

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FIFTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

25 February 2003

(extract from Book 1)

Internet: www.parliament.vic.gov.au/downloadhansard

By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

The Governor

JOHN LANDY, AC, MBE

The Lieutenant-Governor

Lady SOUTHEY, AM

The Ministry

Premier and Minister for Multicultural Affairs	The Hon. S. P. Bracks, MP
Deputy Premier, Minister for Environment, Minister for Water and Minister for Victorian Communities	The Hon. J. W. Thwaites, MP
Minister for Finance and Minister for Consumer Affairs	The Hon. J. Lenders, MLC
Minister for Education Services and Minister for Employment and Youth Affairs	The Hon. J. M. Allan, MP
Minister for Transport and Minister for Major Projects	The Hon. P. Batchelor, MP
Minister for Local Government and Minister for Housing	The Hon. C. C. Broad, MLC
Treasurer, Minister for Innovation and Minister for State and Regional Development	The Hon. J. M. Brumby, MP
Minister for Agriculture	The Hon. R. G. Cameron, MP
Minister for Planning, Minister for the Arts and Minister for Women's Affairs	The Hon. M. E. Delahunty, MP
Minister for Community Services	The Hon. S. M. Garbutt, MP
Minister for Police and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrections	The Hon. A. Haermeyer, MP
Minister for Manufacturing and Export and Minister for Financial Services Industry	The Hon. T. J. Holding, MP
Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Workcover	The Hon. R. J. Hulls, MP
Minister for Aged Care and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs	The Hon. Gavin Jennings, MLC
Minister for Education and Training	The Hon. L. J. Kosky, MP
Minister for Sport and Recreation and Minister for Commonwealth Games	The Hon. J. M. Madden, MLC
Minister for Gaming, Minister for Racing, Minister for Tourism and Minister assisting the Premier on Multicultural Affairs	The Hon. J. Pandazopoulos, MP
Minister for Health	The Hon. B. J. Pike, MP
Minister for Energy Industries and Minister for Resources	The Hon. T. C. Theophanous, MLC
Minister for Small Business and Minister for Information and Communication Technology	The Hon. M. R. Thomson, MLC
Cabinet Secretary	Mr R. W. Wynne, MP

Heads of Parliamentary Departments

Assembly — Clerk of the Parliaments and Clerk of the Legislative Assembly: Mr R. W. Purdey

Council — Clerk of the Legislative Council: Mr W. R. Tunnecliffe

Hansard — Chief Reporter: Ms C. J. Williams

Library — Librarian: Ms G. Dunston

Joint Services — Director, Corporate Services: Mr S. N. Aird
Director, Infrastructure Services: Mr G. C. Spurr

MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FIFTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION

Speaker: The Hon. JUDY MADDIGAN

Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees: Mr P. J. LONEY

Temporary Chairs of Committees: Ms Barker, Ms Campbell, Mr Delahunty, Mr Ingram, Mr Jasper, Mr Kotsiras, Ms Lindell, Mr Nardella, Mr Plowman, Mr Savage, Mr Seitz, Mr Smith and Mr Thompson

Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party and Premier:
The Hon. S. P. BRACKS

Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party and Deputy Premier:
The Hon. J. W. THWAITES

Leader of the Parliamentary Liberal Party and Leader of the Opposition:
Mr R. K. B. DOYLE

Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Liberal Party and Deputy Leader of the Opposition:
The Hon. P. N. HONEYWOOD

Leader of the Parliamentary National Party:
Mr P. J. RYAN

Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary National Party:
Mr P. L. WALSH

Member	District	Party	Member	District	Party
Allan, Ms Jacinta Marie	Bendigo East	ALP	Languiller, Mr Telmo Ramon	Derrimut	ALP
Andrews, Mr Daniel Michael	Mulgrave	ALP	Leighton, Mr Michael Andrew	Preston	ALP
Asher, Ms Louise	Brighton	LP	Lim, Mr Hong	Clayton	ALP
Baillieu, Mr Edward Norman	Hawthorn	LP	Lindell, Ms Jennifer Margaret	Carrum	ALP
Barker, Ms Ann Patricia	Oakleigh	ALP	Lobato, Ms Tamara Louise	Gembrook	ALP
Batchelor, Mr Peter	Thomastown	ALP	Lockwood, Mr Peter John	Bayswater	ALP
Beard, Ms Dympna Anne	Kilsyth	ALP	Loney, Mr Peter James	Lara	ALP
Beattie, Ms Elizabeth Jean	Yuroke	ALP	Lupton, Mr Anthony Gerard	Prahran	ALP
Bracks, Mr Stephen Phillip	Williamstown	ALP	McIntosh, Mr Andrew John	Kew	LP
Brumby, Mr John Mansfield	Broadmeadows	ALP	McTaggart, Ms Heather	Evelyn	ALP
Buchanan, Ms Rosalyn	Hastings	ALP	Maddigan, Mrs Judith Marilyn	Essendon	ALP
Cameron, Mr Robert Graham	Bendigo West	ALP	Marshall, Ms Kirstie	Forest Hill	ALP
Campbell, Ms Christine Mary	Pascoe Vale	ALP	Maughan, Mr Noel John	Rodney	NP
Carli, Mr Carlo	Brunswick	ALP	Maxfield, Mr Ian John	Narracan	ALP
Clark, Mr Robert William	Box Hill	LP	Merlino, Mr James	Monbulk	ALP
Cooper, Mr Robert Fitzgerald	Mornington	LP	Mildenhall, Mr Bruce Allan	Footscray	ALP
Crutchfield, Mr Michael Paul	South Barwon	ALP	Morand, Ms Maxine Veronica	Mount Waverley	ALP
D'Ambrosio, Ms Liliana	Mill Park	ALP	Mulder, Mr Terence Wynn	LP	LP
Delahunty, Mr Hugh Francis	Lowan	NP	Munt, Ms Janice Ruth	Mordialloc	ALP
Delahunty, Ms Mary Elizabeth	Northcote	ALP	Naphthine, Dr Denis Vincent	South-West Coast	LP
Dixon, Mr Martin Francis	Nepean	LP	Nardella, Mr Donato Antonio	Melton	ALP
Donnellan, Mr Luke Anthony	Narre Warren North	ALP	Neville, Ms Lisa Mary	Bellarine	ALP
Doyle, Robert Keith Bennett	Malvern	LP	Overington, Ms Karen Marie	Ballarat West	ALP
Duncan, Ms Joanne Therese	Macedon	ALP	Pandazopoulos, Mr John	Dandenong	ALP
Eckstein, Ms Anne Lore	Ferntree Gully	ALP	Perera, Mr Jude	Cranbourne	ALP
Garbutt, Ms Sherryl Maree	Bundoora	ALP	Perton, Mr Victor John	Doncaster	LP
Gillett, Ms Mary Jane	Tarneit	ALP	Pike, Ms Bronwyn Jane	Melbourne	ALP
Green, Ms Danielle Louise	Yan Yean	ALP	Plowman, Mr Antony Fulton	Benambra	LP
Haermeyer, Mr André	Kororoit	ALP	Powell, Mrs Elizabeth Jeanette	Shepparton	NP
Hardman, Mr Benedict Paul	Seymour	ALP	Robinson, Mr Anthony Gerard	Mitcham	ALP
Harkness, Mr Alistair Ross	Frankston	ALP	Ryan, Mr Peter Julian	Gippsland South	NP
Helper, Mr Jochen	Ripon	ALP	Savage, Mr Russell Irwin	Mildura	Ind
Herbert, Mr Steven Ralph	Eltham	ALP	Seitz, Mr George	Keilor	ALP
Holding, Mr Timothy James	Lyndhurst	ALP	Shardey, Mrs Helen Jean	Caulfield	LP
Honeywood, Mr Phillip Neville	Warrandyte	LP	Smith, Mr Kenneth Maurice	Bass	LP
Howard, Mr Geoffrey Kemp	Ballarat East	ALP	Stensholt, Mr Robert Einar	Burwood	ALP
Hudson, Mr Robert John	Bentleigh	ALP	Sykes, Dr William Everett	Benalla	NP
Hulls, Mr Rob Justin	Niddrie	ALP	Thompson, Mr Murray Hamilton Ross	Sandringham	LP
Ingram, Mr Craig	Gippsland East	Ind	Thwaites, Mr Johnstone William	Albert Park	ALP
Jasper, Mr Kenneth Stephen	Murray Valley	NP	Trezise, Mr Ian Douglas	Geelong	ALP
Jenkins, Mr Brendan James	Morwell	ALP	Walsh, Mr Peter Lindsay	Swan Hill	NP
Kosky, Ms Lynne Janice	Altona	ALP	Wells, Mr Kimberley Arthur	Scoresby	LP
Kotsiras, Mr Nicholas	Bulleen	LP	Wilson, Mr Dale Lester	Narre Warren South	ALP
Langdon, Mr Craig Anthony Cuffe	Ivanhoe	ALP	Wynne, Mr Richard William	Richmond	ALP

CONTENTS

TUESDAY, 25 FEBRUARY 2003

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT BY COMMISSION	1
SWEARING IN OF MEMBERS.....	1
ELECTION OF SPEAKER	2
CHAIR OF COMMITTEES	4
PRESENTATION OF SPEAKER TO GOVERNOR.....	4
GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.....	4
CONDOLENCES	
<i>Louis Frederick Cornu Garlick</i>	4
<i>Hon. Vincent Patrick Heffernan, OAM</i>	5
<i>Hon. Cyril Thomas Edmunds, AM</i>	22
ADJOURNMENT.....	31

Tuesday, 25 February 2003

**OPENING OF PARLIAMENT BY
COMMISSION**

Proceedings commenced 11.03 a.m. by Clerk reading the Governor's proclamation convoking Parliament.

Usher of the Black Rod appeared at Bar and announced that Senior Commissioner appointed by the Governor to open Parliament (the Honourable John Harber Phillips, AC, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Victoria) requested attendance of Legislative Assembly members in Legislative Council chamber to hear commission read for commencement and holding of present session of Parliament.

Honourable members, accompanied by chief officers of house, proceeded to Legislative Council chamber.

On return of members to Legislative Assembly chamber, the Honourable Justice John Spence Winneke, AO, entered chamber and was conducted to chair by Serjeant-at-Arms.

SWEARING IN OF MEMBERS

Commission appointing the Honourable Justice John Spence Winneke, AO, to administer oath and affirmation of allegiance to members of Legislative Assembly read by Clerk.

Clerk announced receipt of return of writ issued by the Governor for election of 88 members to serve for electoral districts set out below and endorsed to show election of following members:

District	Member
Albert Park	Johnstone William Thwaites
Altona	Lynne Janice Kosky
Ballarat East	Geoffrey Kemp Howard
Ballarat West	Karen Marie Overington
Bass	Kenneth Maurice Smith
Bayswater	Peter John Lockwood
Bellarine	Lisa Mary Neville
Benalla	William Everett Sykes
Benambra	Antony Fulton Plowman
Bendigo East	Jacinta Marie Allan
Bendigo West	Robert Graham Cameron
Bentleigh	Robert John Hudson
Box Hill	Robert William Clark

Brighton	Louise Asher
Broadmeadows	John Mansfield Brumby
Brunswick	Carlo Carli
Bulleen	Nicholas Kotsiras
Bundoora	Sherryl Maree Garbutt
Burwood	Robert Einar Stensholt
Carrum	Jennifer Margaret Lindell
Caulfield	Helen Jean Shardey
Clayton	Hong Lim
Cranbourne	Jude Perera
Dandenong	John Pandazopoulos
Derrimut	Telmo Ramon Languiller
Doncaster	Victor John Perton
Eltham	Steven Ralph Herbert
Essendon	Judith Marilyn Maddigan
Evelyn	Heather McTaggart
Ferntree Gully	Anne Lore Eckstein
Footscray	Bruce Allan Mildenhall
Forest Hill	Kirstie Marshall
Frankston	Alistair Ross Harkness
Geelong	Ian Douglas Trezise
Gembrook	Tamara Louise Lobato
Gippsland East	Craig Ingram
Gippsland South	Peter Julian Ryan
Hastings	Rosalyn Buchanan
Hawthorn	Edward Norman Baillieu
Ivanhoe	Craig Anthony Cuffe Langdon
Keilor	George Seitz
Kew	Andrew John McIntosh
Kilsyth	Dympna Anne Beard
Kororoit	Andre Haermeyer
Lara	Peter James Loney
Lowan	Hugh Francis Delahunty
Lyndhurst	Timothy James Holding
Macedon	Joanne Therese Duncan
Malvern	Robert Keith Bennett Doyle
Melbourne	Bronwyn Jane Pike
Melton	Donato Antonio Nardella
Mildura	Russell Irwin Savage
Mill Park	Liliana D'Ambrosio

Mitcham	Anthony Gerard Robinson
Monbulk	James Anthony Merlino
Mordialloc	Janice Ruth Munt
Mornington	Robert Fitzgerald Cooper
Morwell	Brendan James Jenkins
Mount Waverley	Maxine Veronica Morand
Mulgrave	Daniel Michael Andrews
Murray Valley	Kenneth Stephen Jasper
Narracan	Ian John Maxfield
Narre Warren North	Luke Anthony Donnellan
Narre Warren South	Dale Lester Wilson
Nepean	Martin Francis Dixon
Niddrie	Rob Justin Hulls
Northcote	Mary Elizabeth Delahunty
Oakleigh	Ann Patricia Barker
Pascoe Vale	Christine Mary Campbell
Polwarth	Terence Wynn Mulder
Prahran	Anthony Gerard Lupton
Preston	Michael Andrew Leighton
Richmond	Richard William Wynne
Ripon	Jochen Helper
Rodney	Noel John Maughan
Sandringham	Murray Hamilton Ross Thompson
Scoresby	Kimberley Arthur Wells
Seymour	Benedict Paul Hardman
Shepparton	Elizabeth Jeannette Powell
South Barwon	Michael Paul Crutchfield
South-West Coast	Denis Vincent Napthine
Swan Hill	Peter Lindsay Walsh
Tarneit	Mary Jane Gillett
Thomastown	Peter Batchelor
Warrandyte	Phillip Neville Honeywood
Williamstown	Stephen Phillip Bracks
Yan Yean	Danielle Louise Green
Yuroke	Elizabeth Jean Beattie

Members except honourable member for Doncaster, who was not present, took and subscribed either oath or affirmation of allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Commissioner withdrew.

ELECTION OF SPEAKER

Mr LANGDON (Ivanhoe) — I propose the honourable member for Essendon, Mrs Judy Maddigan, as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, and I move:

That the honourable member for Essendon do take the chair of this house as Speaker.

Mr CAMERON (Minister for Agriculture) — I second the motion.

Mrs MADDIGAN (Essendon) — I accept the nomination.

Motion agreed to.

Clerk declared honourable member for Essendon duly elected as Speaker.

Mrs Maddigan conducted to chair by proposer and seconder.

The SPEAKER (Hon. Judy Maddigan) — I wish to thank the members of the house for electing me today to the position of Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

I look forward to working with all political parties and Independent members of Parliament to support the provisions of the Westminster system in allowing frank and open debate in the chamber.

I also, through firm control of the house, hope to improve the level of debate and to improve the image of parliamentarians in the general community.

As you are aware, women have not always been wholeheartedly welcomed into the democratic processes of Victoria. Victoria was the last state to grant women the vote in 1908 and it was not until 1923 that legislation was passed that allowed women to contest a seat in the Victorian Parliament.

Not all MPs were convinced, even by 1923, that women should be parliamentarians. Indeed many women were also opposed to the idea. The views of the conservative Women's National League might sound familiar to some members.

Mrs Hughes, its president, said that she did not think it would be wise for women to enter Parliament, on account of the long hours and late sittings, and that debates rendered Parliament an unsuitable place for women to be in.

The Honourable Dr Harris, a strong opponent of women entering Parliament, explained his views in the Legislative Council in September 1922:

Nature has constructed woman to adorn the home. She has maternal instincts. Those instincts are the predominant part of a woman. Unless she happens not to have been chosen in life, a woman does not think of anything else but her home and her babies. This is the predominant natural quality of the female sex. The fact that she adorns her body is evidence that she is constructed that way.

The Honourable H. H. Smith, who actually supported the bill, said:

Women have made great strides during the last century. There are some women who do not care to marry, but if they could get into Parliament perhaps they would do a certain amount of good.

In all these debates, however, the possibility of women taking senior roles in Parliament was never mentioned. I do not think it ever occurred to our forefathers that women would aspire to senior positions in either the government or the Parliament.

We have now had women ministers and, of course, Joan Kirner our first female Premier. For some reason it has taken much longer for women to be elected to senior parliamentary positions.

I am therefore proud that the Labor Party, of which I am a member, has nominated the first woman President and the first woman Speaker in the 150 years of the Victorian Parliament.

Honourable Members — Hear, hear!

The SPEAKER — Order! Finally I would like to pay tribute to our former Speaker, Alex Andrianopoulos. Alex achieved the respect and admiration of all members of this house for the exemplary way in which he conducted himself as Speaker. This respect extends to the press gallery, where Alex was made an honorary member.

As Deputy Speaker, I, perhaps more than other members, was able to see the great efforts that Alex made to resolve members' problems, however trivial, and we all experienced his fairness in dealing with members in the chamber.

On behalf of all of us I wish Alex, Virginia and Johanna all the best in the future.

Honourable members applauded.

The SPEAKER — Order! While clapping is, of course, against standing orders, on this occasion I am happy to be lenient. Thank you.

Mr BRACKS (Premier) — Speaker, first of all I congratulate you on your election as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. It is a great honour, and an

honour which you have, of course, earned through your period of parliamentary service, particularly as Deputy Speaker, during which you served this house with distinction. I congratulate you wholeheartedly not only on behalf of Parliament but also on behalf of the parliamentary Labor Party.

I can assure you that we will respect your judgments, we will respect the forms of this house and we will adhere to good and appropriate behaviour as you have set out in your comments here today. Again on behalf of the Parliament, the parliamentary Labor Party and the people of Victoria I congratulate you on your election as Speaker and wish you every success in the life of this Parliament.

Mr DOYLE (Leader of the Opposition) — Madam Speaker, I join with the Premier in congratulating you on your elevation to high office. We look forward to working with you, as the Premier has said. I commit the Liberal Party opposition to working with you in upholding the traditions, the dignity and the good order of the house.

It is true that on many of these occasions we hear these lofty sentiments and it is equally true that on occasion we fall away from the standards we set ourselves, but this is a chance at the start of the 55th Parliament to recommit ourselves to conduct which we can be proud of and which our constituents should expect of us. We commit ourselves to working with you towards that goal.

Mr RYAN (Leader of the National Party) — Madam Speaker, on behalf of the National Party I congratulate you upon your election to high office in this place. It is an extraordinary achievement and one of which you should justifiably be very proud. I commit the members of the National Party to supporting you in the way in which the chamber is conducted from this day forward. Indeed, in the course of recent events I proposed a series of measures that I suppose represented the concern we had as a party about the past conduct in this chamber, and I am pleased to say that I am very happy to suspend those proposals bearing in mind the matters you have brought forward today regarding the future conduct of the chamber.

Madam Speaker, I am sure that all of us here — members of the house of all persuasions and ministers who are answering questions during question time — are happy to adhere to the control you quite justifiably seek in this place. Everybody will be happy to contribute in their own way. I congratulate you once again.

Mr LANGDON (Ivanhoe) — As the mover of your appointment to this high office, Speaker, I congratulate you and look forward to working with you as the Government Whip. As members of the class of 1996, until 1999 we shared an office where we got to know each other remarkably well. I know you will do your best in your position as Speaker. I know you did an outstanding job as Deputy Speaker. I commend you for that. On behalf of your family, who are present in the chamber, I congratulate you, and on behalf of my family — you are the godmother of my youngest daughter — I also congratulate you.

Mr SAVAGE (Mildura) — On behalf of my Independent colleague and on my own behalf I congratulate you on your election as Speaker of this chamber. It is a great honour and responsibility, and I know you will uphold the fine traditions of this place, as did your predecessor. Congratulations.

CHAIR OF COMMITTEES

Mr PANDAZOPOULOS (Minister for Gaming) — It is my pleasure to propose the honourable member for Lara, Mr Peter Loney, as Chair of Committees, and I move:

That the honourable member for Lara be appointed Chair of Committees of this house.

Mr TREZISE (Geelong) — I second the motion.

The SPEAKER — Order! Does the honourable member for Lara accept the nomination?

Mr LONEY (Lara) — I accept the nomination.

The SPEAKER — Order! I have to announce that the time for proposals has expired. I declare that the honourable member for Lara, being the only member proposed, has been duly elected Chair of Committees of this house. Congratulations!

Mr BRACKS (Premier) — I have to inform the house that I have already ascertained that the Governor will be pleased to receive the Speaker in the library, Parliament House, this day at 2.10 p.m. I would like as many members as possible to assemble in the library at 2.05 p.m. to accompany the Speaker.

Sitting suspended 11.55 a.m. until 2.31 p.m.

The SPEAKER resumed chair and read prayer.

PRESENTATION OF SPEAKER TO GOVERNOR

The SPEAKER — I desire to inform the house that this day I presented myself to the Governor as the choice of this Assembly and that he was pleased to address me in the following terms:

Speaker,

I have pleasure in congratulating you on your election to the high and important office of Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

The able manner in which you have discharged the duties you have undertaken during your parliamentary career is recognised by the honourable members of the Legislative Assembly, who in their wisdom have selected you as their Speaker.

I have confidence that you will fulfil the duties of this distinguished office and hold fast to its traditions and customs.

John Landy
Governor of Victoria

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

Usher of the Black Rod brought message from the Governor desiring attendance of honourable members in Legislative Council chamber.

Members, led by Speaker, proceeded to Council chamber.

Sitting suspended 3.10 p.m. until 5.05 p.m.

CONDOLENCES

Louis Frederick Cornu Garlick

The SPEAKER — Order! I advise the house of the death of Louis Frederick Cornu Garlick, member of the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Mildura from 1945 to 1947.

I ask honourable members to rise in their places as a mark of respect to the memory of the deceased.

Honourable members stood in their places.

The SPEAKER — I shall convey a message of sympathy from the house to the relatives of the late Louis Frederick Cornu Garlick.

Hon. Vincent Patrick Heffernan, OAM**Mr BRACKS** (Premier)— I move:

That this house expresses its sincere sorrow at the death on 15 November 2002 of the Honourable Vincent Patrick Heffernan, OAM, and places on record its acknowledgement of the valuable services rendered by him to the Parliament and the people of Victoria as member of the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Ivanhoe from 1985 to 1996 and Minister for Small Business and Minister responsible for Youth Affairs from 1992 to 1996.

Honourable Speaker, the Honourable Vincent Patrick Heffernan, OAM sadly passed away on Friday, 15 November 2002, after a short battle with cancer. Vin Heffernan, as he was known in this place and to his family, friends and colleagues, was born on 24 December 1935 in Ivanhoe. He remained connected with and committed to Ivanhoe and Heidelberg for the rest of his life. Vin Heffernan was educated at St Thomas's Christian Brothers College in Clifton Hill. He undertook an automotive engineering course at Richmond TAFE, worked as a motor engineer and soon became self-employed, running a motor repair and service station business. Vin Heffernan also became involved in the building and property development business.

His experience in small business and his links with the Ivanhoe–Heidelberg area were early pointers to his eventual political career. In 1966, at the age of 31, an age then considered very young for a local councillor, Vin Heffernan became a councillor in the City of Heidelberg. He held this position for 22 years, including one year as the mayor of Heidelberg in 1979–80. In addition to being a very active local councillor, Vin Heffernan was a commissioner for the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works from 1976–79, a founder of the Bernie Geary youth scheme in 1980, a life governor of the West Heidelberg community centre and a member of the Heidelberg Rotary Club.

Apart from representing the concerns of small business owners, Vin Heffernan took to the Heidelberg council a special interest in improving road and traffic problems in the municipality. He also took on the challenge of developing alternatives for dealing with youth issues, particularly issues concerning unemployed young people in Heidelberg. His leadership in developing local youth employment schemes won him wide praise. His efforts were rewarded in 1983 when he received the Medal of the Order of Australia for his work with what he described in a subsequent interview with a local paper as 'the most disadvantaged section of our community'.

In 1985 Vin Heffernan was elected to the Legislative Assembly for the district of Ivanhoe. From 1985 to 1988 he served as the assistant on youth affairs to the then Leader of the Opposition. Between 1985 and 1992 he served as a member of several parliamentary committees in a range of fields including planning and environment and housing and construction industries.

In 1991–92 he became shadow Minister for Small Business. Following the Kennett government's victory in 1992 Vin Heffernan was appointed Minister for Small Business and Minister responsible for Youth Affairs — a direct reflection of the work he had previously undertaken in Ivanhoe and Heidelberg. I think many people who saw Vin Heffernan in this house and as a minister would agree with me that it is no overstatement to say that he had enormous pride and passion for those two portfolios, and he regularly brought that pride and passion here into the house.

After leaving the Victorian Parliament in 1996 he became local government commissioner for Nillumbik shire and continued his work on behalf of small business as chairman of the Small Business Advisory Network from 1998 until 2002. Throughout his parliamentary career Vin Heffernan was respected by all sides of politics. As many honourable members would know, on Friday, 22 November 2002, a state funeral mass was held at St Patrick's Cathedral in memory of Vin's life and his relentless drive to improve the day-to-day operation of small business and the lives of young people in the community here in Victoria, and above all, of course, the lives of residents in the Ivanhoe and Heidelberg area.

The state funeral mass was attended by Vin's parliamentary colleagues from all parties, a clear sign that he was respected by all, beyond the party-political divide. Above all, most members reflecting on Vin Heffernan's life would say about him that of all his attributes you could say Vin Heffernan was a good bloke. Sadly cancer claimed Vin Heffernan's life at the early age of 66.

On behalf of the Victorian government and the parliamentary Labor Party I offer sincere condolences to the family of Vin Heffernan, his wife Nancy, his children Anthony, Jan and Susan, daughter-in-law Louise and grandchildren Samantha, Mia and William.

Mr DOYLE (Leader of the Opposition) — I join the Premier in the condolence motion to recognise the life of the Honourable Vincent Patrick Heffernan, OAM, and his lifelong service to his local community and to the state of Victoria. Vin was born on 24 December

1935 in Ivanhoe and passed away just last year on 15 November.

If there was a single feature that stood out about Vin it was that he was a great talker! He listened to people and acted on their problems — but could Vin talk! I often saw Vin at our local gym. When it is early in the morning and you have been on the treadmill for half an hour the last thing you want is a policy debate. Luckily in a chat with Vin you did not have to do much of the talking!

In a rich and full life I think Vin was most proud of his work in areas where he made a real difference: working with young people who needed a chance in life.

Vin was educated at St Thomas's Christian Brothers College in Clifton Hill. He went on to become an automotive engineer after completing his apprenticeship at Richmond TAFE. But it was always civic and community life which attracted Vin; and Vin was steeped in the Heidelberg community. His grandfather worked for the Shire of Heidelberg in the 1920s. His father served an apprenticeship with a West Heidelberg butcher. Vin became over his life the community leader that everybody knew, stemming from his time as a local small businessman and also from 18 years of service to the Heidelberg City Council, including time as mayor in 1979 and 1980.

Among his many local connections were the fact that he was a member of the Heidelberg Rotary Club, a life governor of the West Heidelberg Community Centre, and a founder and chairperson of the Heidelberg Heritage Committee. He was a driving force behind the Bernie Geary Youth Scheme, and was president — a fact of which he was very proud — of the Heidelberg branch of the Liberal Party. Given that Heidelberg is not always known as a Liberal bastion you can understand the work that Vin did in that area with his pride in the Liberal Party.

But he was most passionate about giving young people a break in life, especially young people from a disadvantaged or underprivileged background. In 1983 Vin was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for his work in driving a community-based employment scheme. He went around local businesses in Heidelberg West asking them to take on a young worker for a day a week. It was highly successful — I suspect because of Vin's ability to wear you down. You could not say no to him, and if you did he just kept talking until you finally said yes! Giving kids a fair go was Vin's lifelong commitment. I could not guess at the number of schoolchildren who passed through Vin's electorate office doing work experience programs.

After a distinguished career in local government Vin was elected to the seat of Ivanhoe in the Victorian Parliament in 1985. He was the first Heidelberg councillor to win a seat in the Victorian Parliament and he served this Parliament until 1996. From 1985 to 1988 Vin was the assistant to the opposition leader on youth affairs and served on the parliamentary Liberal Party's housing and resources, planning and environment, and local government committees. From 1988 to 1992 he served on the parliamentary Liberal Party's housing, industrial relations, planning and environment, and industry, technology and resources committees, and was also appointed small business shadow minister.

Vin's talent and his commitment was recognised when he was given the responsibility to serve as small business and youth affairs minister from 1992 to 1996. Vin embraced that responsibility for two areas of government in which he had a substantial level of personal interest and passion. Vin was genuinely committed to alleviating problems such as homelessness, and Vin was talking about problems like homelessness perhaps before it came onto the agenda of so many political parties and into our community lexicon. He was widely respected among his peers in industry and among political opponents alike because of his genuine commitment to young people.

Vin was also a passionate advocate of small business. For Vin success was all about hard work and seizing opportunities. He was passionate about small business being allowed to 'get on with it', in Vin's own words. When speaking to the *Herald Sun* on 7 November 1992 about his background in small business Vin gave a bit of an insight into himself and into his drive. He said:

When I was a mechanic I lived next door to a bricklayer who drove a Mercedes. I thought, 'If he can do it, I can'.

And he did.

Vin was a staunch advocate of his family. He was passionately devoted to them and especially to his grandchildren. We had the privilege of listening to his grand-daughters, Samantha and Mia, saying goodbye to Vin at his funeral. Their love and respect he would have treasured, their courage he would have been proud of.

There was something exceptional about Vin: his energy, his booming voice, his ability to relate to people from business leaders to a street kid. He could talk to them all, but especially always in the front of his mind were those people who needed a better chance in life. That epitomised his energy, his compassion and his commitment.

I was fortunate, as a number of us were, to serve in this Parliament between 1982 and 1996 with Vin Heffernan. I believe Vin stands out as an example to anybody aspiring to public life. His integrity was always beyond doubt, along with his compassion and his determination to make tomorrow better than today.

If a person is measured by what people say following his passing, then Vin Heffernan was truly a great person. Barbara Temby, who was Vin's campaign manager, said Vin was a very caring, special person; he was like a breath of fresh air, and he is the type of person we will miss very much. Sue Course, a foundation member of the Darebin Parklands Association, told the *Heidelberg Leader* on 3 December last year that Vin was an amazing man, highly intelligent, an impressive public speaker with a great sense of humour, boundless energy and an optimism that everything he believed in could be achieved. Vin's daughter Susan, when she also spoke to the *Leader* on 3 December last year, talked about his generosity, saying that he tried to help others in a way that assisted people to take their own initiative, which could be seen in his work with youth.

Vin is survived by his dear wife Nancy, their three children, Anthony, Jan and Susan, and their three grandchildren, Samantha, Mia and William. They are all in our thoughts. As the Premier said, Vin Heffernan was a good bloke; he was a decent bloke. We will miss you Vin, and we will remember you and your contribution to this state and this Parliament.

Mr RYAN (Leader of the National Party) — It is my pleasure and honour to join this condolence motion on behalf of the National Party to mark the memory and the life of Vin Heffernan. Vin Heffernan was a fine man. He was a man of many parts, and both the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition have made extensive reference to his many, many achievements. He served as a member of this place from 1985 until 1996, and it is when you have regard to the commentary contained in his maiden speech, which he of course made in 1985, that you gain some insights into the man who was Vin Heffernan.

He spoke first and foremost about his wife, Nancy, and their three children, Anthony, Jan and Susan. He spoke about people generally. He talked particularly of the aged and the care and concern he had for them. He spoke about single parent families in the electorate he was then representing — a thousand of them at that time — and he expressed his concern for them and on their behalf. He talked about unemployment, the terrible dread of it felt by many people and the role we have as parliamentarians to ease that sort of burden on

the people who are caught in that web. He talked about the poor and the needy, and in many senses he spoke about issues that we now describe as social justice issues long before that term had been coined — and certainly before we came to use it as freely as we tend to today.

Vin also spoke about one of his great passions in life: small business. I echo the sentiments expressed by both the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition when they spoke about Vin's passion for lots of things, but very particularly for small business.

Vin was a man of great principles. He rejoiced in his Catholic faith. He was a man of immense good humour. I cannot remember striking Vinnie on a bad day. He always had a good word for everybody, and he was really something to contend with when he was in full flight. He was spoken of once by former Premier Jeff Kennett as being the true definition of enthusiasm.

The web site for parliamentary biographies talks of Vin and his interests in sport being to do with tennis and golf. I had some association with him and tennis. On the odd occasion over the years — together with the Honourable Bill McGrath, a former member for Wimmera who was a pretty handy tennis player himself, and the Honourable Ron Best, a former member in the other place who took up tennis late in an illustrious sporting career and became pretty good at it — Vin and I used to repair over to the tennis centre of a morning every now and again when Parliament was in session — before it commenced for the day I should emphasise!

Vin attacked the tennis court with all the enthusiasm that was his hallmark. There were added benefits in playing with Vin because you had a running commentary as the game unfolded. For those instances where he hit a winning shot, the commentary was loud, long and effusive. For those instances where he was to lose a point there was not so much said. He was very generous in his praise as you ran around the court trying to retrieve the impossible shot and failed to do it. He would come to the net purposely to tell you how well you had done in chasing the ball down!

It did not stop there. For days afterwards in the halls of this place and in the Strangers Corridor you would come across him and he would want to know if your knee had recovered, and you would realise that this was his ploy to tell you that you had played like a dog a couple of days beforehand when he had beaten you. I can give ample testament to the fact that he loved his tennis and played it with the passion for which he was

famous, and I certainly enjoyed his company over the years.

The other area in which I remember Vin is in his passion for things. He was a very passionate speaker. In many senses he was the Kostya Tszu of Victorian politics. He would pull lines from everywhere and throw them at you. There were times over the years when I had the pleasure of standing beside him as he was at the podium and watching the impact on the crowd as he absolutely blitzed them with his views about whatever the issue might have been, but most particularly to do with small business and his great passion for young people and giving them a chance. As has been referred to, that passion for the young was properly commended by the award of the Medal of the Order of Australia in 1983.

His great love in life was his wife, Nancy, and their three children and grandchildren. I know they celebrate the life of this wonderful fellow and will continue to do so ever after. I must say that my immediate predecessor as Leader of the National Party, the Honourable Patrick McNamara, and Vin were great mates. They not only spent a lot of time together in this place, they spent a lot of time together out of this place. Together they were dubious company in which to engage, if I may take the liberty of saying so.

On behalf of all of us in the National Party, and including Patrick McNamara, I wish today to convey to Nancy and to Anthony, Jan, Susan and the grandchildren our sentiments of condolence on the occasion of the loss of Vin. He died, of course, on 15 November last year. His state funeral was on 22 November. He brought an election campaign to an absolute stop, and 1000 people came along to St Patrick's Cathedral to see him off — and he would have really enjoyed that!

Mr BATCHELOR (Minister for Transport) — I too join in the debate on the condolence motion for Vin Heffernan. Vin Heffernan was the good bloke in Victorian politics in the 1990s and he was widely respected by all sides of the chamber. Respect for Vin grew not just from his engagement in the Parliament, but largely from his involvement in the broader community.

He was born in West Heidelberg, and as honourable members have heard from the Leader of the Opposition, the Premier and the Leader of the National Party, he had a longstanding, active engagement both before entering Parliament and afterwards with the Heidelberg–Ivanhoe community. He was connected to it throughout his parliamentary career. His connection

preceded his time in Parliament and he continued to work for that community after his defeat at the polls.

It is ironical in some senses that the inclusion of West Heidelberg, the place of his birth, in the electorate of Ivanhoe was one of the factors that made it difficult for him to hang on to that seat. Traditionally it has been a seat that has changed hands, and the redistributions have been helpful and unhelpful to incumbents. The irony that the inclusion of West Heidelberg, the place of his birth, made it much harder for him to hold has not been lost on us.

He was a councillor for the City of Heidelberg for a number of years between 1966 and 1984 and served as mayor in 1979–80. One of his achievements for his local community was the establishment of the West Heidelberg community health centre, and the work he did in setting it up and supporting it was one of the reasons for his being awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia. It was a recognition of his work for the West Heidelberg community.

He entered Parliament as the honourable member for Ivanhoe in 1985, when he defeated Tony Sheehan. This is another of a number of ironies that present themselves in this parliamentary chamber. He went on in later life to become very close friends with Tony Sheehan, and in fact they worked together at various opportunities after they both had left the chamber.

During his time in Parliament he was assistant to the opposition leader on youth affairs and on small business, and it was in these two policy areas of youth affairs and small business that he had an enduring and overriding interest.

Of course, that culminated in his appointment between 1992 and 1996 as Minister for Small Business and Minister responsible for Youth Affairs. It was during that time that I first got to know Vin Heffernan and began to appreciate his qualities. For new members of Parliament, and for the Labor opposition as it then was, it was a difficult time — and people should perhaps reflect on that now — but Vin Heffernan was a very generous person, a very generous minister and a very generous member of the then government. The comments which have been made today, which were reflected by the large number of people at the state funeral, are a recognition of his role and attitude as a minister during that time.

After 11 years, and as the electoral cycle changed, he lost to the current member for Ivanhoe. However, his connection to that north-eastern section of Melbourne did not change after the election, and he was

subsequently appointed a commissioner for the Shire of Nillumbik in 1996–97.

There are lots of wonderful stories about Vin. Apocryphally one of his most delightful from that time is about when he went to join the Labor Party in the late 1960s. Unfortunately at that time his pride in his Roman Catholic faith was seen as a dubious badge for someone trying to join the Labor Party. He was rejected — rebuffed — and found a political affiliation with the Liberal Party.

The thing that drove him to make that initial inquiry of the Labor Party — and this has been reflected upon in other contributions — was his great sense of social justice. He was a great bloke, and he was enthusiastic at all times. He might not have been the great public policy expert that some people who refine their parliamentary attributes become, but the overriding feature of his decision making was that he knew instinctively what was fair, what was just and what was good. I guess that too will be a recurring theme in the contributions made today.

Interestingly the Leader of the National Party reflected upon Vin's inaugural speech. I also think it is interesting to reflect on it, particularly at this time when we are at the beginning of a new Parliament and lots of members will be making inaugural speeches. It is important for honourable members to think carefully about what they want to say, because at some later stage people may refer to it!

Dr Napthine interjected.

Mr BATCHELOR — It comes to us all, Denis. You will go one day, too!

In the first speech Vin Heffernan made to this Parliament he spoke passionately about the needs of the aged, of single-parent families, of disadvantaged youth and of the living standards of ordinary workers in this community. They were recurring themes throughout his political life. In a sense he made a speech that many members of this chamber would be proud to make themselves, irrespective of what political party they represent.

He also made a number of comments about policy issues which in the fullness of time have proved to be very accurate. When he got into government he made good relationships across the chamber. He was always approachable, he was generous and he was outgoing in the sense of trying to help people who had interests in those electorates that were of interest to him. I remember him approaching me to deal with issues in my own electorate. He was not driven by wanting to

deliver only on issues that were of concern to a particular party or a particular geographic area, he was also driven by wanting to deliver on issues that were of major concern to him.

He was well liked right across the political spectrum and, together with Pat McNamara and Tony Sheehan, former members of this house, was responsible for establishing the St Patrick's Day parliamentary dinner. It is one of those rare occasions here in Parliament where people from all sides of the political spectrum put their difference aside and get together and have a great time.

He will be missed by his colleagues from the Liberal Party, and he will be missed by the broader community. He will be missed by people across the political spectrum. He will also be missed by his local community, and of course he will be missed by his wife, Nancy, and his three children, Anthony, Jan and Susan. We extend our condolences to them.

Mr HONEYWOOD (Warrandyte) — We do not often in this place have a condolence motion for somebody most of us knew. We all agree that Vin deserved a better innings than he had — but having said that, I think Nancy would agree that Vin packed more into his 66 years than most people could even dream of packing into their lives.

There was something incredibly tribal in Vin's make-up. This could be both an endearing and a very frustrating quality. His more endearing elements included, first, a staunch adherence to his Irish-Catholic roots and family. When I first entered Parliament in 1988 I was immediately adopted into Vin's tribe, simply by virtue of the fact that I was at the time married to the daughter of a childhood friend of Vin's. My then father-in-law, Vin's mate, was Irish-Catholic; therefore Vin naturally assumed that I must be Irish-Catholic as well. Even though you could not get a more English name than Honeywood and even though I kept reminding Vin that I was a confirmed Anglican, in Vin's eyes thereafter I was Irish-Catholic and therefore part of his tribe. Even after I was no longer married to the daughter of his mate, Vin worked at keeping me in the tribe by bringing me into contact with his at-the-time unmarried daughter on every possible occasion.

Of course his tribalism reached its zenith when he and his good friend Pat McNamara got together, as we have already heard. Whether it was at that inaugural St Patrick's Day dinner here at Parliament, which some of us have never quite recovered from, getting up to high jinks at the Celtic Club or later lobbying the

government and the trade union movement on their latest financial development or superannuation deals, these two tribal leaders were like brothers-in-arms.

One of the more frustrating elements of Vin's tribal nature was his unwavering support for the then member for Mitcham, Roger Pescott. Whenever Roger got up to speak in this place the former member for Sunshine, Ian Baker, used to sum him up by bellowing out, 'Here comes Eton, Oxford and the guards!' — but Vin would never hear a bad word said against his good friend Roger. Sure enough, every time there was a leadership contest in our ranks Vin would be Roger's numbers man and singular champion. His loyalty to his friends was incredibly strong, no matter what the popularity of the case.

On our election to government in 1992 the Premier, Jeff Kennett, could not have chosen two more appropriate ministerial portfolios for Vin than youth affairs and small business. The Leader of the Opposition has already set out Vin's outstanding commitment to bettering the lot of young people. His voluntary efforts on behalf of the young people of Heidelberg were rightly recognised by his receiving the Order of Australia Medal.

Vin's commitment to small business was also part of his core being. As he explained to the local newspapers in celebrating his election to Parliament in March 1985:

The good news is I have won. The bad news is I am now a public servant.

To understand Vin's support for small businessmen and women you have to understand his background.

From the time he graduated as a motor mechanic from the then Richmond TAFE he had virtually always been successfully self-employed as a mechanic, builder and property developer. He admired individual effort and the right of someone to get on in life without government interfering too much. This is what drew Vin to the Liberal Party. He was always very proud — and we were very proud — of his holding our only seat west of the Yarra at the time.

There were three other aspects of Vin that I will touch on briefly. One was Vin the environmentalist. As a young member of Parliament representing a green area like Warrandyte I could not believe my ears at my first party meeting when I heard Vin, who was a such a strong, shall I say, right-of-centre member of our party, because he was incredibly passionate about any piece of environmental legislation that came into our party room. It was very refreshing as a new member of this place to know that within the broad church of my party

people were not stuck with just one philosophical label — they could be issues based rather than just right of centre or in-between or whatever. Nancy, when referring to Vin's electorate victory in 1985, was quoted in the local newspaper as saying:

Vin has always loved Heidelberg with its beautiful trees and fought to protect the environment.

Vin was a true environmentalist.

There was also Vin the talker, as the Leader of the Opposition has noted. In an article that appeared in the *Herald Sun* of 5 December 1987 it was said:

One of the main adjustments he has had to make involves the art of getting used to talking to walls, otherwise known as taking part in parliamentary debate.

The article quotes him as saying:

The lack of interest in the parliamentary debate and the lack of people concerned at all with what you're saying is very, very soul destroying.

I found that very hard, to stand up and talk to nobody, and I think it would be an interesting exercise for anybody out there to go into any room and talk to a wall, because that's what you're virtually doing. No-one listens, no-one is concerned.

As somebody said — it is in *Hansard*, do not ask me who reads *Hansard* — 'I often wonder does it really matter what you say up there'. Vin made up for that by talking to each and every one of us in the corridors of power whenever he could.

The final point about Vin I will make is that he had the most amazing relationship with a wide circle of people. Unbeknown to many members of Parliament is the fact that Vin hosted an annual barbecue for the media gallery at the Yarra River. Members of the gallery looked forward to Vin hosting that function. I put it to honourable members that very few colleagues could hold that type of function for members of the fourth estate — they often hold us in such high regard! But Vin really was able to bring the whole of the media gallery together, and they saw him as a knockabout sort of bloke who called a spade a shovel, and that is why they all attended his annual barbecue.

I extend my condolences to Vin's wife Nancy and their three children and grandchildren for the loss of a great, warm, tribal individual.

Mr LANGDON (Ivanhoe) — I join with other honourable members in expressing my sincere sorrow at the passing of Vin Heffernan. I wish to add my condolences to Nancy, Anthony, Jan, Susan and the grandchildren Samantha, Mia and William, to those given by the people of the Ivanhoe electorate.

As has been said in this house, Vin was the member for Ivanhoe from March 1985 to March 1996. I believe he was born at Airlie Private Hospital in Ivanhoe on 24 December 1935 and passed away on 15 November during the election campaign. The point has been made that the election stopped on that particular day, and I was honoured to be at the funeral and see many people there from all sides, all walks of life. It is a rare occasion when politics stop during an election campaign. Vin was the type of person who could do that to politicians — make them stand still.

Vin was the Minister for Small Business and Minister responsible for Youth Affairs in the first Kennett government from 1992 to 1996. I believe he was also shadow Minister for Small Business between 1991 and 1992. Much has been said and will be said in this house about that aspect of Vin, but that was only a small part of his life.

Vin was a Heidelberg councillor for 19 years from 1966 to 1985. Parliamentary politics may have been a passion of his, but his greatest passion was always Heidelberg, Ivanhoe and West Heidelberg, and he served the area as a councillor well. He never represented the West Heidelberg ward, but many people said he was the best ward councillor that ward never had! It was a ward for which he would probably never have been elected — being a staunch Labor area with the old Olympic Village in it and what have you — but that never stopped him representing the area. Vin worked tirelessly for the West Heidelberg area.

Vin had a service station on Southern Road in West Heidelberg, now Heidelberg Heights. Vin was an icon of the area. I do not know how old I was, either eight or nine, but I remember going to the 'Vin Heffernan service station'. We did not know it as the BP service station, we knew it as the 'Vin Heffernan service station'. Vin would come out and lecture everybody who was game to listen to him on politics, which was probably why he became so involved — in those days service stations were not self-serve, you had to go out and serve people. He had a cornered market and used it well. As I say, I can remember as a very young boy going to Vin Heffernan's service station — not many eight or nine-year-olds can remember going to a particular service station, but I certainly can — because my parents, grandparents and extended family used his service station.

Strangely enough, he was known as a Labor man by many people. People often told me that Vin had said, 'You know, I really am a Labor man at heart'. But it would be fair to say that Vin only said that to people

from West Heidelberg — he never mentioned it to people from Eaglemont!

Vin was an extremely colourful character who loved the Ivanhoe–Heidelberg area. He was very passionate about all things to do with the area — from the Darebin Creek to the Yarra River. The Heidelberg–Ivanhoe area is in one of those electorates surrounded by natural waterways and forests — for example, only 20 years ago Darebin Creek was a dumping ground. Vin, through Sue Course whose name has been mentioned, put a lot of effort into restoring the Darebin Creek to what it should be and what it is today. Without the passion of people like Vin, that would not have occurred. It does not surprise me that yes, he was an environmentalist on perhaps the right of the Liberal Party, but he was passionate about the things he did.

I am also aware that Vin was a life member of the Heidelberg Football Club — again, in the heart of Heidelberg. Up on the wall of the clubrooms are pictures of Vin Heffernan. It is probably the most historical of the football clubs in my electorate, and Vin's name is very much associated with it. Again it shows the character of the person that he got involved in all aspects of the electorate.

I remember the 1996 campaign leading up to the election in which I was successful. While doorknocking I met a number of people who were perhaps more aged than the average person in the electorate, and they kept on saying to me, 'Vin used to be my paperboy'. I started to think, 'How many papers did this man deliver?'. He seemed to be the paperboy for everybody, and it was as the paperboy that he was known to the people of the electorate. Vin was exceptionally well known.

I think it has been said that Vin was the life governor of the West Heidelberg community centre. I do not know if the West Heidelberg community and legal centres would be there today if it were not for Vin's passion for West Heidelberg. He was an exceptionally passionate person for the less well off, and he showed that time and again. He knew it was an area that would not vote for him, but it never stopped him. That probably sums up the man more than anything else: he knew he was working for an area that would not vote for him, but he would still work for it, and he still wanted to show that passion.

I am very pleased to follow Vin as the member for Ivanhoe. As I said, he was an icon of the Ivanhoe and Heidelberg area. I believe if it were not for the Kennett government's plan to sell the Austin hospital — another icon — Vin would probably have been the member for

Ivanhoe for some considerable time. Obviously the two clashed — and hence history has been made.

Vin also serviced the electorate of Ivanhoe very well as a councillor for the City of Heidelberg. I believe he was the first councillor of the City of Heidelberg to be elected to this house. Two others followed — the honourable member for Preston and I were both councillors of the City of Heidelberg. Vin obviously led the way and showed us how to do it well.

I advise the house that I have been speaking to the Banyule council, the successor to the Heidelberg council. I think Vin did not really like the Heidelberg council name being changed to Banyule council. I am sure he fought loud and hard to keep it the same, but Vin was not necessarily always successful, although he was very passionate. The Banyule council and I have had some discussions about a reserve called the Viewbank Reserve. I have spoken to a few councillors — as you can imagine, as it is the time just before council elections one cannot guarantee anything — and I think the name Viewbank Reserve may well be changed to Vin Heffernan Reserve. For those who know the reserve — most of you do not — it has tennis courts on it, which would fit into Vin's background very nicely. An irony of life is that I have bought a house that backs onto the reserve, so I could well be haunted by Vin for the rest of my life! I am sure that would suit him just fine.

I have spoken to a few people in my electorate who knew Vin very well. One person who contacted me — Michelle Penson, the last mayor of the City of Heidelberg — knew Vin exceptionally well and followed him in many of his endeavours. I want to quote from a letter she wrote to me:

Vin was full of life, his life was full of people. He was a people person. He was a passionate person. He was frustrated ... by red tape and he struggled to always get around it. He had even said there was blue tape too!

His passion was firstly for his family and he was so proud of his kids and Nancy's art. He was passionate about all youth but more particularly the youth of West Heidelberg.

...

He fought tooth and nail for the community centre of West Heidelberg ...

And to him it did not matter that there were a lot of votes that could not be won in that neighbourhood. He wanted to help, and help he did.

He believed in free enterprise and talked the businesses of West Heidelberg into assisting him in ... jobs for youth. He shared his experience and love of life.

That is Vin. He did enjoy life, he loved life, and as the honourable member for Ivanhoe I commend his life to this house.

Mr COOPER (Mornington) — I am pleased to join this debate, which has been ably led by the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the National Party. I am sure the tributes they have made and those made by everybody who has spoken so far and who will follow me will be a source of great pride to Vin Heffernan's family.

Those who went to the funeral for Vin will know that that was a magnificent tribute. It is rare to be able to say that St Patrick's Cathedral was full, but it was full that day. One of the things that impressed me so much when the funeral finished was seeing so many people in tears. Clearly people who had been part of Vin's life in some way or another were deeply touched by his life and deeply touched by his death.

Already we have heard people mention Vin's maiden speech, and I also want to touch on that before I resume my seat. But I did want to reflect upon the Leader of the National Party's experience with Vin playing tennis, because while I did not play tennis with Vin, I played golf with Vin. I have to tell you it was quite an experience. I prided myself — until I had my first game of golf with Vin — on being somebody who had developed his golf game without the benefit of lessons. To say that I developed it is perhaps too strong a word, but nevertheless I enjoyed my golf and Vin definitely enjoyed his golf. But Vin enjoyed more than just playing golf; Vin enjoyed coaching golf. So as you played a round of golf with Vin you got free lessons, and they were always given out — the tips, the comments that he made and everything else — based on trying to lift your game and to help you. There was never anything derogatory about them.

I noted with some degree of concern that the Leader of the National Party said that Vin would come back and make comments after beating him at tennis. That never happened with golf. Vin had enormous enthusiasm — enormous enthusiasm — for his game. He loved having people as his guests at Sorrento Golf Club, and while the golf game was fantastic and very enjoyable, after golf was even more so. He was a great character, he was great company, and he was always friendly and helpful.

I first met Vin in 1984 when we were both preselected by the Liberal Party to run at the election which was held in early 1985. I met him when the Liberal Party organised a function to introduce a whole raft of new candidates to the media. I was summoned by one of the

senior members of the party to a group that consisted of three or four, one of whom I recognised as an *Age* journalist — who is now a member of this gallery for a different organisation — and a fellow who was introduced to me as Vin Heffernan. I had never ever in my life felt that I lacked enthusiasm, but when I came up against Vin I felt like the absolute wilting flower. He was so passionate about the fact that he was going to run for Parliament, he was so enthusiastic about it and he was so confident about the outcome. He was quite happy to tell the journalist from the *Age* that on election night, whenever it was held, ‘You watch, the biggest swing in the state to the Liberal Party will be in the seat of Ivanhoe’. He was quite convinced about it, and we were all standing there goggle-eyed listening to this enthusiasm. The biggest swing in the state to the Liberal Party was not in Ivanhoe, but there was a swing and it was one that got Vin into Parliament.

Then on 17 April 1985 Vin made his maiden speech. The Minister for Transport is quite right; it is a speech that could be made by anybody from any side of this Parliament. We would all be proud to be able to say some of the things and make some of the predictions that Vin made in that speech that actually did come true — and which were very radical, perhaps, for 1985. Already we have heard of the way he touched on the youth, the unemployed, the single-parent families, the elderly — all the way through his speech was very much a social justice speech.

Perhaps the most telling thing for me was when I got to the end of the speech, where he quoted the words of Abraham Lincoln. To me they are about the essential Vin Heffernan, and I want to again put that quote on the record. Abraham Lincoln said:

You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging thrift. You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong. You cannot help the wage earner by pulling down the wage payer. You cannot establish sound security on borrowed money alone. You cannot build character and courage by raking away man’s initiative and independence. You cannot help a man permanently by doing for him that which he can and should do for himself.

Vin Heffernan was that man.

Mr LONEY (Lara) — It is a privilege to make a few remarks in memory of Vin Heffernan. I had the pleasure of being Vin’s parliamentary shadow from around the end of 1993 to the 1996 state election while Vin was, of course, the Minister for Small Business and Minister responsible for Youth Affairs. It was indeed a pleasure to be Vin’s shadow, because he was a very generous and good-humoured man who enjoyed helping others, and that flowed over to his relationship

with his shadow ministers. He was also a man who was respectful of others and their views.

I was interested in the remarks of the honourable member for Warrandyte in quoting Vin’s view about no-one listening to speeches in this place. That certainly was not true of Vin: he would actually listen to the speeches of others in this place. I remember one occasion as his shadow when I was asked to come in, as we are sometimes in this place, because the Leader of the Opposition was out on business and we needed to ensure that things kept going until he got back. I was asked to ensure that the bill was examined in a fair amount of detail. I was rolling along, examining the bill on probably the third occasion in great detail, when the doors burst open and the Premier, the Honourable Jeff Kennett, came into the chamber, marched up to Vin and asked him bluntly what was going on. Vin simply turned around to him and said, ‘It’s all right, Jeff; he knows what he is doing’, and we continued on. That was Vin: he was prepared to listen to others and to give others an opportunity.

Through that period as his shadow I came to know Vin well, and I found him to be a person of great decency and values. He believed in many things, and he believed in them passionately. I had the pleasure in recent years, once Vin was out of the Parliament, of catching up with him on a regular basis for a chat. As has been said, Vin never knocked back the opportunity for a chat, and usually I would do so in the company of the Irish mafia referred to elsewhere, Pat McNamara and Tony Sheehan. They were always enjoyable times, made so by Vin’s storytelling. He had a great way of telling stories, and he would often regale us with tales from the mythical memoirs he could have written had he so desired.

Vin was a lovely man who enjoyed people. He had strong principles and values, which were always expressed with warmth and good humour. I always found him a thoroughly decent bloke. I will certainly miss bumping into him around this place on occasions such as those, and I am sure other honourable members will too. I pass on my sympathies to his wife, Nancy, and his family.

Dr NAPHTHINE (South-West Coast) — Madam Speaker, congratulations on your elevation to the position of Speaker.

When I think of Vin Heffernan I think of a person who was an absolute enthusiast, who was absolutely passionate, positive and an eternal optimist, and who was absolutely committed to making a difference in everything he did — and he was a person who did

make a difference. He made a difference to many individuals, whether they were in Heidelberg or across the state of Victoria. He made a difference to many families, and he made a difference particularly to his community — the community he represented and the community of Victoria.

Honourable members have spoken about his inaugural speech. I think they have spoken about that speech because it epitomises what Vin Heffernan stood for. He was a person who passionately cared about those people in our community who were in need. He spoke about older people in our community, and he spoke about the need to improve services for older people in his area of Ivanhoe and Heidelberg. He spoke about the unemployed, particularly the young, who needed an opportunity in life. Honourable members will remember that that was in 1985, when there were very high levels of youth unemployment and many young people were leaving school without the opportunity to seek employment — in particular to seek a trade — and were frustrated about their future.

He spoke about single-parent families, as someone mentioned before. He talked about 1000 single-parent families in his electorate with real concern and passion. At the same time he also stated his belief about the direction that should be followed in terms of solving some of those problems. He made it very clear in his speech that government spending needed to be curtailed and better targeted. He railed long and hard against bloated bureaucracies, red tape and things that stopped small business driving the engine room of growth. Indeed he made a number of comments such as:

When will governments learn that the stimulus of private enterprise is the only way in which we can produce a satisfactory result?

When talking about government waste he said:

One can imagine the tremendous stimulus funds of that magnitude would create if they were invested in the private sector, in research and development, reducing on-costs, payroll tax, workers compensation and so on.

He talked with passion about the needs in his community and the needs of individuals and groups in that community, but he also talked with absolute passion about some solutions, such as stimulating and getting off the back of the private sector and encouraging opportunities and economic growth.

The honourable member for Mornington, when he quoted Vin's quote of Abraham Lincoln, summed up what Vin Heffernan was on about — and I endorse that wholeheartedly. When Vin was concluding his maiden speech he said:

Private enterprise is the only solution to a long-term economic recovery. I make it quite clear that I support the private enterprise system.

You could not have had anyone more passionate or more supportive of the private enterprise system. However, he did not see it as an end unto itself but as the engine room to drive opportunity for individuals, drive opportunities for families and drive the economic growth that was needed to fix the issues that were broadly encompassed in the social justice agenda that he had.

I had the honour to follow Vin Heffernan as the minister responsible for youth affairs in 1996. I can tell the house that as I went around Victoria, time and time again individuals, groups and organisations told me of their meetings with Vin Heffernan, how he listened to their concerns and how as a minister he responded very positively to those concerns.

I will give one example of how Vin Heffernan made a real difference, and a difference that is ongoing. The Visycare centre at Dandenong, which is an absolutely magnificent complex, is providing integrated services in a one-stop-shop for young people at Dandenong, particularly young people at risk. That came from work that Vin Heffernan did, together with Richard Pratt, the former City of Dandenong, and the local community, but very much driven by Vin Heffernan's enterprise and initiative and his ability to bring the private sector and the community together to deliver a positive outcome for the people of Dandenong, particularly the young people of Dandenong, and especially the young people at risk in Dandenong. The Visycare centre itself stands as an enormous testament to the hard work, dedication and commitment of Vin Heffernan.

Vin Heffernan was an enthusiast, he was passionate and he was a person who really did make a difference in his community life, in his parliamentary life and in his role as a minister. I extend my sympathy and condolences to Nancy, Anthony, Jan and Susan, and their families.

Mr LEIGHTON (Preston) — It is a privilege to be able to make a contribution on this condolence motion to respect the life and memory of Vin Heffernan. I first met Vin in the late 1970s and then got to know him quite well upon my election to Heidelberg council in 1980. Vin was one of the most decent people I have ever met in public life. However, during my time on Heidelberg council I also realised that he was really great fun to be with.

In those days we had a large council comprising 15 councillors and, unfortunately, the ALP councillors only ever numbered 5 or 6, so invariably there would be

a couple on our side, if they had had a bad night, who at the end of the night would take their bat and ball and go home. We would sit quite late — often until 1 o'clock in the morning — and then we would go into the supper room, and invariably there would be three councillors left — Vin Heffernan, myself and Ross Christie, who may be known to some of the older members on the other side as the son of Sir Vernon Christie, a former Speaker of this place. While I stuck to beer, Vin and Ross would, during the early hours of the morning, knock over a bottle of Scotch, and Vin would regale me with stories of how, in the preselection leading up to the 1973 state election, he had been Ross Christie's numbers man or campaign manager against Bruce Skeggs, and how he continually said to Ross, 'Don't worry. You're right. We've got this sewn up'. To their horror, Bruce knocked off Ross Christie.

How the circle turns. A number of years later, it was Bruce Skeggs, having lost the seat of Ivanhoe, who came back to the Legislative Council via Heidelberg council, so it was certainly an interesting council in those days with a number of members of both the Liberal Party and the ALP about to be elected to this place.

Indeed out there early this afternoon I bumped into another former Heidelberg councillor, Peter Clarke, who also has an interesting election on his hands at the moment.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr LEIGHTON — Peter Clarke insists he has never lost an election, but I do not think he really wants my endorsement.

During my time with Vin on Heidelberg council there were two areas that I particularly remember him for. The first is the Darebin parklands. At that time the Darebin Creek was not much more than a sewer, and we were going through the process of reclaiming it. It was really before it was accepted that all levels of government, particularly local councils, should put a lot of money into the environment, and while that was a passionate cause of many of the ALP councillors, Vin was critical in ensuring there were enough members of the Liberal Party to ensure a bipartisan position on Heidelberg council and substantial support in reclaiming that land. I believe the state of Darebin parklands today is a legacy of Vin's.

As a number of other members have commented, he also did a lot of work in and around the West Heidelberg area. I remember the enormous amount of

voluntary time he put into the West Heidelberg community health centre.

When the Liberal Party endorsed him in 1984 to stand against Tony Sheehan, the sitting member for Ivanhoe, I know there were some on our side who pooh-poohed the choice of Vin as the Liberal Party candidate. I think they were expecting somebody more from Eaglemont or East Ivanhoe stand and saw somebody like that as typical of the Liberal Party. So there was a tendency on our side to pooh-pooh, but I have to say I was surprised that the Liberal Party could make such a clever choice. That was reflected in the result in 1985, where because of all the work Vin had done with the Darebin parklands in West Heidelberg — I suppose people would vote for the Greens these days — the battlers all switched their vote and voted Liberal, and got Vin up.

In the 1991 redistribution West Heidelberg was taken out of my electorate of Preston and put into the Ivanhoe electorate. That caused both Vin and I grief. I think we both would rather it had stayed in Preston. It gave me a very difficult preselection contest, and meanwhile, as has been commented on, it was the reason why Vin ultimately lost Ivanhoe. He was chatting to me privately — and I think he would not mind my saying this — and he was quite candid. He said, 'That Ivanhoe electorate on the new boundaries with West Heidelberg is in a natural Labor electorate. I will win it this time because you guys are so on the nose, but I'll lose it the following time', and he was quite right. He held it comfortably in the 1992 election but went on to lose it in 1996.

Like the honourable member for Lara, I also had a period of shadowing Vin between 1992 and 1994 in small business and youth affairs, and the longer serving members here will remember those horrendous nights in October and November 1992 where we sat all night. For some reason we discovered it was necessary to debate the shop trading hours at length. I think it must have been about midnight or 1 o'clock in the morning when Phil Gude came to me and said, 'If you don't wind up now, I'm going to guillotine it'. With encouragement from me, Vin said, 'It's okay, he's nearly finished. We're about to go into committee'.

The moment we got safely into committee we started the debate all over again, and by 5 o'clock in the morning Vin was leaning over the table to me, saying, 'Do you realise I have to address a Rotary breakfast at 7 o'clock this morning?'. In some ways he almost took it personally. Given that we had always had a good relationship, he could not see how I could put him through the wringer at 5 o'clock in the morning.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr LEIGHTON — The last time — —

Mr Doyle interjected.

Mr LEIGHTON — You remember it, do you?

The last time I saw Vin Heffernan must have been during the winter recess last year. My 11-year-old daughter and a school group had come in here, so I came in to meet them. Just as they were about to leave, I saw Vin walking towards me with another guy. I did not even bother looking at who the other guy was. I saw Vin. I went up to him and shook his hand, and all these 11-year-old schoolgirls started screaming. I am thinking, 'Gee, Vin, you're popular'. It turned out he was with Eddie McGuire.

I also attended the funeral on 22 November. St Pat's cathedral was packed out. I think what was noticeable was that, as well as his own party, there were so many serving and former members of the ALP who attended during the middle of a state election campaign. I think that is a mark of the respect he was held in as much by our side as his own side. It was a privilege knowing Vin Heffernan. He was a decent man. As has been said, he was passionate about life. I would like to express my sincere condolences to his wife, Nancy, and his family.

Ms ASHER (Brighton) — I too would like to contribute very briefly to the condolence debate on Vin Heffernan simply because I followed him as Minister for Small Business and I was particularly grateful for the help he gave me in the very difficult early days of my being minister.

Vin's career has been covered adequately by previous speakers — that is, his having been the honourable member for Ivanhoe, the Minister for Small Business and Minister responsible for Youth Affairs in the first Kennett government, and a shadow minister prior to that; and a long-term councillor of the City of Heidelberg and mayor of that city as well. I wish to make a couple of observations on Vin as a person, not particularly adding anything new to what has been said but to reiterate some of the characteristics that I knew about Vin as a fellow parliamentarian.

Firstly, he was passionate. He was passionate about many things. He was passionate about small business and the private enterprise system; and I am not so sure — although the honourable member for Ivanhoe's claim was in jest — that Vin was really a Labor man. I think that if you look at some of those comments in relation to his belief in the capacities of the private

enterprise system, they earmark him very firmly as a committed Liberal.

His background was one of self-employment, and he had a view that if he could do it, others could do it. He was committed to allowing pathways of opportunities for kids of underprivileged backgrounds to have those same opportunities for self-employment and self-advancement that he had had. He was chair of the Small Business Advisory Network, in which capacity he gave me a lot of particularly good advice, normally in relation to reduction of red tape and, very bluntly, what small businessmen actually felt during my jurisdiction as minister.

He carried also a passionate commitment to young people, which has been mentioned in this chamber. In 1983 he was rewarded with the Medal of the Order of Australia for his work with youth. He would of course not have regarded that as a reward for him but simply an acknowledgement of work that needed to be done in the community.

Vin was also particularly smart. I think the fact that he ended up as the minister for his two passions, small business and youth affairs, just showed how politically smart he was within the machinations of the Liberal Party. He was also particularly passionate about his local community and, of course, his family. He was a man who had old-fashioned values. He believed in hard work. He was an early riser and liked to tell us that periodically, and he had a hands-on approach to running a bureaucracy. One of his pieces of advice to me was to get up early and go into my public service department at 7.00 a.m. He informed me that I would find no-one there, and the first few in I should promote. That was his attitude to running a bureaucracy, and I have to say that with those he did encourage he chose particularly well.

He had a very matter-of-fact style, and I note that he said very bluntly in his first speech that any politician who stands up today and says he will guarantee a job is either naive or completely removed from the real world. The real world mattered very much to Vin Heffernan — no airs, no graces, no rose-coloured glasses and no finery. As has been said, he was just a very matter-of-fact, decent, humane, good bloke. I think it is fair to say that the full force of the 1970s feminist revolution did not impact hugely on Vin Heffernan. He was a man's man who did not pull any punches and said it the way it should be.

I also pass on the condolences of my husband, Ron Best. Vin and Ron were both Heidelberg boys, and Ron will dearly miss his golf with Vin Heffernan. I

remember the first time I saw Ron's diary with a commitment with Vin where it said 'Pasture inspection, Vin Heffernan'. I naively said, 'Why is Vin helping you with National Party policy?', until it was explained to me that 'pasture inspection' was code for 'golf'. I am sorry, but I see I have divulged a secret! Both Ron and I pass on our condolences to Nancy and Vin's family.

Mr SEITZ (Keilor) — Speaker, I congratulate you on achieving your high office in this Parliament.

I am one of the members of Parliament who came into contact with Vin, or Vinnie, as he was known here. Vinnie was quite an inspiration to deal with and talk to, even when he was in opposition when he was first elected. When he became a Liberal government minister he continued to mix with members from all sides of the house. It made life in that era of the Kennett government quite pleasurable — to talk to a minister who listened and took note of people's needs.

I describe him as a community politician because that is what Vinnie really was. In this place he kept a bridge open between both sides of the house by mixing with the people, by having a talk or by having a cup of coffee outside on the balcony at different times. You could talk to him on the real issues on both sides, and he would listen to you and express an opinion and take it on board. And in taking it on board he was actually taking action on some of the issues we have raised.

He had said at times that in his youth he was a Labor person, and probably in his heart he was thinking Labor, because some of the issues, seen from our side at the time in opposition, were similar to some of our policy, except that his approach and style in achieving them were different. For those reasons I stand here to show my respect for Vinnie Heffernan, to say that he contributed to this place. I also say to the newcomers that they should listen and take note of what Vinnie did, because it is possible that we can advance the needs of the state of Victoria collectively from both sides of the house and work for the betterment of all people, as Vinnie did, whether they were part of his electorate of Ivanhoe or part of his ward in Heidelberg when he was a councillor.

When he was nominated was when I first began to find out something about him and his activities as a councillor in Heidelberg, working right across the municipality trying to help people. That is very commendable, so I think that Nancy and the children should be very proud of Vinnie Heffernan and have a cherished and fond memory of him. I am sure they have, as I have, with my short contact with him here in

this Parliament. I extend my sincere condolences to the family.

Mr WELLS (Scoresby) — Vincent Patrick Heffernan, who was born on 24 December 1935, died on 15 November 2002. Before entering politics I had heard about Vin Heffernan and the work he had done for youth communities in the Heidelberg and St Kilda areas. When I first met Vin as a candidate in 1991 it was like being hit by a bulldozer racing over you, and when you were just about to get up he hit you again. His energy and enthusiasm were extraordinary. He had a strong, genuine commitment to youth, not one that lasted as long as the media were interested but one that needed a final outcome to existing problems.

Rowville in my electorate had a huge youth population. Vin knew this and wanted to ensure that youth services were available in the area. The Rowville Uniting Church contacted me to discuss an application to the state government to expand the church to incorporate a family and youth centre. Vin agreed to accept a deputation because he thought the idea had great merit. He explained to me as a new member that we needed to go through a very careful, well-planned and well-thought-out strategy in order to get the funding pushed through. Vin advised me that he would receive the deputation from the church, listen very carefully to what they had to say and at the conclusion of the meeting would agree to visit the site in Rowville. He said he would also agree to meet with church representatives at the conclusion of the site inspection. Vin went on to advise me that following this process he would discuss it with the regional youth committee for the outer east to ensure that the church's plan fitted in with the overall strategy. I went back to the Rowville Uniting Church to say that it would be a longwinded, bureaucratic process but that I was confident the funding would be successful.

The big day arrived, and I led the deputation to meet the Minister responsible for Youth Affairs, Vin Heffernan. We sat there waiting with bated breath for the minister to enter the room. A couple of minutes later, in walked the minister. He sat down and said, 'Right, what is this all about?', to which the Rowville Uniting Church minister, Kim Cain, said, 'Minister, we are here to seek \$30 000 as a contribution to building a family and youth centre'. Before the deputation could open their paperwork and show the minister their plans, Vin pointed individually to each person and said, 'Done, done, done; your request has been granted. Well done!'. So a well-thought-out and well-planned strategy which was going to take a couple of weeks was over in 10 seconds! Vin's good-natured impatience had got the better of him.

In 1995 Vin insisted I take up a position on the board of the Victorian Homeless Fund. I still remember the conversation we had when he asked me. It lasted 10 minutes and I did not get a word in edgeways, but his final sentence was, ‘Great stuff, Wellsy, I will let them know you have agreed’.

We on the backbench could always tell when Vin Heffernan was about to get a question without notice, because his hair would be combed with great attention to detail — the only time his hair was combed with great attention! In full flight Vin reinvented the word ‘theatrics’. It was something great to see.

When Vin was defeated in 1996 it was a great loss. He was a man very dedicated to helping others and dedicated in his love of Parliament. But in politics that is life, and you move on — and Vin did. But we often saw Vin around the Parliament with his two Irish mafia mates, Pat McNamara and Tony Sheehan.

Vin was incredibly good at playing practical jokes and could easily embarrass you at the drop of a hat. He maintained a real twinkle in his eye, and you were never really sure whether he was pulling your leg or being real. The constant telephone calls would always start with, ‘Wellsy, my son, it’s Heffernan. Why don’t you ...’ — and the call would go on. I will really miss those.

Always ready to solve the world’s problems but always ready to listen to the other side of the argument — if you could get a word in — Vin Heffernan was larger than life. You could not help but like this tearaway larrikin. I suspect that his never-ending energy at times would have driven his wife, Nancy, nuts! He will be remembered by all of us in Parliament who knew him. I am sure he will already have fully reorganised heaven and be starting to offer advice on solving problems.

I extend my sincere condolences to Nancy and Anthony, Jan and Susan and their families.

Mr BAILLIEU (Hawthorn) — Vinnie was a blazing light, and he was bloody good fun to be with. Vinnie had a fire in the eyes, a fire in the belly and a fire in his speech, and there was a warmth about him that was really irresistible. I would say, and I am sure Nancy will agree, that Vinnie was a very hard bloke not to love. He will be horribly missed.

Vin Heffernan never stopped smiling. I was chatting to a friend today who knows the family extremely well, and she described Vinnie as pathologically friendly, which I thought was the most apt description. He was a wonderful bloke, just pure effervescence at every turn.

Vinnie never stopped planning, whether it was on the council or as mayor, in his business enterprises, in this place or even out of this place — and probably particularly out of this place! I think there are probably a number of members who joined this Parliament after the 1996 election who thought Vinnie was still a member of Parliament. He was here that often in the stranger’s dining room, and he was always planning. There was always something he had in mind. In fact Vinnie was always planning to get back into this chamber. He would have been delighted to be here now, taking up the challenge we have in front of us, because he never stopped fighting for the causes he believed in, whether they involved young people, small business enterprises or whatever. To me he was a never-knock-him-down sort of bloke. He loved a challenge, and he was quintessentially a Liberal — and he was quintessentially a family man as well.

Vinnie’s approach to politics was to put people first, not the party. His dear friend Barbara Temby, who ran all those campaigns for him, always reminded us that it was Vinnie who got elected in this seat and that it was Vincent Heffernan we should be promoting, and that was always true in Ivanhoe.

I got to know Vinnie well in a variety of ways, particularly in my roles in the Liberal Party before I came to this place. I have an abiding image, one of my early recollections of Vin in politics, involving the Ambassador Hotel in Geelong — and it is a story that has been told before. In the hotel room after one of our conferences, there stretched out on the double bed with his shoes on was Vinnie, with Roger Prescott sitting on the end of the bed and Jeff Kennett sitting on the window. In those days the Ambassador Hotel did not have any devices which stopped the windows opening. At one stage Jeffrey nearly tumbled out the window. Perhaps things would have been incredibly different had he tumbled out the window, but I can assure you that Roger and Vincent were firmly sitting on the bed!

Vinnie suffered a few challenges for preselection, and one of those was deemed in advance to be fairly contentious. Some of us were a bit nervous that Vinnie might miss out, but I can assure you that he had it all well organised, and Barbara served him extremely well in the process.

Vinnie was very good at what he did. He was a very good fundraiser. I remember going to a fundraiser for a colleague — just a small, quiet dinner. It was a Liberal Party fundraiser, and a fairly expensive one. There were not many people there, but I was staggered to find Liberals, National Party people and Labor Party people there.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr BAILLIEU — I wouldn't name them, but some of them are still bringing in good money.

Vinnie was absolutely rapt to become a minister and, as others have said, he could not have been more pleased than to be Minister for Small Business and Minister responsible for Youth Affairs. He loved the job; he loved the opportunity it gave him to do the things that he thought were incredibly important — in particular, the deregulation of small business. Wouldn't he be wretched at the prospect of the changes ahead in the small business arena in terms of shopping hours now? Vinnie would be up there fighting hard to maintain the status quo.

He loved the job. He loved getting up and motivating people. He was a great talker, as others have said, but he was also a great speech-maker. He could motivate a group in no uncertain terms. The only thing Vinnie could not do is read a speech. He hated reading a speech — he hated the discipline of reading it and sticking to the script. Vinnie was in his element when he was flowing freely. When he was flowing freely there was fire and there was thunder, and he was a joy to be with.

I also remember Vinnie in another role. If roles were reversed — had I expired before Vinnie — I am sure he would have taken this opportunity to tell this story, because I have never had a conversation with Vinnie in the last 15 years which he has not commenced with, 'God, you're a shocking golfer!'. Unlike others, Vinnie reminded me all the time that he once beat me at golf — only once — and satisfied himself by reminding me every time he saw me. In fact I always found on the golf course that Vinnie was the Jack O'Toole of golf. He had a swing like an axeman, and I found that if you watched it you could ruin your own game. So when I played golf with Vinnie I shielded my eyes from his swing to protect my own game. He challenged me a number of times to perform on the golf course and laid a few bets, and on one celebrated occasion he did me good and proper — and I have heard about it ever since.

As I said, Vinnie would be horrified at the situation now with politics in Victoria. He would see this as an incredible challenge; he would have been delighted to be here taking it to the government.

I am confident that he is in touch with his new surroundings. I am confident that Vinnie has already booked a tee time with the Lord. He has probably struck up a pretty good partnership, and they will be

playing knock-out comps for a long time to come. I imagine that Vinnie is probably already plotting the downfall of the government in some way or another. I am sure, as the honourable member for Ivanhoe said, that he will be haunting the honourable member for Ivanhoe, both in a good-natured way and with good intent. I am looking forward to receiving Vin's advice through whatever starry, starry night he is now a part of.

I know that he is incredibly well loved and remembered in his family. To Nance, Tony and Louise, Sue and Jan and the grandkids that he loved, I pass on my sincere condolences. I was reminded by the friend I spoke to today that Vinnie was such a good family man and was so well regarded by his children's friends that at some stage at the school his daughters attended they voted Vinnie the best father in the school. It is a glorious tribute to a glorious man.

Sitting suspended 6.34 p.m. until 8.02 p.m.

Mr DIXON (Nepean) — It is a great honour to join this condolence motion for the Honourable Vin Heffernan. I offer my condolences to Vin's family and friends.

Over the years I have had a few connections with Vin. As the honourable member for Warrandyte said, Vin was rather tribal. One of the tribes I belonged to was the West Heidelberg tribe. I am one of three conservative MPs to come out of the working class suburb of West Heidelberg; the others being Vin and the Honourable Ron Best, a former member for North Western Province in the other place. Of course, there is also my colleague from the other side, the present honourable member for Ivanhoe. We had a lot in common there.

The Heffernan garage was mentioned. It was a bit of an institution in West Heidelberg. We could not afford a car, so we never visited it, but everyone knew about it and knew that was the place to have your car fixed, get your petrol or have a long chat with one of the Heffernans.

Vin's brother Mark is my accountant, and has been for many years. When we finally got around to doing my tax it was always preceded by a long chat about what Vin had been up to. Mark and his family were very proud of Vin, his achievements and the person he was. I know Vin just loved and adored his family as well.

As a minister Vin showed great compassion. In the early 1990s my sister was setting up an emergency accommodation shelter for young people in the Heidelberg area, and of course she went to Vin. Even

though he was a minister, Vin spent a lot of time considering where the shelter would be. He went with her to look at a number of sites personally and saw the issue through with her. She could not get over the cooperation, enthusiasm and support that Vin showed for her project, which was after all for the young people of the area that he so loved.

When Vin was defeated in 1996 I think he was quite devastated. As the honourable member for Preston said, it was in the back of his mind but the reality devastated him. He always said the issue over the Austin Hospital was the thing that did him.

My connection with Vin then moved down to my electorate. Vin and his family had a holiday house at Sorrento. He often played golf down there, and in his retirement from Parliament he found a lot more time to hone his skills on the golf course. He then became a local branch member as well, so I often ran into Vin at branch meetings.

You always expected one or two questions from Vin, but mainly it was a good chat and a good discussion, in fact a good lecture, on what I should be doing, what the issues were and how I should be tackling them. He had an incredible amount of wisdom, and I was always very keen to listen and learn from Vin.

He could not get it out of his blood, and in 1999 Vin ran for preselection for the upper house seat of South Eastern Province. He really loved being a member of Parliament. He wanted to get back into this place, although it be in the other chamber, because he wanted to do more for the community. And this time his focus was on the community of the Mornington Peninsula, not so much the Heidelberg area. It would have been great if he had won that seat and gone on to be a member of that place, because I would have had a great, close working relationship with him as my upper house member, and this place and the state would have benefited a lot from his continuing input.

Finally, Vin was someone whose example all of us in this place should aspire to. He was a person of great passion and was compassionate, hard working and loyal. They are ideals we should all aspire to. The St Patrick's Day dinner next month will not be the same without him.

Mr THOMPSON (Sandringham) — Vin Heffernan was a person who was in many ways larger than life. Two days after he lost his seat in this chamber he fulfilled a commitment to speak in my electorate, and at that stage he outlined his political values and

philosophy in the face of a defeat that was a great disappointment to him.

He was keen spirited and enthusiastic, and a natural orator with a rare zest for life. Vin was also a very keen problem solver, especially, as has already been touched upon in this chamber, in areas ranging from politics to the tennis court and the golf course. He generally relied upon the wisdom of his mother, who, if I recall correctly, brought up six children. He had the simple philosophy that you did not need 25 government inquiries and a roomful of reports to work out what was right in the administration of youth affairs, he would just contact his mother and find out what she might have done in any such circumstance.

Vin had a very practical wisdom. He also relied upon his experience in small business to solve problems, and in doing so he drew attention to the need for there not to be so much red tape. That phrase was I think coined in Canada in the early 1970s. It came into vogue and was very much part and parcel of Vin's approach, which was to simplify matters, to get to their essence and not to waste time — to solve matters directly.

On one occasion after he came to office he visited, as I understand it, an agency in his electorate and sought to find out what it did. As I recall, it was suggested that the agency helped homeless children. He said, 'But what do you actually do?'. The reply was repeated on two further occasions, whereupon he asked, 'How do you actually help them?', and they said, 'Well, we refer them to the Salvation Army down the road and it provides accommodation'. Vin was very keen to cut straight to the heart of the matter and he thought that he perhaps had better channel the money straight into the Salvation Army, which would bring about a swifter outcome.

He also had occasion to work as a consultant following his retirement from politics, and I recall one trip to Canberra on a plane leaving Melbourne where he had really solved the destiny of the Liberal Party in the first 10 minutes and then entertained me and those in the surrounding seats with his views on a broad range of matters in life.

Mick Young, a Labor Party identity and a former federal minister, had the view that there were too few Labor Party people in Canberra who had ever had to wash their hands with Solvol. Vin Heffernan had very proudly washed his hands with Solvol and had a very broad life experience which enabled him to help his constituency at the local level and further afield. I seek to convey my condolences to Nan and the family of Vin on the occasion of the condolence motion.

The SPEAKER — Order! I call the honourable member for Bass, and in calling him I remind the house that speaking on the condolence motion does not affect people's right to make an inaugural speech.

Mr SMITH (Bass) — I must say it is a great pleasure for me to talk about Vin Heffernan because I had a great feeling about Vin. He and I came from a background in small business, in which we were real believers. I have heard ALP people speak here tonight about Vin Heffernan and his Labor thoughts. We often refer to Labor Party people as true believers, and I think Vin was in fact a true believer — a true believer in cutting red tape and in making some effort to look after young kids.

I went to Vin's funeral, and I must say it was a very moving ceremony. As were most members, I was put in a seat up front. It was not until after the ceremony when you walked out that you saw the many people who were there. As my colleague Robin Cooper said, the number of people who had tears in their eyes was amazing.

Vin was a great bloke, a real man's man. He could mix it with the best of you and he could really enjoy life. You could enjoy Vin's company out in the bar and you could enjoy Vin's company at golf — if you, like me, could turn off your hearing aid! He was, as has been described, a great tutor for golfers who thought they were doing all right and then found they were not doing quite as well as they should have been. It was a fact that you were never putting properly, that you could not drive properly because your feet were not quite in the right place and that you had not got your swing back far enough. I learnt a lot from Vin — I am still playing off 36 now!

An Honourable Member — You are coming in!

Mr SMITH — Yes, I used to play off 26! Vin was an excitable person. He was full of enthusiasm for the things he believed in — and he believed in lots of things. We have heard about many of those today. He was the epitome of small business. He was a person who would really get into it. He was the sort of person who knew that if you worked hard you could achieve and that it was worth while working for, and he took that attitude through his parliamentary career and afterwards as well. He was a councillor, certainly, in Heidelberg; but he was a commissioner in Nillumbik. I reckon Vin would have had Heidelberg working terrifically. He would not have liked all the red tape. He would not have liked all of the bulldust that goes on in councils. He would not have liked the bureaucracy there. I reckon he would have been questioning the

officers, and he would have loved it as a commissioner because he would have had a chance to make a real difference in cutting the red tape and the work of the minor bureaucracy that is unfortunately in local government. I am sure Vin would have liked to have sat back and watched the TV show called *Grassroots*. He would have been sitting there and absolutely fuming at what some of those council officers did and, more importantly, what the councillors did not do. Vin was a great bloke.

I served as his chairman on the bills committee when he was shadow Minister for Small Business and also when he was Minister for Small Business. I had a fair bit to do with him during that time. We used to chew the fat a bit about different things to do with small business and how we were going to cut the red tape. He used to say, 'Let's get rid of the red tape that is strangling small business'. It happened all the time, and it still happens, but Vin did his best to try and cut that red tape when he was the minister. He did a lot in putting legislation through this place to allow small business to thrive, and for that he is to be admired.

We are all going to miss Vin. I have a press article here which I think sums him up. It is from the *Herald Sun* of 27 January:

He claimed this insight also left him with little doubt about what was needed for small business to thrive.

'There's nothing like it, you've got to work hard,' he said.

'Don't let anyone tell you that running your own business you don't work twice as hard as anybody else. It is hell, but the rewards are there provided you work.'

And he was right: the rewards are there. He worked hard all of his life in small business, and he did us a favour when he became a member of Parliament and was able to bring that experience and expertise into this chamber and certainly into our party room.

The article goes on:

In true Liberal Party fashion Mr Heffernan said the role of government was to stay well out of the way of small business.

'Government's role is to act as a catalyst for small business,' he said.

'It's not the role of government to be financially backing certain businesses as winners.'

And that was the way he thought and the way he went through his business life and his work as a minister.

Vin was a great talker. My belief is that he has not quite made it into heaven. He is still standing up at the Pearly Gates and is talking to St Peter. He could have got in,

but no, he is probably telling St Peter about his golf swing. He is probably telling him about how he is going to improve things on the golf course up in heaven, and that is where he is headed. There is no doubt about that.

I thank Vin for his support because I had a fair bit to do with him in the run-up to the election for the Bass district. We talked about issues, and I had his total support, and I am so grateful for that. It really hurt me when Vin passed away on 15 November, and I think it hurt all of us.

I pass my condolences on to Nancy, Tony, Jan and Susan and to Vin's grandchildren. May he rest in peace. We are all going to miss him.

The SPEAKER — Like a lot of honourable members in this chamber, I did not know Vin, but from the tributes that have been paid to him this evening by honourable members on all sides of the house he certainly sounds like the sort of person you would like to know. From what has been said about him tonight, he was obviously a great community representative for the people of Ivanhoe and Heidelberg. Tributes have been paid to him in his role as both a councillor and a state member, as well as for his work with the many community organisations he was involved with. They all show him to have been an extremely hard worker and a dedicated community person.

Therefore on behalf of all members of Parliament I express condolences to Nancy, his children and his grandchildren. We can say that Vin will live in the hearts of many honourable members for many years to come.

Hon. Cyril Thomas Edmunds, AM

Mr BRACKS (Premier) — I move:

That this house expresses its sincere sorrow at the death on 3 February 2003 of the Honourable Cyril Thomas Edmunds, AM, and places on record its acknowledgment of the valuable services rendered by him to the Parliament and the people of Victoria as member of the Legislative Assembly for the electoral districts of Moonee Ponds from 1967 to 1976, Ascot Vale from 1976 to 1985 and Pascoe Vale from 1985 to 1988, and as Speaker from 1982 to 1988.

Sadly, the Honourable Tom Edmunds passed away on 3 February after a long illness. He will be remembered for his years of service to the electoral districts of Moonee Ponds, Ascot Vale and Pascoe Vale between 1967 and 1988 and for his 22-year contribution to the Victorian Parliament as a frontbencher in opposition and as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

Tom Edmunds will also be remembered for his sharp wit and individual style. He lived a full and rewarding life. He was a devoted family man, a tireless public servant, an active community member and an accomplished swimmer and sailor.

Tom was born in Essendon on 25 October 1925. He was educated at Essendon North state school and Essendon high and technical schools. In 1943 he enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force and served for three years in the Air Sea Rescue Service in the south-west Pacific. On his return he completed his apprenticeship and was employed as a lithographer and later became a factory manager of a printing firm.

The year 1952 was a watershed for Tom Edmunds. He married his wife, Vivienne, and also joined the Essendon West branch of the Australian Labor Party, where he would make a lifetime contribution to the party. Tom Edmunds served as a secretary to his branch for 15 years and also as a treasurer for 3 years. He also worked on 19 federal, state and municipal election campaigns both in and out of Parliament.

Tom Edmunds's parliamentary career began in 1967 when he was elected to this house as a member for Moonee Ponds. In his inaugural speech to the house on 13 December 1967 he highlighted issues of particular concern to him and his electorate, and they included equitable access to education and housing and safeguarding the rights and liberties of ordinary Victorians. His further pursuit of these policy interests was recognised when in 1972 he was appointed opposition spokesman for housing and planning and in 1977 when he was appointed spokesman for police and emergency services.

Tom's outstanding parliamentary career included his being elected chair of the House Committee and deputy chair of the Law Revision Committee. This was capped off by his unanimous appointment to the position of Speaker following the Cain government's election victory in 1982.

Tom Edmunds remained Speaker until his retirement in 1988, and it was in this role that his wit and individuality shone through. In an interview with the media to mark his appointment as Speaker, Tom Edmunds said that he did not want to take the dignity out of Parliament — and I am sure the Speaker will appreciate the comment he made — 'but I would like to take the awe out of it'. He refused to wear the traditional wig and gown, famously stating that 'the gods took my hair from me many years ago, and I'm not going to replace it with horsehair'.

Tom Edmunds invited television cameras into the chamber for the first time; he also abolished the practice of the Clerk reading three stages of the bill, viewing it as an anachronistic waste of valuable parliamentary time. On his retirement Tom Edmunds was made a member of the Order of Australia in 1989. He resumed his hobby of woodwork, he walked labrador guide dogs and he continued his electorate campaigning, as he had done for many years, for the Australian Labor Party. Tom was a man who, in his own words, had a passion for helping others, and it is for this that I believe he will be remembered by all honourable members, by the people he represented and by all those he worked with. On behalf of the government and the Australian Labor Party in Victoria I extend condolences to Tom Edmunds's family: his wife, Vivienne, his children, David, Mark and Penelope, and his brothers, Geoffrey and Bruce.

Mr DOYLE (Leader of the Opposition) — I join the Premier in the condolence motion to recognise the contribution to this state and to this Parliament of the Honourable Cyril Thomas Edmunds, AM.

Tom Edmunds was born on 24 October 1925 in Essendon and he passed away earlier this month aged 77. He was educated at the Essendon high and technical schools and served in the Royal Australian Air Force before eventually becoming the factory manager of a printing firm.

Reading his inaugural speech, it is obvious that Tom Edmunds was passionate about local, environmental, health, education and housing issues, and, of interest to me, he was also vocal in acknowledging and supporting the role of volunteers, which was not something that was commonly done at that time.

Tom Edmunds entered the Legislative Assembly in 1967 when he was elected as a member for Moonee Ponds. He served as the member for Moonee Ponds until February 1976 and then served the electorate of Ascot Vale from 1976 to 1985, and from 1985 he served one term as the member for Pascoe Vale — a very lengthy period of time of service to this Parliament.

It was with interest that I heard the Premier note that Tom was also a branch treasurer for 3 years and a branch secretary for 15 years. As those of us who have served in those positions would appreciate, I am not sure which of those periods of service is the more onerous — a period here in the Parliament or a period as secretary of a branch, whether that be with the ALP or the Liberal Party.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr DOYLE — That is a different matter altogether, but I thank my honourable colleague for his help.

Tom enjoyed community involvement, as the Premier said, which was demonstrated by the many local and also statewide organisations in which he served. He was a member of the Essendon North State School committee, he was a member of the Buckley Park High School council, he was a member of the Essendon and District Memorial Hospital board, he was a member of the West Essendon Progress Association, he was chairman of the Essendon community centre, he was a member of the Victorian Institute of Colleges Council, he was a member of the Melbourne College of Printing and Graphic Arts Council, he was a delegate to the Victorian Constitutional Convention and he was the chairman of the exhibition buildings.

During his parliamentary career Tom Edmunds served on various committees and was the opposition whip from 1976 to 1979 and then again from 1980 to 1982. He was opposition spokesman on housing and planning from 1972 to 1977, and he was opposition spokesman on police and emergency services from 1977 to 1982 — a very distinguished career while he was a member of the opposition, with considerable party and frontbench experience.

In his inaugural speech Tom spoke of the honour and privilege of serving in this Parliament. He said, if I can quote him:

I hope that as a member of this Parliament, I shall be able to make a practical contribution to the challenges of my office.

From all accounts he was a practical man with a practical wisdom, and the reforms to parliamentary process which the Premier outlined are ample evidence of that.

After that distinguished career in opposition, Tom Edmunds's career culminated in his election as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in 1982, and he served in that role until his retirement in 1988. During his time he stressed the need for the Speaker to be impartial, and he was renowned for maintaining very high standards during his Speakership.

In an interview on 20 June 1984 Tom Edmunds spoke of the requirement of the Speaker to show great diplomacy. He said:

While sitting in the office and chair of Speaker, you must be impartial. You're there as the custodian of the rights of all members.

And a part I particularly enjoy:

Representatives of all political parties come through that door, wanting different things.

I wonder if anything has changed since those times, Madam Speaker, and I am sure you will be able to tell us in due course.

Fairly early, but at about the middle of his career, the *Essendon Gazette* wrote of Tom Edmunds:

Even his political opponents have acknowledged the way in which he has conducted business before the house, with his understanding of parliamentary procedure and with his keen sense of humour.

That is a great testament to Tom Edmunds, both as a Speaker and as a member of this Parliament.

Tom is survived by his wife, Vivienne, and his children, David, Mark and Penelope. Our thoughts are with them and their families.

Mr RYAN (Leader of the National Party) — On behalf of the National Party I rise to support the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in moving this motion of condolence for the late Tom Edmunds.

I did not have the pleasure of knowing Tom, but some of those who are still in the house did. I must say that when one reads the background to Tom Edmunds it can truly be said that he was the proverbial self-made man. Tom was born in Essendon in 1925. He was state school educated. He left school at the age of 14 and took up an apprenticeship in lithography. He had three years in the Royal Australian Air Force, and he served in the south-west Pacific during the war. After the war he joined Specialty Press. He became a shop delegate for the printers union, and he joined the ALP in 1952. He was elected eventually to this place in 1967, and he served here until 1988.

It is interesting to reflect on the fact that the 14-year-old who left school at that age and took up an apprenticeship eventually became the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in the state of Victoria in 1982. That is a commentary upon the extraordinary community in which we live and which we enjoy, and it is also a commentary upon the man himself.

I saw the quotation to which the Premier has already made reference in his contribution about the wig. I just observe in passing, Madam Speaker, that the horse hair remains retired, and I think the fair prospect is that in the course of this four years we are not likely to see it.

From my reading of the material on Tom Edmunds, I must say that he also oversaw some changes in

parliamentary procedure, as referred to in his biography. Suffice it to say it was a portent of things to come, and it would perhaps be interesting to have him here in the chamber tomorrow to oversee what is about to happen and receive a point of view from him.

Tom Edmunds had wide interests. They are reflected in the contributions he made in this place. He was a man who recognised a couple of decades ago the changes in society which were then occurring, and he was alive to the nature of the global changes that society was just then beginning to experience.

The history I have read records that he took a Commonwealth Parliamentary Association trip to England years ago, and we are all aware what magnificently constructive investments CPA trips being made available have been for parliamentarians over the years. Out of that trip he was able to see some wonderful initiatives that had been introduced in England with public housing. The commentary upon Tom Edmunds records that he brought back to this Parliament and into the policy of the government many of the issues which he had seen on that invaluable CPA trip in England, which were able to ultimately result in changes to our public housing.

Tom Edmunds had very broad interests. He spoke in his maiden speech about the coal deposits in the Latrobe Valley. He talked about, in essence, the nature of a competitive edge, and the fact that if industry and communities were to flourish, governments of all persuasions were obliged to ensure that they had appropriate policy settings in place. He spoke about some of the state's cultural icons. He was very keen to see the development of the sort of infrastructure that would enable our culture to flourish in Victoria. He had a keen interest in the Institute of Applied Science. He was a great advocate for the teaching of science in our schools. When you read the history of Tom Edmunds it is clear that he was a mix of many things and made obviously an invaluable contribution to this Parliament in the time that he served here.

I suppose that contribution in a sense is summed up by the heading to the article in the *Age* of 12 February, which talked about many of the aspects of Tom Edmunds. The heading reads:

Plumber's son who became a speaker of wit and style.

That seems to encapsulate a man who is warmly remembered by so many of this Parliament. On behalf of the National Party I convey to Tom Edmunds's family, his wife and children, the condolences of the National Party.

Mr BATCHELOR (Minister for Transport) — Tom Edmunds was born and lived and worked all his life within and for the former City of Essendon. He was an Essendon boy through and through. He joined the Labor Party in 1952, and was very active in a whole range of Labor Party activities all through his life, starting from that early period in 1952.

Concurrently with his activities and support within the local branch and at other levels in the Labor Party, he was also active at his workplace in the printing trades and was very active in trade union affairs. Arising from these experiences within the Labor Party and the union, he then took an active interest in seeking representation for election to Parliament, and stood for the seat of Moonee Ponds three times before he was finally elected in 1967. If nothing else Tom Edmunds was determined, and once he set his sights on achieving a task he set the course to achieve it.

Following a number of redistributions he was successful in continuing his parliamentary career by being elected to the seats of Ascot Vale and Pascoe Vale. During his time in Parliament he was the Labor Party whip between 1976 and 1982, and was Labor Party parliamentary spokesman on housing and planning and then police and emergency services.

Upon the election of the Cain government he was elected Speaker, a position he held until 1988. During his long and distinguished parliamentary career of some 22 years there were many things that can be said of Tom Edmunds, but talking to some of the former members who were here and who worked with him and under him as the Speaker, a recurring theme is that he is fondly remembered for being particularly good at imparting his considerable parliamentary experience. He gave it freely and with good humour, and he was particularly generous towards members.

He knew the building and its procedures extremely well and was keen to go out of his way to assist those who did not have the same level of knowledge. He was also keen to pass on crucial information about the parliamentary bowling club, in which he took an active interest. He saw it as a way of engaging with the more conservative members of his constituency. He found that they were quite enamoured of the events around the parliamentary bowling club as well as participating in those parliamentary competitions.

As a Speaker, Tom was respected across the board. He was respected for his commonsense and for his approach to seeing things in a rational way rather than purely relying on a procedural approach. An article in the *Age* when he was appointed Speaker reveals that he

was expected to be a more witty Speaker than his predecessor — and that good humour was a trait in his role as Speaker of this Parliament. He had a good and very long memory for past rulings. He was always making use of that memory and of past rulings to assist him in carrying out his tasks.

Other people have made reference to his decision, which was regarded as quite radical at the time, to not wear the wig and the gown. He set a trend that some subsequent Speakers have followed. Some have decided not to go with it, but others have decided in a similar way to continue the tradition that he established.

He was keen to improve the hours that Parliament sat, and I am sure he will be interested in the debate we will have tomorrow to try to bring some regularity and predictability into the parliamentary sitting hours.

He also wanted to reform the upper house. He was quoted as saying:

When you look at the Legislative Council it is one of the last bastions of reaction. I bet the government intends to officiate some legislative reform ...

Unfortunately Tom will not be around, at least here with us, to see these long-awaited reforms unfold over the next number of parliamentary weeks, but it is a great tribute to the interest that he sparked in parliamentary reforms that some 21 years after he first alluded to them this Parliament will actually get around to trying to bring about those reforms.

His inaugural speech showed that he had a broad range of interests. They ranged from his policy interests in fuel and power through to cultural developments and the sciences. At that time he made reference to the National Gallery of Victoria, which had just moved into its new home down in St Kilda Road. He described that as a milestone in the history of Victoria's cultural maturity.

Again it is unfortunate, given his interest in the National Gallery of Victoria, that he has not been around to see the ongoing success of the new Ian Potter Gallery at Federation Square or the opening of the refurbished St Kilda Road gallery, which will take place later this year. No doubt he would have been in furious agreement with and approved of both those initiatives.

I join with other members of the house in offering our condolences to his wife Vivienne and to the children. He is a fondly remembered Speaker in this chamber. Those who worked with him were very affectionate towards Tom, and he will be sadly missed.

Mr THOMPSON (Sandringham) — I rise to speak on this condolence motion principally through my knowledge of the late Tom Edmunds as conveyed to me through his brother, Bruce, a Sydney–Hobart yachtsman and a person who had a pivotal leadership role in the development of a multimillion dollar marina in Sandringham; and also through his nephew, Stephen, a local accountant and community builder who was behind the establishment of a community bank in my electorate.

One of Tom’s key traits that the family has indicated to me was his keen sense of humour and the level of wit he imparted during his adjudications from the Speaker’s chair, and also outside. The issue of political redistributions is something that is very close to the heart and soul of any member who has been through them as they see their political destinies realigned. On one occasion back in the mid-1980s a former Labor member for Dandenong, Terry Norris, looking very forlorn, moved into the chamber through the back door and passed Speaker, Tom Edmunds, in the Chair. Tom Edmunds asked Terry Norris, ‘What’s the matter?’. Terry replied, ‘I’ve just lost my seat in the redistribution’. Tom, displaying his sense of humour, burst out laughing. Terry then replied, ‘Well I wouldn’t laugh; you’ve lost your seat too!’.

Tom displayed great equanimity of mind and his approach to people and issues was reflected in the humour he displayed. In the eyes of his family he was a consummate citizen, family man and politician. He was immensely proud of his country and its traditions, and following his war service he later married his wife, Vivienne Ballantine, who had served our country in the navy. They had three children, David, Mark and Penelope.

Tom’s political career has been well covered in the chamber already. I draw attention to the fact that following his retirement he served as chairman of the Royal Exhibition Building for a number of years. He continued to work for his community, particularly for Legacy, where he assisted an unknown number of people with their problems, including providing assistance in acquiring pensions. Despite spending long hours in the political arena he maintained close contact with a number of friends. I understand the late Norm Manderson and Alan Thor were well known to him, together with the Cranes, Fitzgeralds, Roscoes and Bill Gilbert, in addition to his friends in politics. Tom’s family told me they thought it would be good if everyone was able to enhance their lives by having such loyal and lasting friendships.

Tom’s devotion to his family was total, and his pride in their lives and achievements and interest in their problems were always his pleasure. This interest flowed through to his extended family also. He had a very special relationship with his brother, Bruce, who was seven years his junior. Tom and Bruce’s father died when Bruce was at an early age, and Tom was a father figure to him in their formative years. Bruce told me how, with the seat out of his trousers, he rode his bike from Essendon to the Sandringham Yacht Club to sign up as a junior member. He told me how Tom would regularly tow his boat around Melbourne as Bruce learned to sail, and in fact he built his own boat before he acquired his own car. Tom provided great assistance to his younger brother and his other brother during tough times.

A former member of this house noted that Tom Edmunds’s personal style was quiet, measured and confident. He was self-assured and considered problems as he should. He was a good listener and evenings in his room were a learning exercise as well as social. His brother described the lunches he had with Tom over many years as ‘legendary’ and ‘an institution’. It was noted that his Welsh Methodist background of industry, thrift and dedication to self-improvement had helped him in his life journey. Tom Edmunds also knew about real politics through his struggle in that arena. Having lost two elections and then finally won, he told the media, ‘It’s a case of tenacity being rewarded. I have tasted defeat, and now victory’.

To the wider Edmunds family, which includes his wife, Vivienne, his children, David, Mark and Penelope, his brother Bruce, his niece, Jenny, and his nephews, Robyn and Stephen, and his other brother, Geoff, we convey the condolences of the house.

Mr HULLS (Attorney-General) — Whilst I did not have the pleasure of being in Parliament as a backbencher or shadow minister when Tom Edmunds was in this place, I had the opportunity of meeting him on many occasions in my role as the member for Niddrie. He visited my office — and I am sure he visited your office, Speaker — on a regular basis, and I was privileged to listen to his views on a range of areas including the importance of integrity in public life.

Tom was a man of great commonsense and a great reformer. When one looks at some of the newspaper clippings at the time of his appointment as Speaker and sees some of his ideas on reforming this place, one sees that he was a great reformer. He would have been very proud for you on your appointment today, Honourable Speaker, as the first female Speaker of this place, and

very excited by the prospect because he was a great reformer. We have heard about his comment on wigs and I will continue to try and push his cause in relation to the judiciary. He was certainly keen to give advice to anyone who wanted to listen. If one has a look at his first speech in this place, he knew what the role of the opposition was. He said:

Opposition members must carry out their duties with determination and vigour. It is our role not to offer negative criticism but to find alternative policies and make positive contributions to the debate in Parliament.

Tom took that role very seriously, but he was not just passionate about his role as Speaker and parliamentary reform, he was also passionate about his electorate. In an interview with the *Community and Real Estate News* in April 1983 he spoke about his passion for the Maribyrnong River. He made it quite clear that the cleaning up of the river had always been one of his pet projects dating back to the days when he used to swim in the river as a kid. He said:

Ever since I've been in Parliament it's been a goal of mine to bring it back to the splendour it did have many years ago, before it was used as a sewer by industry.

I've seen it go through the stages when we used to swim in it, and as it went into the war time and the ammunition plant poured muck into it.

It then sort of stagnated for a long time, to come back to what it is now.

He was very keen to ensure that the river was cleaned up to become an iconic river that would attract many families to its banks. I hope the Moonee Valley City Council will give serious consideration to doing something in Tom's honour down at the river. It has been cleaned up. It really is a great local icon and because of the way Tom treasured and did what he could as a local member to look after the river, it would be appropriate for the council to pay a tribute to him on the banks of the river.

Other speakers have talked about Tom's passion for change in his role as Speaker. In an interview in 1982 he spoke, as the Premier said, about losing his hair and not replacing it with a horsehair wig. He also spoke about the fact that he would like to see some dress reform in Parliament. He said that he would like to leave it to members' commonsense. He said:

I don't expect to see thongs and T-shirts, but if a member thinks that way, it's his own affair.

Particularly on hot days in this place I am sure Tom would be more than happy with the removal of jackets, but he would be pleased to know that we have not yet

got to the stage where we are debating in thongs and T-shirts!

Another area where Tom wanted to introduce reform was in relation to petitions to Parliament. He said he would like to give more emphasis to the petitions presented to Parliament each day of a parliamentary session. He said he still did not know what happened to the petitions once they had been presented. He said:

I believe they disappear in a chute down into the basement somewhere ...

There must be a bloody mountain of them. Perhaps they go down a pipe in the river and into the bay and disappear forever.

Perhaps that is exactly where they go. I am sure he would be keen on the planned reforms to be introduced in relation to the Parliament in 2003.

I conclude by saying that, as everyone has said, Tom was a great bloke. I was fortunate enough to attend his state funeral where former Premier John Cain spoke at length about Tom in very glowing terms. It is interesting that when Tom became Speaker he was spoken about in glowing terms in this place. He was so embarrassed by the way that people spoke about him that he said:

If speeches of honourable members continue this way, soon there will be nothing left to be said about me at my funeral.

Having been at his funeral I can say that there was plenty that was said about Tom. He will be sadly missed and I offer my condolences to members of his family, his wife, Vivienne, his three kids David, Mark and Penelope, and his brothers Geoff and Bruce.

Mr COOPER (Mornington) — I am one of the few people left standing in this place who served with Tom Edmunds. He was Speaker when I joined the house in 1985 and I served under his speakership between 1985 and 1988. I wrote down on a piece of paper underneath the details of this condolence motion the words 'tough but fair', and they are the first things that come to mind when I think of Tom Edmunds.

He was certainly tough as Speaker. He knew the rules, he knew precedent and he was prepared to cop nothing in the way of people standing up to him or flouting his authority. But at the same time he was very willing and keen to ensure that, regardless of their political persuasion, every member of this house got a fair go. As a very new and untried member in 1985 I can recall moving an opposition business motion on a Wednesday. We were having a good crack at the government. I was persuaded during that debate to

move an amendment to my own motion by somebody who should best remain nameless.

It was not a very good piece of advice. However, I did go ahead with it. One of the government backbenchers at the time — who later became a Speaker, not long after Tom Edmunds retired, so honourable members can draw their own conclusions as to who that was — picked up on the fact that there was a comma in the wrong position and therefore the way in which it read completely negated what I was trying to do. A vast debate ensued over this and I was a bit shaken by it all. I did not remember putting a comma in it, so I went to the clerks and they very happily acknowledged the fact that they had inserted the comma when they should not have, and they advised the Speaker accordingly. In terms of party politics it would have been very easy for the Speaker to have just agreed with the attack on that amendment, but he did not. He very quickly stepped in and ensured that the debate went ahead as amended and as intended by me. I was very appreciative of that: I thought it was a pretty decent indication of the man that he was prepared to give everybody a fair go and not let party politics rule his decision.

I also recall that when I first came to this place I sat in the middle row, even though I was a frontbencher. I had to sit in the middle row, just there, under the old seating configuration. I had not been in here all that long when one day Tom picked me up two or three times during question time for interjecting, which I know will come as a bit of a surprise to most members of the house — a total shock, as the Premier said. The Speaker told me to cease interjecting, so being somebody with a bit of initiative, I decided that the best way to interject was probably to do it by putting my hand that way so that he could not see my mouth moving. He said, 'I have warned you before, and it is no use putting your hand up. I have done all those tricks. I know them all'. It was done with good humour, but he shut me up.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr COOPER — A rare Speaker! Nevertheless he made sure that his authority triumphed. He was devoted to this Parliament. It came through loud and clear in virtually everything he did. He was devoted to its forms and its traditions, but he was not frightened to make changes if he believed that would assist Parliament to improve the way it conducted its business. That again is the sign of somebody who, while having deep roots in the traditions, is also forward looking. That was appreciated by all honourable members.

The last point I want to make is that those honourable members who are new to this place — and as I look

around, most are new to this place in comparison with me — should recall that the work of Tom Edmunds as Speaker will always be remembered as long as this chamber stands, more so than that of any other Speakers, because as they look up they will see three beautiful chandeliers, which are the result of the work of Tom Edmunds. He was the person who went overseas and ordered those chandeliers. They were installed to replace chandeliers that had been removed from the Parliament many years before. I am sure that all of us would agree that they are a beautiful addition to this chamber; they are the work of Tom Edmunds and he will be remembered for that.

I join with all honourable members in sending my condolences and deepest sympathy to Tom Edmunds's family.

Ms CAMPBELL (Pascoe Vale) — I support this condolence motion. Given the comments of the last speaker, it is clear that Tom is still giving guidance in this house, particularly to a colleague, the honourable member for Essendon. The new Speaker is continuing the grand tradition that he set for the Labor Party and for Essendon.

I pay special tribute tonight to the memory of the late Tom Edmunds, the honourable member for Pascoe Vale from 1985 to 1988, and prior to that the honourable member for Moonee Ponds and Ascot Vale. Before becoming the honourable member for Pascoe Vale Tom made a significant contribution serving the nation and the community, and particularly by being a great family man. That has been outlined by previous speakers and I do not wish to repeat it.

Tom was highly regarded by his constituents, particularly by those in the Pascoe Vale electorate, and also by ALP members who occasionally could be accused of being harsh judges. When I began work in the Pascoe Vale electorate I can honestly say that not once did I hear a negative word about Tom from ALP members. As I said, they are not people who tend to give praise willingly. To have only accolades spoken about a person shows the character of the man. That wholehearted endorsement of the work of Tom Edmunds was shared by many constituents in Pascoe Vale. Within the party and local political life accolades are rarely bestowed on people, and I too read the piece that the Attorney-General referred to and I too attended the funeral and thought, 'Well, Tom, there are plenty more accolades to come'. Perhaps it is a reflection on the way our world operates that it is rare that we actually compliment people while they are with us and tend to save the praises until it is a little too late.

It was at Tom's funeral that I saw the many dimensions of Tom's life. His active war service and associated work with Legacy was recognised in one of the many eloquent eulogies at that funeral. But what struck me, on leaving that service, was something that could not be spoken of in the eulogy. It was the very deep sadness and clear solidarity on the faces of those wearing the Legacy badge as we exited St John's Uniting Church. One can imagine, and it is my hope, that they will be with Vivienne and the family in so many ways in the years ahead.

Tom's enthusiasm for education and lifelong learning has been documented by previous speakers, evident through his work on the Essendon North State School committee and the Buckley Park High School council, and as a member of the Victorian Institute of Colleges Council and the Melbourne College of Printing and Graphic Arts Council. In his inaugural speech he also referred to the State Library, the National Museum, the National Gallery and the Institute of Applied Science.

After speaking at that time about the new arts centre he turned to speak about the then Institute of Applied Science, and his love of both education and lifelong learning was conveyed. There are some things that are timeless in this place: not only did he speak about the value of education and lifelong learning through the Institute of Applied Science, but he made a plea for more public funds to that end, saying:

Financial limitations are retarding the natural expansion of the institute.

He highlighted the school services that were provided by the institute and how they had:

... grown to become an indispensable auxiliary of science teaching in schools.

He was active in the broader community — today we might call it 'community benefit' — through a range of local organisations.

It was only after Tom had retired from this place that I met him, during an early experience of helping with the famous political pastime of campaigning and letter distribution, finding people who were willing to walk and do the letterboxing. I prided myself on having distributed every one of the letterboxing rounds. This man came back with his letterboxing bundle. My heart sank: I knew either that somebody was not well enough or that the bundle had been dropped at the wrong house or whatever. This man introduced himself as Tom Edmunds. I thought, 'Perhaps I have really blown it this time. This is a man who has served in Parliament for as long as he has and who has been Speaker. Perhaps this

is not the way he wants to contribute to the Labor Party'. How wrong I was.

Tom said to me, 'These have not been trifolded'. We had been in a great rush and had distributed the letterboxing piles without trifolding the sheets. He said, 'There is a folding machine in the office'. I said, 'Oh there probably is, somewhere down the back' — but little did I know at the time that Tom had been the manager of a printing works. He had taken it upon himself to come in and teach those of us who as yet had not used the folding machine how to use it. He set it up with impeccable precision so that the trifold was absolutely spot on, and I am sure forever more the people who received their letterboxing rounds were eternally grateful to Tom.

Mr Doyle interjected.

Ms CAMPBELL — We make sure our electorate is well informed on what the Labor Party does. That is why we win elections!

At the funeral we learnt in great detail how Tom's grand skills were put to good use within his family and beyond. We learnt how Tom was the consummate handyman who helped his younger brother, Bruce, with fixing cars and yachting and who helped his own children with their cars — and when he could not fix the cars he was prepared to tow them home.

Together with his wife, Vivienne, Tom built five homes, and any time people visited Tom's place they would be made very welcome. He talked about his family with pride. I was looking at one of the press clippings that has not been mentioned tonight. When Tom was elected in 1967 he was asked what his main interest was, to which he replied, 'I am a family man'. He listed his wife, Vivienne, and his children — David, 14, Mark, 11, and Penelope — as his main interest.

With electoral redistribution, Tom's family's current home was out of the Pascoe Vale electorate. After I had received preselection he spoke to me about the importance of working for your electorate but not disrupting your family.

He also spoke with great pride in the fact that, as the member for Essendon, he had been Speaker. Previous speakers have spoken about what Tom brought to the house in terms of changing traditions. It is interesting to note that we were summoned here tonight with pagers — some of us would not have envisaged pagers years ago when Tom first became Speaker.

At the funeral, much of the fun family time at Torquay was mentioned. Those of us who are parents I think

could identify with the fact that as Tom tried to improve the caravan down at Torquay he did not have to battle the weather in terms of construction but in terms of the surf. His children had to make a very difficult choice between surfing the great waves and helping dad finish additions to the caravan and annex. Vivienne told me, 'We did complete the annex'.

As I said, Tom was a devoted family man. To Vivienne, his treasured wife, to David, Mark and Penelope, his beloved children, and their families, especially his grandchildren, to his younger brothers Geoff and Bruce and their families, I extend not only my sympathies but also those of the Pascoe Vale electorate and ALP members. Tom rests in Williamstown, where his forebears landed in 1852.

Tom concluded his inaugural speech by saying:

During the period that I am privileged to serve in this institution, I trust I shall honour it by at all times representing the people of my electorate with honesty and sincerity and to the best of my ability, irrespective of political, social or religious attitudes, for better or for worse.

His family, friends and associates know Tom made the world a better place and the community and his family better. We are all indebted to him and, indeed, to his family, for sharing his life with us.

Mr SEITZ (Keilor) — I am one of the members on the Labor Party government side who has served under Tom as Speaker. I was elected in a by-election and Tom already had the position of Speaker. As previous speakers have mentioned, he was a person who came across as very authoritative. I was taken by the then Whip, who was Bunna Walsh, to meet the Speaker and be given the rules and told what has to take place, as I had missed out on the briefings for new members.

People used to like to make jokes, and I did go in trembling when I stood in front of him, because of his mannerism of just standing there. I knew him from party campaigns and knew the strong views he had on positions. However, once I got to know him in the Speaker's office it was a different story. He was very helpful and gave me a lot of good advice at the time. In particular, he said, 'Don't start thinking you're earning bigger money now, spend it and show off with it. You've still got to keep your lifestyle going. You've got your family to support, and if you have only one family member working, you will find that the money doesn't go that far', which, given that was back in 1982, was a fact.

He belonged to a group in this house known as the shellbacks. That group of MPs on the Labor side were very loyal to each other and they stuck up for each

other in the bar in particular, when things were happening. Some things did happen in the bar in those days including some people from the shellbacks. Tom, as the Speaker, also had the control of the bar as he was responsible for the precincts of the Parliament.

However, he was very good about accepting issues as they went along. I will always remember one thing he said to me, 'Don't forget: one day you're a rooster, next day you're a feather duster', particularly when it came to preselection time.

He gave that advice to a number of people. I will never forget how quickly things can change in life!

His sense of humour was very good. At that time with the Premier we used to have an annual staff and MPs Christmas break-up party in Queens Hall, which again was something Tom instigated, but it did not continue after his time as Speaker. It was up to the members to provide the entertainment and the speeches. Tom was a very good leader because everybody used to wait and listen to his after-dinner speeches, which were colourful and easy to listen to.

One that I remember vividly was about roosters, and it always seemed to come up around preselection time. Being an older gentleman who was being challenged, he said he would make a deal with the young rooster that he would have a head start and the young rooster could chase him. Of course at the end of the preselection Tom won the race with the head start that he had. Tom told the story in his usual very colourful and interesting way.

When it came to upholding the rules of the house, things were very different from the relaxed atmosphere we experience in this house today. He changed it simply by not having the wig or the formality that existed prior to 1982 when I used to come to Parliament as a visitor. Parliament became a more friendly and different place to operate in simply by his actions and the changes he brought about. Yes, we had long nights, and that also tested the stamina of the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees, who, of course, was one of his shellback colleagues by the name of Bill Fogarty. Bill did not need a microphone when he wanted to have order in the house; you could hear him right through the building! He certainly had a voice like a foghorn.

The gentlemen of that era when I served as a young member of Parliament had some very sensible ideas and some practical changes to make, and they had the opportunity to make them. The honourable member for Mornington spoke about the lights, but also the whole refurbishment of the chamber was part of the action that

took place under Tom Edmunds. Research was done, the rosettes that had been there were re-established, as were the lights that were mentioned. Tom had a good sense of history and an interest in the building itself, and in his position of Speaker he brought in many changes.

When he retired a number of his colleagues from the shellback group went with him. They were a delightful group, particularly when they used to come in with the retired members club. They always had plenty of advice to give to a newcomer, and I am sure they are up in heaven now and will be giving advice to the newcomers who will join them in years to come.

I offer my deepest sympathy and condolences to the Edmunds family. Tom Edmunds was a man our whole region was very proud of.

The SPEAKER — In concluding this debate may I say that I had the pleasure of having Tom not only as a constituent but as a branch member. Some terrific stories about Tom have been told in Essendon as well as in this house, some of which honourable members have heard tonight, but I would like to share with the house just two in relation to Tom. To a certain extent they both show one of his finest qualities, which was his tenacity and determination.

The house heard that Tom joined the Labor Party in 1952, but the Essendon West branch which he joined was not his first choice. He in fact rang up the branch in his area. Of course 1952 was the time of the start of the split in the Labor Party and around Essendon, particularly at St Monica's and St Theresa's, feelings were fairly high.

So Tom rang up the appropriate secretary of his local branch and then engaged in a lengthy discussion with this gentleman that covered a whole range of areas of Tom's life, including where he went to school, where he worked and his views on a number of subjects. After some time the secretary said to Tom, 'I am terribly sorry, Tom, you can't join this branch. It's full'.

All honourable members involved in political parties know that there is no such thing as a full branch. So that is how Tom ended up in the West Essendon branch. He obviously had a different view on the Labor Party and Democratic Labor Party split.

Another more recent story is associated with me. Once again it shows Tom's spirit, in that he would never be defeated. The story relates to events during the 1996 election. As honourable members will remember, the federal election was at the beginning of March. Being the good branch member he was, Tom had a sign for

Kelvin Thompson, his federal Labor candidate, outside his house in Prince Street. He became increasingly annoyed that someone kept knocking the sign over, so he went to greater lengths to try and get the sign to stay in the ground.

As honourable members will recall, about three weeks later we had a state election. Once again Tom very kindly put a sign for me in his front garden. He was quite incensed when the same thing happened. Not to be defeated, he took himself off to the local hardware shop and bought a very long stake and a quantity of barbed wire. He put my sign on top of the stake and covered it with barbed wire. Needless to say, Tom won again.

Both those stories say lots of things about Tom that are worth while. As I said, he will be very warmly remembered around Essendon by many people who worked with him. He was always there to help. Even after he had been made Speaker, the level of the task asked of him did not matter. He was ready to do anything to assist the party and the people. I have many fond memories of the great advice he gave me and the many pleasurable conversations we had together.

On behalf of the house I extend my condolences to his wife, Vivienne, and the family. I have no doubt that stories about Tom will be passed around this Parliament for many years to come.

Motions agreed to in silence, honourable members showing unanimous agreement by standing in their places.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr BRACKS (Premier) — I move:

That, as a further mark of respect to the memory of the late Honourable Vincent Patrick Heffernan, OAM, and the late Honourable Cyril Thomas Edmunds, AM, the house now adjourn until tomorrow at 9.30 a.m.

Motion agreed to.

House adjourned 9.18 p.m.

