

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
FIFTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION**

Tuesday, 29 July 2008

(Extract from book 10)

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Heads of parliamentary departments

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

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Parliamentary Services — Secretary: Dr S. O'Kane

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FIFTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION

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Leane, Mr Shaun Leo	Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Vogels, Mr John Adrian	Western Victoria	LP

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TUESDAY, 29 JULY 2008

CONDOLENCES

Hon. Lindsay Hamilton Simpson Thompson,

AO, CMG 2739

ADJOURNMENT 2752

Tuesday, 29 July 2008

The PRESIDENT (Hon. R. F. Smith) took the chair at 2.05 p.m. and read the prayer.

CONDOLENCES

**Hon. Lindsay Hamilton Simpson Thompson,
AO, CMG**

Mr LENDERS (Treasurer) — I move:

That this house expresses its sincere sorrow at the death on 16 July 2008 of the Honourable Lindsay Hamilton Simpson Thompson, AO, CMG, and places on record its acknowledgement of the valuable services rendered by him to the Parliament and the people of Victoria as a member of the Legislative Council for Higinbotham Province from 1955 to 1967 and Monash Province from 1967 to 1970, a member of the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Malvern from 1970 to 1982, Minister without Portfolio from 1958 to 1961, Minister of Housing and Minister of Forests from 1961 to 1967, Minister of Education from 1967 to 1979, Deputy Premier from 1972 to 1981, Chief Secretary in 1980, Minister for Police and Emergency Services from 1979 to 1981, Treasurer from 1979 to 1982, and Premier of Victoria from 1981 to 1982.

I support the motion. In doing so I note the extraordinary amount of service rendered by Lindsay Thompson through his duties in the Parliament of Victoria. Last Thursday I had the privilege, along with about 1000 other people, of being at the memorial service at St Paul's Cathedral. Those 1000 people were there because they respected him, loved him, or both. They were there to celebrate the life of an extraordinary man. His eulogy was delivered by five people — a former Prime Minister, a former federal Treasurer, a former Premier, and Lindsay Thompson's two sons. That eulogy summed up the life of an extraordinary man. Terms like 'honourable', 'decent', 'loyal', and 'committed' were used frequently by those giving the eulogies and by others at the cathedral and by the writers of obituary pieces in the media in the last week or so.

Lindsay Thompson lived from 15 October 1923 to 16 July 2008. You can look at his life in three fairly distinct chapters. The first was as a young man with his war service. That is from a generation when it was common to talk about people's war service. Now the generation when so many people were involved in World War II has passed; he was one of the last of those. As part of the eulogy about the young man and his war service, we heard of his determination and grit: when all his mates were playing two-up, he was in his tent learning Latin. He was a very dedicated man.

We also heard about the second part of his life: his time as a member of Parliament. I will touch on that in more detail shortly.

We also heard of the third part of his life: as a respected community leader. In the order of service at the cathedral we saw a list of organisations that Lindsay Thompson had dedicated the last two decades of his life to. It was an extraordinary list of community service, of organisations that he was interested in, either as a member or as patron. Two of them were present in the cathedral: the Australian Children's Choir sang and the Caulfield Grammar School band played at the service.

We also had the underpinning of him as a family man. At the funeral the presence of his wife, his three children and seven grandchildren was very moving for all of us who saw it.

As a member for the same electoral area as Lindsay Thompson, I would like to acknowledge the work he did as a member for Higinbotham Province and Monash Province in this house and as the member for Malvern in the Assembly. I also acknowledge that he lived in Southern Metropolitan Region and up to his last days was an active member of the Ewing Memorial Uniting Church in the electorate.

I would like to focus mostly on Lindsay Thompson's achievements as a parliamentarian. At the cathedral, his son David said that when Lindsay was preselected for the Higinbotham by-election, it was, if I remember correctly, his sixth attempt at preselection. Many of us in this chamber would admire the man's tenacity: he tried and tried again. He succeeded on the sixth attempt and was preselected for Higinbotham, and went on to serve in the state Parliament for 27 years.

It is extraordinary that for 26 of those 27 years Lindsay Thompson attended a cabinet meeting every Monday — that is a record — first as cabinet secretary and then in the various ministerial portfolios he had. The accumulated knowledge that he built up over that period of time in his contribution is something that would be unparalleled. He spent 2 years in this house as cabinet secretary, then 12 years as a minister, including 8 years as the Deputy Leader of the Government in this house. He went on to spend another 12 years as a minister in the Legislative Assembly, including 9 years as the Deputy Premier to former Premier Dick Hamer, and the last year, or 299 days thereof, as the Premier of Victoria.

All of us when reflecting on the life of someone who has had such a distinguished public career will focus on particular areas. I will focus on the portfolios I have

held that have formerly been held by Lindsay Thompson. He spent three years as the Treasurer of Victoria. When Dick Hamer did his cabinet reshuffle after the 1979 election it was the first time in decades that the Premier was not also the Treasurer. Lindsay Thompson was the last chief secretary of this state — that old office that ultimately was absorbed into the police and emergency services portfolio. He was also minister responsible for Aboriginal affairs, Minister of Housing and Minister of Forests. But Lindsay Thompson's main focus was his time as Minister of Education. It is not surprising that he had a passion for education: he was the son of teachers and became a teacher himself. He spent 12 years — 4390 days — in that portfolio and was the longest continuously serving education minister in this state. The length of that service was exceeded, in the 19th century, only by Sir Alexander Peacock, who served six separate terms to set a longer record.

Lindsay Thompson's contribution to education extended over 12 years. In that period of time he built an extraordinary number of schools. He also presided over changes to the curriculum in Victorian education. It is interesting and probably slightly ironic that the school that Lindsay Thompson had the greatest affection for, Caulfield Grammar School, has named a building after him and called it the Lindsay Thompson centre. That is abbreviated to LTC. Anybody who has followed education matters closely and saw all those light timber construction buildings erected during Lindsay Thompson's period as Minister of Education knows that there is an irony in the fact that the one building named after Lindsay Thompson is called the LTC. But his commitment to education was unequivocal and was probably highlighted most significantly by his heroic acts at Wooreen and Faraday where he, as education minister, rose to the occasion and, with a sense of obligation to the students in his care, went out to deliver either the ransom note or the ransom money or to be the decoy on those two occasions.

All of us in public life would ask ourselves, 'Could I have done that?'. I imagine that he would be one of the few ministers in the history of this state who did anything like that. Whether others would do it or not is something that only individuals know when they are tested, but he was tested on two occasions. I am not fond of quoting Jeff Kennett, but during the funeral service in the cathedral he said that Lindsay Thompson probably did not see his actions as heroic at all; he probably just saw them as his duty as a minister to the students in his care.

Lindsay Thompson led a very fulfilling life. He was a great Victorian and set records that probably will not be matched by any other Victorian. I cannot imagine in this era that a person would ever again serve as a member of cabinet for 26 continuous years. He left a strong legacy for the state. He had a passion for education.

On Thursday 1000 people at the cathedral and all others who have met Lindsay Thompson could not have been more moved by the humility of the man, the honour of the man, the contribution of the man and his loyalty to his cause and to the people around him.

The state of Victoria will miss him. On behalf of the government I extend my condolences to his wife Joan, his children, including Murray — who is obviously known to all of us in this house — David and Heather and his seven grandchildren. It was a life well lived, and Lindsay Thompson will be missed.

Mr D. DAVIS (Southern Metropolitan) — I, too, wish to associate myself on behalf of the opposition, and the Liberal Party in particular, with the condolence motion today. The late Honourable Lindsay Hamilton Simpson Thompson was a great man. Many of us knew him; some of us knew him very well; and, as the Leader of the Government has pointed out, members representing Southern Metropolitan Region — the region that covers the area he represented in Parliament, including the federal and state electorates of Higinbotham, Monash and later Malvern — can see his legacy in many places across the electorate.

It is important to note that he was born in October 1923 and died just this July. The funeral that people attended last week was a remarkable event. I am not sure of the exact number, but well over 1000 people attended. It is important to place on record the wonderful contributions that were made at his funeral not only by Murray and David Thompson but by former Prime Minister John Howard; former federal Treasurer Peter Costello; and former Premier of Victoria, Jeff Kennett. Through those contributions the decency of Lindsay Thompson came through — his huge contribution to Victoria and Australia. He had a national profile and a national level of support: the comments of Robert Gordon Menzies referred to at various points in Lindsay's autobiography and other references there indicate the strong links that Lindsay had nationally as well as around this state.

He pointed to a team game in politics and also to living life by example. The huge generosity that he operated on — at a family level, at a community level and in political life — is a model for many people. His loyalty

to people, to his comrades and to his counterparts in Parliament was remarkable, and certainly the many I have spoken to who served with Lindsay back that up very strongly indeed.

As the Leader of the Government pointed out, many members know Murray Thompson, the member for Sandringham in the Assembly, and are very respectful of his contribution. In Murray we can see many traits of Lindsay's personality — the humility, the decency and the commitment. Murray's contribution at the funeral, along with that of his brother David, was something the community was very respectful of; indeed, it was very moving.

Lindsay Thompson's contribution both to Caulfield Grammar School and to education was remarkable. As I reviewed the large pile of material about his life I was struck by the fact that he was education minister from 1967 to 1979 and, on a quiet personal reflection, I noted that that was precisely the period of time when I was at school. It is a remarkable achievement for somebody to be an education minister for such a long period; again through his work in that role you can see the legacy around the state. That period was one of great growth in Victoria's population, presenting great challenges in dealing with that population growth.

The number of schools that needed to be built around the state and the need for educational facilities was obviously a great challenge for the government financially but also logistically for Lindsay Thompson as education minister. I was reflecting with Mr Kavanagh earlier today that I remember one class that I was a member of had 65 students in it — Croydon West, for those who might know it. The school was literally being built as the population in the area grew around it. That is a very typical example of the challenges faced then. There is probably much from the example that Lindsay Thompson set at the time that we, as a community, can learn about infrastructure and the need to build for the future in a constructive way.

I want to pay tribute, though, to Lindsay's family — to Joan — and I think it is worth quoting some words from page 236 of his autobiography, where he says of political life in the 'Premiership and farewell' chapter:

I could not have successfully endured the political storms and battles of the years without Joan's tolerance and unfailingly loyal support. She had to contend with my long and irregular hours, interrupted family life, constant ringing of the telephone and the pandemonium of election times when our house occasionally resembled Flinders Street railway station during the peak hour.

You can feel Lindsay Thompson's turn of phrase in this:

I also owe a debt of gratitude to my children, Heather (a secondary school teacher and honours graduate in Russian), Murray (a lawyer and former Richmond footballer), and David (a lawyer and the Mr Placid in the family team). I would not want it to be thought that they did not play a big part in my life, although I have hardly mentioned them in this book. Understandably, they wanted to live their ... lives free from the spotlight of publicity. I have greatly valued through the years their affection, interest and loyal support.

He went on in that chapter with reflections about political life and how it changed over the period, and the Leader of the Government referred to some of those changes. But his time in this Parliament and in the Victorian community was a time of growth, a time when the Liberal Party was very strong and very much in the ascendant. He was both a president of the Young Liberals, in 1947, and a secretary of the Kew branch, and then as he came into Parliament with the support of Robert Gordon Menzies he went quickly into the cabinet and held that large variety of posts that covered the broad spectrum of government activity.

His personal bravery has also been referred to widely in the community. Wooreen and Faraday are extraordinary examples of somebody in public life being prepared to put their life on the line for the public good. That level of bravery and that deep personal conviction about doing the right thing are things that Lindsay will be remembered for forever.

I certainly greatly regret his passing. I want to place on record my personal condolences to his widow, Joan, and to his three children, Murray, David and Heather, and note the Liberal Party's enormous debt for the work that Lindsay did over those many years.

Mr HALL (Eastern Victoria) — The Nationals join with members of the government, members of the opposition and, I am sure, members of other parties in this chamber in expressing our sincere sorrow on the passing of Lindsay Thompson.

Lindsay resigned from Parliament in 1982. That preceded my entering this chamber, so I did not have the opportunity to serve the people of Victoria concurrently with Lindsay Thompson, nor did I have the opportunity to meet him and understand him very well; I met him in passing on a number of occasions. But you cannot help but be impressed by the great number of stories about and tributes given for Lindsay Thompson, particularly over the last several weeks.

To have served in this Parliament for 28 years is certainly a significant achievement. I do not know if any of us will ever reach that record. But Lindsay did it, and he did it in a variety of ways. For 12 of those years he was the Minister of Education and, as the Leader of

the Government has expressed, that is the longest term of any education minister in Victoria's history. He also held a number of other ministries and portfolios. He was Treasurer for a period of time, Deputy Premier between 1972 and 1981, and of course Premier for a short time spanning the years 1981 and 1982. He served the Parliament and the people of Victoria extremely well in his capacity as a member of this Parliament for 28 years.

Lindsay Thompson also served the people of Australia by joining the Australian Imperial Force in World War II, and served in New Guinea in that capacity. It has been mentioned that he served the community as a teacher prior to entering Parliament and that he was involved in a plethora of community organisations before, during and after his time as a member of Parliament. His contribution was made in a great number of areas.

Lindsay Thompson was passionate about his sport. As well as being a very competent sportsman himself he served for periods of time as a trustee of the Melbourne Cricket Ground and as a trustee of the National Tennis Centre. At one time he was president of the Royal Life Saving Society. He was also a patron of the Victorian Cricket Association and a passionate supporter of the Richmond Football Club. I cannot help but say that he was perhaps a very proud father when his son, Murray, ran out onto the MCG in the Tigers' colours. I am sure that was a day which Murray and his father remembered very well indeed. Talking about being a proud father, he was also named Victorian Father of the Year in 1970. Lindsay Thompson was involved in a great and fulsome life of different activities.

As I said, much has been written and said about Lindsay Thompson since his passing. I have devoured the articles in the newspapers with a great deal of interest because this man has certainly done more than any of us will achieve in our lifetimes. His contribution to all aspects of the community and to public and family life has been very wholesome and positive. He has been described as honest, determined, courageous, tough, compassionate and diligent and as possessing a formidable memory and sense of humour, but the attribute ascribed to Lindsay Thompson which I think was strongest was that of humility. Despite all he achieved in life, he remained a very humble person. On those few occasions when I met him it came through to me very strongly that even though he had achieved all those amazing feats in life he was still a very humble person. He would call himself an ordinary person. I think he was extraordinary.

Lindsay's record speaks for itself. I have no doubt that his family and the people of Victoria are the beneficiaries of all that he accomplished during his lifetime. So it is that on behalf of The Nationals I express our sincere condolences to his wife, Joan, their children, Heather, Murray and David and Lindsay's extended family and friends.

Hon. T. C. THEOPHANOUS (Minister for Industry and Trade) — I also want to make some comments and associate myself with this motion. Lindsay Thompson was not somebody I served in Parliament with. I came into Parliament in 1988, but of course his legacy was clearly part of the milieu of Parliament that I knew from 1988 onwards, so in that regard I think I am like Mr Hall, who did not have direct experience of contact with him as a member of Parliament here but who certainly knew him in other contexts.

His record has been outlined by both the Leader of the Government and the Leader of the Opposition. I do not want to add very much to that except to say that it is an extraordinary record of achievement and one which many of us here will never be able to emulate.

The other thing I want to say is that I know his son Murray quite well. Murray is somebody with whom I have had a relationship particularly since he is involved in the Greek community through his marriage and in a variety of other ways as well. Despite what people outside might think, in this house and in this chamber we are capable of having friendships that go across the chamber. I think that is a good thing and it adds to the way in which this Parliament operates.

I am pleased to be able to say that I have a great deal of regard for the achievements of Lindsay Thompson, but the thing that struck me most about him was his intellect and his memory. He had an incredible intellect. I did not manage to get to Lindsay Thompson's funeral because I was overseas but I did go to Rupert Hamer's funeral, and the thing that struck me more than anything else was the speech given by Lindsay Thompson. For anyone who was there it was just extraordinary because here he was, this frail person — I think he had already had an accident of some description, and he looked fairly frail — who got up and made a speech, without any notes whatsoever, in which he recounted so much detail and so many facts in such an articulate way. You just could not imagine that somebody in their 80s would be able to do that.

I certainly hope that I am even a fraction of the way towards being like that when I eventually reach my 80s — and I hope I do. That was the thing he took

everywhere and in the speeches he gave and after his service in Parliament in whatever forum; that intellect, that memory and that capacity to put together a set of arguments just came through.

In that sense Lindsay Thompson represented the best traditions of this place as well because the best traditions of this house are that people are able to get up and speak from the heart — to say what they think and do so without just reading from prepared notes. He represented that tradition in the most dramatic way that I have seen of anyone and for that we should all be grateful, as well as for his major contribution.

I want to put on record my commiserations to the family, to his wife, Joan, to their children and to all other members of their family.

Ms LOVELL (Northern Victoria) — It is an honour to rise to speak in support of this motion and to pay respect to a former Premier and a great Liberal leader, Lindsay Thompson. The state funeral for Lindsay Thompson was held last Thursday at St Paul's Cathedral. Those of us who attended had the opportunity to reflect on what was an extraordinary life. In fact it was an extraordinary service to celebrate what was a truly extraordinary life. The life of Lindsay Thompson has been well documented and those who have spoken before me have outlined that life. I will not go into all the details again but I wish to speak on a couple of points that are of particular significance to me.

Lindsay Thompson was the education minister from 1967 to 1979, a period that covered almost the entire span of my own education years. This was a period of great growth in Victoria and also of great investment in education. Lindsay oversaw this growth and many reforms to the education system in Victoria. It was during this period that I first met Lindsay when he opened a new art wing at the primary school that I attended. I was asked to respond to the minister on behalf of the students. In later years I would often joke with Lindsay that that was my first ever political speech.

There are events that happen in your childhood that perhaps have no personal connection to you but leave an indelible impression on your memory. For me three events stand out in my mind. The first of those was the abduction of Linda Stillwell from St Kilda beach in 1968, another was the abduction of Eloise Worledge from her family home in 1976, and the third was the Faraday kidnappings in 1972. All of those things stand out in my mind because they involved places where I felt relatively safe: at the beach, at home in my bed and

also at school. Those events also made me reflect on why my parents were so protective of their three children when at the beach or even in getting us to school and returning home.

In the case of the Faraday kidnappings, when the men invaded their school those children were in a place where you would expect them to be safe. At the time of those kidnappings I was unaware that in future years I would have links to some of those children who were kidnapped on that day through friends of mine who are siblings of the children and also cousins of some of the six little girls who were abducted together with their teacher, Mary Gibbs. I was also unaware that in future years I would go on to represent the people of Faraday in this Parliament. It is an honour to represent those people here today and to express to the Thompson family their great gratitude for the role that Lindsay Thompson played in ending the kidnapping of the children from the Faraday School. Lindsay offered himself as the courier to deliver the \$1 million ransom demanded by the kidnappers. He attended an early morning rendezvous in Woodend which was aborted by the kidnappers, who did not turn up to pick up the ransom.

There was a happy ending in that Mary Gibbs was able to kick a panel out of the van that she and the children were enclosed in, and they were able to escape to safety. Nevertheless, they have never forgotten the contribution that Lindsay made and the fact that he put his own life on the line to try and save the life of Mary Gibbs and the six little girls from the Faraday school.

Lindsay was to go on and offer himself in exchange for a victim a second time in another kidnapping committed by the same person at a school in Gippsland. That unprecedented act of great bravery by a minister in this state is something that will never be forgotten. It is an honour for those of us in this chamber who serve as Liberals to follow in the footsteps of Lindsay Thompson. I extend my heartfelt sympathy to Joan, Heather, David, Murray and their families at this time of great sadness for them.

Ms PENNICUIK (Southern Metropolitan) — I would like to express on behalf of the Greens our condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of the late Honourable Lindsay Thompson. None of us knew him personally. I remember him as the education minister. In particular the events that Ms Lovell has just been referring to — the kidnappings — stick in my mind. As a teenager I followed those events, as I think most Victorians did, and it is what I remember Lindsay Thompson for, as well as for his time as Premier.

Most people have said that Mr Thompson came across as a fundamentally decent, humble, compassionate and capable person. His contribution during the war years as a parliamentarian and, as Mr Hall said, with community groups both before and while he was in Parliament and after his parliamentary life, cannot fail to impress people about his commitment to public life and public service. With those few words, the Greens express our condolences to his family, friends and colleagues.

Mr PAKULA (Western Metropolitan) — I rise to associate myself with this condolence motion. I did not know and never met Mr Thompson. I certainly did not have the opportunity to run across him in party forums as members of the opposition did, but I want to speak briefly on this motion to honour the contribution he made to his party, to the governments he served in, to this Parliament and to the state of Victoria. I think anybody who serves 27 years in this Parliament and who serves in cabinet for as long as he did, and particularly who fills the role of Premier, deserves the recognition and respect of all of us.

As members of most parliaments in this country know, politician-bashing is a bit of a sport in Victoria and Australia. A lot of fine individuals are probably discouraged from participating in public life, particularly when institutions that are charged with the responsibility of informing the public do so much to reinforce public prejudices about politics and its practitioners. I choose to maintain my belief that politics is a worthwhile calling, which is fundamentally undertaken by people who want to improve the society they live in and to improve the amenity of the community that they serve.

In the process of doing that, politicians offer up their reputations, they offer up their privacy and, as Mr David Davis read from Mr Thompson's autobiography, they offer up their time with their families and their employment security. Certainly in Lindsay Thompson's case, they also offer up their personal safety, as he demonstrated at Faraday. If I am right about politics still being a worthwhile cause, then Lindsay Thompson stands as a Titan in the history of this state.

He served 15 years in the upper house as member for both Higinbotham and Monash provinces; 12 years in the Assembly as the member for Malvern; 24 years in cabinet, which is a remarkable achievement; and, as has already been spoken of, a year or so as Premier. At the end of his time as Premier, having served 27 years in Parliament and with a government that had been in office for 27 years of unbroken rule, he had to face an

election against a popular opposition leader. It was a monumental task by anybody's measure.

It is customary for politicians who have passed on to be eulogised in public and for people to say less generous things about them in private. One of the things that struck me about the passing of Lindsay Thompson is that I have not heard a bad word spoken about him by anybody in any forum. To have served 27 years in Parliament — 27 years in the political bear pit — with all the attendant difficulties and rivalries that that can create is a remarkable achievement and suggests he must have been an exceedingly fine individual. With those few words, I want to add my condolences to his wife, Joan; his children, Murray, David and Heather; and to all his family.

Mr P. DAVIS (Eastern Victoria) — I feel humbled to have the opportunity to speak to this condolence motion, because Lindsay Thompson was not just an outstanding public figure in this state but clearly one of the most amazing human beings that the state has had the privilege of having serve in any public office. It goes almost without saying that his record as a parliamentarian, as a minister of the Crown, and in the community work he undertook both before and after his parliamentary career stand as a public testament to him, as do the media reports of his personal courage in relation to Faraday and Wooreen.

Members of Parliament and people in public office are not very often really put to the test of what sort of character they have. It is quite easy for members of Parliament to go through a career without having to confront their own inner self and decide absolutely what it is they choose to do with a very tough issue. Sometimes we think it is tough deciding which way we are going to vote in the party room! In this example, if you like, Lindsay Thompson had to deal with what was potentially a tragedy and eventually came through that and received plaudits publicly.

I do not think, however, that those public acknowledgements of his personal courage meant a great deal to him; it was just a part of his character that he would put himself in harm's way, because he saw that as his public duty. He had committed himself to a life of public service. I think any member of Parliament or indeed any aspiring candidate seeking public office could study Lindsay Thompson's life as a great example and a model to follow.

I do not want to dwell on the public side of Lindsay Thompson. I feel privileged to have known him — not well, in the sense that I did not serve in the Parliament concurrently with Lindsay, but I was active in the

Liberal Party during the time that Lindsay was in public office. Indeed I first met him when I was active in the Young Liberals, commencing in 1975. I came into closer contact with him as a tyro candidate for Gippsland East in 1979; I think I must have still been at school! Lindsay was very generous with his time, with his advice and with the inevitable requirement of a candidate — the picture opportunity.

I have a very small clippings file. It is not something I dwell on very much at all, but probably the most prominent photograph I have in that very small file is of Lindsay Thompson, because I regard him in a sense as the model that one should have for a life in public service.

Lindsay was an amazing man who wanted to contribute to the community. Well after he retired from Parliament he was still contributing politically in the general and wider community but he was also supporting the Liberal Party where he could. He made himself available to support the 2002 election campaign. In that role he was approached and accepted an invitation to come to a function at Metung in East Gippsland. This caused great consternation, I have to say, because we had presumed that as a former Premier he was entitled to have a car and driver to bring him down to Metung and deliver him back home safely, but he was insistent that he drive himself. I can assure you that it was a delight to see him arrive at the function in Metung — on a fairly wintry night, as I recall.

Lindsay was in no less fine form making a speech to the obviously interested gathering than he was at the previously mentioned state funeral for Dick Hamer. He made an erudite contribution and entertained the gathering. He was not only able to do that but in fact outlasted nearly everybody at the function and he was, if not the last to leave, nearly the last to leave on the occasion. He was accompanied by Joan, who was not just the great strength in the family while he was in public office but certainly his tower of strength after he left the Parliament.

I want to give a very personal anecdote, because sometimes we may have suspected that Lindsay's memory was a really good act. I always wondered how he did it. I used to think, 'Does he just sit at home at night and read tables of figures or does he prepare his speech thoroughly and commit to memory the detailed facts?'. I have to say I can testify that this was no trick. It was a personal quality that I think most of us here would kill for! Lindsay was able to recall conversations that had been had decades before.

On that occasion in 2002 at Metung in conversation with my wife, whom he met on that occasion for the first time, he was able to recall in 1958 visiting her uncle, Ray Archibald, who was then the Liberal candidate for the seat of Gippsland East, staying at Ray's farm at Meerlieu and subsequently opening the Wuk Wuk Bridge. To pronounce that properly without embarrassment is a challenge in itself! He recalled my wife as a very young primary school student, one in a school of seven pupils, as she would have then been, marching across the Wuk Wuk Bridge, as the Fernbank Primary School students were obliged to do as part of the opening ceremony. He could recall all that detail some 24 years on. That is a remarkable feat of memory, and it signifies to me that not only did Lindsay have great personal courage, integrity and intellect, but he had a gift which served him incredibly well. He did not have to resort to political tricks to win an argument; he could simply argue his case on its merits.

The last time I had a conversation with Lindsay was in 2005, and it was purely by chance. My family was having lunch at a restaurant in the city and Lindsay was having lunch with Joan at a nearby table. He indicated that he would like to speak to me, and we ended up having a quite long conversation. What was interesting was his understanding of exactly where contemporary politics were in Australia, Victoria and the Liberal Party and his continuing absolute engagement with public life.

It is inevitable that somebody who has served a busy life, a life full of activity, and who has been in contact with so many people over the years, will be mourned. It is inevitable that we will all die. Today should not be one of mourning: we should be here today simply celebrating what was a wonderful life and a wonderful career. I doubt that I will ever know anybody in public life who has made a bigger impact, certainly on me, than Lindsay Thompson.

I certainly join members of this house who have spoken on this condolence motion. I join them in passing on to the Thompson family my concern at how they will all feel at this time. I know there will be mixed emotions in celebrating a wonderful life and mourning the loss of a loved one; but to Joan, to Murray, to David, to Heather, and Lindsay's grandchildren, I pass on my condolences.

I particularly feel strongly about the fact that I have served with Murray Thompson, the member for Sandringham in the Assembly, for all the years that he and I have been in Parliament. We both came to this place together. Along with my colleague Bruce Atkinson, who came in at the same election in 1992, I

have had the privilege of understanding a little of Lindsay through Murray. It is a privilege indeed to have that perspective. I therefore particularly want to say to Murray that this is a very sad time — but he should be proud of a great Australian.

Mrs COOTE (Southern Metropolitan) — It is not only with sadness but also with honour that I speak on this condolence motion for the late Honourable Lindsay Thompson. To be regarded as a gentleman and a scholar is an extraordinary achievement. But in addition to being a gentleman and a scholar and highly regarded, to be at the same time a politician is almost unheard of.

Lindsay Thompson achieved all three of these criteria, which is a truly remarkable achievement. The 1000 mourners at Lindsay's state funeral last week was a tangible recognition of the respect and regard that Lindsay had achieved in his life, and the quality and calibre of the contributions today in this condolence motion reinforces that Lindsay, the politician, was seen and respected as a scholar and a gentleman.

As others have said, the more than 1000 mourners at the state funeral included the current Premier and past premiers Steve Bracks, Jeff Kennett, Joan Kirner and John Cain. There were former prime ministers John Howard and Malcolm Fraser, former federal Treasurer Peter Costello, a former Governor-General and a former state Governor.

There was a multitude of representatives from all of Lindsay's interests. Lindsay's son, our colleague Murray in the Assembly, and his brother David gave wonderful tributes to their father. A state funeral is a very difficult balance to achieve. You have a family that is mourning and grieving, yet you have a public grouping that wants to acknowledge a very great man. I think they got the balance right at that state funeral. It was a wonderful mix between statesmanship and family, and it was a very dignified state funeral which was an honour to Lindsay. It was a very Lindsay-type funeral.

Lindsay had a wonderful family who enabled us to share in their personal mourning and their personal grief by allowing Lindsay to have a state funeral at which all of us could pay our respects. His grandchildren spoke, and they all spoke extremely well. It is a tribute to Lindsay, to Joan and their children that their grandchildren felt able to get up and speak on that day. But I would especially like to mention Alithea Thompson, his granddaughter. She read poignantly from the Revelation of John: her clear, beautiful voice reading out one of Lindsay's favourite readings rang through the packed St Paul's Cathedral.

As the last Liberal Party member for the then Monash Province, Lindsay also being a former member for Monash Province, we had a special bond because he took me under his wing, as he had done with so many politicians, when I first entered Parliament.

I, too, was a recipient of many of those letters which we heard about at the state funeral. I am certain many members of this chamber would have received similar letters — always with a sense of humour, always with a kick in the tail but always very poignant and up to date as well.

I was fortunate also to have Lindsay and Joan living in my electorate; I saw them both frequently at a huge variety of local events. It is noteworthy that at almost 84 years of age Lindsay was still locally involved with the following organisations: Caulfield Grammar School, the Ewing Memorial Church, the Australian Girls' Choir, the Malvern Rotary Club, the English-Speaking Union, the East Malvern RSL and the Prahran Cricket Club. These were the local organisations he continued to support on a regular basis; in addition to those in many other areas and in which he had many interests.

The last time I saw Lindsay was at Melbourne High School. We were there at the unveiling of a statue and the launch of a book on Brigadier Langley, who in fact had employed Lindsay at Melbourne High School as a teacher. Lindsay was very frail on the night and although he was not there in an official capacity, he was recognised and received a standing ovation, which was long and loud. It was really nice for him to feel that the Melbourne High community recognised his achievements and his contribution to that school.

Much has been said about Lindsay's sense of humour, and it was a hallmark of the man. He was a very amusing speaker. I would like to relate an example of that. We had a Liberal Party fundraiser — we have many Liberal Party fundraisers! — which Lindsay Thompson attended not long after he and Joan had been in that horrendous car smash on their way to Queensland. The evening progressed, he was a great speaker, and then it was time to draw the raffle — we always have a raffle at a Liberal Party fundraising event! Lindsay went on with the preamble, put in his hand to pull out the first ticket and said, 'Aha, this is wonderful: some very lucky person has won the first prize. The good news is the first prize is a trip to Noosa. The bad news is I am driving!'. He was very amusing. His humility and self-deprecation were very amusing, and caused great hilarity on the night.

In conclusion, in the aggressive, media-driven world of today's politics we may forget that being a politician is a noble profession. We were reminded by Lindsay Thompson that we as politicians can indeed be noble in this profession. All of us should learn from his example and let this be his parliamentary legacy. My condolences to Joan, Murray, David, Heather, Theana and his grandchildren.

Mr KAVANAGH (Western Victoria) — I would like to offer my condolences and also those of the Democratic Labor Party to the family and friends of the late Honourable Lindsay Thompson. I never had the opportunity to meet Mr Thompson but I wish I had. It was clear to me, however, as an observer of politics over a long period that Mr Thompson was a decent, kind, honourable and keenly intelligent man. Indeed that has been confirmed in recent weeks by everybody who knew him. I understand that the former Prime Minister, Mr Howard, said at his funeral that Mr Thompson never said a bad word about anybody. What a great tribute that is to anyone.

Mr Thompson's political career was an extraordinary one. He made huge contributions to Victoria over a very long period. His bravery was spectacularly demonstrated in the Faraday kidnapping case. However, something that other members have perhaps not emphasised but which strikes me as very important is Mr Thompson's contribution to the defence of this country in the Second World War, in its direst hour of need.

In this country, which has many great stories making up its history, it seemed to me for a long time that the greatest one was the story of young men and boys pushing the Japanese empire back over the Owen Stanley ranges in New Guinea and saving this country from a brutal invasion. The record of Mr Thompson shows that when he was 18 years old he went to New Guinea and served there for three years. Even without all of those extraordinary achievements in politics, it seems to me that this would well justify calling Mr Thompson a hero.

I offer condolences to the friends and family of Mr Thompson, particularly to his son, Murray.

Mr FINN (Western Metropolitan) — I wish to very strongly support the motion of condolence before the house for the Honourable Lindsay Thompson. I did not meet Lindsay Thompson until some years after he left public office but that in no way diminished the impression that he made on me.

It might seem a little odd in this day and age that somebody would commit almost their entire life to serving the public but Lindsay was most certainly no ordinary person. His 27 years in this Parliament, his many years in cabinet and his term as Premier could never be construed as Lindsay seeking power for power's sake or as a way of boosting his ego. In fact I would be most surprised to learn that Lindsay knew what ego was. Humility, integrity, honour and total decency are just some of the words that spring to mind when I think of Lindsay Thompson.

As a young backbencher in another place, I was almost overwhelmed when this former Premier, this lion of the Liberal Party, found the time to offer a parliamentary newbie from the western suburbs encouragement and support. But Lindsay was like that, and we loved him for it. Just a few days before he left us I was going through some papers in my office and found a letter from Lindsay, congratulating me upon my return to office in the 1996 election. It was full of the warmth, enthusiasm and humour I had come to know as a trademark of Lindsay Thompson. Needless to say, that letter will forever be in a very safe place.

I referred to Lindsay a moment ago as a lion of the Liberal Party. I will now amend that: he was, of course, a tiger of the Liberal Party. I first met Lindsay Thompson not through the Liberal Party but through our mutual love of the Richmond Football Club, and the last time I saw him was at the final Tigers match last year at the MCG. Many Tigerlanders are deeply mourning Lindsay's passing, and more than a couple of glasses have been raised at recent matches to honour this proud son of the yellow and black. I have no doubt that he would have loved last Saturday night's game!

Last Thursday morning, in a packed St Paul's Cathedral, Peter Costello made mention of Lindsay's magnificent sense of humour. I cannot help but think that I may have at least once been a beneficiary of it. Some years ago, Lindsay organised an invitation for me to attend the Melbourne Cricket Club committee room lunch and watch the Richmond-Melbourne game from the committee box in the old smokers stand. Now, this area contained largely gentlefolk of a certain vintage who, I suspect, may not have traversed the West Gate Bridge all that often. Anyone who has ever been to the football with me will back me up when I say I am probably more at home with a pie behind the goals than in the inner echelons of the Melbourne Cricket Club, and this was proved very early in the game when one of the all-time greats, Matthew Richardson, came from nowhere to take a truly spectacular mark in front of goal. I jumped to my feet and let forth a throaty

‘Richo!’. There is every chance the looks on the faces of those around me kept Lindsay laughing for a month.

It is a great pity for Victoria that Lindsay Thompson was not elevated sooner to the office of Premier. He had the capacity to turn around the fortunes of a government that was at that time in a fair bit of strife. The respect he commanded, not just on the conservative side of politics, would have given the Liberal Party a far better chance of victory at the 1982 election.

No political leader can achieve anything without the support of those around them. I take this opportunity to offer not just my condolences and those of the Liberals of Melbourne’s west, to Lindsay’s wife, Joan, and his family — David, my very good friend and colleague, Murray, and Heather — but also the heartfelt gratitude of so many Victorians who benefited from Lindsay Thompson’s long and distinguished service to his state.

I have always been of the view that our success in this life will be judged largely by what we have done to make this world a better place. If that is the true measure, we can categorically state that Lindsay Thompson’s life was one of outstanding success. For those of us who knew him and the multitudes who did not but were still touched by his contribution to public life, we can say we are saddened he is no longer with us but we celebrate his life and give thanks for having had him amongst us. He worked long and he worked hard, with commitment, dedication and wisdom. He worked for the betterment of us all. He was a great Australian, and there is not the slightest doubt in my mind that Lindsay Hamilton Simpson Thompson is now enjoying his much-deserved eternal reward.

Mrs KRONBERG (Eastern Metropolitan) — I rise to support the motion and to honour the memory of the late Honourable Lindsay Hamilton Thompson, AO, CMG. I offer my condolences to his wife, Joan, his daughter, Heather, David, my friend and colleague, Murray, and my dear friend Murray’s wife, Theana, and the seven grandchildren.

Over the 25 years of my involvement in the Liberal Party I had the pleasure and privilege of meeting Lindsay Thompson on a number of occasions. His passing struck me whilst I was overseas and I felt it very keenly. I felt quite helpless, in fact, that I was not able to attend the funeral service conducted here. I understand many people — some people have said about 1000 — attended the funeral last Thursday at St Paul’s Cathedral. I want to place on record that in anticipation of the funeral I thought it fitting that I visit the royal chapel at Hampton Court Palace outside

London, where I gave thanks to the Lord for the life, the courage, the talents, the wit, the intellect and the commitment of Lindsay Thompson.

I think about it because my father is a veteran of campaigns in New Guinea, and I echo the sentiments that have been expressed about Lindsay’s war service. As a result of that service throughout his life he suffered from the effects of malaria, which I am sure contributed to the shortening of his splendid life and to the frailty that many people have commented on.

Whenever I travel to Bendigo I am reminded of his heroism at the time of the Faraday kidnapping of the six children and their teacher. I often wonder what Lindsay Thompson thought about when he was standing there with that \$1 million in ransom money, waiting to have the rendezvous with those crazed and dangerous criminals. The fact that he did that again five years later is just extraordinary. Lindsay Hamilton Simpson Thompson was a true hero, a very successful politician, a brilliant Minister of Education, a greatly honoured Premier of this state and a person who has made an invaluable contribution to the life and to everything that nourishes the souls of the people of Victoria. God rest and God bless Lindsay Thompson. I give thanks for knowing him and for the work he has done for us all in Victoria.

Mr THORNLEY (Southern Metropolitan) — I rise also to support the motion of condolence in honour of the late Honourable Lindsay Thompson. I did not know Mr Thompson. For many of my generation, the heroes of prior generations become known to us not personally but for what they stood for and the values they represented. It strikes me that the more I learn of Mr Thompson’s life — tragically, after it has ended — the more I realise he was the embodiment of some of the values that we hold dearest and which his generation, a generation that the great American journalist Tom Brokaw called ‘the greatest generation’, represented. He did so because they were, as Mr Kavanagh pointed out, a generation whose adult lives were forged in their most formative years in the service of their country in one of the greatest and most important conflicts the world has known.

It struck me in understanding more of Lindsay’s life that to go from being the dux and captain of his school, and obviously having a bright future ahead, to immediately at the age of 18 serving his country for three years in the jungles of New Guinea would have put a different focus on his life. You go from being the biggest fish in a small pond to someone who sees duty to country and, in the case of that conflict, to humanity, as a greater service. I cannot help but imagine those

formative years would have set the tone, if it were not already set within his family, for the rest of his life.

It strikes me that as you reflect on the moments for which Lindsay Thompson is most frequently remembered — for his incredible courage at Faraday and Wooreen and for his term as Premier — that they were brief intervals which seemed to symbolise a life of continuous values which started way before and continued way after those times. The events in Faraday probably occurred right in the middle of his enormous career of public service. I think those events, in that sense, should not define his life and memory but rather illuminate a life that they punctuated most visibly.

One of the other things that struck me as a value which is embodied in Lindsay Thompson's life, that those of us in coming generations can learn, was his commitment to the things which he clearly cared for and held deeply. I am knocked out not just about the 27 years of service to the people, directly in public life and with all the challenges that, as we all know, that brings, but about his time as a trustee of the Melbourne Cricket Ground for 33 years, his 26 years with the Royal Life Saving Society Australia, his 13 years on the board of the Mutual Friendly Society, his 14 years as a patron of the Victorian Cricket Association, an association, as I understand, of over 50 years with the East Malvern Uniting Church, and a lifetime of passion for the Richmond Football Club.

That is a wealth of commitment which speaks of someone who knows what they believe in, who contributes to the causes they hold dear and who clearly does so long beyond those things being set out on your CV and receiving any public recognition you may get for them — it was done simply for the love of what those institutions bring.

It is always hard on this side of the chamber to be fully inside the lives and beliefs of those members on the other side, but it struck me that Lindsay Thompson exhibited some of the great qualities of both the liberal and conservative traditions of the Liberal Party. He was clearly someone who has a great family history and a personal commitment to education, to the great liberalism of the Scottish enlightenment, to a belief in the liberating power of education — he devoted a great portion of his life to education, both as a teacher and then as a minister — and to his own school and many others over that period.

Yet he also embodies great conservative values — a belief in the value and importance of institutions and of preserving and building those institutions for the benefit of future generations. I think his commitment to the

range of institutions and to this Parliament speaks volumes for his authenticity in pursuing that set of values as well.

I cannot say that I knew Lindsay Thompson. I have had the privilege of getting to know his son Murray in the other place as one of my colleagues in the Southern Metropolitan Region. Given that we did our level best with Noel Pullen, the former member for the then Higinbotham Province, to try to knock Murray off, I have to say that he responded without a moment's rancour and has been very welcoming to me as a new member of this Parliament. He is from the other side but has shown me the ropes in local community areas; he has been a friend and a colleague. I can only imagine that he embodies the DNA and values that his father represented for such a long period.

I believe that one of the other abiding loyalties and commitments of Lindsay Thompson was to his local area and community. That is evident in all of the things that he has done and in the many speeches, particularly from my colleagues, regarding that area.

I believe it is my role partly, as it is the role of the Leader of the Government and the other members who represent Southern Metropolitan Region, on behalf of the people of the electorate and, historically, the people of the electorate of Malvern and the former electorates of Monash and Higinbotham, to thank Lindsay Thompson for his great service to those people, to pay tribute to his service and to extend to his wife, Joan, the condolences of this house and its people and to express the gratitude we should on behalf of all of those people. I also extend best wishes to his children Heather, Murray of course, David and to his grandchildren.

Mrs PETROVICH (Northern Victoria) — Today I am proud to support the condolence motion for the Honourable Lindsay Hamilton Thompson. I would like to offer my sympathy to those who knew and loved him. I, like many others in the chamber today, knew of Lindsay Thompson as a Minister for Education throughout my years in education, and as the Premier of the state of Victoria.

It is a very real image that I have of Lindsay Thompson standing outside my local post office on a bitterly cold Woodend morning waiting to pay a \$1 million ransom to free six pupils and a teacher in something that legends are made of. From what I understand about Lindsay Thompson, that would have been the furthestmost thing from his mind. The words humility, decency, honourable and loyal are more often associated with this man who, according to his peers,

had a great sense of humour and integrity — we have heard much about that today.

As the longest-serving cabinet minister in Victoria's history, dedication and true public service must also be added to this list of accolades. Although he may not have planned it, Lindsay Thompson has left behind a legacy of which the Liberal Party, his family and his friends can be very proud.

In my mind he is also a wonderful role model for future generations of all politicians across party lines. I understand he was encouraged by Robert Menzies to step outside his comfort zone when he was at university to speak publicly on what he believed the future policies of the Liberal Party should be. He also worked alongside Geoffrey Blainey as coeditor of Melbourne University's newspaper *Farrago* — in historical retrospect, an unbelievable start to his future political career, which began in 1955 when he traded in his profession of teaching to enter the Parliament.

His incredible hard work and dedication over the 26 years he served Victoria as a cabinet minister enabled him to administer nine different portfolios, including the ministry of education for 12 years, and all speakers today have spoken highly about his achievements in that role.

During this time Lindsay Thompson has been lauded for having totally restructured the education service in Victoria and, as we have said many times, most of us in this Parliament today are products of this vision. Although the death of Lindsay Thompson is a great loss to all Victorians, my thoughts are with those who were closest to him and my condolences go particularly to Joan, his wife; his children, Heather, Murray and David, and his seven grandchildren, who can proudly remember their grandfather as one of Victoria's great human beings.

Mr ATKINSON (Eastern Metropolitan) — I am pleased to join with colleagues from all sides of the house to pay a mark of respect to a remarkable man. Victoria indeed has lost one of its finest sons and the Liberal Party has lost one of its greatest heroes. This was a man whose humility has been described, but perhaps it is also worthwhile reflecting on his intellect.

I had an opportunity to work with Lindsay Thompson over a number of years. I was in the Young Liberal Movement when he was Deputy Premier and subsequently Premier. I served on a number of committees with him and was very much inspired by the measured and succinct comments he would make, the level of intellect and experience that he would bring

to debates, and the basis upon which he was able to crystallise issues and to understand particularly the needs of ordinary Victorians.

We hear a lot in this day and age of the rhetoric of publicists and spin doctors — and, indeed, ourselves as politicians — trying to come up with phrases that will capture the imagination of people. Lindsay Thompson was a man who did not need those spin phrases because he had an engagement with the people. I saw Lindsay Thompson at schools. I saw him equally comfortable and not in any way seeking opportunities for Kodak moments, or acting in any way that lacked sincerity. I saw Lindsay Thompson comfortable sitting alongside young students and milk monitors, as there were in those days, as he was just as comfortable with teachers, with parents, with principals, and with people right across the spectrum in Victoria.

From the Liberal Party's point of view, Lindsay Thompson and Joan Thompson were very much the first man and first lady of the Liberal Party over an extended period, even when he was Deputy Premier to Dick Hamer, because the two of them were a pair who would attend many functions, who impressed everybody and engaged everybody with their personalities, with their genuine affection for other people, and certainly with their intellect and their interest in providing people with opportunities, as the Liberal Party would expect in accordance with its philosophy.

Lindsay Thompson was always the teacher. Even when he came in here to Parliament he was the teacher. He remembered people's names, which is something that baffles me. He had an almost encyclopaedic knowledge of Victoria. It is legend that, as Lindsay Thompson was being driven through areas of Victoria, he would regale his drivers with stories of every little town along the way and of people he had met in those towns. He knew their names and he knew the towns and he knew the stories and he knew every school in the state. He had an encyclopaedic knowledge and he would often draw on that in his speeches, and people would just marvel at both the knowledge that he brought and, as other speakers have mentioned, the wit that he brought to those speeches.

Lindsay Thompson was a man who had a genuine passion for Victoria. He was alert to the issues and concerns of Victoria right until his demise. I met him at the cricket a couple of years ago at the Boxing Day test, and he was quizzing me on how the government was going, how our side was going. He certainly had some advice to pass on in terms of the things that we might do in aid of the Liberal Party's cause in political

forums, and also what we might all do as colleagues in this place from all sides of the house for the betterment of Victoria.

Lindsay Thompson was a man who gave great encouragement and inspiration to many people. As I said, he was wise and measured in his counsel and he was truly a mentor for many young people, myself included, through my involvement in the Young Liberal Movement, and therefore my opportunities to meet with, work with and learn from this great Victorian.

I dare say that had that car accident not occurred some years ago Lindsay might well have been with us for a while longer because it left him rather frail in recent years but, as I said, he was certainly alert and he was revered by people in the Liberal Party and right across the community.

Joan Thompson has lost a wonderful man. The family of Murray, David, Heather, their respective partners and children have lost a remarkable man and, as I said at the outset, Victoria has lost one of its finest sons.

I am very saddened to see Lindsay Thompson pass from our midst because I think we still had a great deal to learn from a man who had a great deal to offer and never stinted in terms of sharing in his very humble way the gifts that he was given.

Mrs PEULICH (South Eastern Metropolitan) — I would like to place on the record my sympathies and regret at the passing of the Honourable Lindsay Thompson, not only on my behalf but also that of my family, the local community, some of whom he served as the member for Higinbotham Province, and of course the broader Liberal Party family.

I was fortunate to know Mr Thompson — and that is what I called him — as well as Murray and his family. His grandchildren were often involved in sporting events with my son, and when you needed a hand, somehow miraculously Mr Thompson always made available the resources or the assistance that one required, especially in my former role as the Assembly member for Bentleigh. He somehow always seemed to be on the scene, in the background, guiding, shepherding, mentoring.

I did not know him when he was active in the service of politics, but that continued, as we know, until his last days. To hear so many people say that he was a nice person after 27 years of service in this game, in this profession, is an amazing achievement because politics tends to bring out the best, and unfortunately also the worst, in practitioners of this profession.

Lindsay Thompson was a community builder, and that continued until the very end of his life, with his being patron and founder of many of those organisations that he continued to support and take an active part in. He made a tremendous contribution to parliamentary life here in Victoria, to this state, and to his community. What was odd, however, and what was different was that he also tried very hard to bring out the best in other people, and that is a unique thing to do in politics.

I agree with the contributions and observations made by others that he was essentially a perpetual teacher who wanted to see people perform at their best and wanted the community to be the best that it could possibly be, because he appreciated the importance of having a strong, vibrant community in order to help people achieve their aspirations, knowing full well the hardships and challenges that he himself had faced as a child coming from a fairly difficult family situation.

His father had passed away at the age of two and his mother raised him single-handedly, with the support of his grandmother. He was a dux of Caulfield Grammar School, having got into there on a scholarship, but his mother was not able to send him to university. Yet, it is worth looking at the things he achieved.

Lindsay studied Latin under a lamp while serving during the Second World War in the then New Guinea. He eventually went to university and achieved incredible accolades as a scholar.

The man's contribution is a testament to the tireless attributes and virtues that he represented. Everyone has spoken about his integrity — and certainly this was the case in my personal dealings with Mr Thompson; also, his humility, his firm values and his strong commitment to his family — Murray, David, Heather and their families; his grandchildren, in particular those I have had something to do with over the years, namely Alex, Alithea and Theo; and his daughters-in-law and son-in-law as well as, of course, Joan. No doubt he was an outstanding father, grandfather and husband, and he was a vital member of the Liberal family. He will be sorely missed.

Mr Thompson knew what it took to succeed in politics: perseverance, determination and an awareness and appreciation that all decisions needed to be grounded in reality. So he made sure that he was always in touch with what people were doing, and this is what was fascinating about him. He always remembered people's names; he obviously had a photographic memory, but he was genuinely interested in their progress — in how, for example, so-and-so performed at his most recent

athletics competition, or how so-and-so was doing at school.

He had an incredible interest in people, and I believe that was part of his enormous success as a politician. It is an enduring legacy and an enduring contribution that will hopefully continue to be remembered and honoured. He has been a recipient of many awards and honours, both in the Liberal Party and in the broader community.

I was pleased to be able to honour him with my mother at the state funeral. As has been mentioned, it was an amazing funeral with an incredible line-up of people delivering eulogies, including former Prime Minister John Howard; former federal Treasurer Peter Costello; former state Premier Jeff Kennett, as well as Lindsay Thompson's two sons. It was an amazing life story of an ordinary person who achieved extraordinary things through those timeless values and timeless attributes.

In summary, this man had an enormous commitment to family, to values, to his ideals, to the Liberal Party and to that whole notion of service, including the teaching profession. In his 12 years as education minister he presided over an expansion of education, advancing the interests of women in the profession, and heroic feats — although many have made the observation that perhaps he may not have seen it as heroism but merely a duty — during the Faraday kidnapping. He made a terrific contribution to this state, this country and this Parliament.

He was certainly a person of significant intellect, and he was a great debater. I remember attending an education function a few years ago. The minister of the day, and I will not comment on which one, slavishly read through a 50-minute speech obviously prepared by the department, and we all felt duly punished for enjoying a dinner to which we had been invited. The Honourable Lindsay Thompson was an invited guest because the particular award was named after him. Every year — and I commend the government for continuing this tradition — he was invited to take part in the presentation.

He got up and in front of hundreds of people in the auditorium he spoke without a scrap of paper, without a single note. He gave a helicopter view of education in Victoria over the decades in such a crystal clear and simple way that he had the entire audience — Labor, Liberal and those who had no political interest — in the palm of his hand. He was a person, as I said, who had an ability to engage, and that was derived from his genuine interest in and commitment to all he met and all he represented.

I would like to extend my sympathies to Lindsay's wife, Joan, and to all in the family on behalf of all of Liberals and the members of the community, including those in the south-east, whom he represented as a member for then Higinbotham Province for more than a brief period. Lindsay and Joan, as well as other members of the Thompson family, have on many occasions been incredible contributors and examples of how to achieve outstanding outcomes without making enemies, without using a political bulldozer and without wielding the knife. It is an enormous legacy that he leaves behind to us, as members of the Liberal family, and to this Parliament. No doubt that will continue through the service and active involvement of his family, especially his grandchildren.

With those few words I would like to place on record my enormous regret that the contributions of this remarkable man have come to a close, but I hope the legacy will continue.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Mr LENDERS (Treasurer) — I move:

That, as a further mark of respect to the memory of the late Honourable Lindsay Hamilton Simpson Thompson, AO, CMG, the house do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

House adjourned 3.36 p.m.