



Speech by

Phil Weightman

MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND

Hansard Tuesday, 16 October 2007

KEOGH, MR LJ

Mr WEIGHTMAN (Cleveland—ALP) (10.13 pm): I rise to inform the House of the passing of Leonard Joseph Keogh born on 2 June 1931. On Wednesday, 10 October, former federal member for Bowman and past Redland Shire Council Chairman, Len Keogh, passed away. Len was 76 and resided in Ormiston within my electorate of Cleveland.

Len leaves behind his beloved wife, friend and soulmate, Joan, who was also his carer during a persistent and determined battle against prostate cancer. Joan and Len had six children and were grandparents to 19 wonderful grandchildren. Today's service was a very strong indication of the importance of family to Len with all his family contributing substantially to the celebration of his life at the Star of the Sea Catholic Church at Cleveland. Father Frank O'Dea welcomed and included all family and friends in the celebration of Len's life.

I have here some excerpts from the eulogy so bravely delivered by three of his children, Anne, Paul and Michael, who have kindly provided me with a copy with the express purpose of sharing some of it with members of this House. Anne said—

Len was born into a political family during the difficult times of the great Depression. His father John, whose parents were Irish immigrants, was the last Mayor of South Brisbane before the amalgamation of the North and South Brisbane councils. Len's mother Agnes also has Irish ancestry and all things Irish were of interest to him.'

Len joined the Australian Labor Party in 1950 and went on to be a well-respected life member of that party. Some of the reasons for that well-earned respect were outlined during the eulogy when his son Paul said—

Persistence, determination, diligence and fortitude were etched into Len's character. Over a period of almost 30 years, he stood for 11 elections winning six in this district. He represented Bowman in the federal parliament for a total of 12 years and was chairman of Redlands Shire for three years.

This was in the early nineties when the Redlands really began to blossom as a shire. In the Redlands he is also a local legend who served as the patron for a number of local sporting and community groups including the Redland Cricket Club, Redland and Capalaba soccer clubs and Yurara Art Group.

In the eulogy, Paul Keogh went on to mention a plaque that was permanently displayed in Len's office. It said—

Press on—nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education alone will not; the world is full of educated failures. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent.

Len Keogh obviously lived his life by this mantra and his immense contribution to the community during his public political life reflected this, and it was never more evident than in his protracted battle against prostate cancer.

Joan Keogh and family lost a husband, father, brother and grandfather, the community lost a dedicated humanitarian and the Labor Party lost a life member and stalwart. Len, you will be missed by your family and friends and remembered by many more. Thank you for your great contribution. May you rest in peace.