

## MAIDEN PARLIAMENTARY SPEECHES – A GREAT RESOURCE FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROFESSIONALS



*Be a craftsman in speech that thou mayest be strong, for the strength of one is the tongue, and speech is mightier than all fighting.*

*~ Maxims of Ptahhotep, 3400 B.C.*

Any professional in public affairs and lobbying worth their salt will be across parliamentary maiden speeches by legislators they deal with or who may be relevant for issues they are working on.

A maiden speech, free from the luggage, cynicism and strictures of those who have become bedded into our Parliamentary party system, is often full of ideals and a great window into a parliamentarian's background, ideology, ambitions and values.

Some maiden speeches make a big splash, and reveal much about a candidate's agenda. John Carey MLA made front page news in Western Australia with his [brutal assessment](#) of the lack of vibrancy in the Perth CBD and surrounds, and highlighted his intentions for rejuvenation and activation.

Of course, rewind back to 1996 and our national polity was shaken to the core with the [first speech](#) from an Ipswich fish and chip shop owner in the House of Representatives. It was hard not to get a clear snapshot of her ideology and political framework.

Winding back the clock even further to 1989 in WA, it's very clear when looking at Peter Foss's [maiden speech](#) that he had his eye set on the portfolio of Attorney General.

Still in WA, and back to the mid-1970s, it would have been clear you didn't stand much chance lobbying Jim Clarko on [beachside development](#) if you had read his first speech.

Over in the UK's House of Commons, the youngest Member of Parliament [Mhairi Black](#) delivered a viral speech in 2015 that was watched millions of times online and made an instant brand for herself.

Maiden speeches can be a great window into our Parliamentarians, free from the barnacles gathered in a long parliamentary career. It's worth the time to review those relevant to your cause.

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