on this day with my community—for now. I join with community members to celebrate what is good about our nation, but I also reflect on those things that are difficult to acknowledge. One poignant moment for me occurred during the sesquicentenary of Taroom, my mother's home town. My uncle, who was filling the role of parish priest for a year, organised a group of Indigenous people who were descended from people who had lived at the Taroom mission to return to the town for the celebrations. This caused quite a stir but, ultimately, was good for the celebrations. It led me to ponder why this had occurred and also led me to reflect on why I knew so little about the original inhabitants of this town and area that had been so much a part of my life.

The people who lived at the Taroom mission probably did not include the traditional owners of this land. The traditional owners, as recognised recently by the High Court of Australia, were driven almost to extinction following the well-documented Hornet Bank massacre. A series of atrocities were committed by all people involved, but there can be no doubt that the Iman, the local Indigenous people, were dealt with brutally and extrajudicially. No doubt dispossession of their traditional lands was well underway by this time, but these episodes drove the people almost to the point of extinction.

My grandparents arrived in this district approximately 50 to 70 years after these events, no doubt seeking a place to recover from the horrors of the Great Depression. They took no part in these events and I have no recollection of my grandmother speaking about Indigenous people except in a distant but generally positive manner. For 60 years Taroom provided a stable home for my mother's family and other members of our family and it provided a base from which to start and continue a great education.

There can be no doubt that this education and commitment to education has led to prosperity and security for subsequent generations. There is no doubt in my mind that this has been achieved at the expense of the Iman people. I, therefore, humbly pay my respects to the Iman people who inhabit the lands surrounding Taroom and to all Indigenous Australians. In doing so I recall the apology offered by then prime minister Kevin Rudd just over 10 years ago to all Indigenous Australians and, in particular, the stolen generations. We cannot change the past. We can seek forgiveness and we can work together to build a better future.

Like all in this House, I have affirmed my loyalty to the Queen and I remain absolutely committed to our system of democracy. However, it is no secret that I would prefer a republic with an Australian head of state, and we will get there. As part of a move to a republic I believe there should be a process to realise true peace and reconciliation between the original custodians of this land and those of us who have arrived more recently. Perhaps the Uluru Statement from the Heart would be a good place to start. When we are truly reconciled, we will come to find a genuine national day to celebrate our community.

As a society we have shown great resilience and capacity for change. The same-sex marriage debate was very difficult, but we survived. Acknowledging our past can also be very difficult. However, as a country, a nation and a community we must have the fortitude to acknowledge what has occurred and work together to build our community for the future.

My community is a diverse, exciting and vibrant community which I remain both humble and proud to represent in this House. It is again a privilege to be the representative of that community as part of this majority Labor government. I offer my sincere congratulations to the Premier and the ministers on their re-election and reappointment. I certainly offer my sincere congratulations to all members of the House regardless of their political persuasion. We all know how challenging it is to get the opportunity to represent our community. I commend all members for continuing their work of furthering democracy.

I would like to thank a number of people who have helped me to achieve this. I would like to start by thanking my wife, Susan Adams, and daughters, Molly and Brenna. I think we all know the significant sacrifices that our family make for us to have the opportunity to be in this place. I would also like to thank and acknowledge my mother. Thanks to the wonderful parliamentary staff who do so many great things for us, there is a system set up so now my mother can get on her computer in Coolum Beach and watch a speech like this.

I would like to acknowledge my brothers and sisters: Christine, Bill, Peter, Paul, Vincent, Angela and all of my extended family. I will not name them all because we only have 20 minutes, but I do acknowledge them all and thank them for their ongoing love and support.

I would like to thank the office staff who worked with me over the last few years: Matt Sellars, Brooke Wilson, Catherine Birmingham, Fran Bell and Rachel Quinn—all people who are dedicated and worked hard for the electorate of Greenslopes. I would like to thank my campaign manager, Matthew Campbell. He worked astoundingly hard. I do not think he knows what the word 'no' means. He will always turn out and dig deep. I would like to thank the members of my campaign team: Daryl Sparkes, Jordan Ayton, David Barbagello and Richard Cleal. They all did a fantastic job. They were supported by many volunteers and Greenslopes branch members. I would particularly like to acknowledge Derek Wood, John Savage, Jim Loftus, Lisa O'Donnell, John Limpus, Matilda Keenan, Mark Miles, Lyle and Trish Nicholson, Heather Abramson, Brock Taylor, Peter Stirk, Ian McLennan, Tony Brown and Chris Anderson. There are many donors who supported my campaign. I would particularly like to thank a very old friend of mine, Crichton McIntyre.

I want to acknowledge the tireless work and leadership in our community of Terri Butler, the federal member for Griffith. She supported me, but she does so much to support our community. I simply would not be here if it wasn't for Terri. All of the party office staff worked hard during the election, and I particularly want to thank Adam Obeid, Josh Milroy and Jon Persley. I think the last speech finished with some sort of callout about 'union hacks' only being interested in power. The last time I checked with my union colleagues we were interested in protecting workers' rights, making sure people got fair pay for a fair day's work, making sure they got home safe and making sure we achieved good outcomes for our entire society. I want to thank the TWU, the Plumbers Union, the SDA, the AWU, the Services Union, the QTU, the QNMU—of course—and all of those other unions out there.

I reserve my final thanks for the people I want to thank most deeply: the people who live in the electorate of Greenslopes, who gave me their support and returned me to this place. I am here to represent all people. Over the last three years it has been an absolute privilege to work hard for, and with, the people of Greenslopes. It was a huge honour and a big responsibility to be re-elected to represent my electorate. It is the community that my wife and I have called home for over 21 years.

After three years as a local member, my appreciation and understanding of our community has grown immensely. Ours is a community where people value education and are proud of schools like Seville Road State School, Saint Agnes Catholic Primary and Cavendish Road State High School. Ours is a community of diversity. Ours is a community of many faith traditions, with Australia's second-oldest mosque sitting comfortably alongside Christian, Jewish and Buddhist places of worship.

Ours is a community where people contribute to the arts by maintaining community organisations like the Women's Creative Centre or classical music station 4MBS, which everybody in Queensland can enjoy. Ours is a community where children are nurtured in homes, schools and community organisations like the Wynola Girl Guides. Ours is a community that embraces change but wants to be actively involved in setting the direction of that change.

Ours is a community where Zigzag and the Brisbane Youth Service are supported by the community to respond to the scourge of family and domestic violence. Ours is a community that knows that everyone needs a secure home and we value every single person, whether they live in social housing or in a mansion. Ours is a community where people with disabilities due to age or illness are empowered by groups like the Holland Park Meals on Wheels, Vision Australia and Grow. Ours is a

community that enjoys spending time in Mott Park hanging out at the Coorparoo Bowls Club and cheering for the many sporting teams under the banner of the mighty Easts Tigers, and I wish them luck in this Saturday's preliminary final. Ours is a community that gathers in great numbers to run in the park every Saturday morning at the Stones Corner park run or play netball at Wembley Park.

Ours is a community that understands the value of public transport, and we use it. Ours is a community where volunteers run great community events like the Mt Carmel and Marshall State School fetes. Ours is a community that looks to the future but values the past, with groups like the Coorparoo & District Heritage Group actively working to preserve our history and educate the next generation about that history.

Ours is a community where, in one day alone, I can bump into the imam of our local mosque, a researcher from the Gallipoli Medical Research Centre, a small business owner, a volunteer at a P&C, a worker supporting people affected by domestic violence or a young student with a vision for an innovative start-up. All will ask me, 'What more can we do to support each other?' 'What more can we do to respect each other?' 'What more can we do to build community?'

Ours is a community that contributes much to our great state. At the 2015 election I committed myself to the task of building community. I did this because people told me they wanted their political leaders to build community. My community witnessed the division and damage caused by the Newman government and came to realise from this just how important caring, compassionate and listening governments are. Moreover, people of the Greenslopes community instinctively understand that our lives are better if we have a strong and healthy community that works together. I share this value.

To build community across the last term of parliament I used my very privileged position to listen to people and organisations. I took every opportunity to engage with people, to ask questions and to attempt to understand what they wanted for themselves, their families, their careers, their community groups, their businesses, their future and their community.

Building community occurs when you connect good people and encourage them to work together, and we have no shortage of good people across the electorate of Greenslopes. During the last three years I have worked with community members and groups to establish our local Australia Day, Queensland Day and International Nursing and Midwifery Day celebrations. We have worked together with 30 to 40 different community organisations, local businesses and Public Service departments to develop the Greenslopes community domestic and family violence prevention plan, which has recently seen us providing education to people who work in the hairdressing industry in our area so that they can provide advice and support if they have clients who are affected by domestic violence. These are real outcomes.

I have worked with the community to preserve the Coorparoo School of Arts and Memorial Hall. Last week we had our AGM. Two years ago when I joined we had two members and we have now passed the 20-member mark. We have clear ownership of this beautiful old hall. As it celebrates its 126th anniversary next month, we will have this hall in our community for many, many years to come in community use. We worked together to re-establish the suburb name and separate the suburb of Stones Corner so that once again Brisbane has the iconic area of Stones Corner.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr KELLY: I will take that interjection; it is great to have it back. I have worked together with many community organisations to educate the community about health matters such as stroke prevention and CPR. By listening to the community I have identified the challenges that people face, and I have worked doggedly to fix these problems. I have maintained pedestrian access to buses and shops for people in Mount Gravatt; built sporting facilities for students with disabilities at Nursery Road Special School—I would like to acknowledge the former education minister for her support—and I have worked together with P&Cs and P&Fs to improve road safety at Holland Park State School, Mount Gravatt State School and Mt Carmel. We have gained a go card reading machine at the Greenslopes IGA, giving access to a whole lot of people, particularly pensioners, to top up their go cards. We have preserved parklands in Holland Park.

I have listened to small businesses and connected them with government services to support them to grow and prosper for our entire community. I have worked with numerous community organisations, listened to their challenges and concerns, and assisted them with strategic planning, marketing and fundraising. I have supported groups like the Coorparoo junior Aussie Rules club in their effort to create pathways from under fives to a professional competition for girls and women. I have worked with groups like the Coorparoo Secondary College P&C and TAFE to save their tuckshops and the Mount Gravatt Community Centre—which is now in the electorate of Mansfield—to celebrate Seniors Week.

Of course, listening to people and organisations comes easily to members of the Palaszczuk government. Our Premier leads by example. Whether you are in Greenslopes or on Horn Island, the Palaszczuk government listens to all Queenslanders and works with all Queenslanders to build our great state. There are three key commitments I made to the people of Greenslopes in the recent election: I vowed to continue the work of improving public transport; I committed to backing our local schools; and I promised to create more local jobs. Improved public and active transport is critical to the successful future of my community. People in my electorate understand the flow-on benefits of public and active transport for health and the environment. Fairer Fares and the Veloway—two initiatives that I spoke about in the House earlier this afternoon—are getting more people to use public and active transport.

Of course, the big piece of infrastructure is our commitment to Cross River Rail. Unlike those opposite, who have consistently opposed this vital infrastructure, we are building it. This piece of infrastructure is fundamentally important for the entirety of South-East Queensland and will deliver economic benefits to be felt right across the entire state. An efficient south-east corner creates massive demand for goods and services from throughout the state. People in my electorate support it because it gets people home faster, is good for the environment and creates jobs.

Investment in education and schools is fundamental to us building a more equitable and just society. People in my electorate understand the link between education, good health outcomes and a good society. Our future will be different. We face a future of changing technology, a changing economy and changing employment. Education provides the best tool that young people can have to benefit from this inevitable change. That is why I continue to back our local schools.

The Palaszczuk government achieved much in education in the first term, restoring front-line services with increased teacher numbers and investing in guidance officers in our schools. I have been proud to be part of a government that is putting teachers back to work and is investing in the future of our young people. I have visited Mount Gravatt State High School, Coorparoo Secondary College, Mount Gravatt State School and Greenslopes State School, and I have seen the students embracing the new language of coding and robotics.

Of course, I have also seen the support for the non-government school sector. I was so pleased to open the new administration and classroom block at St Joachim's school during its 80th year of serving our community, supported by our government. We are committed to delivering 3,700 new teachers over the next four years, putting a teacher aide into every prep classroom and providing funding for IT staff. Each of these shows that the Palaszczuk government backs our local schools.

When I left school I was lucky to find a job that I loved and that was in high demand. As I mark 30 years of nursing this year, I am so proud to be part of a government that has done so much for nurses and midwives—restoring graduate nursing positions, implementing nurse-to-patient and midwife-to-patient ratios, and establishing the nurse navigator position. Quite simply, when we look after nurses we look after patients.

I am proud to be part of a government that is committed to creating jobs. I see these jobs being created right across my electorate. I am thrilled to see participants in Skilling Queenslanders for Work at Vision Australia gain skills, confidence and jobs. People with low or no vision have very high unemployment rates, and this program is working to reduce this. This investment is a commitment by the Palaszczuk government to care about all people and try to help everyone to find a job. We certainly did not sack 14,000 public servants.

I am proud to be part of a government that created jobs by restoring front-line services. The infrastructure being built by this government, whether it be a stadium in Townsville or Cross River Rail, is creating jobs. The Back to Work boost is creating jobs in my community. The confidence and the certainty that government has created for business, when combined with the support being provided to small business with programs like the digital innovation and entrepreneurship grants, are creating more local jobs. Most recently, our state's success in securing the Land 400 armoured vehicle contract will see even more jobs created in Queensland. This shows what is possible when government works with local businesses and supports future opportunities.

I will continue to work hard for the people of Greenslopes as part of the Palaszczuk government. I will continue to work to improve public transport, back our local schools and create more local jobs. I make the commitment that I will continue to work with the people of Greenslopes to build our community.