



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Tuesday, 6 February 2007

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE: DEATH OF MR WB KAUS MP

Hon. PD BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.34 am), without notice: I move—

1. That this House desires to place on record its appreciation of the services rendered to this state by the late William Bernard Kaus, a former member of the Parliament of Queensland; and
2. That the 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.

William Bernard Kaus, better known as Bill Kaus, was born in Brisbane on 24 May 1923 and educated at Mount Gravatt and Greenslopes state schools. In 1941, at the age of 18, Mr Kaus volunteered for the Royal Australian Air Force—the RAAF—where he remained until the end of World War II. He underwent aircrew training in Brisbane and Canada before being sent to England in April 1943.

In August 1943, Mr Kaus joined the Royal Air Force's 161 Squadron as a wireless operator/air gunner at the Royal Air Force station in Tempsford. This unit was tasked with 'setting Europe ablaze' by landing agents behind enemy lines. In 1944, he was commissioned as a pilot officer within the 161 Squadron and flew on many secret operations to France, Norway and Germany. In 1945, Mr Kaus was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for exceptional valour for operations against the enemy in which he displayed 'the utmost fortitude, courage and devotion to duty'.

After the war, Mr Kaus returned to Australia where he was discharged from the RAAF and became involved in the family business, Kaus Brothers Bedding Manufacturers, in Woolloongabba. In 1947, Mr Kaus met Neth Hutchinson and they were married the following year, later raising two sons and two daughters. The family lived in Camp Hill and Coorparoo.

Mr Kaus's political career began in earnest in 1966 when he was elected to the Legislative Assembly as the Liberal member for Hawthorne, a seat he held for six years before switching to the newly created seat of Mansfield in 1972. In his maiden speech, Mr Kaus focused on an issue that he was passionate about, and that was improving road and pedestrian safety in Queensland.

During his parliamentary career, Mr Kaus held the position of Liberal Party whip and was secretary of the parliamentary Liberal Party for a period of 14 years. He also served as a Temporary Chairman of Committees and was a member of various overseas parliamentary delegations. In 1983, following the split of the coalition, Mr Kaus joined the National Party and continued to hold the seat of Mansfield until his retirement in 1986.

In 1977, Mr Kaus was awarded the Queen's Jubilee Medal for his military service and in 2005 he received the Legion of Honour, the highest award given by the French Republic for outstanding service to France, as recognition of his contribution to Australia's service in liberating France during World War II.

Throughout his life Mr Kaus was an avid cricket player and sportsman. He was an inaugural member of the Queensland Cricketers' Club and for many years played in the Queensland parliamentary team in the annual interstate parliamentary lawn bowls carnival. Following his retirement, Mr Kaus was president and member of the Caloundra Bowls Club and secretary to the board of the Caloundra RSL Club

where he worked to support the local community with funding for sport and local charities. He also worked on his local church council and youth committees.

A funeral service for Bill Kaus was held at the St John's Anglican Cathedral, Brisbane, on 28 December 2006. On behalf of the government and all members, I take this opportunity to extend my sympathy and that of this House to his wife Neth, their children and their families.