



Speech by

Bob Quinn

MEMBER FOR ROBINA

Hansard Tuesday, 14 February 2006

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE: DEATH OF MR J MELLOY

Mr QUINN (Robina—Lib) (9.43 am): On behalf of the Liberal Party, I rise today to pass on to the family and friends of the late John 'Jack' Melloy our sincere sympathies for their sad loss. Jack Melloy was born in Brisbane on 10 November 1908. His parents were Charles Frederick, who was an English engineer and seaman, and Ada Louisa Crampton. Jack was educated in Brisbane and, after leaving high school, became a dental technician. Dental health was a passion of Jack's and, as a member of parliament, he constantly questioned the lack of funding in the state's dental services. Jack was the founding president, secretary and subsequent life member of the Dental Technicians Association of Queensland and served as the union representative on various dental committees. He also served as a staff sergeant in the Australian Dental Corps during the Second World War. On 24 June 1933 he married Elizabeth Maude Garner. It was a marriage that lasted until Maude's death in 1997. They had two sons and five daughters.

Jack worked as a trade union organiser and Industrial Court advocate in the early fifties and was an air cargo officer from 1956 to 1960. Jack Melloy, above everything else, was a Labor Party man. He joined the ALP as a 14-year-old and held more than 20 campaign and party positions throughout his life. He first ran for public office as a councillor in 1949 but was unsuccessful. He twice failed to win the federal seat of Lilley in 1955 and 1958. Jack finally won the state seat of Nudgee in 1960, beating future lord mayor Frank Sleeman in preselection, and I believe the Hon. Rob Schwarten's father, Evan, was on that preselection committee. Jack served as the state member for Nudgee from 1960 until his retirement in 1977. His maiden speech was a passionate one and its concluding line was—

So the day will come when the people of Australia will thank heaven for the existence of the Australian Labor Party.

Now, I do not necessarily agree with that statement and its sentiment, but it indicated his deep belief and commitment to his party, something that I think people would appreciate. Jack served as the shadow minister for health and was the 'vice-captain', so to speak, of the 11 representatives from the Labor Party from 1974 until his retirement. He was a vocal spokesperson for health issues in Queensland, but the moment that grabbed him the biggest headline was in 1975 when he was reprimanded by the Speaker for wearing a short-sleeved safari suit—those icons of Queensland at that time—and was rather unkindly labelled by the former member for Townsville South as a 'hippie' and a 'bagman'.

After his retirement Jack worked tirelessly on ALP campaigns, and working on his children's campaigns when they ran for office must have been some of his proudest moments. In 1980 his daughter Elaine won the seat of Lilley, the seat he had run for and lost twice in the 1950s. Jack was awarded ALP life membership in 1984 and worked on polling booths right up to the last state election campaign in 2004. Jack Melloy made a substantial contribution to this state and is an example to politicians of all persuasions with his commitment, dedication and passion for what he believed in. Jack is survived by his seven children. My colleagues and I join with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in extending our sympathies to his family and friends.