




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

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MOTION

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

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (10.41 am): Thirteen years ago, like others in this House, I swore an oath of allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and her heirs and successors to faithfully serve the people of Queensland. I therefore rise this morning to mourn the passing of our truly extraordinary monarch, but in doing so I also rise to affirm my loyalty to King Charles III and look forward to serving as a member of the Queensland parliament under his reign. I understand that not everyone remains comfortable that the Australian head of state resides in the United Kingdom, but I am supremely confident that all Queenslanders would agree that in Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II we have been ruled by a truly wonderful and inspiring leader—steadfast, confident, dutiful, intelligent, wise, an example to all. As BBC correspondent Nicholas Witchell wrote, ‘a constant amid gale-force changes’. But whilst being a constant and steadfast leader, Her Majesty not only embraced change; she was often at the forefront of it in her quiet, dignified but significant way. Just one example was when in 1945 she joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service as a mechanic. She was the first female member of the Royal Family to join the armed services as a full-time active member.

Her reign was also defined by her tours of the Commonwealth. As other members have already mentioned, Her Majesty visited Australia 16 times and Queensland eight times. I was working in the Premier’s department when she opened CHOGM, the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, at Coolum and a member of parliament when Her Majesty visited in 2011 to console those many Queenslanders who suffered through the floods of 2010 and 2011. Following her first visit to Australia in 1954 and her very grand tour, then prime minister Robert Menzies summarised the outpouring of emotion in the following way—

It is a basic truth that for our Queen we have within us, sometimes unrealised until the moment of expression, the most profound and passionate feelings of loyalty and devotion. It does not require much imagination to realise that when eight million people spontaneously pour out this feeling they are engaging in a great act of common allegiance and common joy which brings them closer together and is one of the most powerful elements converting them from a mass of individuals to a great cohesive nation. In brief, the common devotion to the Throne is a part of the very cement of the whole social structure.

Whilst our population and that of the broader Commonwealth has grown significantly since 1954, the explanation for the outpouring of grief at Her Majesty’s passing could be explained in the very same way as then prime minister Menzies wrote.

I had the honour of attending Government House to convey the condolences of the people of the Glass House electorate. I was joined by year 10 Maleny State High School student and work experience student who was serving with me at the time Kelly Schofield as well as her mother, Sharon—possibly my electorate’s most devoted royalist. Kelly already held a deep respect for Her Majesty and I personally

could not think of a better example of servant leadership for Kelly to follow. It is certainly an example that I have sought to follow, so let me conclude with the words I wrote in the official condolence book—

Your Majesty, as someone who strives to serve the public in my role as a member of parliament, your example has been extraordinary. Your service to your realm, Commonwealth, country and family has been exemplary. You have conveyed yourself with a calmness, assuredness, strength and wit that has inspired us all. Thank you for your service. Rest in peace with those you love. You have deserved it.