




Speech By
Tim Nicholls

MEMBER FOR CLAYFIELD

Record of Proceedings, 14 June 2016

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Orlando Shootings; Queensland Greats

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.16 am): I join with the Premier in extending the sympathy, prayers and thoughts of the opposition—and I am sure many, many Queenslanders—to the people of Orlando and the United States with respect to the horror and terror we have seen on our TV sets in the last 48 hours as they mourn the loss of 49 of their countrymen and countrywomen—49 of their own—and the critical wounding of so many others. I have sent a message to the US Consul General Hugo Llorens, who I am sure is a friend of many in this House and a great friend of Queensland. Our deepest thoughts and sympathies are with the people of Orlando and the people of the United States as they deal with this awful, awful horror.

It is difficult to comprehend how such tragic events can unfold, and we also find it difficult to comprehend how people can act in such a fashion against any section of our community. To strike as this person has, in the way that he has, makes us all think more deeply about why people behave the way they do and the vulnerabilities we all face. It is beholden on all of us to continue to condemn these all-too-frequent attacks of terror and in particular this appalling attack on the freedom of people to associate with whom they please, when they please. Our thoughts and prayers are with loved ones as they deal with the dead and wounded and also the first responders, who were no doubt faced with carnage. We saw reports that people were asked to put up their hands if they were still alive, and that is very difficult to imagine. We join with the government and the Premier in condemning such attacks and we express our solidarity with the people of the United States. We must not allow this to curtail the freedom that we enjoy to live our lives in the way that we choose, and I do that very clearly today.

I also join with the Premier today in congratulating the Queensland Greats from the awards service on Sunday night. I had the opportunity to sit with the family of George Roberts, who died two weeks short of his 100th birthday. As the Premier said, he was a stalwart of the Townsville community and a founder and driving force behind the James Cook University. While sitting with the Roberts family I was also fortunate to sit with David Roberts, who was a partner at the law firm where I worked, so we reminisced and spoke with the Roberts family. It is fair to say that the Roberts family are still proud North Queenslanders and are still pushing for Townsville and North Queensland. In that respect it is very good to see the outcome that we saw from the Queensland Greats Sunday night.