

VALEDICTORY SPEECHES

House of Representatives, Canberra, 30 September 1999.

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Mr REITH (Flinders—Leader of the House)(4.06 p.m.)—This is a procedural motion with which members will be familiar, but it does provide the opportunity today to make some remarks about the impending resignation of the member for Holt. I should say for the information of members that it is intended to allow members the opportunity to make some remarks through till approximately 5.30. Provided the member for Holt has not been too aggrieved, so personally affronted, by the many remarks that will be made in the next hour and a bit, hopefully he might then take the opportunity to address this chamber and the Australian parliament for the last occasion.

In speaking on this motion, I am sure I speak on behalf of all members of the government in wishing the member for Holt well. The Prime Minister has added his personal good wishes to the member on today's occasion. When it was suggested to me that I might make a few remarks, my mind immediately went back to many separate incidents, many separate occasions, in which in one way or another we have all been involved with the member for Holt. He of course has been a significant contributor to Australian politics for a very long period of time. The first thing that I think of is the pressures and the tribulations of members of family. It is good that his wife, Merran, and his daughter and son—Caitlin and Eamon—are able to be with us because, for all the difficulties of those

who practise politics, there are of course particular pressures on members of the family. No more can that be the case than with someone who has served a long time as a Minister for Foreign Affairs, which the member for Holt was for many years. So I start by paying tribute to Mrs Evans and the family for the support that they have given Gareth in his time but really for the contribution, through Gareth, that they have made to the important work of the foreign minister.

Also my thoughts go back to more entertaining moments in the time of the member for Holt. I think of him promising to garrotte Bronwyn Bishop. The minister, fortunately, is here.

Mr Melham—You want him to finish the job, do you?

Mr Beazley—As I recollect, you seconded the motion!

Mr REITH—I knew that would bring forth a smile from the other side. It was testament of course to her unrelenting pressure applied to the government, as it then was, in the Senate that brought forth such an injudicious remark. He was very much involved, as I understand it, in the decision of the member for Dickson to move across from the Democrats to the Australian Labor Party.

Ms Kernot—He hasn't had any afternoon teas with you, Peter?

Mrs Bronwyn Bishop—Only afternoon teas?

Mr REITH—I will restrain myself in that regard. If the Treasurer were here, he would start with a reference to the member for Holt QC, SA, MP. If we go back further there would be comments about the famous incident of the F111s flying over Tasmania when he got the title of 'Biggles' in the aftermath of the big debate about dams. In the foreign affairs department I suppose people will think of flying ashtrays and the Cooper defence—all incidents along the way in a long political career.

However, when thinking of the member for Holt, I would also say that he has always been a person interested in ideas. That is a very important aspect of politics. One could say many things about Australian politics, but I actually think that Australian politics is often run at a very high standard and that people are genuinely interested in ideas. They are interested in the history of political development in Australia and they are interested in substantive debate.

I know one of the great interests of the member for Holt has been constitutional reform. The history of constitutional reform is littered with unsuccessful referendum proposals, and I think he was associated with some of those in his time. But, whether successful or

unsuccessful, a debate about the Australian Constitution is one of the most important debates that you can have. I suppose it is fair to say, 'Well, it's important but it's not as important as jobs or other issues of the day,' but the reality is that the Constitution represents the rules for politics. Australia has a very successful democracy and it is successful because, in part, people of calibre are prepared to make a contribution to the political process, and there is no doubt that the member for Holt falls into that category.

His interest in constitutional issues reflects his involvement at an academic level. There he has been involved in many aspects of the constitutional debate. A little publication I came across a few years ago demonstrates this. This was a reprint basically of articles which appeared in a labour movement magazine called Tocsin. He might remember it. This was published in the 1890s but the reprint was in 1977 and the member for Holt provided a foreword for that particular document. He said in that 1997 reprint of extracts:

But Tocsin 's criticisms of the inherently anti-democratic character of the Senate chamber, one where one man's vote is equal to eight or nine other men's votes, remains as valid today as when it was first penned and a standing rebuke to the pretensions of that chamber to make and break governments formed in the popular house.

An understanding of the history of the constitutional development of Australia is relevant to the debates that we have today. It is relevant to an understanding of the ideas which form such an essential element of the democratic freedoms that we enjoy. So I pay tribute to the member's interest and active involvement in the constitutional debate in Australia.

Of course, in foreign affairs there are many ongoing issues of great controversy, even today, but I think it would be fair to say that there would be a shared view about his contribution to some issues. While perhaps not often talked about in this place, I think the subject of United Nations reform is a very important one for the international community, and there the member for Holt was very active in his time as Minister for Foreign Affairs. I know that because, when I was for a short time the shadow minister for foreign affairs, I was lucky enough to be in New York to observe the goings-on of the UN and, in his own inimitable style, the member for Holt had organised a seminar or some such discussion group of other countries interested in this.

Mr Melham—You used to go to the ILO too, didn't you?

Mr REITH—I have been there a couple of times, but let me refer to this. He gathered together a number of countries of like mind to talk about reform of the United Nations which is the premier institutional body that provides an opportunity for the countries of the world to get together to talk about important issues. Whilst the reform of the UN is not front-page news in the Australian or the Age or the Sydney Morning Herald, it is a

terribly important issue, and countries like Australia should be at the forefront of reform of the United Nations. In his strong intellectual style, the former Minister for Foreign Affairs made an important contribution to that debate.

Cambodia is one of the other foreign affairs issues with which he was closely associated. He played a leading role in putting together Australia's participation in Cambodia. That was a very constructive role for our country to play in the affairs of a country within our region. The pursuit of democracy is long and hard but, in the end, our objectives can be achieved only if we play a constructive role with other countries in the region. I add that to the list of successes in which the member for Holt has played an important part.

More recently he has moved from the Senate to the lower house. That is always a difficult move in Australian politics. Relevance deprivation syndrome affects anybody who has been a very active member of the government and finds themselves not only in a different chamber but also in opposition. But you can be constructive in opposition. That is an objective that some on the other side should pursue more often.

Mr Beazley—Like you used to.

Mr REITH—Like we used to do.

Mr Melham interjecting—

Mr REITH—Well, in the 1988 referendum it was not a good proposal. We said so, and I do not walk away from what we said.

Mr Melham interjecting—

Mr REITH—Defending the Australian Constitution against proposals put up by the Labor Party is honourable work. I would go so far as to say that the people who voted no in the constitutional referenda in Australia basically have been right, because we have maintained a very good constitutional system. That is not to say that further reform is not justified—in fact, I think it is—but it has to be the right reform and it has to match the constitutional temperament of the Australian people.

The member for Holt and I were personally associated when we were both charged by our leaders a year or two ago to negotiate a resolution on the question of racial tolerance. It can sometimes be difficult to find a form of words which will attract bipartisan support. That was one issue where we worked together and came to a sensible outcome. The debate that flowed from that was constructive and inched us in the right direction.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to make these few remarks. I

pay tribute to the member for Holt for the work that he has done as a member of the Australian parliament. Our parliament is only as good as the quality of members' contributions and the support from their families. I wish the member for Holt well. I am sure it will not be the last we will hear of him—if not here, in the Australian community at large.

Mr BEAZLEY (Brand—Leader of the Opposition)(4.19 p.m.)—Mr Speaker, this is a sad occasion. We are farewelling a member of parliament who, as we look back over this century, is arguably in the top dozen parliamentarians who have been elected to either this chamber or the other place. He is without question the greatest foreign minister that this country has ever had. He is one of the longest serving members of federal Labor cabinet, and one of three people who are the longest serving members of federal Labor ministries. He has had a career in politics that anybody in this country would be proud to have had, and he has contributed more than just about anyone else who has served for the length of time that he has.

This is the fourth occasion this week that I have had the opportunity to say something kindly about Gareth. The other three have involved aspects of a roast. My party colleagues have heard on those particular occasions, replete with the appropriate linguistic structure, great stories of Gareth's times and tribulations, but I will not regale the House with any of them here. Given his record, and given the presence in the gallery of his family, it is appropriate that, as the leader of his party, I set down his record in some more formal way as we farewell him. It will necessarily be brief but, nevertheless, it will be a very full accounting.

He served as a Victorian senator from 1978 to 1996. He has been the member for Holt since 1996. He was deputy leader in the Senate from 1987 to 1993, and leader of the Labor Party in the Senate from 1993 to 1996. Given our status at that time, it meant that he was deputy leader of the government and then Leader of the Government in the Senate for the best part of a decade. He was Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the previous term of parliament.

During his time in parliament, whilst I intend to say most about his period of time as the foreign minister of this country, he was also Attorney-General from 1983 to 1984. He was Minister for Resources and Energy from 1984 to 1987, and he was Minister for Transport and Communications from 1987 to 1988, before becoming the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Apart from his achievements in parliament and the recognition that has accrued to him here, he was made Australian Humanist of the Year in 1990, he was given the freedom of

the city of Sydney in 1993, he won the Anzac Peace Prize in 1994 for his work in Cambodia and he was awarded \$150,000 in 1995—which went into trust in the Department of Foreign Affairs—for the Grawemeyer Prize for Ideas Improving World Order. He served on the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, the Board of Trustees of the International Crisis Group, the International Council of the Asia Society, the International Advisory Board of UN Studies at Yale, the Council of the Asia-Australia Institute and the Advisory Board of the Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies at the Australian National University.

Something that was said by a friend of his, Judge Michael Kirby, is probably apposite at this point before we analyse anything further, and that was that Gareth has never really willingly allowed his head to disappear from any position he has ever held and if it were possible for Gareth—not in terms of his own capacity for work, because he could basically continue to hold any position he has ever held simultaneous with any of the other positions, but peoples' tolerance would not permit it—he would still like to be minister for resources, Attorney-General, foreign affairs minister, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, perhaps

even Leader of the Opposition, Prime Minister, Leader of the Government in the House, Leader of the Government in the Senate and Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate. He could in fact have held all those positions simultaneously but, as I said, for questions of tolerance. He also would have made a very good Treasurer of this nation.

Gareth is one of those extraordinary figures who is totally fascinated not only by the world of politics but also the world in which he finds himself. As I remember Gareth when I first came into caucus—apart from his self-deprecating remarks about having been given by his colleagues at the University of Melbourne two suitcases to transport his ego to the place—he was basically then a man concerned about Australia's general civic culture. He raised civil liberty issues; constitutional issues—the quality of our Constitution; the reform of Labor Party rules, Labor Party ideology and the socialist objective, as it then was; the reform generally of attitudes in relation to race relations in this country—and you could go on. It is an extraordinary list.

Gareth constantly sought a field of combat in the world of ideas. I remember when I had to carry some of his duties in the House of Representatives while he was in the Senate. I was Special Minister of State while he was Attorney-General. I said to Gareth, 'When I am in a bit of trouble, Gareth, I have always in my very short ministerial career found it useful to get into the trenches, haul the cover down over myself and just emit the merest possible signal. You seem to seek the battleground and expose yourself on it. It is all right for you, but the problem is that you create questions for me.' But that was Gareth. There was never an issue that he could not argue.

I remember being told by the Hansard people that Gareth, even though he fitted twice the verbiage that anyone else was capable of into the timeslots available to us—and we saw a final demonstration of that the other day—spoke in sentences and paragraphs and was the easiest person to record. The extraordinary mental discipline was there. That is the mental discipline that basically established his reputation. But that is not the only thing on which his reputation survives and prospers. The main thing was his role as foreign minister of this nation. It was not sufficient for him simply to respond to crises as they occurred; it was sufficient for him only to develop a conceptual framework for a structure underpinning Australian foreign policy—an objective to work to, a standard against which foreign policy could be judged.

He was brought up in the same era as I was, I suppose, when foreign policy was simply a tool of domestic politics and very much against the national interest of Australians. He recognised that that endangered the life of the nation, that it endangered its possibilities for survival and that if foreign policy was not capable of being more than that, then the nation itself could not survive and prosper. So he devised a strategy for middle powers. Only one other foreign minister attempted to do that—I do not think he did it anywhere near as well as Gareth—and that was Evatt.

Gareth put in place a structure for the survival of middle powers in international politics for the contribution they could make to the development of an international civic culture which would ensure everybody's security, be it on arms control matters—the elimination of particular classes and categories of weapons; be it on crisis management—the development of international strategies on crisis management to ensure that outcomes were secured diplomatically rather than by fighting wars; or decent international citizenship, when it related to terrorism and the transportation of illicit substances. He managed to encompass a whole range of things within the structure of a definition of a good international citizen for a middle power.

It really saddens me to see people denigrating that particular capacity, because in the end, while they might secure narrow political advantage by denigrating it, what they do is pass on to a subsequent generation a stone. They do not contribute to the long-term survival of the Australian nation; they in fact detract from it. Nothing that Gareth ever did in international politics—whether he has been in error or whether he has been right—detracted from the security of Australian citizens. That is something to be said for a foreign minister in a dangerous world at the time of the collapse of all the certainties in international politics that went with the collapse of the postwar order.

He will have something unique apart from his status, and that is that he was the foreign minister who presided over the transition of Australia's participation as an international citizen from a global system structured around the total ideological clash and the adversarial relationship between two superpowers into one where the political system was much more diffusive in many ways in the region around us and much more dangerous. It

is an enormous tribute to him that, as foreign minister, he was able to negotiate those shoals and at the same time create a role for Australia in negotiating other nations through the same shoals.

Apart from that global dimension, he understood firmly that the starting point of our international diplomacy was to address our security within this region. As Minister for Defence, I had occasion to know that Defence tended to run the foreign policy in the immediate region around us. Gareth came in and said, 'No, this is a foreign affairs issue.' We were glad to concede it, as we saw the focus come on to the area as he tried to create in the region around us conditions of security.

It was an extraordinary effort and an effort also against a background in which you would not automatically agree with those who had been or continued to be your friends or necessarily disagree with those who had been your enemies. But you could sometimes contribute to making previous enemies of your friends into their friends—for example, Gareth's diplomacy in Cambodia that made the United States a friend of the emerging forces in Cambodia. Being able to mobilise the United States and the international diplomatic community behind those efforts in Cambodia stands out as an individual triumph. It is possible for these things to be undermined in time, but it was for that that he was recommended for a Nobel Peace Prize and for that that he received that Anzac award from the RSL. It was a truly extraordinary achievement.

Finally, there was his role as a parliamentarian. He was a great parliamentarian in one of the great democratic chambers globally; not so much this one—though I have served all my of my years in this one—as the party balance and the exigencies of an executive in the House of Representatives renders this difficult, and we make those already difficult circumstances even more difficult by our general behaviour in this place.

Mr Martin Ferguson—Speak for yourself.

Mr BEAZLEY—I am. But the Australian Senate is a different body. It is a very great debating chamber. As I sat and watched Gareth handle with two days' notice the entire native title legislation—the most complex piece of legislation, and I include within that the recent tax packages that have been put through—I saw an extraordinary parliamentary performance. I know how it began in the Clerk's office, and I know how it concluded in the Prime Minister's office. I would be happy to tell other persons in this place about the conclusion and the beginning, but not in this place. Parliamentary language has not advanced sufficiently far for us to be able to incorporate the truth of the remarks of the then Leader of the Government in the Senate.

Gareth is going to be deeply missed by all of us. I have to express to his family our thanks for letting us have him, because over the bulk of your lives—particularly Eamon and

Caitlin—you have not. You have had to share him with us and, from time to time—in fact, most of the time—we have had the lion's share. I am grateful for your tolerance and for the support you have given him over the years, and I am grateful for what he has done for us.

Mr McGAURAN (Gippsland—Minister for the Arts and the Centenary of Federation) (4.33 p.m)—As a fellow Victorian and on behalf of the National Party, I am very glad of the opportunity to be able to rise to recognise and acknowledge the very significant achievements and record of service of the member for Holt. My task is both extremely difficult and somewhat easy. It is very difficult because the honourable member has spent most of his career far removed from most of us on this side of the House, either in the Senate or as a member of the cabinet in a leadership position. So, with rare exceptions, we have never been able to properly know him as an individual and, therefore, have to rely very much on the public presentation, which we all know is not always—indeed, is rarely—the true measure of a person's worth.

But it is easy because the honourable member is not a hypocrite. He would hardly expect me or anyone on this side to exaggerate or overstate our affection for him. But he can be assured of our deep respect. I should not speak on behalf of everyone in the government, because there are some who will have known him personally and as an individual and, therefore, would be able to say that he is the most wonderful, nicest person ever to inhabit these chambers.

But we can rely very heavily on his remarkable achievements. By any measure he has been a significant figure in the Australian political and public policy landscape for almost 20 years. It was as a law student at Melbourne University in the second half of the 1970s that I first heard about the mythical Gareth Evans. It seems to me that there has been one mystifying characteristic of Gareth Evans over all of these years, which is that people know of him and talk of him, yet you can never quite find somebody who will substantiate the wilder stories about the honourable member for Holt.

Mr McMullan—They're all true.

Mr McGAURAN—I will have to take the member for Fraser at his word. There are all of these supposed high-tension outbreaks of anger, at times, and demanding requirements of those who work around him but, when you do meet people from the various government departments and from his personal staff, it seems to me that they have nothing but praise for him as both an individual and an employer. Nonetheless, there are always going to be stories surrounding the honourable member for Holt so that at times he becomes larger than life; he certainly was when I was a student at the University of Melbourne Law

School. People would talk of his intellectual prowess, his energy and his commitment to ideology. It seems—again, from the outside—that he has not changed enormously over all of these years.

His departure is a significant event for the parliament and for the ALP. He has been a remarkable figure in Australian politics, serving—as we know only too well—at the highest levels of government over a prolonged period and with many achievements that he, the rest of the parliament and, indeed, the Australian community can take pride in.

One area in which I always thought he excelled, above all else, was the portfolio of resources and energy, for which I do not think he has been given enough credit. I know he always thinks of this as a humdrum period of some dowdiness, lacking the glamour of Attorney-General or foreign affairs. Nonetheless, there are many people in the resources sector who believe to this day that he was one of the best—and, for some, the best—resources and energy minister for a very long time. Who would ever forget his assessment of Coronation Hill as being 'clapped out buffalo country'? He was brave, adventurous, daring and controversial in that portfolio, which has not been repeated.

On behalf of the government we wish the honourable member well. We know that whatever he does it will be the furthest thing from retirement anyone could possibly imagine. He has served his party, the Senate and the House of Representatives extremely well. He should take pride in that. Life in parliament can be full of as many disappointments as successes. I believe the honourable member, through dint of his own efforts, has achieved a great many more successes than disappointments, either personal or professional. I wish his wife Dr Merran Evans all the very best now that she has Gareth more to herself. All of our spouses would wish that to be so.

Finally, the honourable member for Holt is not always known for his patience, tolerance or graciousness because of his thriving intellect and strength of character, but I have seen him display extraordinary tolerance. Both of us were at a function, which he may not recall, in 1996. We were guests of a leading Australian company at the performance of an international—supposedly—star who was to perform some piano pieces for us. The international star, I am afraid, was under the weather to an extraordinary extent, to the point where he could hardly make it to the piano stool. Nonetheless, it was a long performance; it went on for hours. We sat there and afterwards joined the company and, whilst most of us were grumbling and complaining about a wasted evening, Gareth Evans—and I was with him for most of the time afterwards—never said a word of complaint and behaved as if he had just heard one of the great performers of our time.

Mr Kerr—He is tone deaf.

Mr McGAURAN—He is tone deaf, I am told. He probably thought it was a great

performance. That is my only insight into Gareth Evans the man and it has just been somewhat swept aside. I do not want to be disillusioned at this last moment. We wish you well. You have, even to the end, gone out kicking, with some well aimed barbs at the government. Therefore, you have not petered out; you are going out on the same high with which you have served the nation.

Mr CREAN (Hotham—Deputy Leader of the Opposition)(4.40 p.m.)—I wish to join with the Leader of the Opposition, the minister and others who will speak in this debate in wishing Gareth well in his retirement. We will miss him here because he has been an institution in the place for 21 years. I have only had to experience half of that here, but the other part of his parliamentary career I was very closely associated with in another role associated with the labour movement. It was a privilege to be with him last night. It was a lovely night, a bit ribald, I suppose. I think some of us were suffering a bit this morning from the after-effects, but it was fantastic to have Merran and Eamon and Caitlin there with us and to hear the history told in entertaining terms.

I have known Gareth for more than his 21 years in this place. Over the last three years we have been neighbours in the seats that we represent, Holt and Hotham. A lot of issues have crossed both boundaries. I have had a long association with him. We barrack for different footballs teams, he for Hawthorn and I for North Melbourne. In the 1970s they were the teams to beat. They were great rivals. There were great contests. We emulated that some three years ago, to his advantage. I wished him well after that and we had a continuing great working relationship. I am pleased to say that out of the exercise, though, at least his son has seen the direction for football support. Eamon is a North Melbourne supporter. I am pleased we have had some influence in that direction within the family.

Of the 21 years that he served in the parliament, 13 of them were as a minister and 18 were in the Senate. It is great to see John Faulkner, the now Senate opposition leader, with us in the gallery today. He succeeded Gareth in the role as opposition leader in the Senate, a role that Gareth carried out not only with great distinction but with great dedication. He was a self-starter. In politics there are people who are the self-starters, the people who can take the initiative, and those who just do what they are expected to do. Gareth was by any standards the best of the self-starters. There was nothing that you had to really ask Gareth to do. He knew instinctively what to do and he knew how to carry it out. All of us who witnessed the Mabo debate saw it demonstrated by him par excellence in that exercise. There were many other debates he had to involve himself in, but I think in terms of parliamentary performance that will go down as testimony to the encapsulation of a brilliant parliamentary career.

The other thing that was terrific about Gareth was that not only was he the greatest foreign minister this country has had; he was a great cabinet contributor. Again, there are people

who participate in ministries and cabinets who can master their briefs, but the true mark of a great cabinet minister is one who not only masters the brief and leads, but one who can contribute in the other debates that are essential for government to determine its positions on issues from time to time. Of course, Gareth brought to the cabinet in those years that I was with him great corporate knowledge because he had been Attorney-General, he had been resources minister, he had been communications minister. He then became foreign minister.

I remember opening his electorate office when he moved from Attorney-General to resources, something he has described as being the down point in his life. I recall saying at the opening that he was too good a person to let that setback get him down, that what he would do would be to master that task and move on. And of course, that he did.

Gareth is a person of fierce intellect but he is also a person of fierce emotions. It is those contrasts that I think endear him to us and from which all the various stories come. We know about his self-deprecation. I sometimes think self-deprecation can go a bit far, especially if you are in public life, but I did not realise how so until last night. The story has often been told about the F111 flight—it has been mentioned here already—over the Gordon-below-Franklin Dam to assess what was being done, and of course Gareth got the nickname of Biggles. I had always thought that this was a pretty unfair description and that these journalists were being particularly harsh until I found out last night that when Gareth fronted to the doorstep to explain himself, he says that he said to the journalists, 'I hope you're not going to call me Biggles for this.' This is just one example of when self-deprecation, said in the wrong forum, can be used to your disadvantage.

As I said, I join with the Leader of the Opposition in acknowledging his role as foreign minister. I, too, believe that he can genuinely wear the mantle of the greatest foreign minister that this country has had. His role in Cambodia, again, is another one of those high points and one that was internationally recognised—again, a point that was referred to by the Leader of the Opposition. One has cause to reflect, I think, in the current circumstances, on the way in which Gareth set about the follow-up and the detail associated with Australia's involvement and engagement in Cambodia, and we can contrast it with what we have been debating in this place about the current government's performance in relation to Timor. Many significant contrasts can be made, but I think the Cambodian exercise and his involvement show the right way to go about it, and I think we have seen a number of flaws in the current government's approach to a more significant circumstance right on our doorstep.

Gareth is a person of great passion. He is also a person with a great capacity for work. I have said that every one of the tasks that he undertook he mastered. I have never seen a person get across the subject and the detail so effectively, so well, as Gareth. People talk about workaholics in life; he doubles them up. I have never seen Gareth as someone who

has an idle moment. I agree with the Leader of the House that there are difficulties in the transition from one house to the other: it is a consequence of their being, essentially, different chambers. The leader has remarked upon the nature of the Senate and, of course, we who have been in this House know it and have grown up in a different sort of culture in the way in which, because of the numbers here and the way they are arranged over the other side, you simply approach things differently.

I think the important thing about Gareth was that he understood the importance of utilising in opposition the corporate knowledge to give the Labor Party the opportunity to renew itself and to develop the policy initiatives that it needed to take to the next election if it was to be in the game. I want to pay tribute to the work that was done by Gareth in coordinating the policy work, the policy rewrite of the party that took us to the last election. I might say that there are people now who say that we are a party without policies. No-one said that in the last election. In fact, when we put that policy manifesto down, when the Leader of the Opposition launched it in Brisbane, everyone recognised the depth, the content and the new initiatives that were contained in it. So let us understand who was responsible for the coordination of it, and let us also remind ourselves, when people want to engage in the phoney debate about where the policies are, to look to that document and to look to the ongoing work that we have been involved in. The standard that Gareth set for us in our first term of opposition has been a benchmark from which we need to project ourselves.

Finally, I will just say that I wish him well, as all of us do, in the ballot for UNESCO. It is not just a prestigious international position; it is an essential international body. When one looks at the disadvantage around the world, when one looks at the fact that what is needed is education and opportunity for it and access to it, it is the international forum that needs to drive that agenda forward. Currently structured, it has not been doing that. Under his leadership it will. That is why, in terms of talent, he should walk this ballot in. But all of us who have had involvement in the way in which these ballots are conducted know how difficult that task is. The best person does not always win. He has been out there campaigning—as we know he can, as I certainly know he can—and we know that he will give it his best shot. We wish him well in that regard.

We know that that will mean a change of direction and habitation for Merran. She has been a terrific support for him through all this time. Carole and I have been great friends with both of them. We see each other a lot. We have not seen Gareth as much recently because of the campaigning activity. His success has been due to her support. I think, like every successful person in public life, the fact that they have the support of family is an essential ingredient.

We are here today to salute you, Gareth, but to also salute Merran as well. We thank you for the contribution. We wish you well in the immediate task at hand, but we know that whatever you tackle in the future you will continue to make a great contribution to this

nation and to represent it internationally with great distinction.

Mr McMULLAN (Fraser)(4.52 p.m.)—These debates are both very easy and very hard to speak in. They are very easy because you are saying words about a friend and colleague that come easily. They are very difficult because, having followed the leader and the deputy leader, it can easily become repetitious. I want simply, at the start, to endorse the remarks that Kim and Simon have made and add to them those things which I hope might have an extra perspective in terms of the relationship we have had, particularly as fellow refugees from the Senate and as people who have worked together closely as ministers.

There are two things that have been mentioned with respect to Gareth that must be said and I think will be said by everybody. They are that it is very easy to speak favourably about someone who was both a nominee for the Nobel Peace Prize and who engineered the successful passage of the Mabo legislation, who was, for the period that I worked closely with him, which really started in 1981 when I became the national secretary, the policy engine and policy advocate for this party and in every way a larger than life character.

I had the opportunity to share service in the cabinet with Gareth, to share a portfolio, to share common interests and a friendship. Others have said, and I merely endorse, that he was a remarkable contributor in the cabinet where it is always valued when people contribute outside their portfolios, although it is not always valued when you are the person in whose portfolio he is making the contribution. You usually think, if you have a pretty good argument and you go to the cabinet, that it will probably go through because everyone is obsessed with their own area, and it is going all right until you hear a cough and Gareth starts to speak. Suddenly you are battling a bit harder than you thought you would. It did not happen to me when I was in the trade portfolio because we used to take the submissions jointly. But earlier, from time to time, I had that problem and I saw others have it in spades.

In 1994, what I found when I came to share for two years the foreign affairs and trade portfolio was how remarkably easy it was. People talk about the controversial aspects of the now member for Holt's, the then Senator Evans's character, but I have to say I did not find it personally. In the intense pressure of working closely together on controversial issues for two years, when there was that capacity for boundaries to cause conflict—where you disagreed about whose responsibility A was or B was and, instead of concentrating on the main game and you got into those debilitating arguments about who should be saying what and to whom—we were always able to focus on the big picture and he was in fact a remarkably easy colleague to deal with, but incredibly effective.

We travelled together, although not often—I suppose the rest of the world would say that they were not ready for both of us at the same time. We did not often get the chance to travel out of the country together but to APEC we always did. What struck me was the respect in which he was held by every other minister at APEC. Like other international fora, it is essentially a series of set piece speeches being made for the record and people are walking in and out. I know only two ministers who had an international reputation so that, when they went to speak in an international forum, everybody came in. One was Paul Keating at the IMF and the other was Gareth Evans at APEC. I am sure it was the case at other forums but that is the one that I shared with him. People would come and listen because they knew they were not going to hear just another bland recitation of the standard message. There were always ideas and challenges. I think half of them came because they were not sure they were going to agree with the message, but they certainly wanted to hear it and knew something interesting and effective would be said.

He also set a very cracking pace in the portfolio. I used to derive some amusement for quite some time when we shared the briefs that came across from the departments. I would get the ones that had Gareth's comments on them and he would apparently get the ones with my comments. I used to laugh because Gareth would write his notes on the bottom and, because his handwriting is so execrable, somebody in his staff used to write for the department what he had actually written. I thought this was really funny until there was a mix-up and I found someone was doing it to me as well. I then realised that nobody in parliament seems to be able to write. I have discovered, since moving to the House of Representatives, that it is certainly true about the current leader and deputy leader. Nobody can read any of our writing. So communication is exciting, interesting and open to all sorts of interpretations.

The other experience we had last time we travelled together was to the Papua New Guinea joint ministerial meeting in December 1995. In many ways, it was not a memorable meeting. There were some issues in terms of the bilateral relationship that might be discussed in some other forum—they are not appropriate for today. We did conclude with a game of golf. Gareth was playing with a senior representative of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and I was playing with a very good golfer who was a burglar about his handicap and was a minister in the Papua New Guinea government. He was so good that it was a close game, even though I was terrible. We got to the last hole—this is a true story—and we were level. It was a team thing where you take it in turns having shots. Gareth got the ball close to the hole. If the foreign affairs official sank the putt they won and if he missed it they lost. I have never seen a more nervous deputy secretary in my life, but there were two remarkable things. Firstly, he missed and was relatively calm and, secondly, he is still in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. So Gareth is a person of some tolerance, as others have said.

I will be very brief about these matters because I know others want to speak. We shared a passion for the arts which led to enjoyment and some common policy initiatives in our

various portfolios. I am very proud of some things we were able to do together, driven by his perception, breadth and understanding in the international arena both for the elite performing and visual arts tourism program and for the initiative which he was able to push through with regard to a promotion in India that created the capacity to transform our relationship with that very important neighbour of ours. India is too often unregarded as a neighbour because Australia is just coming to grips with the fact that we are in the Pacific. We have not yet worked out that we are in the Indian Ocean as well and that India is a very important neighbour. Gareth did realise that and pushed that through. It was an important initiative. It is a pity more was not made of it. I hope in future we will have the opportunity to build on it.

Lastly, I want to thank Gareth as a friend, both personally and on behalf of my wife, Robyn, and daughter, Kate. We had the chance to briefly enjoy a remarkable holiday with him in the United States where we were both due to attend meetings in Atlanta—from opposition. As you could imagine, we travelled together at breakneck speed both in the car and when we were walking. He had inexhaustible curiosity and energy. Even then he was always in the search for new information and ideas. It was great fun and great excitement, and my family have never forgotten it. I am grateful for the experience to work together, the shared interests and the shared friendship.

Like the deputy leader and the leader have said, I very much hope that Gareth is successful in the ballot for UNESCO. Of course we all hope that our friends win ballots in which they find themselves; we all hope that when there is an Australian candidate that the Australian candidate wins. But I really think it is very important for UNESCO. It can be a very important organisation for the world. When you talk about advancing the world by the pursuit of knowledge and the enhancement of culture, you cannot think of a better person to run the organisation than Gareth Evans. I hope for him, for us, but more importantly for them, that he wins. Best wishes.

Honourable members—Hear, hear!

Mr KERR (Denison)(5.01 p.m.)—I will make just a few remarks with respect to Gareth's contribution in an area that, it has been repeatedly suggested, he himself sees as not perhaps the area of his greatest triumph. But I actually regard him as having made a singular contribution to the revitalisation of Labor at two periods. We have had a focus on the period of Labor as we left government after 13 years and the period of opposition, where his contribution in terms of platform development and policy development has been acknowledged. But there was a previous contribution which I also recall. Gareth's motivation, drive and energy, in refreshing our capacity to come into government in the period when Hayden was leader and then in the period when the transition was made to Hawke, made a very singular contribution. It was in terms of both policy development and

the regeneration of ideas that flowed from the Whitlam era, where he had picked up some of the initiatives that had not been completed.

He wrote a book on the constitutional developments which were at issue in the Whitlam government. He formed a basis for us, having a very strong intellectual grasp of the issues that he would start addressing as Attorney-General and which were carried through, perhaps with less pace but with still the same thematics, by successive Labor attorneys-general—not the least by Michael Lavarch in the last government. I was briefly Attorney-General—and I might say, Gareth, your one year was a triumph of longevity compared to the period for which I held office. The only thing I take comfort from is that there was an Attorney in the panoply of Labor attorneys-general who held office for a shorter period than I did—and that of course is Gough Whitlam. I take some small comfort from that.

You were able to make that intellectual contribution in that process of renewal. Your achievements in the term when you were Attorney-General were significant, but the lasting strength is the legacy of ideas that went with a reforming Labor government. Your capacity for retaining a grasp of the technical skills of a first-rate constitutional lawyer was shown through the Mabo process. I believe there is yet one final office that you might fit for Australia's constitutional betterment. That would be an appointment to the High Court, should you ever have that opportunity advanced to you by the government of Australia. Perhaps it would be a courageous decision by a government of whatever colour to make such an appointment. Nonetheless, I believe that should you ever have that opportunity you would grace the court and make a very significant contribution to the jurisprudence of Australia.

That is not to say that you have always been the easiest of colleagues to work with. Sometimes I have had red ears as a result of being chipped at by you, and I am sure there are few of our colleagues who have not. The one thing I am now absolutely delighted about, though, is that, as a result of the comments of the Leader of the House about your poor handwriting, we now know that when you were falsely quoted as referring to Kakadu as 'clapped-out buffalo country' it was an error of transcription and what you had actually written was 'high class buffer country'.

Mr RONALDSON (Ballarat)(5.04 p.m)—I am aware that the honourable member for Holt's colleagues will want to speak, and I will make this very short. It is fair to say that, while the nature of Australian politics means that we do not necessarily support the endeavours of our political opponents, we can respect the input that leads into the outcomes that flow from there. I have no doubt that Gareth Evans's ability to put his heart and soul and 24 hours into anything that he has done is a mark of the man who will leave us today. I have two very vivid memories of Gareth Evans, one not so pleasant and one of

great respect. I will deal with the second first.

I remember when I was first elected in March 1990, and indeed right through until the Labor Party lost the last election, it did not matter where you were in any capacity, Gareth Evans was working. Whether it was in an airport lounge or on a plane, Gareth Evans was always there with a huge bundle of work and he obviously gave 110 per cent to anything that he ever did. I think that is a mark of the man.

The second not so pleasant experience was in 1972 when the Hon. Gareth Evans was my lecturer in constitutional history or constitutional law—I cannot remember which one it was. He was a very spirited lecturer. There were not a large number of hours you were required to attend law school in those days. I think if you had 12 hours a week you had done something terribly wrong or had chosen the wrong subjects. But certainly constitutional law was one that I was involved with. And while I had achieved first-class honours in every other subject at the end of first year, I had an oral supplementary exam in constitutional history. I very foolishly and naively—and I now accept the fact and I'll fess up to it—walked into that supplementary exam shortly after the December election with a Liberal Party badge on my lapel. Gareth Evans looked me in the eye and said, 'I hope you haven't taken too much time out of your day to come here today.' I took the hint and hopped back in the car and went back to the hay-carting truck that I had left at about 6 o'clock that morning to come down for the oral examination.

Gareth, as a fellow Victorian, I think you will leave this place with a great deal of respect on both sides of the political fence. I wish you and your family my very best for what lies ahead. Obviously, with the events that are coming up shortly, everyone on this side of the House wishes you well from an Australian parliament point of view. From a personal point of view, I am sure that you will very much enjoy some time with your family. Families are the great sufferers in Australian politics, and I am sure we are all slightly jealous that you personally will now have time to spend some more time with your family.

Ms KERNOT (Dickson)(5.08 p.m.)—Several years ago, in an interview, Michelle Grattan asked me to nominate some international political figures that I admired. I recall mentioning Franklin Roosevelt and Gro Harlem Brundtland, amongst others. Then she said, 'What about in Australia?' I have to say I mentioned Janine Haines, but I also mentioned Gareth Evans. She seemed a little surprised, but several years down the track I still stand by that judgment.

Much of that judgment came through the negotiations on the Mabo legislation, which began in November-December 1993. I had previously only thought of Gareth as a particularly verbose foreign minister, using every second of time in question time with

judiciously planted dorothy dixers on a daily basis. I was really, I suppose, admiring when, as well as being foreign minister, he became Leader of the Government in the Senate: having got off a plane at 6 a.m., that very day he would be across all the most complicated briefs in question time on the diverse range of subjects which leaders of the government would get at the time.

I think the speed and depth of his intellect, his stamina and his discipline were absolutely central to the success of the Mabo debate—absolutely central. I would like to tell you why. We others in the debate had taken about six months to get across the detail of both the bill and the hundreds of amendments that were drafted. A couple of days before the debate was due to begin, I recall Gareth saying, 'I'd better have a look at this stuff. It is going to happen soon.' About a day later, in a meeting which I convened and persuaded Gareth to attend to sort out the common ground in the hundreds of amendments floating around—and which produced the legendary running sheet which John Faulkner referred to last night—I recall seeing some really important leadership, which we do not always see in this place.

There we were, in a room, the so-called A team and the B team, with some other QCs, some public servants and the politicians. This man, who had only just read the legislation, decided to take us through the difficult areas. The public servants gave a point of view. I remember Ron Castan QC, at the other end of the table, putting a different case. I remember seeing Gareth's brain just whirr over immediately. He said, 'Excuse me a moment,' and took the public servants outside. I went to witness. He said to them, 'I'm sorry, we are not going to do what you say we are going to do. It is intellectually indefensible. I have listened to Mr Castan's arguments and I am not prepared to go in there and argue something which is morally and intellectually indefensible with respect to indigenous Australians.' And he said, 'I will tell Paul Keating.' And he did. What Ron Castan and Gareth Evans negotiated with respect for indigenous Australians was legislated on their behalf. And why was it done? It was because it was a good public policy outcome.

When the debate had been under way for a couple of days, there was the obvious tactic of the opposition of the time to form a tag team. I remember Bronwyn Bishop was in that too, regularly asking about planes flying over sacred sites and other things, thousands of feet up in the air, and how that affected native title. When it became clear that the major tactic was to seek to exhaust him, I went to Paul Keating, whom I did not know particularly well, on advice from others, and passed on the observation of those who knew better than me that the debate was becoming incredibly bogged down in jurisprudence. I sat in the seat next to Gareth to say to him very quietly, 'Excuse me, Gareth, I have been asked to tell you that, despite your brilliant knowledge of this, the opposition seems to be bogging the debate down in really technical detail and we need to think of a way to break the momentum.'

Paul Keating accepted a suggestion that he convene a press conference to say that this piece of legislation was so important to him and to the Labor Party that we might sit all over Christmas. That was not met with much joy by the opposition; nevertheless they persisted with their questioning—question after question, clause after clause. And Gareth Evans, from 10 a.m. till midnight, day after day, answered nearly every one of those questions, with a few comfort breaks when he was supported by Bob Collins, as I recall.

The one point that I wanted to record for posterity, which I do not think is recorded in very many other places, was the compliment Paul Keating paid to Gareth in a typical Paul Keating way. When he decided that he would suggest that we might sit over Christmas, I tactfully suggested that in his press conference he not make his usual comments about the Senate. He looked at me, very straight in the eye, and he said, 'Cheryl, I can be just as disciplined as Gareth Evans when I need to be.' I will always recall that memory.

Finally, on the discipline and the stamina, after being on his feet all day we would all be expected to convene in his office after midnight—Rick Farley, Lowitja O'Donoghue, other lawyers and the poor public servants who were doing all the work—and we would look over how far we had progressed that day. Sometimes it would only have been three or four clauses. We would say how far we wanted to get tomorrow and the draftspeople would go off to work until dawn. I do not think a lot of people know that this was the background to the native title debate No. 1. That is why, along with many others, I do greatly admire the application of the awesome intellect, the energy and the wit to so many better public policy outcomes for our nation.

As a child I lived not very far from where Doc Evatt also lived and I went to the same primary school. I feel really proud that the Labor Party has produced another outstanding foreign minister of international stature. Although we do not know the future of the vote for the position of Director-General of UNESCO, were Gareth to win it I hope that he would find it personally and professionally fulfilling. I certainly welcome the opportunity for him to continue to make a brilliant and enthusiastic contribution not just to this nation but to the world. That is a wonderful thing that we as a nation can say that we have to offer to the rest of the world.

Lastly, there is one thing we absolutely know in advance of his leaving, and I do not think we can say this about each one of us. We do absolutely know that we will miss him very much—his party, his friends and this parliament. We will miss him very much and we will know it very soon.

Mr MARTIN (Cunningham)(5.16 p.m.)—In December 1991 I remember getting a telephone call from the Hon. Paul Keating, Prime Minister of Australia—despite those on

the other side thinking that I used to get those regularly when I was the Speaker. I took the telephone call and the Prime Minister said, 'Mate'—as the fraternal greeting of the New South Wales Right goes—'I want to make you a parliamentary secretary. You've got two choices: you've got Immigration or you've got Foreign Affairs and Trade.' I thought about it. Stewart West, who was

still in the parliament as the member for Cunningham at the time and I recall had been the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, said to me once, 'If I have to go to another one of those ethnic singsongs I'm going to go mad.' I thought, coming from Wollongong, that was definitely going to be on the cards as a parliamentary secretary for immigration. I then thought: who actually is the minister? It was Gareth. Gareth was legendary, as we certainly heard last night and as many people have recalled on other occasions. The Minister for Trade was John Kerin.

Weighing it up, they were both from the Right, so I fitted in reasonably well there. One was from New South Wales but one was from Victoria, which is always a bit of a worry on our side—particularly after last weekend—but I weighed it up and I thought, 'Gareth is the bloke for me.' He had a sensational reputation as a foreign minister around the world. He was somebody who, for the Labor Party and for Australia, had such a commitment and devotion to his work that he seemed to be the sort of person that I could learn a lot from. So I said to Paul, 'Okay, I'd like to do Foreign Affairs and Trade.'

My first meeting with Gareth was one of trying to work out exactly what I was going to do—because I am not sure that Paul actually told Gareth that I was coming. John Kerin, Gareth and I sat down and we worked out a bit of a program of things I could do. Gareth said, 'Occasionally I want you to represent me.' I said that would be fine, knowing where he had gone: because of the United Nations it was to New York or Geneva or, if it were for UNESCO, to Paris and so on. As somebody who was just starting a bit of a career in the executive, that did not sound too bad.

The first place he sent me to was Colombia. He said, 'On the way I want you to go to Venezuela for me because Venezuela is this sensational example of democracy in South America. It is what we're trying to interest other nations in that continent in emulating and we want you to go there, talk to them and then go away as a little bit of an ambassador for them as you go to Colombia as well.' I headed off and got into Los Angeles where I was met by our consul there who said, 'Parliamentary Secretary, I have got some terrible news for you.' I said, 'What's that? I'm here on this great peace mission for Gareth Evans and on my way I'm going to Venezuela.' He said, 'That's the problem—the tanks are just moving up the palace at the present time.' I thought: 'Good call, Gareth, another champion effort to send a new bloke on the block over there.' Nevertheless, we went on to Colombia and it was good.

I thought, 'That was a little bit of a mistake and the next one will be terrific.' The next one happened to be Nauru for the 25th independence celebrations. That was also an experience as they cleared the cows off the runway for the plane to land. I was nevertheless there representing his interests.

During the next 18 months, while I was his parliamentary secretary, he gave me every opportunity to start to develop some policy on our side in government, particularly the role that the services sector could play in trade and foreign policy. He was encouraging every step of the way, whether it was in environmental services or in banking and looking at ways in which we might emulate some of the European models to have us as a centre of excellence here—a stepping-off point in the Asia-Pacific region for the European and American companies and so on. He was always encouraging and always interested. For that I have always been grateful.

Working as closely as I was with him, I learned a lot—there was no question about that. Despite all of those legendary stories, not once did Gareth Evans and I ever have a cross word. It was always a dialogue that was based on talking about the issues that were necessary. I might be a little bit unique in that. I am not sure what it is—maybe it is just because I am from Wollongong, Gareth—but it was part of that relationship and it was a side of him that people had views about. But there was no doubting his passion, his commitment, his intellect, his diligence and the way that he as the Minister for Foreign Affairs for Australia was out there for this country.

Gareth, you have done the party proud and you have done Australia proud, as all your colleagues and those on the other side have said during the debate this afternoon and as was said last night. It is going to be difficult for you to go. You will be missed by everybody in this place. The role you played as the deputy leader in the last parliament, the role you played as our shadow Treasurer and the role you played in formulating the policy prescriptions for the Labor Party—bringing together all the disparate elements of Labor's policy, putting them into a coherent form and looking at the way they could all work—are again testimonies to that great capacity you have.

Others have spoken about Mabo. As someone who was here at the time and watched it on television during the night as it went on and on, I could only marvel again at that capacity you displayed. We will all miss you. We wish you every success in the future. We hope desperately that you succeed in your present quest. If not, we know that you will always succeed in whatever you choose to turn your hand to. You have been a great mate. Good luck.

Mr MELHAM (Banks)(5.23 p.m.)—Other speakers have spoken about Gareth's

contribution in the Mabo debate. That is well known, and I do not want to canvass it again, but it does complement his contribution in other great debates in this nation. One case occurred before he was a member of parliament. It was when he was an adviser to the Whitlam government and the Racial Discrimination Act was being pioneered through this parliament. Gareth was an adviser to that government and his fingerprints are all over that act.

He was also a champion of a bill of rights. It never quite got up, but the Racial Discrimination Act is the closest thing we have to a bill of rights in this country. It is an act of parliament that says that we who are the later arrivals and the children of later arrivals are equal—we are all Australian. There is no difference whether you were here 40,000 or 50,000 years ago or whether you arrived a couple of days ago. That act stands as a testament to Gareth as an adviser and to the Whitlam government. It is an act that laid the basis for indigenous Australians finally being recognised in the highest courts in this country. There would be no native title without the Racial Discrimination Act. The High Court in Mabo basically said, 'But for the Racial Discrimination Act, state and territory governments could have extinguished native title without compensation.' It acted as a protection. It is how repressive acts of parliament in Queensland against indigenous Australians were overturned by the High Court—it covers a range of things.

There was the recent Wik judgment in which we had a modern hysteria that equated to the McCarthyism of the 1950s where communism and reds under the beds were used by the conservatives. In the 1990s, the conservatives used native title and blacks in your backyard as a modern Mccarthyism. Arising out of the Wik judgment, the Labor Party had to make a fundamental decision as to whether we would defend the position we took in 1993 in response to the High Court decision on Mabo. That is where I came to know Gareth. The shadow cabinet had a subcommittee. Whilst I had official carriage of native title on behalf of the party, Gareth, Nick Bolkus, Stephen Smith, Mike Megaw from Kim Beazley's office and others worked as a team to produce a response. The real test in public office is what you do not when the polls tell you it is popular but when it is right and the polls tell you it is unpopular. That was the real test for me of Gareth Evans. There were those who believed Gareth was sent in to basically walk away from what we did in 1993. They thought he would preside over the Labor Party in a wink and nod situation. Well, he did not.

At the end of the day the real Gareth Evans came to the fore, and that is a humanitarian and someone who has devoted his public life to serving this nation and the vulnerable and the weak. There is no doubt that at times there has had to be some compromises in that regard, because you cannot legislate for the pure position. I know that at times we on the Left—and you can read an anecdote in the biography by Keith Scott—had a different standard for Gareth, because we had him up on a pedestal, and we let others off more lightly.

But I think Gareth has delivered. He is one of the few people who can leave this place with people on both sides genuinely saying that he contributed to the better of this society. Australia is a better place for Gareth Evans having served in the parliament. I know his friend John Faulkner is in the gallery—he cannot speak because he is from the other house—and I know other people like Michael Duffy and Gerry Hand, who I have spoken to in recent times, would want to be remembered.

Gareth, I will miss you. You have made an enormous contribution. What the Labor Party did in the last couple of years through your involvement showed that we are here on the political landscape and we are here to stay. You were part of a leadership team that saw at the last election, despite a vicious, nasty, venal campaign that was personally directed at you, the majority of the Australian electorate vote in favour of the Labor Party. It is just an accident in relation to where those votes fell that you were not back on the government benches. And that is a testament to you and to Kim and the rest of the Labor Party.

I want to finish by quoting one thing from the book which I think summarises you. It is at page 343:

He is volatile, but does not hold grudges. As those who have worked closely with him attest, when he does relax he is generous, warm, and for all his intellectual sophistication possesses an endearing, almost boyish, charm.

The best photo in the book is opposite page 215. It is the family photo with Merran, Caitlin and Eamon. That shows Gareth Evans to me. He is boyish. I will miss him. That is not to say that we did not have our differences of opinion, but the key to Gareth is to engage him. That is what brings out the best in him. I think he still has a contribution to make. He can count—he showed that in the deputy leadership ballot after the 1996 election. He kept ringing me up time after time and I said, 'I am not voting for you, Gareth. The only commitment I'll give you is that I will not work against you,' but he kept persevering, so I do not write you off, but I do not know whether that is necessarily the best job for you.

Mr ROSS CAMERON (Parramatta)(5.30 p.m.)—The member for Banks referred to bipartisan support. Just in two minutes I would like to record a couple of things. One is that on a flight to Lebanon I sat next to a senior figure in the Cambodian government, and on learning that I was a member of parliament for Australia he launched with enormous enthusiasm into an account of Gareth Evans's contribution to the achievement of peace and the achievement of agreement between the royalists and the communists in Cambodia. He spoke with enormous fervour, and I confess to feeling on that occasion a sense of pride at being an Australian.

I have frequently also had the experience of visitors coming from overseas and being asked, 'Who do you want to meet while you are here?' They mention the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the opposition spokesman, and almost invariably they also want to meet Gareth Evans. I recently read Chris Patten's book *East Meets West* and found in it one of the most glowing endorsements of any political figure I have ever read in any book, and a substantial photo of Gareth with the caption 'Gareth Evans: friend of democracy in Asia'.

Finally can I just say that on the few occasions when I have had occasion to speak with Gareth on some matter or another, as one of the more inconsequential figures in the place, I have always found him to be extraordinarily courteous and respectful in spite of one's own lack of consequence. The parliament must be able to attract figures of his intellectual capacity. Others such as Barry Cohen have graced the place. I believe Labor has another in its ranks, but I will not damage his prospects by naming him on this occasion. I record my respect and appreciation for the contribution of Gareth Evans.