



Speech by

Hon. V. LESTER

MEMBER FOR KEPPEL

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MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Deaths of Mr R. T. McLean, MLA, and Mr L. J. Yewdale, MLA

Hon. V. P. LESTER (Keppel—NPA) (10.12 a.m.): As a member of Parliament representing central Queensland, it is very obvious that I have known Les Yewdale for a long, long time. For many years, I was president of the Clermont football club. It was during those very interesting times that I initially got to know Les and to find out just what a decent, fair-minded person he was. It did not even matter when he found that I was running for politics in a party different from his. Football was first as far as we were concerned. He continued to do all of his football related duties very, very well.

He also probably gave me the greatest political lesson I have ever learnt in my life. I used to do a column called "Talking Football with Vince Lester", which I have to say was widely read. It was always a very positive type of column. If I could say something good about somebody in it, that is the way I tried to work. I was duly elected to Parliament, and on my very first Sunday as a member of Parliament I could not get to the football, because there was a fete or something else somewhere. I asked somebody to take notes for me and I took my notes off that. The notes came back to the effect that the referees were crook and something else was crook. I tell you what: I got a blast from Les in no uncertain terms. I had no option but to apologise. I have never since written a football column; I have concentrated on politics. It was a good lesson. You do not make adverse comments on the basis of something given to you by somebody else if you do not know what you are talking about. I might add that he did not continue in that vein after that. Once that little incident was over, he was always again his very, very wonderful self. He and Marge moved to Keppel a little while after retiring. Unfortunately, they had to leave. I used to call on the family occasionally.

In relation to Ron—he was my shadow when I was a Minister. During that time in the industrial relations area a number of pretty interesting incidents caused a lot of debate, to say the least. During one of those incidents, Ron and I had to debate each other on the ABC AM program. I will not say what it was about, but it was a pretty serious affair. We were into it boots and all. We each had separate microphones and the ABC fellow was in the middle. This was radio, not TV. One of the microphones broke down. That did not worry Ron. He said, "She'll be right, mate." While I am blasting hell out of him, he is holding the microphone to my mouth, and I had to smile. At the same time, when it was his turn to blast me, I held the microphone for him. It was one heck of a debate; we called each other for everything. As soon as it was over he patted me on the back and said, "We fooled them there, didn't we, mate!"

Ron also was a very decent fellow to deal with. It is very obvious that he did not treat me the way Robert, the member for Rockhampton, said that he dealt with some people he did not like. Obviously, politics aside, we got on very well. To his widow, I say: he was a great man.

I had extensive dealings with both of these men. One can only hope that they have gone as high as they can possibly go.
