



Speech by

Hon. Campbell Newman

MEMBER FOR ASHGROVE

Hansard Tuesday, 21 August 2012

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE: LAMONT, MR CC



Hon. CKT NEWMAN (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.42 am): I move—

1. That this House desires to place on record its appreciation of the services rendered to this state by the late Colin Charles Lamont, a former member of the Parliament of Queensland; and
2. That Madam Speaker be requested to convey to the Lamont family 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.

I would also like to acknowledge Lachlan Lamont, Colin's son, who is present in the chamber today. Colin Charles Lamont was born in Brisbane on 18 November 1941. Mr Lamont attended Wilston State School and Brisbane Grammar School. While at Brisbane Grammar School he captained its debating team before going on to Brisbane Teachers College and the University of Queensland. Mr Lamont was what would you call an all-rounder. He excelled in classical piano, he was an A-grade tennis player and, according to those who knew him well, had a reasonable singing voice as well.

After graduating from university, Mr Lamont initially worked as a state secondary school teacher before travelling to London to continue his university studies. Following his time in London, he served for seven years as a detective inspector with the Hong Kong police. During that time, Chinese communists had set up a red guard unit in the city and ordered science students in the high schools to make bombs. Colin was defusing one when it exploded. Shrapnel lodged in his brain and pieces near his eye were removed in 1994. On his recovery he was seconded to MI6's special intelligence branch, where he formed friendships that lasted a lifetime.

Upon returning to Australia, Mr Lamont served as senior history master at Brisbane Grammar School from 1972 to 1974 and he was also involved in debating circles, serving as president of the Queensland Debating Union in 1973 and as president of the Queensland Liberal Speakers' Group from 1973 to 1975. He joined the Liberal Party and formed a close relationship with Australia's first Indigenous senator, Neville Bonner.

In 1974, Mr Lamont was preselected by the Liberal Party to contest the seat of South Brisbane in the Queensland Legislative Assembly against the sitting ALP member, Fred Bromley. After a keenly fought electoral contest, Mr Lamont was successful at the state election of December 1974—a landslide election which famously reduced the ALP to a cricket team—and took his place in this parliament as the first member from the conservative side of politics to represent the seat of South Brisbane for many years. That year, he married Janette Alexander in the Speaker's private dining room at Parliament House. The couple went on to have two sons, Cameron and Lachlan.

In 1977, an electoral redistribution rendered the seat of South Brisbane as virtually unwinnable for the Liberal Party and Mr Lamont subsequently decided to contest the seat of Woodridge. However, Mr Lamont was defeated at the 1977 state election for the seat of Woodridge by the ALP's candidate, Mr William D'Arcy. After his election defeat, Mr Lamont joined the board of the Deaf Society, became the head of the Brisbane Deaf School and the state chair of the Council on Disability. But he always remained interested and involved in politics.

Always one to fight for what he believed in, Mr Lamont was reprimanded by the Liberal Party hierarchy after publicly taking on party president, Dr John Herron, following a decision to drop his close

friend, Neville Bonner, from the Senate ticket. Mr Lamont went on to become president of the Registered & Licensed Clubs Association of Queensland, after earlier being asked by the Liberals to help formulate a pokies policy. His advocacy for pokies saw him engaged in a bitter battle with vested anti-pokies interests, including the National Party and the Queensland Hotels Association. Mr Lamont later lectured in politics and public policy at Griffith University and served as the Queensland chairman of the Australian Council for Education Standards. On retirement, Mr Lamont moved to the Gold Coast, where he married Gail McGregor, becoming a valued member of her large family. In 2006, he founded the Unit Owners and Body Corporate Alliance, a Gold Coast lobby group for unit owners, and was also involved in the Miami Beach Surf Life Saving Club.

Passionate and idealistic, Colin Lamont gave his all to any endeavour he set his mind to. Once he had committed to a cause, his support was always absolute. He fought for what he believed in and he fought hard. Colin Charles Lamont passed away on 7 July 2012 and a service to celebrate his life was held in the Parkview Chapel, Allambe Memorial Gardens at Nerang, on 18 July 2012. I place on record the government's thanks to the years of service Mr Lamont gave to the institutions of our democracy and to the Queensland community. On behalf of the government, I take this opportunity to extend my sympathy, and that of this House, to Mr Lamont's family and friends.