




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR PUMICESTONE

Record of Proceedings, 11 October 2022

MOTION

Death of Queen Elizabeth II and Accession of King Charles III, Address of Condolence and Congratulations

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (11.21 am): I rise to offer my contribution to the condolence motion for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. In 2002 the Queen said—

Change has become a constant; managing it has become an expanding discipline. The way we embrace it defines our future.

Those words were emblematic of our complex times—the Queen’s own presence was perhaps the only constant in her 70-year reign. That reign began in a time of transformative change; when a postwar world began to question the assumptions of the past and rigid class, gender and race divides ever so slowly began to unravel. That is work that we continue in this parliament today.

Many Queenslanders I think have a nuanced relationship with the monarchy, while retaining a deep appreciation for the long, dedicated and dignified personal service of the Queen. My own family history embodies that nuance. My father was two years old when Queen Elizabeth acceded to the throne, born to British parents who fled the cold and scarcity of Britain after World War II. My grandfather Denny fought in World War II, but motivated by his hatred of fascism rather than love of his sovereign. Enthusiastic about their new lives in what they persisted in calling the colonies, my grandparents never relinquished their British citizenship. My grandfather was an avowed republican, yet after his death I was surprised to find in his effects an invitation accepted to attend one of the Queen’s famous garden parties on a visit to England in the 1990s.

That nuanced relationship to the crown—and that affection for the Queen and appreciation for her service—was evident in many of our responses to the news of her death. Change may be constant, but for many in our Pumicestone community, and especially our many, many British migrants, Her Majesty represented comforting continuity. People told me that they were profoundly shocked by their own sense of loss at her passing however unsurprising it may have been. Many asked me to arrange a site where they could lay flowers in her memory, and I am grateful to the Bribie Island Lions for offering their memorial gardens for this purpose. Others shared the sentiments of Pumicestone community member Christine Lewis, herself a woman of dedicated service—

While I am in favour of an Australian Republic, I have so much admiration and respect for Queen Elizabeth II and the dedication she has given to her reign ... and I feel her passing deeply.

As we commemorate Her Majesty’s life of service, I also acknowledge the pain that many First Nations people have expressed since her death. The member for Algester often speaks of our uncomfortable shared history and the need for truth telling to shine light on those dark chapters so we can walk together for reconciliation. I have been disappointed by the condemnation of First Nations people for speaking their truth about the role of the crown, if not the Queen, in colonisation and dispossession.

For some Queenslanders the crown and the Queen represented continuity and connection—a promise made for life and faithfully kept. For others, the Queen represented imperial power with all its painful legacies. The reality is that both can be true, both are true. We need to be robust enough to have these difficult conversations with respect for each other. We need maturity and grace to hear those different points of view and understand what they mean. I believe Australians, and especially Queenslanders, are up to the job. I believe the Queen, who presided over the Commonwealth with grace and acceptance even as over half its countries moved on from their direct constitutional relationship with the British Crown, would have been up to the job.

On behalf of the Pumicestone electorate, I offer our condolences on the death of Her Majesty and congratulate King Charles III on his accession. Vale, Queen Elizabeth II.