## Speech By

# Michael Crandon

## MEMBER FOR COOMERA

## MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

### Renouf, Sir Clem

**Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (11.37 am): From time to time we have the privilege of meeting some amazing people and I had that privilege recently at a function I attended when I met Sir Clem Renouf. I was walking out of the function after having said a few words and this chap was walking in. Sir Clem is 91 years of age and as sprightly as can be, and he said, 'Are you someone that I should know?' I said, 'I don't know, but my name is Michael Crandon.' He introduced himself and I recognised the name immediately. This is the man who started the push to eradicate polio in the world.

**Mr Cripps:** A Rotarian.

**Mr CRANDON:** A great Rotarian. I went back to my office and asked my staff to contact Sir Clem inviting him to my office for morning tea and a chat. I was very pleased to see that he did come. Quite coincidentally, we had morning tea on the 24th of this month which just happened to be World Polio Day. It was an incredible coincidence that he came to see me on World Polio Day, a day which raises awareness of polio and the aim for worldwide eradication. He and his wife of 19 years, Firth, came to see me. She was just as sprightly as Clem, I have to say. Sadly, Sir Clem's first wife passed away some 20 years ago. But he and Firth have certainly found a great match on their journey into retirement and beyond.

He was a charter member of the Rotary Club of Nambour, which was chartered on 26 September 1949. Indeed, the Rotary Club of Nambour was sponsored by the Rotary Club of Gympie, which was in itself only 12 months old at the time. Sir Clem went through the process. He became the president of the Rotary Club of Nambour in 1954-55. He became a Rotary International Director in 1970 to 1972. Interestingly, he waited until 1978-79 before he became Rotary International President.

Today I would like to make the point that, because of Sir Clem Renouf, there are now only three countries in the world in which polio is endemic. That means that 193 countries in the world no longer have polio in them. It was during Clem Renouf's term as Rotary International President in 1979 that Rotary International first took up the international fight to stop polio. Providing humanitarian grants funding and hands-on support from everyday club members, Rotary committed to a five-year effort in partnership with the government of the Philippines to immunise about six million children against polio at a cost of $640,000. The scheme grew into PolioPlus, a program that has since helped over two billion children worldwide, reducing worldwide polio cases by over 99 per cent.

Not many people know that the global movement to eradicate polio was begun by Rotary International. That might be news to many members here. Certainly Rotarians themselves know that it was Sir Clem Renouf, an Australian international president, who created the possibility for all of this. Since the start, Rotary International has raised more than a billion dollars for polio eradication. In fact,

Rotarians all over the world have worked tirelessly lobbying government and volunteering during polio vaccination campaigns. They physically go out into the field in various countries raising money and awareness. As I said, it has now reduced the incidence of polio by 99 per cent.

An announcement at the Rotary International Convention in Lisbon, Portugal recently set the stage for a bold new chapter in the partnership between Rotary and Bill and Melinda Gates. Between the Gates Foundation and Rotary International, we are going to see the eradication of polio right around the world. To summarise, an Australian and a charter member of a Rotary Club became a Rotary International president and, as a result of that, he has changed the world for many young people. I would like all members to reflect on the saying, 'Who are you to think that you can change the world?' and know that, just like Sir Clem Renouf, you are able to do exactly that.