



Speech By
Ann Leahy

MEMBER FOR WARREGO

Record of Proceedings, 26 May 2022

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Cory, Mr DW, AM

Ms LEAHY (Warrego—LNP) (9.49 am): David Wheatcroft Cory AM was born in Warwick in 1928. He was a farmer and a grazier on the property 'Vermont' at Warwick and Swanfels Valley. He married Margot in 1967 and his son, Ben, is here with us in the gallery today.

David Cory was elected at a by-election for the electorate of Warwick following the sudden death in office of the former member, Otto Madsen, who had only just been re-elected at a state election. My eldest sister, Dulcie, is named after Otto Madsen's daughter, Dulcie Madsen, who passed away during childbirth.

My father knew David well as they were of a similar age and both lived in the Southern Downs. Both shared a passion for all matters that concerned pests, weeds and, more often than not, wild dogs and dingo fences.

David served as the member for Warwick for 14 years. In his final speech he made the statement, 'I have made many friends and I do not think I have made any enemies over that period.' That statement really captures the kind manner in which David Cory conducted himself throughout his life.

I came to know David when he was reappointed chairman of the Rural Lands Protection Board during the Borbidge government. He served on the Rural Lands Protection Board for some 20 years. As chair of the board, we often saw him in the minister's office and out and about in the field.

He did a great amount of work on the realignment, rebuilding and maintenance of the dingo barrier fence—one of the longest structures in the world. He oversaw many of the negotiations to ensure the fence continued to protect the sheep country from wild dogs without causing too many issues with the cattle producers.

Given his primary producer experience, he always had a practical and common-sense approach. He put in place a management structure for the dingo barrier fence staff, strategically locating them throughout Queensland to ensure the integrity of the fence at all times.

David was a very hands-on chairman and took a personal interest in ensuring the dingo fence was effective. One day he went out to inspect a very expensive grid across the Alpha Road near Tambo. That grid was referred to as the 'golden grid' by the previous Rural Lands Protection Board chairman. On David's visit he confronted the local Tambo Shire Council foreman about the 'golden grid' and its costing. The foreman advised David he should take the matter up with the former mayor of the Tambo Shire Council. David soon learnt that the former mayor happened to be the minister who had appointed him as chair of the Rural Lands Protection Board. I do not think much more was said about the 'golden grid', except to say that it was an excellent piece of infrastructure that is still effective today. I recall visiting the 'golden grid' with other members of this House when one of parliamentary committees was at Tambo looking at wild dog exclusion fencing.

David understood the needs of travelling stock. He was instrumental in ensuring that travelling stock had the appropriate watering points along the long paddock. He also encouraged councils to do the same.

In 2004 he was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia for his service to the environment, particularly in the areas of rural lands protection in Queensland and through animal, weed and pest management.

He was patron of the Warwick Polocrosse Club, which hosted several world polocrosse championships. David attended them all. He did not miss a polocrosse carnival. Even when his eyesight was failing, he could still hear the games and loved attending the polocrosse. At the games his many friends and family would keep him informed of who scored and what a penalty was for.

His elixir in life was Bundaberg Rum—and in his case it proved to be correct. David left a legacy in his achievements in the electorate of Warwick and in his love for rural and regional Queensland through his work on the Rural Lands Protection Board.

His family, who are here today, can be proud of his achievements for this state. I want to acknowledge his contribution and extend my deepest condolences to his family.