



Speech by

**Dr DAVID WATSON**

**MEMBER FOR MOGGILL**

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Hansard 13 April 1999

**MOTION OF CONDOLENCE**

**Death of Mr D. J. Sherrington**

**Dr WATSON** (Moggill—LP) (Leader of the Liberal Party) (9.51 a.m.): I rise to speak to the condolence motion for the late Douglas Sherrington, the member for Salisbury from 1960 to 1974. From what I am told and what I have heard from the previous speakers, there is no doubt that Doug Sherrington was a visionary. He was a greenie long before it was fashionable to be a greenie. I also understand that Mr Sherrington was a forceful debater who never required the protection of the Speaker.

As the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing just mentioned, it was during the debate on the proposed mining of the Cooloola sands that Doug Sherrington was most forceful. Although he was in Opposition at the time, Mr Sherrington's passionate and spirited defence of the Cooloola sands played a real part in saving it from being mined. I think he is entitled to a lot of the credit for locking up the Cooloola sand mass. In fact, I am told on good authority that Doug Sherrington's campaign to save Cooloola was so strong that when the National and Liberal parties discussed the issue in the joint party room, it was decided to hold a secret ballot. I do not know how things work within the Labor Party, but secret ballots in joint party rooms are very rare. In fact, I cannot recall a secret ballot in the joint party room since I have been in Parliament. That demonstrates the impact of Doug Sherrington's campaign and the effective way that he fought it.

When Doug left Parliament, he remained a committed greenie and was very active in the Save the Trees movement. He also fancied himself as a bit of the poet. On 9 September 1971 in this place, he read a poem that he had written, which covered a lot of conservation issues that were very relevant at the time. Those included the sand mining on Fraser Island and at Cooloola, the oil drilling on the Great Barrier Reef and the blasting of the bat caves at Mount Etna. While paying tribute to Doug Sherrington as a visionary and a man who stood up for Queensland, it is interesting to note that some of the predictions that he made in that poem did not come true. He said that scientists had predicted that by the year 2000 the world's oil supplies would be exhausted and the polar icecaps would be melting. To be fair, Doug was not the only person saying that 30 years ago.

Doug obviously did not get everything right, but there is no doubt that he got some important things right. He certainly deserves credit for the tough fight that he fought on behalf of the conservation movement in Queensland. On behalf of the Liberal Party, I pass on our condolences to the Sherrington family.

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