



Speech By  
**Julianne Gilbert**


**MEMBER FOR MACKAY**

---

Record of Proceedings, 3 May 2018

**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Casey, Hon. ED**

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (2.34 pm): I rise to speak about the legacy of Edmund Casey—a legacy I am proud to carry in this place. The record of Edmund Casey needs no recounting. He was a giant amongst those who stood here in this House and a giant of the Mackay community. Mackay Labor politics over the decades has been rooted in its community and has been a force for consensus and not division. Nobody exemplified this more than Edmund Casey.

Edmund always carried his arguments by persuading people not by berating them. Edmund knew that in public life the loudest voice in the room made the weakest argument. It was a skill that Edmund needed during his party's dark days in the 1970s and 1980s when division threatened to fatally split the Labor Party. It was a skill that earned the respect of the parliamentary Labor Party, which sought Edmund to rejoin in 1977 and made him leader only a year later. Edmund could not just convince the person next to him; he could carry the whole party room with him.

During his four-year leadership, he faced off against the Bjelke-Petersen machine at its full might. It was a battle that he did not win. Even if at that time his voice was not heard outside the Labor party room, it was well and truly heard within it. The respect of Edmund's colleagues propelled him into cabinet once Labor returned to office in 1989.

Edmund's skill for bringing people together did not take from his strongly held political beliefs. Edmund was famously quoted in the *Courier-Mail* as stating that he was neither a right winger nor a left winger; he was a Labor man. He was a man of convictions who did not seek to convict his opponents. In his political life, Edmund used argument, reason and history, not abuse, derision and ignorance. Edmund Casey was in every sense of the phrase a gentleman and a scholar. The former member for Southern Downs, during the condolence motion for Edmund Casey, recounted the comments Edmund made upon his retirement to *Courier-Mail* journalist Peter Morley, namely—

I have only had one political ambition—that is that the day when I die—when they lower my body into the grave—there will be somebody at the grave who is able to say that something I had done for them had helped them. Everyone who has come through my office door, or who has contacted me, I have tried to treat as perhaps being that person.

Those who seek to praise Edmund should be wise to heed these words, lest their praise be hollow. I would like to say to the member for Mirani that the Palaszczuk government has visited his electorate many times previously, and the Premier has a lot of knowledge of his electorate.

*(Time expired)*