


Speech by  
**Jackie Trad**

**MEMBER FOR SOUTH BRISBANE**

Hansard Tuesday, 21 August 2012

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**MOTION OF CONDOLENCE: LAMONT, MR CC**

 **Ms TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (9.56 am): I rise to pay tribute to Colin Lamont, a former member for my seat of South Brisbane. Colin was elected as the Liberal member for South Brisbane in 1974 and is only one of two conservative politicians to have held the seat since it became a one-member constituency in 1912. While his time in this chamber was short, serving only one term, he packed a lot into those three years. In a parliament much like this one, Colin took it upon himself to be an internal critic of the Bjelke-Petersen government. He was guided not by the Premier but by his own principles. The positions he took won him few friends within the National Party, but history has come down squarely on his side. Colin opposed Joh Bjelke-Petersen's decision to spurn precedent in 1975 and to ignore Labor's recommendation to fill the casual vacancy created by the death of Senator Bertie Milliner. Joh appointed Albert Field instead, a man who Gough Whitlam once described as an individual of the utmost obscurity, from which he rose and to which he sank with equal speed. Colin was also critical of the appointment of Terry Lewis to the position of police commissioner. Years later the Fitzgerald Inquiry and Terry Lewis's conviction would vindicate Colin's prescience.

In 1977 when Bjelke-Petersen resolved to ban street marches, Colin again proved to be a principled voice of dissent against a Premier and a government that had gone too far. On the morning the debate was to have taken place in parliament, Colin spoke to students at the University of Queensland and told them the bill was a tactic to incite a protest and provide a law and order issue for the Nationals to run on in the 1977 election. The students elected not to march. I will let Colin tell you in his own words how Sir Joh reacted to his intervention—

Two hours later, he lunged at me across the floor of Parliament, waving a tape recorder and spluttered, "I've heard every word. You are a traitor to this Government". I told him I was not a member of his Government but a member of the parliament charged with keeping his Government in check. The point was lost on him. He never understood finer philosophical points: The concept of the people electing a parliament to keep check on the government was simply not part of his awareness.

It appears that you can take the member out of South Brisbane, but you cannot take South Brisbane out of the member.

Because of this, Colin was not a Bjelke-Petersen favourite. When the 1977 election came around, a number of changes had been made to the seat of South Brisbane. This was at a time when the gerrymander was in full effect and the decisions on electoral boundaries were made in the Premier's office. Colin decided against running again for South Brisbane, a seat he had little chance of winning. Instead, he ran for the seat of Woodridge, which he lost. Jim Fouras was elected as the member for South Brisbane and, arriving in this place, he was told by the Nationals that they had changed South Brisbane's boundaries because they would rather have a Labor member than another term of Colin Lamont. In 1980, Colin returned to contest the seat of South Brisbane against Jim Fouras. He was not successful.

While he was no longer a member of the parliament, Colin was always active in politics and the community. In his post-parliamentary life, he served as the president of the Registered and Licensed Clubs Association, lectured in politics and public policy at Griffith University and was the Queensland chair of the Australian Council on Education Research. In 2006, he founded the Unit Owners and Body Corporate Alliance to represent Gold Coast unit owners, as has already been commented on here today.

Colin is survived by his wife, Gail, his sons, Cameron and Lachlan, and his grandson, Taylor. In the words of his wife, Gail—

With Colin there were no half measures. Once committed to a cause, it was absolute. He could be likened to a mythical favourite of his, Don Quixote, even sometimes tilting at windmills, always a crusader and an adventurer.

As the member for South Brisbane and on behalf of the electors of South Brisbane, I put on the record the appreciation of my local electorate for his principled service to this place. I extend my condolences to his family and friends.