



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard 17 October 2000

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Mr V. J. N. Cooper; Mr H. Williams

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central— ALP) (Premier) (9.31 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"1. That this House desires to place on record its appreciation for the services rendered to this State by the late Mr Vivian Joseph Northcote Cooper, a former member of the Parliament of Queensland;

2. That Mr Speaker be requested to convey to the family of the deceased gentleman the above resolution, together with an expression of the sympathy and sorrow of the members of the Parliament of Queensland, in the loss they have sustained."

Mr Vivian Cooper was born in Parkhurst, Queensland, on 19 June 1909. He attended the Parkhurst State School and the Christian Brothers College in Rockhampton. Prior to entering politics, Mr Cooper worked as a coach painter and sign-writer for Queensland Rail until 1952. Mr Cooper was the chief inspector with the Queensland Fish Marketing Board until 31 December 1974. Mr Cooper was a member of the Rockhampton Vehicle Builders Employees Union, where he served as secretary and president from 1939 to 1952. From 1943 to 1945 he was secretary of the Rockhampton Trades and Labor Council. He was also involved in the Rockhampton Combined Unions Organisation, where he served as president and was a delegate to the Queensland Trade Union Congress.

Mr Cooper served as president on the Labour Day Celebration Committee during the 1940s and was the campaign director for the Federal seat of Capricornia and the State seats of Keppel and Rockhampton. In these positions Mr Cooper served the local and State tiers of Government by providing outstanding service to all sections of the community.

Mr Cooper won the State seat of Keppel in a by-election on 25 October 1952 and was elected to the Legislative Assembly in the 32nd Parliament. The State election of 7 March 1953 saw Mr Cooper retain the seat of Keppel. It was not until the opening of the 33rd Parliament on 25 August 1953 that Mr Cooper made his maiden speech to the Legislative Assembly. Mr Cooper noted—

"Having been re-elected as their representative in this Parliament, I assure them that I will give of my best to further their interests, and the interests of central Queensland and of the State as a whole."

Mr Cooper was a great advocate for regional development, and noted in his speech that emphasis needed to be placed on extensively developing the area through providing electricity, bringing amenities and home comforts to country dwellers and developing the tourism industry for the central Queensland region. Mr Cooper was re-elected to the 34th Parliament in the State election of 1956 and represented Keppel until August 1957. Mr Cooper was the Government Whip between June and August 1957. Mr Cooper was in State Parliament until August 1957. Mr Cooper married his wife, Catherine, in 1933. Together they had three sons and one daughter. On behalf of the Parliament I extend my sympathy and that of this House to his family.

While I am on matters of condolence, I wish to inform the House that in the early hours of this morning—in fact, at around 12.30 a.m.—Harry Williams, who was a media adviser to the Minister for Transport, Steve Bredhauer, tragically passed away. Yesterday morning he was at a meeting of press

secretaries and senior staff when he became ill. He was taken to the Wesley Hospital after that meeting and, tragically, he suffered a second heart attack at the hospital and died this morning.

Steve Bredhauer, the Minister for Transport, will not be with us today in Parliament because he is supporting the family. I attended the hospital last night and had a brief meeting with Harry's wife, Gail, and his two sons, Charles and Jon. Many honourable members would have known Harry. I knew him from when he was an industrial reporter some 25 years ago. He was a good man. He had a great sense of humour. He had a generous spirit and a good natured approach to life. He was well regarded as a highly professional and ethical journalist. He was a loyal and dedicated staff member to the Minister for Transport and Minister for Main Roads. I know that all honourable members will be thinking of him. Tragically, he was only 54 years of age. I know members would understand that it is appropriate for the Minister, Steve Bredhauer, to be making arrangements today with Harry's wife and family and to be supportive of them at this time.
