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SITTING DAYS—2015

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<th>Month</th>
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FORTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION—FIFTH PERIOD

Governor-General
His Excellency General the Hon. Sir Peter Cosgrove AK, MC (Retd)

Senate Office holders
President—Senator Hon. Stephen Parry
Deputy President and Chair of Committees—Senator Gavin Mark Marshall
Leader of the Government in the Senate—Senator Hon. Eric Abetz
Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate—Senator Hon. George Henry Brandis QC
Leader of the Opposition in the Senate—Senator the Hon. Stephen Conroy
Manager of Government Business in the Senate—Senator Hon. Mitchell Peter Fifield
Manager of Opposition Business in the Senate—Senator Claire Moore

Senate Party Leaders and Whips
Leader of the Liberal Party in the Senate—Senator Hon. Eric Abetz
Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party in the Senate—Senator Hon. George Henry Brandis QC
Leader of The Nationals in the Senate—Senator Hon. Nigel Scullion
Deputy Leader of The Nationals in the Senate—Senator Hon. Fiona Nash
Leader of the Opposition in the Senate—Senator the Hon. Penny Wong
Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Senate—Senator the Hon. Stephen Conroy
Leader of the Australian Greens—Senator Christine Anne Milne
Chief Government Whip—Senator David Christopher Bushby
Deputy Government Whips—Senators David Julian Fawcett and Anne Sowerby Ruston
The Nationals Whip—Senator Barry James O’Sullivan
Chief Opposition Whip—Senator Anne McEwen
Deputy Opposition Whips—Senators Catryna Louise Bilyk and Anne Elizabeth Urquhart
Australian Greens Whip—Senator Rachel Siewert
Palmer United Party Whip—Senator Zhenya Wang

Printed by authority of the Senate
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<th>Party</th>
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<td>Abetz, Hon. Eric</td>
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<td>Back, Christopher John</td>
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**Casual vacancy**

Pursuant to section 42 of the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918, the terms of service of the following senators representing the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory expire at the close of the day immediately before the polling day for the next general election of members of the House of Representatives:

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<td>Peris, N.M.</td>
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(1) Chosen by the Parliament of New South Wales to fill a casual vacancy (vice R. Carr), pursuant to section 15 of the Constitution.

** Casual vacancy to be filled (vice J Faulkner, resigned 6.2.15), pursuant to section 15 of the Constitution.

**PARTY ABBREVIATIONS**

AG—Australian Greens; ALP—Australian Labor Party;
AMEP—Australian Motoring Enthusiast Party; CLP—Country Liberal Party;
FFP—Family First Party; IND—Independent, LDP—Liberal Democratic Party;
LNP—Liberal National Party; LP—Liberal Party of Australia;
NATS—The Nationals; PUP—Palmer United Party
Heads of Parliamentary Departments
Clerk of the Senate—R Laing
Clerk of the House of Representatives—D Elder
Secretary, Department of Parliamentary Services—C Mills
Parliamentary Budget Officer—P Bowen
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<tr>
<td>Prime Minister</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Indigenous Affairs</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Nigel Scullion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Michaelia Cash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>The Hon. Charles Porter MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Women</td>
<td>The Hon. Alan Tudge MP</td>
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<td>Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development</td>
<td>The Hon. Warren Truss MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Deputy Prime Minister)</td>
<td>The Hon. Jamie Briggs MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>The Hon. Julie Bishop MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Trade and Investment</td>
<td>The Hon. Andrew Robb AO MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Foreign</td>
<td>The Hon. Steven Ciobo MP</td>
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<td>(Deputy Leader of the House)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attorney-General</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for the Arts</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. George Brandis QC</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Vice-President of the Executive Council)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Justice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>The Hon. Joe Hockey MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Small Business</td>
<td>The Hon. Bruce Billson MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Treasurer</td>
<td>The Hon. Joshua Frydenberg MP</td>
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<tr>
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<td>The Hon. Robert Baldwin MP</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Finance</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Mathias Cormann</td>
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<td>Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance</td>
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<td>Assistant Minister for Health</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Fiona Nash</td>
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Each box represents a portfolio. *Cabinet Ministers are shown in bold type.* As a general rule, there is one department in each portfolio. However, there is a Department of Human Services in the Social Services portfolio and a Department of Veterans’ Affairs in the Defence portfolio. The title of a department does not necessarily reflect the title of a minister in all cases.
### SHADOW MINISTRY

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<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>SHADOW MINISTER</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Leader of the Opposition</strong></td>
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<td>Shadow Minister Assisting the Leader for Science</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Kim Carr</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister Assisting the Leader for Small Business</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Development</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Women</td>
<td>Senator Claire Moore</td>
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<td>Manager of Opposition Business (Senate)</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for the Centenary of ANZAC</td>
<td>Hon. David Feeney MP</td>
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<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>Hon. Matt Thistlethwaite MP</td>
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<td><strong>Leader of the Opposition in the Senate</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Penny Wong</td>
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<td>Hon. Anthony Albanese MP</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Cities</td>
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<td>Hon. Julie Collins MP</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Regional Development and Local Government</td>
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<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Development and Infrastructure</td>
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<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for External Territories</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Financial Services and Superannuation</td>
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<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Industry</strong></td>
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<td>Hon. Gary Gray AO MP</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Northern Australia</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Mental Health</td>
<td>Senator Hon. Jan McLucas</td>
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<td>Hon. Bernie Ripoll MP</td>
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<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Health</td>
<td>Nick Champion MP</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Families and Payments</td>
<td>Hon. Jenny Macklin MP</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Disability Reform</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Human Services</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Doug Cameron</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Housing and Homelessness</td>
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<td>Senator Claire Moore</td>
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<td>Senator Carol Brown</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Immigration and Border Protection</td>
<td>Hon. Richard Marles MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Citizenship and Multiculturalism</td>
<td>Michelle Rowland MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Hon. Matt Thistlethwaite MP</td>
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<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Aged Care</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations</td>
<td>Hon. Brendan O'Connor MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Employment Services</td>
<td>Hon. Julie Collins MP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONTENTS

MONDAY, 23 MARCH 2015

Chamber
CONDOLENCES—
   Fraser, Rt Hon. John Malcolm, AC, CH................................................................. 2051
NOTICES—
   Presentation.............................................................................................................. 2118
DOCUMENTS—
   Order for the Production of Documents............................................................. 2120
   Tabling..................................................................................................................... 2120
   Indexed Lists of Files—
      Tabling.............................................................................................................. 2120
COMMITTEES—
   Report.................................................................................................................... 2120
The PRESIDENT (Senator the Hon. Stephen Parry) took the chair at 10:00, read prayers and made an acknowledgement of country.

CONDOLENCES

Fraser, Rt Hon. John Malcolm, AC, CH

The PRESIDENT (10:01): Honourable Senators, it is with deep regret that I inform the Senate of the death on 20 March this year of the Rt Hon. John Malcolm Fraser, AC, CH, a member of the House of Representatives for the division of Wannon, Victoria, from 1955 until 1983 and Prime Minister of Australia from 1975 until 1983. I call on the Leader of the Government in the Senate.

Senator ABETZ (Tasmania—Leader of the Government in the Senate, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public Service and Minister for Employment) (10:01): by leave—I move:

That the Senate records its deep regret at the death, on 20 March 2015, of the Right Honourable John Malcolm Fraser, AC, CH, former member for Wannon and Prime Minister of Australia, places on record its appreciation of his long and highly distinguished service to the nation and tenders its profound sympathy to his family in their bereavement.

Mr President, it was a shock to all Australians when we learnt last Friday of the passing of our 22nd Prime Minister, the Rt Hon John Malcolm Fraser, AC, CH. His passing brought to an end a life devoted to public service and active public engagement, which lasted for 60 years, if not longer. His active and lengthy participation is borne out by the fact that he was a candidate for parliament at the age of 24 and sent his last tweet four days before he died at the age of 84—by any measure, a long period of public engagement.

Mr Fraser was born on 21 May 1930; he had one sibling. His parents lived on a property on the New South Wales side of the Murray River, north of Deniliquin. In his very young, formative years—by the age of eight—he understood the ravages of drought, helping to euthanase new-born lambs in the hope the ewes might survive. At the age of 10, Malcolm Fraser was sent to Tudor House at Moss Vale as a boarder. In 1946, his parents bought the property Nareen near Hamilton in the Western District of Victoria, whereupon the young Malcolm was sent to complete his schooling at Melbourne Grammar. Aged 19, he went to Oxford University and graduated as a Master of Arts in politics, philosophy and economics. He returned to Nareen aged 22 and joined the local branch of the Liberal Party.

It seems politics was in his genes. His grandfather, Sir Simon Fraser, was a delegate to the Australian Federal Conventions of 1897-98, a member of George Reid's Free Trade Party and a senator for Victoria from 1901 to 1913. He sought and won preselection to contest the seat of Wannon, held by Labor's Don McLeod. A week after his 24th birthday, the election was held and McLeod beat off his young challenger. At the 1955 election, McLeod retired and Fraser went on to win, aided by preferences from the then newly-formed anti-communist Labor Party. He successfully defended that seat at every subsequent election he contested. It is often forgotten that Malcolm Fraser won a Labor seat and converted it into a safe Liberal one. All of us in political life admire that sort of achievement.
In 1956, as the youngest member of the 22nd parliament, Malcolm Fraser made one of his best decisions: he married Tamie Beggs, daughter of another family from Western Victoria. They went on to have four children, and she proved an exceptional support to him in his public and private life.

As a backbencher, Malcolm Fraser worked diligently on the then Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and developed a keen interest in Australia's Asian neighbours, visiting Indonesia in 1965. He also worked his electorate. As a backbencher, Mr Fraser would undertake tours of his electorate with some of his colleagues. On one particular trip they returned to the family property, Nareen. On arrival of the group, Mr Fraser was greeted with a welcome from one of the children, exclaiming, 'Daddy, no-one slept with Mummy while you were away!' It was quickly explained that the reference was, of course, to the children. The story was recounted by none less than Mrs Fraser herself, a classy lady who was a great asset not only to Mr Fraser and his life of service but also to our nation—an observation also made by Sir Robert Menzies in a private letter to Mr Fraser. Once, when confronted by the media about a particular allegation, Mrs Fraser described the pedlar of the allegation as 'lower than a snake's duodenum'—class with punch. Mrs Fraser was her husband's greatest asset in his political life.

After a decade in the parliament without a promotion, the backbencher Fraser asked Prime Minister Menzies if he was wasting his time—whether there was a future for him in politics. Menzies encouraged patience although ultimately never appointed him. It was in 1966, when Sir Robert Menzies retired, that the new Prime Minister, Harold Holt, gave Mr Fraser the break he so sorely wanted and he became a junior minister as the Minister for the Army. Staunchly anti-communist, Mr Fraser was the government's most articulate advocate for our involvement in Vietnam and travelled to see our troops on many occasions. In 1968, after John Gorton had succeeded to the leadership following the tragic death of Prime Minister Holt, he made Malcolm Fraser Minister for Education and Science. Although this was then not a cabinet post, Gorton had himself held the portfolio, and his choice of Fraser illustrated his regard for Malcolm Fraser's obvious political skills.

In 1969 he finally entered the cabinet, 14 years after first being elected, when he became Minister for Defence. Unfortunately, his relationship with the Prime Minister had become uneasy, and in March 1971 he resigned after he felt that Prime Minister Gorton had sided with Defence chiefs against him. After William McMahon replaced Gorton as Prime Minister, Fraser re-entered the cabinet in his old portfolio of education and science. After the defeat of the McMahon government in 1972, Fraser became shadow minister for industrial relations, and he forged a good working relationship with his opposite number, Mr Clyde Cameron—and I understand that his namesake in this place will be making a contribution to this debate.

However, his relationship with his own leader, Bill Snedden, was less cordial. On 21 March 1975 Mr Fraser was elected parliamentary leader of the Liberal Party, defeating Snedden. On assuming the leadership, he re-energised the party—a party about which its founder, Sir Robert Menzies, was beginning to despair, recounting in a letter at the time to his daughter that the Liberals would never win by being 'Labor light'. He opined that he thought Mr Fraser was the only one capable of leading the party to victory by going back to its core values.
The Liberal Party's membership base exploded. Donations rolled in. There was an air of expectation that the chaos and charisma of Whitlam had finally met its match. The atmosphere in which all this was taking place cannot be forgotten. The Liberal Party that had enjoy 23 years of government had suffered reduced elector support and then ultimate defeat. Few, if any, of the parliamentarians would have known opposition. Just imagine twice the time of the Howard government in office and then being subjected to opposition. The transition was difficult and confronting. It was in that climate of low morale and the questioning of direction and policy that Mr Fraser brought an authoritative style of leadership that once again galvanised the base of the Liberal Party.

It is recalled that the Fraser and Whitlam showdown was literally the battle of the Titans. One who knows has recounted to me that being 'done over', as it was described by Whitlam in the parliament, Mr Fraser went to his room, slammed the door and an hour later re-emerged straight into the bear pit of parliament and returned the compliment—he getting the better of Whitlam. He had real political courage, as of course was shown in 1975, as he believed the country's future was in genuine risk. To block supply and hold his nerve was not the behaviour of the timid.

Mr Fraser adopted a much tougher political approach to the chaotic Whitlam government, which was then beset with a cavalcade of resignations and sackings, including at the Treasury, and then there was the loan scandal. All the nation's economic indicators were moving in very alarming directions, and Fraser and the party determined to force the issue to the people and give the Australian people the opportunity to decide their country's future. A foretaste or a harbinger of what was to come was the by-election for the federal seat of Bass, in which the Liberal Party's candidate, Lieutenant Colonel Kevin Newman, had resigned from the defence forces to seek Liberal endorsement in Bass and to stand against the then defence minister, Lance Barnard. Barnard's resignation propelled Newman into the federal parliament earlier than expected and with a massive swing. The Bass by-election victory was a huge morale boost for the new leader, helped cement his position and validated his uncompromising stand against the Labor government. It may well have been the Bass by-election that saw Mr Fraser treat Tasmania with particular favour, once gaining government.

As all senators know, the Whitlam government was dismissed by Sir John Kerr on 11 November 1975 and Malcolm Fraser was commissioned as caretaker Prime Minister, having agreed to the Governor-General's request to call an immediate election and not to introduce new policies until the Australian people had been able to decide on the make-up of their parliament. In 1975, the people gave their verdict and they did so resoundingly, responding to the 'Turn on the Lights' campaign and repudiating the Whitlam Labor experiment. The Liberal Party won 68 seats in the House of Representatives, the National Country Party at the time won a further 23 seats and the Australian Labor Party won just 36. It was the most resounding result since Federation. It is also worth noting that two years later Mr Fraser again led the coalition to a thumping victory—the second-biggest landslide we have ever had. Sir John Kerr's actions and Malcolm Fraser's actions had been validated not once, but twice, and in dramatic form by the people at the ballot box.

As Prime Minister, he was consultative and intensely Australian. I am told that he had a wonderful three-question routine to get people to confess to their misdemeanours. The first question was: 'Did I ask you to do this? The second was: 'Did you understand what I asked?"
And then the killer: 'Why haven't you done it?' He was able to have discipline within his government. The government was a government of reform.

The new Prime Minister coined the phrase 'new federalism' whereby he wanted a genuine rebalancing of the economic powers of the states and the Commonwealth. He established a new family allowance scheme, including a lone fathers benefit for the first time—a cause championed by my then federal member, Bruce Goodluck MP. He established the Australian Institute of Sport after Australia's mediocre showing at the Montreal Olympics in 1976. He established automatic indexation of pensions, abolished death, state and gift duties and introduced the ombudsman. He declared the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, banned whaling in Australian waters and sandmining on Fraser Island—all good environmental policies, without a Green in sight. He established the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme in 1976 which, might I add, was recently further enhanced by the Abbott government.

As a former science minister, he recognised the historical links between Tasmania, Antarctica and the Southern Ocean, and moved the Antarctic Division to Kingston, my home town, in southern Tasmania. He also established the Australian Maritime College in Launceston as an international trading academy for marine engineering and seamanship. His support for my home state of Tasmania was legendary. He turned a Labor state into a Liberal state. In 1975, all seats were held by Labor and they all fell to the Liberals and remained with our side of politics until well after the defeat of Mr Fraser's government.

Three referenda questions were successfully passed under Malcolm Fraser's government, marking it as the most successful with regard to Constitutional change we have ever had. After the shock of the Hilton bombing in Sydney in 1978 at the regional meeting of Commonwealth Heads of Government, Malcolm Fraser recognised the need for coordinated national security and established the Australian Federal Police. He took a strong stand against apartheid. He supported the boycott of the Russian Olympics. He reversed the disgraceful decision of the Whitlam government which recognised the incorporation of the Baltic states into the Soviet empire. He welcomed Vietnamese refugees fleeing the brutality of the new communist regime in that country—a policy which Mr Whitlam referred to as 'supporting Viet Balts' in reference to refugees from the Baltic states. Commercial FM radio was established, as were a number of bodies to further the cause of our Indigenous community. The Northern Territory was given self-government, along with land rights for our first people. He introduced freedom of information legislation, and so the list goes on.

The Fraser government was an active reforming government, but without the chaos and calamity of its predecessor. Stability and certainty had been restored. Despite such a great legacy, Mr Fraser, personally, and his government were continually pilloried and harangued by a hostile media, saying the sorts of things that have been said about the Howard and Abbott prime ministerships as well. He was labelled as 'The crazy grazier', 'reactionary' and 'dull'. It seems some things never change for Liberal prime ministers. Indeed, there were those amongst the Left who proudly promoted the slogan, 'Give Fraser the razor'. His presence on university campuses was often a security nightmare and, whilst I look forward to Senator Hanson-Young's contribution, I do suspect that if she had been old enough she may have been in the thick of the demonstrators, chanting and waving placards.

Mr Fraser had a formidable reputation. His imposing height, his sometimes stern demeanour, but ultimately his capacity for hard work and mastery of his brief, made him a
political giant in every sense. He inspired a generation of young supporters, including me. I recall fondly his support for the Australian Liberal Students' Federation and the university Liberal clubs all around Australia. Having the privilege of being the executive of the ALSF, and ultimately as its president, I recall with gratitude his generosity with his time and the odd cup of coffee in his office. He served as our patron with distinction and commitment. Being called a 'Fraser hack' in student politics was worn as badge of honour by us at the time. I, for one, will continue to admire and salute his magnificent contribution to our nation.

Without in any way detracting from that legacy, I do regret that the party which gave Mr Fraser so much and to which Mr Fraser gave so much parted ways. Everyone has their own analysis for this parting of the ways. I simply observe and note that the man who was, rightly, such a strong advocate of our military involvement in Vietnam—and, if reports are correct, even the suggestion of potentially a nuclear option—who brought down the Whitlam government, was staunchly anti-communist, promoted choice in education, was an admirer of Ayn Rand and her writings and saw no role for Don Chipp in his ministry is now being hailed by those somewhat further to the left in politics.

In 1983, in spite of being comfortably re-elected to his own seat of Wannon, his government was defeated in a campaign where Labor first sold out to the Greens. Believe it or not, a renewable power generator was being demonised in favour of a coal fired alternative. After the defeat of the government, Mr Fraser resigned from his seat in the House of Representatives, but he remained active. He was appointed by the UN to an eminent persons panel to engage with South Africa to end apartheid. On a personal level, he established Care Australia and was its president from 1987 to 2002. He was appointed to observe a number of elections across the globe and to intercede for the release of political prisoners. He campaigned for a number of causes which, unfortunately, helped to widen the gap between him and his party. But he did continue our very heavy schedule of public appearances and, when not appearing in person, tweeted in the Twittersphere.

Whilst throughout his life he was often seen as awkward, which was variously described and unfairly seen as aloofness—chances are he was more shy—Mr Fraser was always in his element with country people. He enjoyed being with them and they with him, and his popularity in his own electorate bears testament to that observation. Throughout his life, Mr Fraser maintained his intense interest in photography and fishing, even owning a shack in Tasmania's Central Highlands to help chase the elusive trout. In retirement, Malcolm and Tamie Fraser moved from their rural property, Nareen, to a house on the Mornington Peninsula, where they developed a beautiful garden which they happily shared with the public as part of the Open Garden Scheme.

His was a life fully lived, dedicated to the service of his nation. Our nation was enhanced by his leadership and is poorer for his passing. It is to Mrs Tamie Fraser AO and to their children, Mark, Angela, Hugh and Phoebe and their children and extended family that we extend our deep sympathies today and thank them for sharing him with a grateful nation.

Senator WONG (South Australia—Leader of the Opposition in the Senate) (10:23): I rise on behalf of the Opposition to support the condolence motion moved by the Leader of the Government in the Senate on the death of Australia's 22nd Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser. I extend to Malcolm Fraser's family and friends our deepest sympathies. To Tamie Fraser, his
wife of more than 58 years, and to Mark, Angela, Hugh and Phoebe, their children, I say how profoundly sorry we are for your loss.

John Malcolm Fraser was born in Melbourne on 21 May 1930. George V was on the throne. Jim Scullin was Prime Minister, battling both the Great Depression and a hostile Senate. Later that year, Phar Lap would win his first and only Melbourne Cup. Malcolm Fraser was the grandson of Simon Fraser, a member of both houses of the Victorian parliament, a delegate to the Australasian Federation Convention of 1897-98 and a senator for Victoria from 1901 to 1913. Simon Fraser moved the first Address-in-Reply in the Senate. Like his grandson, Malcolm, he was fiercely anti-socialist.

Malcolm grew up on pastoral properties, in the Riverina and then, famously, at Nareen in Victoria's Western District, the property with which he is most closely associated. He was educated at Melbourne Grammar and then Oxford University, graduating in 1952. Just two years after that graduation, he contested the then Labor seat of Wannon for the Liberal Party, and lost by just 17 votes. A year later he won Wannon for the Liberal Party and found himself a member of the House of Representatives aged just 25, at that time the youngest member of the House. And, as Senator Abetz has said, he would serve the people of Wannon for the next 28 years.

Denied appointment to ministerial office under Prime Minister Menzies, Malcolm Fraser's first ministerial role came in 1966, when Prime Minister Holt appointed him Minister for the Army. He held this role from 1966 to 1968 and oversaw conscription for service in Vietnam. Having helped to engineer Senator John Gorton's election as leader in the wake of Holt's disappearance, Malcolm Fraser was appointed by Gorton to the cabinet post of Minister for Education and Science in 1968. He held this office until his promotion to Minister for Defence after the 1969 election. That appointment ended in 1971, when his relationship with Prime Minister Gorton deteriorated so badly that he resigned, an act that precipitated the resignation of Gorton himself. A few months after that, Gorton's successor, Prime Minister Billy McMahon, reappointed Malcolm Fraser to the ministry in his old role as Minister for Education and Science, a position he held until the defeat of the government in 1972.

In the first days of opposition, Malcolm Fraser stood unsuccessfully as leader and deputy leader, and he went on to serve as shadow minister for primary industries before challenging Billy Snedden for the Liberal leadership unsuccessfully in November 1974 and finally successfully in March 1975. It was in that role that Malcolm Fraser catapulted himself into political infamy. As opposition leader he was not content to let the recently re-elected Whitlam government govern. Anti-Labor numbers in the Senate had been bolstered through the unscrupulous actions of conservative premiers appointing non-Labor senators to fill Labor vacancies. The Fraser-led opposition used those numbers to block supply, a course of action that led Governor-General John Kerr to dismiss Prime Minister Gough Whitlam, commission Malcolm Fraser in his place and issue writs for a double dissolution. The nation went to the polls for the third time in three years and Labor suffered a heavy defeat. While Malcolm Fraser had achieved his objective, the manner in which he took office forever tainted his prime ministership, and the polarising events of 1975 earned him the enmity of many Australians. This fact of history makes his later reconciliation with Gough Whitlam all the more remarkable.
In electoral terms, Mr Fraser was one of the Liberal Party's most successful leaders, winning office in 1975 and retaining office at two subsequent elections. At the time he left office he was Australia's second-longest-serving Prime Minister. The coalition maintained the clear Senate majority that it won in the 1975 double dissolution election until July 1981. As Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser implemented some key elements of the Whitlam program, including legislating land rights in the Northern Territory, ending sandmining on Fraser Island and establishing the Family Court, the Administrative Appeals Tribunal and the Commonwealth Ombudsman. And other key reforms, such as the abolition of university fees, were not undone. Malcolm Fraser promoted multiculturalism and established the Special Broadcasting Service. And his government welcomed tens of thousands of Indo-Chinese refugees to our shores—an act that has enriched both our nation and my home state of South Australia immeasurably.

Internationally, Prime Minister Fraser was a strong and effective opponent of apartheid in South Africa and a supporter of democratic rule in Rhodesia. In a statement marking the passing of Malcolm Fraser, Paul Keating remarked that throughout his political and public life Malcolm had 'no truck with race or colour and no tolerance for whispered notions of exclusivity tinged by race'.

The Fraser government enacted our first freedom of information laws and established the Human Rights Commission. Malcolm Fraser was one of the few Prime Ministers to successfully initiate changes to our Constitution, succeeding with three of four proposals put to the Australian people on 21 May 1977, including an amendment on Senate casual vacancies requiring that departing senators be replaced by senators from the same party or group.

Malcolm Fraser and the government he led lost office on 5 March 1983. He had called an election on 3 February hoping to face Bill Hayden as opposition leader but instead found himself facing Bob Hawke. Hawke, of course, was magnificent, but the recession, the drought and the refusal to halt the Franklin Dam aided Labor's cause. Malcolm Fraser accepted responsibility for the election loss and resigned from parliament aged 55.

He brought the same resolute conviction he had shown in his political life to bear in his post-political life where he held key national and international roles. He was co-chair of the Commonwealth Group of Eminent Persons on South Africa from 1985–86. This body played a key role in the international effort to dismantle the apartheid system and ensure a peaceful transition to democratic rule in South Africa. In 1987 he founded the aid organisation Care Australia and later served as President of Care International from 1990 to 1995. In 2000 Malcolm Fraser was awarded the Human Rights Medal by the then Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission for his work advancing human rights in Australia and abroad.

Malcolm Fraser's death has ignited a discussion about whether Mr Fraser changed over his life or whether his party, or his nation, changed around him. In introducing him at a writers' festival, Laura Tingle observed that the Darth Vader of her youth had become the Obi-Wan Kenobi of her middle age. Of course, all of us in public life have our contradictions. Sometimes they spring from the suppression of personal opinions in the cause of party discipline and let loose once free of the party whip. At other times, it is because we grow to reject views we once held or because the world around us has changed so radically that our old world view is simply out of place.
There is no doubt that Malcolm Fraser's life was marked by contradiction: the shy, reserved man who felled two Liberal leaders and polarised a nation with his assault on constitutional norms; the Cold War warrior who later called for the end of Australia's military alliance with the United States; the lifelong Liberal who left the Liberal Party; and the right-winger known to a generation of his Twitter-followers as a champion of asylum seekers, reconciliation and an Australian Republic. Opposition Leader Bill Shorten has observed that Malcolm Fraser's personal reconciliation with Gough Whitlam represented more than one man coming to terms with another—it was itself an act of national reconciliation.

Malcolm Fraser's passing has caused many of us to reflect on and reassess the contribution he made to his party and his nation over the course of his long public life. Today, as Labor Leader in the Senate, I recognise and thank him for that contribution.

Senator MILNE (Tasmania—Leader of the Australian Greens) (10:32): I rise today on behalf of the Australian Greens to support the motion of condolence in recognition on the loss of the Rt Hon. John Malcolm Fraser AC, CH. As we have heard from both the Leader of the Government and the Leader of the Opposition here in the Senate, Malcolm Fraser was a big man—a big man of Australian political history and a big man in that, over his lifetime, he was able to move from political positions that he held, hold onto the principles that backed them and therefore change his perspective on the party that he had once led. I want to particularly comment on this in my own experience.

I was a young person at university during the Vietnam War. Malcolm Fraser, as the Minister for Defence, was someone against whom we led protests about the war. The 1975 election was the first one in which I voted. So you can imagine that, as a young person at university, the Dismissal at that time was again something on which young people had a very strong view, and there were the protests to which Senator Abetz referred. The 1983 election was the last election for Prime Minister Fraser, and that was at the height of the campaign to stop the Franklin Dam. So the protests, the civil engagement of those years, were about strong engagement, but so too was the work of Malcolm Fraser throughout his entire life in upholding human rights.

As has just been spoken about, his reconciliation with former Prime Minister Gough Whitlam was of great leadership. As Mr Shorten has mentioned, it was more than reconciliation between two people; it was of a nation, because it certainly has been for all of us in my generation.

Mr Fraser was born to a wealthy and well-connected family. He adhered to the view that inherited money and privilege carry with them a responsibility to contribute to the greater good, and that is something that he stood by for his entire life. He believed in the principle that the strong must look after the weak, and right up until days before his death he was still advocating that the strong must look after the weak—must uphold international law and must uphold human decency—and was calling out the failure to do so.

It has been noted by many of the commentators that when he was at Oxford, his closest friends were from Zambia. There is no doubt that his complete rejection of racism was there from the very earliest years of his life. It is extraordinary that he took such a strong stand against racism throughout his life. As has been noted, he opposed the minority white rule in what was then Rhodesia. He then stood strongly against apartheid in South Africa, as Senator Wong has just noted, in his role on the eminent persons group in 1985 and 1986. He took a
strong stand against apartheid. He actually visited Nelson Mandela in prison, and Nelson Mandela asked him whether Bradman was still alive. When Nelson Mandela became South Africa's first black President, Malcolm Fraser took him a signed cricket bat, 'To Nelson Mandela, in recognition of a great unfinished innings. Don Bradman'.

That is just a small example of the kind of personal engagement and thoughtfulness that Malcolm Fraser had. He was often seen as an aloof person, and he himself said, 'Frequently, people mistake shyness and aloofness.' I think in his case that was probably true, especially since we heard that he was sent to boarding school as an eight-year-old and spent all his school years in boarding school, was then at Oxford and so on.

But he did embrace everyone, regardless of colour or creed, and we will always remember that, as Prime Minister, it was his Aboriginal Land Rights Act in 1976 that recognised that Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory should have control over their own land.

After the Vietnam war, he also embraced 70,000 Vietnamese refugees. One such family I looked after in Devonport back in those days, and I can tell you that they have gone on—as with the Vietnamese community broadly across Australia—and made a huge contribution to this country. Their children here have graduated from university and are making an enormous contribution. That was the work of a man who supported the Vietnam War and who supported conscription to the Vietnam War but who, after the war, saw the responsibility Australia had to look after people fleeing from that country. Of course, as education minister, he also insisted that Asian languages be taught in Australian schools. He also set up a Civil Affairs Unit to make sure that there was actually some focus in Australia's overseas aid programs—that they looked at poverty and education, and that it was not just about a war-and-conscription focus.

Right up until his death, you could say that he was a great advocate for multicultural Australia and for the rights of refugees and asylum seekers. That, of course, stemmed from his time in office, where, as we have heard, he did set up the Family Court, the ombudsman, the first FOI laws, the Australian Federal Police and also the Human Rights Commission. Right up until his death, he was still defending the Human Rights Commission and its head, Gillian Triggs, saying, 'Enough is enough,' on the attack on the Human Rights Commission. In terms of the media, he set up SBS, and later on, in his post-parliamentary career, he was a leader in the campaign against the concentration of media ownership.

As Prime Minister, he rejected the new neoliberal economics. He brought in a strong focus against the 'bottom of the harbour' schemes. He was the Prime Minister who set up a pecuniary interest register here in this parliament and insisted that his cabinet members resign as directors of companies if they were to serve in his cabinet, recognising the conflict of interest that that would result in. He was a great supporter of the republic and, at the end of his life, was not only a supporter of the republic but a strong supporter of Australian independence in foreign policy, particularly from the US, which had been a major shift from his support of the United States in the Vietnam War.

But in his environmentalism, from the point of view that we might say that 'conservative' comes from conservation of what is, he was a true conservationist in those years. He served on the ACF council right back in the 1960s. He did offer Robin Gray $500 million to build a coal fired power station and not to proceed with the Franklin Dam. It was the major election
issue in 1983, and I am very glad to say that his desire to stop the dam was actually delivered, and we have stopped that dam. But he was one of those who stood out against it.

In terms of the Great Barrier Reef, he was the person who established the marine park, and he took on the Bjelke-Petersen government in spite of the fact that it was Bjelke-Petersen, the former Premier of Queensland, who had helped him out via the numbers with the Albert Field scandal in terms of the Senate replacement. But Malcolm Fraser revoked the licence for sandmining on Fraser Island in 1976. He also banned whaling in Australia in 1979, in spite of the fact that brought him into great conflict with the Western Australian government of the day. He declared the Kakadu National Park, and he had a great focus on the Antarctic and, as Senator Abetz has noted, moved the Antarctic Division to Hobart.

His recognition of the environment and his love of country was probably something that we have only come to appreciate, perhaps, in later years, because his time as Prime Minister was so tumultuous for other reasons. But the last entry he made as a teenager before he went to Oxford said this:

All my life I will have memories of calm nights beneath the sky, of waking before dawn to see the sun rise in the east and of driving over the lonely bush roads with dust eddying all round. The deformed Mallee scrub and the ghost farms, the great plains and the endless sand hills, the majestic mountains, the beautiful valleys and pleasant hills. All these are part of Australia and part of my memories. Among them I will find my home.

Well, he did. He not only found his home; he represented his home, Australia, in so many ways about which we feel proud. He was a man who stood by his principles for his whole life. He welcomed the outsider, he embraced the refugee, he rejected racism, he stood up for human rights, he stood up with people who cared for human rights, and he cared for country. He promoted the Aboriginal spirit of country, and he worked to protect it. And I extend our sympathies to his widow, Tamie, and to the family and say that the Australian Greens recognise the great contribution that he made to Australia.

Senator SCULLION (Northern Territory—Minister for Indigenous Affairs and Leader of The Nationals in the Senate) (10:44): I rise to associate the Nationals with this condolence motion for the Rt Hon. Malcolm Fraser. As the Prime Minister and in his life afterwards his influence was felt in many areas of Australian life. If I can just have a short anecdote, on Friday morning last I was approaching the Sky studios in Sydney—it is an open studio that looks out onto the street—and as I walked up a man turned to me, as a stranger, and said, 'Malcolm Fraser's died.' I turned and I saw that the Sky News TVs were in there. It was the first time. I turned around and said, 'Wow, that's a bit of an end of a legacy.' He said: 'Yes, he sent me to war, you know. He sent me to Vietnam. He was the minister. I had a very bad time in Vietnam. But he did a lot of great things, so it's probably time to forgive him.' I think that quintessential Australian moment of looking through a TV as one of a few people outside probably really encapsulates the spectrum of influence he had on people's lives. He was not someone who necessarily always did things that people agreed with, but he certainly did things that people would have a lasting impression of.

Malcolm Fraser was elected to the seat of Wannon a year before I was born. Throughout my life I can still remember where I was when particular things happened, so he has certainly been around throughout my life. Obviously, I have a great interest in Indigenous affairs, and certainly his action and activism is something that we should remember as a great legacy for
Australians. Land rights were very hard fought for, but I think we have to recognise that Mr Fraser delivered significant gains for Aboriginal people right across Australia, particularly in the Northern Territory. I think it changed the Northern Territory. The Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act significantly changed the tone of that debate.

The Fraser government followed up on the Whitlam government's initiatives and passed significant land rights legislation relevant specifically to the Northern Territory. Interestingly, the term 'self-determination' was dropped from the government's vocabulary and replaced by 'self-management' and 'self-sufficiency'. For somebody at quite a high level to insist that those two terms be changed was a reflection of his conversations and his relationships with Aboriginal people on the ground. He insisted that those were the things that, from his conversations, we should actually change—our vernacular.

The Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act provided recognition of Aboriginal ownership and established the position of Aboriginal Land Commissioner, the Aboriginal Lands Trust and the Aboriginals Benefit Account. It enabled traditional Aboriginal lands to be granted to those land trusts and provided for the creation of a Central Land Council, the Northern Land Council and the Tiwi Land Council.

This morning, Galarrwuy Yunupingu had this to say about his dealings with Malcolm Fraser: he reflected on his dealings with Malcolm Fraser, saying that he was a man of honour and a man of his word. Malcolm treated everyone as equals and together, through a tumultuous process, they developed land rights and also came to a very difficult agreement, he describes, over uranium mining in Kakadu.

In Malcolm Fraser, Aboriginal traditional owners had a friend and champion of the land rights cause. Because of their work, and the efforts of the Whitlam government before him, Aboriginal traditional owners were finally recognised as the landowners in the Northern Territory. Aboriginal land now covers almost half of the Territory and has been the basis for significant economic development across the communities. This is an absolutely clear legacy of not only Malcolm Fraser's government but him as an individual.

The uranium environmental inquiry, led by Justice Fox, examined many of the effects of the impacts of mining on people. When they recommended the Ranger mine go ahead, it was subject to many strict environmental safeguards. It is pretty well known in the Territory that part of the legacy of those environmental safeguards was, again, because of the personal intervention of a Prime Minister who had been affected and influenced by so many of those Aboriginal people on the ground.

In 1977—I am not sure about the exact connection but certainly under his leadership—the first Community Development Employment Program began nearly 40 years ago. Under this scheme, members of the participating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities or organisations forwent social security payments for a wages grant that was paid to the community. For those who are in this space, and I know that Senator Siewert follows this space, it was almost 40 years ago. We are moving back, frankly, to a system that is effective and reflects the spirit of the wishes of many of the people in those communities in that regard.

Many of the processes of representation were changed under Mr Fraser's guidance. The National Aboriginal Conference replaced the National Aboriginal Consultative Committee, a peak body to advise federal government on Aboriginal affairs. It comprised representatives
elected to state branches from which a 10-member national executive was elected. This was the first time that we reflected that Aboriginal people had to be the spokespeople for Aboriginal people and actually had come from the area so that they could recognise the diversity of the Aboriginal people.

Justice Toohey was appointed Aboriginal Land Commissioner in the Northern Territory, and I think the first land claim was around Borroloola. The proclamation of the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act in 1976 enabled traditional owners to claim unaliennated Crown land. The act provided for the commissioner to hear claims and the power to grant limited title. This was the very first time under Australian law that claims of traditional ownership and the other benefits that flowed from that were judged, a most significant issue for our First Australians.

Mr Fraser can be credited with putting in place all this modern government infrastructure, much of which exists to this day, in Indigenous affairs. I think his legacy is a significant legal framework that established, for Aboriginal people, how to deal with governments and the courts of the day. Credit should be given to him, and to his leadership, as the architect to ensure that this happened under his watch.

In 1978, conflict arose between the Commonwealth and Queensland governments over Aurukun and Mornington Island Aboriginal reserves after the Queensland government decided to take control of both reserves. It actually led to the intervention of a prime minister, Prime Minister Fraser, after the community contacted him and asked for some assistance. Eventually, through his insistence, state and federal ministers agreed local authorities should be created for former reserves and the land leased to the newly created councils for a 50-year lease. Again, he was somebody who really believed that Aboriginal people should have a say and made it so.

The Northern Land Council and the Commonwealth government signed the historic Ranger agreement. The agreement provided for payments to be made by the Commonwealth to the Northern Land Council by way of royalties for mining on Aboriginal lands, and that created the Aboriginals Benefit Trust Account—and, if you are an Aboriginal Territorian, you will know exactly what that means and what that means for you, your communities and your families—which, uniquely, established that Aboriginal people receive the same royalties in the Northern Territory for mining on their land that the Northern Territory government does, as other state governments around Australia do.

In 1979, a group of prominent Australians, including Nugget Coombs and Judith Wright, formed the Aboriginal Treaty Committee to lobby for a negotiated treaty. Again, it is a matter for Indigenous Australians that we are pontificating on to this day. The conference put forward a treaty proposal, and Malcolm Fraser subsequently agreed to have significant discussions with the treaty proposers.

Fraser's government was also the first government, I think, significantly, to recognise the plight of Indigenous people with regard to health. The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs released a report, Aboriginal health, which I think is the basis of the Closing the gap report later, providing all of the indicators that we now take for granted.
Many of the processes before Malcolm Fraser were extremely antiquated. We remember them although they are dust, and they are brought up in conversation from time to time. He was responsible for repealing a number of pieces of legislation that are of little interest to most: the Aboriginal Development Commission Act, the Aboriginal Loans Commission Act and the Aboriginal Land Fund Act. Part of the motivation for getting rid of those was to ensure that Aboriginal people were empowered. Fraser then went on to establish the Aboriginal Development Commission, which was governed, for the first time in Australia, by a board of Aboriginal people and had the task of administering a range of development oriented programs. The scope for more power over their own future was gradually opening up for our First Australians.

Following a review of the administration of a whole suite of processes, the Commonwealth Department of Aboriginal Affairs actually changed a whole suite of things that we take for granted today. For example, with the very difficult issue of Aboriginality based on descent, self identification and community recognition were adopted by federal agencies. This was very much a landmark decision that we use today.

The Fraser government included the first Aboriginal federal parliamentarian, Neville Bonner. Neville had what he described as a 'good but robust' relationship with Malcolm, as one could understand. He was quoted later in life as saying:

When Aboriginal issues came up in the Party room, I had some very good and wonderful thought, particularly after the change of government in 1975. Malcolm Fraser and Philip Lynch, Margaret Guilfoyle, Bernie Kilgariff, Fred Chaney, Ian Viner, Peter Baume, …

I think that all these individuals were influenced very much by Malcolm's thoughts. These were all people who went on to make a significant contribution in Indigenous affairs.

What one needs to understand is that we take for granted in this place the things I have talked about: this is the way that we should think—we may have our slight schisms of views, but we are thinking much along the same lines. But I can tell you that as a Conservative in the early 1970s, this was certainly not what people were thinking. So when we talk about political courage and real leadership, this was providing leadership at a time when it was not popular. It was something that I think rankled many of his colleagues at that time, but it provided what we know in Australia as the right direction.

As we have already heard this morning, Malcolm Fraser was a key player in ensuring that apartheid became a thing of the past, particularly in the leadership role he played in 1977 at the meeting in Scotland where all Commonwealth countries affirmed their opposition to racial discrimination in sport, insisting that South Africa must lift apartheid to be able to compete in the Commonwealth Games scheduled for Edmonton in Canada in the next year. The Gleneagles Agreement against apartheid in sport was reached with his leadership at this historic meeting.

As a representative from the Northern Territory, I would also like to say that it was under Malcolm Fraser that the Northern Territory achieved self-government—a fully elected legislative assembly. This followed 67 years of federal administration, after 50 years of government by South Australia.

Malcolm Fraser continued his activism in Indigenous affairs after leaving parliament. In 2003 he said in his Sorry Day speech, which I think was not only eloquent but also absolutely accurate:
There are no quick fixes to Indigenous poverty and social disaster. Solutions will be found when the non-Indigenous people respect the insights of Indigenous people, and listen to them. Solutions will not be found while Indigenous people are treated as victims for whom someone else must find solutions. They will be active partners in any solution.

I think this is an insight that we have only recently started to grasp.

The legacy of Malcolm Fraser, of course, is a legacy across the political divide. I have touched on something that is close to my heart, but it is a legacy in this particular area where I do not think that Australia would be anything like what it is now had it not been for his very courageous and personal intervention.

I know that he will be sadly missed, particularly in Arnhem Land. I know that the Northern Land Council chairman, Sammy Bush-Blanasi, said, amongst other things:

Mr Fraser pushed it through—
He is speaking about the land rights act—
against strong opposition from the Country Liberal Party.

And whilst I was not around at the time I know many of the characters who were, and it would have been just full opposition in the place where we were introducing this legislation.

He said:

Mr Fraser pushed it through against strong opposition from the Country Liberal Party in the Northern Territory. Aboriginal people will ever be grateful to Mr Fraser for holding out against that opposition. We also recognise that Mr Fraser was a great advocate for the human rights of all peoples.

Again, in closing: this was a man of political courage. He was a man who did things that were unpopular at the time, not only amongst his colleagues but in quite large sectors of the Australian people. But he knew intuitively that this was the right thing to do and when he knew intuitively that that was the case, that is the direction he took.

He was an all-round champion Australian. I pass on the National's condolences to his family, to his wife, Tamie, and to his children and his grandchildren.

Senator BRANDIS (Queensland—Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate, Vice-President of the Executive Council, Minister for Arts and Attorney-General) (10:59): I associate myself with the remarks of my leader, Senator Abetz. I also thank Senator Wong and Senator Milne for the gracious tributes that they have paid to the late Malcolm Fraser. In her contribution in particular, Senator Wong appropriately did not gloss over the intensity of the political dispute at which Mr Fraser was at the centre in 1975. Nor did she gloss over the enmity with which the Labor Party treated Malcolm Fraser in the course of that very bitter political conflict. It is appropriate, I think, if we assess Mr Fraser's life as a whole, as we should, that all elements of his career and all of the critical events in which he was an important participant should be acknowledged, and Senator Wong has done that—as, indeed, has Senator Milne. I will return to those events in a moment.

When Malcolm Fraser rose in the House of Representatives shortly after nine o'clock on 22 February 1956 to make his maiden speech, he was not long back from Oxford. In fact, I am wearing my Magdalen tie today in tribute to him. Although Mr Fraser was regarded as a dour and humourless politician for much of his life, his first words in the House of Representatives were actually a cheeky joke. He said:
As the youngest member of this House—in passing I should like to say that if I remain a member it will take me 33 years to reach the average age of members of the Cabinet—I appreciate the honour that the electors of Wannon have shown me by returning me as their representative.

It was a speech largely devoted to the issue of national development but, in the course of the speech, he did touch upon some broader themes which were to characterise his public life. He said, among other things:

We owe a duty to ourselves, to future generations of Australians, and to the rest of the free world to play our part in the maintenance of world freedom and peace; and any effective foreign policy directed towards that end must, quite obviously, envisage an effective defence force.

Before he was Prime Minister, he was involved primarily in defence related portfolios and, as other senators have pointed out, was a very strong proponent of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War. He finished his speech, rather movingly, with these words:

I was too young to fight in the last war, and I owe a debt of gratitude to those who fought in World War I, as well as in World War II. But I am not too young now to fight for my faith and belief in the future of this great nation, in which the individual is, and always shall remain, supreme.

Malcolm Fraser was, as Senator Wong has observed, a lifelong liberal. It is a matter of regret to those of us in the Liberal Party that he was not a lifelong member of the Liberal Party. He resigned from the Liberal Party some 4½ years ago. But in the span of a long life and in the span of a long career the most important contribution a person makes in public life is the contribution they make during the time they serve here in the parliament. Malcolm Fraser served in the parliament for 27½ years. I assume the average age of the cabinet fell during the course of those 27½ years. He was in fact a relatively young Prime Minister at the age of 45, an office he held for seven years and four months. So when we look at the totality of Malcolm Fraser's contribution of course we should consider the post-parliamentary years. They are relevant. In his post-parliamentary years, Mr Fraser did many very, very fine things. But the most important years were the years in which he led the nation. He was, as Senator Wong rightly said, in many ways marked by contradiction. But, much more importantly, he was consistently a liberal. He was consistently a person who subscribed to the great liberal philosophical tradition. It is to that that I want to direct my remarks in particular.

In the years before he became Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser gave two speeches that were of particular importance. The first of those was the 1971 Deakin lecture, given a few months after he brought down the Gorton government and established himself as very much a politician on the rise. Those were the days, by the way, in which Malcolm Fraser was seen as an ogre of the right by his critics. In the Deakin lecture, he said this:

Arnold Toynbee once wrote twelve volumes to demonstrate and analyse the cause of the rise and fall of nations. His thesis can be condensed to a sentence, and is simply stated: That through history nations are confronted by a series of challenges and whether they survive or whether they fall to the wayside, depends on the manner and character of their response. Simple, and perhaps one of the few things that is self evident. It involves a conclusion about the past that life has not been easy for people or for nations, and an assumption for the future that that condition will not alter. There is within me some part of the metaphysic, and thus I would add that life is not meant to be easy.

That is the genesis of the remark often associated with him. But, in fact, as he pointed out in later years, he was channelling George Bernard Shaw, who in his play *Back to Methuselah* gave the full quote:

Life is not meant to be easy, my child; but take courage: it can be delightful.
There is something of a robust, Theodore Roosevelt air about the 1971 Deakin lecture. It is a peon to the vigorous life, in a very Theodore Rooseveltian way. He went on to say:

We need a rugged society, but our new generations have seen only affluence. If a man has not known adversity, if in his lifetime his country has not been subject to attack, it is harder for him to understand that there are some things for which we must always struggle. Thus people or leaders can be trapped to take the easy path. This is the high road to national disaster. There are many strands to the maintenance of will—a society that encourages individual strength and initiative, an understanding of events, ability to bear sacrifices, an understanding that there are obligations that precede rights and a belief that work is still desirable.

The great task of statesmanship is to apply past lessons to new situations, to draw correct analogies to understand and act upon present forces, to recognise the need for change. We must be particularly aware of the great weaknesses of man's idealism which is to forget the frailty of the human race, to believe that man is something that he is not and so construct a view of society that can only exist in the mind. We can only draw reality from our idealism when we can accept that while we strive for perfection, we will not reach it in this world nor our sons after us. Recognition of this truth should soften the radical, bring tolerance to the fanatic, temper the extremes of love and hate. But it will not make our vigilance or struggle any the less necessary.

There you have, in a few sentences, the approach of Malcolm Fraser that characterised his entire public life: a belief that great causes are something that have to be struggled for. That ruggedness, that purposeful, the rugged individualism, characterised Mr Fraser through all the twists and turns of a long life. It certainly characterised his prime ministership.

When, in 1975, he took the decision to block supply, he made himself the object of the most intense hatred that I have ever seen directed at an Australian public figure. The venom and hatred directed at John Howard when he was Prime Minister and the venom and hatred directed at Mr Abbott today are mild by comparison to the vile and venom and hatred directed at Malcolm Fraser by the Labor Party and those on the Left in politics in those remarkable summer days of October, November and December 1975.

Today it is regarded as almost a capital political offence, certainly in the worst possible taste, to invoke Nazi metaphors. Yet routinely in 1975, Mr Fraser was depicted on Labor Party placards with a Hitler fringe and a Hitler moustache. Routinely the letter 'S' in the middle of his surname was replaced by a swastika. Never in my lifetime has a figure being more reviled and anathematised by the Left than was Malcolm Fraser in 1975.

I mentioned earlier that, before he became the Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser gave two speeches of particular importance, and I have quoted from the first, the Deakin lecture. But, at the height of those days—in fact, it was on 25 September 1975, a matter of days before the Senate first deferred the supply bills—Malcolm Fraser gave a speech in Perth, the Sir Robert Menzies lecture, which in those days was held under the auspices of the Western Australian division of the Liberal Party. It is, I think, the most important speech he ever gave, because he set out in an articulate and compelling way the philosophical argument for the difference between my side of politics and the Labor side of politics. I seek the indulgence of the Senate to quote some passages from that speech, because I maintain that Malcolm Fraser never became a figure of the Left. Certainly he was disillusioned with the Liberal Party in his last years; there is no doubt about that. But the values that he articulated, in particular in the Sir Robert Menzies lecture, never left him. He said this:
Some people appear to believe that the differences between governments of the Liberal and Labor persuasion on the issue of government intervention is merely a matter of degree. On this view, Liberal Governments make merely a pretense at resisting governmental growth, while Labor governments actually foster government growth. Superficially, the record bears this out. There has been a continuing growth in the size of government over the last few decades.

He went on to say:

Underlying the different rates of expansion of government, are two fundamentally opposed attitudes to the role of government and its proper relation to the people of Australia.

One attitude, the Liberal attitude, is that there are serious limitations on the ability of the government to produce the better life, that while government may encourage and assist people, basically, a better life will be built by Australians themselves, through their own efforts, by their own decisions, on their own volition.

The other attitude, the Labor attitude, believes that a government growing in size and powers and concentrated in Canberra, is the road to a better life for the average Australian.

The Liberal view is that the goals of Australians should be set by Australians themselves in the course of their lives. Government is the focus of common but limited goals. It does not, and should not set, detailed goals for individuals. Government has the job of aiding people in pursuit of their diverse objectives and of minimizing the imposition of uniformity and conformity.

The Labor view on the other hand views government as embodying some higher wisdom, as the authentic voice of the community, as distinct from the individuals who make up the community. In this view, it is bad that individuals differ, that they want different things. Since there is a common interest known to the governments, its wishes prevail over individual desires. In this view that fewer choices in important matters that individuals have, the better, because the greater the latitude that individuals have the more likely they are to deviate from the government's line.

The means of implementing this philosophy is through gaining control over an ever-increasing proportion of the earnings of the individual. It gains this control through the tax system.

Having exposed, I think, in a particularly clear and articulate way the fundamental differences in approach between those who sit on my side of the aisle and the Labor Party, Mr Fraser went on to critique the Labor approach. He said:

The notion of an all-embracing community will and over-riding community interest represented by a ruling group which claims to have the insight to discover what the community really wants, has been the basic rationale for totalitarian movements which suppressed people in the interests of a myth. Government is not the embodiment of the community. It is a set of institutions within a wider society. A community composed of groups and individuals who have both co-operative and conflicting interests.

The significance of undertaking an increasing number of activities through governmental decision can only be appreciated if the character of governmental institutions is properly understood. Government is bureaucratic. It is not the only bureaucracy in society, but it is the most powerful. Government places decisions in the hands of a few. In the provision of services, it tends to be monopolistic. It largely relies on the acquisition of resources by compulsion from other sections of the community. In allocating resources, governments rely on authority and coercion. These are simple facts.

They do not mean government cannot be used for very worthwhile ends, in a dynamic and creative way. In fact, it is fundamental to Liberal beliefs that the power of government ought to be used to establish the circumstances in which people can act according to their own wishes and to assist those in need, who would not otherwise obtain assistance. One of the great strengths of the Liberal tradition of political thought is that it has always had a much more accurate view of the role and nature of government than those influenced by socialist philosophy.

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Lastly, he went on to say:

This is the reason why Liberals have always sought to keep government limited. Liberals have recognised that that government, in common with all monopolies, is a threat both to individuals and to the community's constituent groups. It inevitably means a massive growth of monopoly power, the power to dictate. Government may have both a constructive and destructive role in relation to the constituent groups of community. Ill-conceived government action effectively destroys co-operation between members of the community.

That is, I think and if I may say so, a very eloquent and accurate description of the philosophical underpinnings of the liberal tradition.

Although in the years after he left parliament, and in particular in the last years of his life, Malcolm Fraser may have had very strong differences from the Liberal governments of the day, whether the Howard government or the Abbott government on individual policy issues—most notably refugee policy—nothing that Malcolm Fraser said in that Robert Menzies lecture of 1975 40 years ago had abated until the day he died. Not one word of it, which is why I stand in this chamber today proud to claim Malcolm Fraser is a great liberal. It is sad that in the last four or five years of his life he was estranged from my party, but nevertheless confident in the knowledge that the philosophical tradition that he represented and the philosophical tradition that I and my colleagues represent are one and the same. I give thanks for the memory of the great Australian.

Senator CAMERON (New South Wales) (11:20): It is an honour for me to stand in the Senate and pay my respects to a great Australian, the Rt Hon. Malcolm Fraser. I also join in expressing my condolences and the condolences of my wife Elaine to Tamie, Mark, Angela, Hugh and Phoebe and all of Malcolm's friends who would be devastated with this loss.

I was about to commence a doorstop interview on Friday at 10 am, when a journalist advised me of the death of the 22nd Prime Minister of Australia, the Rt Hon. Malcolm Fraser. It was devastating news, as Malcolm was, despite its advanced years, one of the strongest and most incisive voices on behalf of human rights in Australia. The dispossessed, the vulnerable and refugees seeking protection have lost a great campaigner and champion for their cause. Malcolm, in my view, was a man of courage, conviction and intelligence. Paul Kelly has said that he was 'informed, formidable and constructive'. He certainly was formidable. Australia has lost one of its most significant political figures.

In 1973, I arrived with my young family in Australia. We arrived as the Whitlam government was reshaping the country: I was so proud to be a new migrant and a union activist, as the Whitlam government set about democratising and modernising the country—recognising Indigenous rights, abolishing conscription, releasing draft resisters from prison, establishing Medibank, providing benefits to the homeless, promoting equal pay for women, abolishing the death penalty, giving access for the poor to the legal system, establishing a Family Court, making university education available to the working class, replacing *God Save the Queen* with *Advance Australia Fair*, replacing the British honours system, building a sewerage system in Western Sydney, and so much more. Then along came Malcolm Fraser, John Kerr, and Reg Withers, and we had a constitutional crisis. I was in total disbelief that a Governor-General could dismiss a prime minister and a democratically elected government. It was then that Malcolm Fraser became public enemy No. 1, to me and to millions of other Australians. I reviled Malcolm Fraser and John Kerr. They epitomised all that was wrong with
a political system based on power and privilege. I participated in strikes at Liddell Power Station to demonstrate against the sacking of the Whitlam government and the imposition of what I still think was an illegitimate government. I was a strong supporter of national strikes in defence of Australian democracy. History shows that the conservative forces won out, and the Fraser government became a reality. I will leave it to others to judge the success or otherwise of the Fraser government, but to me it always epitomised the start of the institutional attack on the trade union movement in this country.

I became a union official in 1981, and one of my first big campaigns was to fight against the Fraser government's 1982 wage freeze. After the excitement of the Whitlam years, the Fraser government was, in my view, pale in comparison. I was happy to see the Fraser government defeated in 1983. The evolution of Malcolm Fraser from reviled conservative politician to respected elder statesman and human rights activist is one of the great Australian political stories. It is a mark of the stature of Malcolm Fraser as an individual that the revulsion felt by millions of Australians towards him has now become deep respect and sadness at his death. Malcolm's consistent values and advocacy on behalf of multiculturalism, refugees, and human rights at the national and international levels was, in my estimation, the driving force to move him from being a divisive political figure to a respected national and international statesman.

In the intervening period, after the defeat of the Fraser government, many things changed as globalisation, economic reform, free trade, and individualisation became the dominant features of the political landscape. During this period, Malcolm Fraser was growing in stature with his strong views on apartheid, refugees, the environment, and Australia's place in the world. In 2002, when I was the national secretary of the AMWU, I was concerned at the growing vilification of refugees. I felt that Malcolm Fraser was one of the strongest and most persuasive voices in support of the human rights of refugees. It was in this context—and almost 27 years after the Dismissal—that the leadership of my union, the AMWU, made a big call and invited Malcolm Fraser to address the 2002 National Conference of the AMWU. This was not a universally popular decision within the union; many of my comrades were still maintaining the rage. I was actually surprised to receive a letter of acceptance from Malcolm. He agreed to address the conference. This was a decision that epitomised his commitment to human rights and multiculturalism. There were over 100 delegates at our conference in Parramatta's Park Royal Hotel; we all resented the Dismissal, and many were still hostile towards Malcolm Fraser. This was my first real engagement with former Prime Minister Fraser. As I understand it, it was also the first time that Malcolm Fraser addressed a union conference.

Malcolm was at his sartorial best: pinstripe suit, a pocket handkerchief, waistcoat; a tall and commanding presence. He presented as being aloof and privileged, something that did not go down well with AMWU activists. As he entered the conference, he was given a polite but subdued welcome. I wondered, 'what have I done?' He then took the stage and made the conference his own. He spoke about the history of Australia, moving from the Depression and the Second World War to a migration policy which changed the face of the nation. He recognised the statesmanship of Arthur Calwell in allaying the fears of a socially conservative community, which allowed the government to embark on a migration program that would build and transform Australia. Malcolm noted that the Curtin program was bipartisan and
supported by the opposition political parties of the time. He said that the 1946 program was instrumental in developing a multicultural and diverse Australia—which is recognised as one of Australia's great strengths. Malcolm argued that the 1946 program brought great change to Australia and taught the policies of tolerance, and of the need for compassion and concern. Malcolm went on to speak about the provision of a safe haven for over 200,000 Vietnamese following what he described as 'a most misguided conflict'. Over 1.25 million Vietnamese and Indochinese resettled in the United States; 250,000 in Canada; well over 200,000 in Australia; and a significant number in France. This was, according to Malcolm, achieved through international cooperation and the establishment of transit points through Malaysia and Indonesia. Malcolm noted that many of the Vietnamese settling in Australia had no papers and would have been rejected under the then government policy. He went on to say:

If one had asked the people of Melbourne whether they wanted Melbourne to become the largest Greek city outside of Greece, they would have said No with a resounding majority. Now that it has happened, Melbourne is proud of the fact and Australia is much better off as a consequence of that migration.

He then asked:

How did we change? Why did we change? Why did both major political parties abandon leadership and reverse the policies which Australia had implemented so successfully for so many decades?

It is our task to reverse that attitude and to re-establish Australia as a compassionate and humane society.

He went on:

Australia's current policies are often attacked because they offend international agreements, which we helped draft and supported. They offend sections of the Convention on Refugees and on the Rights of the Child but we need to look at current policies on the basis of Australian values because they offend every decent fibre of our being. They offend every idea of a fair go. They offend the basic principle that we should do to others what we would like done to us.

The Government has attracted support by playing on insecurities, by emphasizing difference, by exaggerating numbers and by claims that in the event were totally untrue.

Malcolm argued:

There is much insecurity in the world at the present time. Many of those insecurities are shared by Australians but those insecurities do not relate to asylum seekers and refugees who come to Australia by boat. There are great insecurities as a result of economic globalisation and the failure of anyone to spell out where that process will end. That insecurity should be directed at government and not at a few thousand would-be refugees.

Malcolm went on to discuss the dehumanisation of refugees—the fact that refugees offered no threat to the integrity of our borders. He argued that refugees should be treated in line with the great Australian philosophy based on a fair go with basic human decency. They should be treated, said Malcolm Fraser, as human beings. Malcolm indicated:

When the policy of compulsory, mandatory, non-reviewable detention is ultimately abandoned, we will have ended a period of shame for Australia worldwide.

Malcolm finished on another contemporary issue—the need for more vigorous attempts to assist poorer countries as an essential part of the whole process. He indicated:

Foreign Aid from wealthy nations has fallen dramatically in the last 25 years. That trend should be reversed so the greater impact can be made in tackling problems of poverty and persecution at their source.
That speech, from 13 years ago, is still as relevant and as important as the day it was given. The best tribute, in my view, that this country could give to Malcolm Fraser would be to end the scare campaigns and the demonisation of refugees, with us working towards reconstituting the international and regional frameworks that worked following the Vietnam war.

I would now like to briefly recognise one of Malcolm's great passions—his Scottish heritage. I last met Malcolm on the occasion of the opening of the 'For Auld Lang Syne' exhibition at the Art Gallery of Ballarat, just under 12 months ago. I had been invited to be the keynote speaker, and Elaine and I were pleasantly surprised to see Malcolm, resplendent in his Fraser tartan dress kilt. He was an imposing figure, let me tell you. It should be noted, for the Irish here, that one third of all the prime ministers in this country have been of Scottish or Scottish descent compared to only one fifth Irish.

Malcolm and Ranald MacDonald presented an interesting dialogue at this opening. Ranald MacDonald was from the David Syme family, from The Age, and Malcolm was the grandson of Sir Simon Fraser. Sir Simon Fraser was a free trader and David Syme was a protectionist—things do not change a lot in politics, do they? There are some constants. They went through correspondence between Sir Simon Fraser and David Syme. In the beginning, all of the pleasantries were invoked in the correspondence—'My dear Simon' and 'My dear David'. Then 'My dear' disappeared from the correspondence and it became 'Simon' and 'David', and then it became 'Fraser' and 'Syme' as the correspondence became more polemic in terms of the arguments and issues being raised. The addressed was finished by Malcolm indicating that Mr Syme had written to Sir Simon Fraser and said—remember that Mr Syme was the owner of The Age—'Your name will never again appear in the correspondence column of the Melbourne Age.' Sir Simon replied: 'You are wrong. Read the half-page advertisement I have taken out on the front page of the Melbourne Age for tomorrow morning's issue.' It just shows what money and power can do.

This was an extremely interesting night. Malcolm was so proud of his Scottish heritage. That night, along with Tamie, his relatives and friends, he invited Elaine and I to go to a local pub. We went to the local pub, and we had dinner that night. We spoke about many things that night. We spoke about refugees, we spoke about human rights, and we spoke about Malcolm's forthcoming book—I think it came out the following Monday—called Dangerous Allies. Malcolm was an impressive man. Malcolm was an extremely intelligent person who understood a raft of issues that were important to this country. We had a fantastic night that night, and I am proud to say that I viewed Malcolm as a friend.

I would never have said that in 1975. I never thought that I would one day be a senator, nor that I would stand up in the Senate in Australia and say that I felt Malcolm Fraser was a friend and that I thought he was a great Australian. But I think his strength was not his previous political career; it was about the man himself. It was about having strong values, strong principles, strong commitments and the courage to take them to the Australian people. That was the strength of Malcolm Fraser. That was strength of a great Australian.

The great Scottish poet Rabbie Burns wrote Auld Lang Syne. Lots of people do not know what Auld Lang Syne means. They sing it in Beijing, they sing it in America and they sing it Australia for the new year. It is a sincere expression of friendship. It is about times gone by. It is about remembering friends from the past and not letting them be forgotten. Well, Malcolm
Fraser, you will not be forgotten. You have made so many friends in your long, distinguished political career. I will finish with the words of Rabbie Burns:

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
and never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
and auld lang syne?

Vale Malcolm Fraser.

Senator HANSON-YOUNG (South Australia) (11:39): I rise today with a heart full of sadness that we are speaking to the condolence motion of the late Malcolm Fraser. Malcolm and I share more in common than our commitment to refugees and human rights. Malcolm was elected to this place at the age of 25; I was elected to this place at the age of 25. While I was only two years old at the time when his reign as Prime Minister of this country ended, my commitment to and passion for immigration policy in this country taught me from my university days that it was the leadership of Malcolm Fraser that allowed our nation to open our doors to those most in need following the Vietnam War. But more important than that was the practical implementation of the end of the White Australia policy. While Gough Whitlam took great steps to end the White Australia policy, the practical implementation came from Fraser opening our doors to our regional neighbours, encouraging Asian migration, and offering a helping hand and a hand of compassion to those on our doorstep.

Malcolm Fraser was a rare combination of exceptional strengths and abilities. He was strong in conviction but humble in person. He was able to recognise mistakes and correct them, and recognise when his view had changed—skills that are in desperately short supply, I believe, in today's politics. He was a man who could accept change and understand that mistakes had happened but was never a hypocrite in doing so. He was determined and consistent, without being stubborn, and he was fiercely intelligent, as we all know. This is a rare combination of attributes, and it was this combination that turned Mr Fraser into a genuine politician of principle. He was, by all marks, a leader of compassion.

I was lucky, in the final years of Malcolm's life, to get to know him, to become his friend and to have him as a mentor. I always remember his strength of character, his quiet but very sharp wit, and that he was always a gentleman. He has been a mentor and a great friend—especially, I must say, in the darkest times. In the almost seven years that I have been in this place, there have been many political debates, particularly around asylum seekers and refugees, where the political tempo gets so heated and emotions are raw. I have always been very humbled to have Malcolm on the other end of the phone for advice or sometimes just for me to vent my frustration with the current policies. He always showed me that it is possible to be both strong and compassionate, and that showing compassion to people is not a sign of weakness. No-one would argue that Malcolm Fraser was a weak man, yet many, many people in this country are saddened today because we have lost a man of great compassion and empathy.

He was resolute in his commitment to human rights and treating people with dignity and respect. Particularly at the time of welcoming tens of thousands of Vietnamese refugees to this country, he was never irresolute. He would never waiver in his commitment to allowing those tens of thousands of refugees into this country. He was resolute in his commitment to
allowing them in and to welcoming them. It was not enough for him to just open doors. He wanted them to feel part of the Australian family. He wanted everyone in Australia from our Indigenous people in communities through to our recent arrivals and new migrants to feel part of the Australian family. This is what his big commitment to creating the SBS was all about—allowing people to feel part of their community and for them to tell their stories to the rest of the Australian community. He wanted people to feel proud, secure and happy in the big Australian family.

Over the last few days since his passing, there has been increasing debate—a debate which has been bubbling along for some time—about whether it was Malcolm or the Liberal Party who had changed. I for one believe it was probably a little bit of both. Obviously, his resolute attitude towards immigration was always there. His commitment to human rights was always there. But I must say: how can you change your country if you cannot change yourself? I think that is the principle by which I will always remember Malcolm Fraser. He could recognise when things were wrong and recognise where things needed to change, whether in his own country, his party’s policies or, indeed, himself.

He struck a chord in later years amongst those of us who have been staunchly opposed to the current Liberal Party policy and, admittedly, the policy of the Labor Party, on asylum seekers. I do not think one could criticise Mr Fraser of not standing up against both parties on their weakening of the rights and protections of refugees. He carried his commitment on these issues right to the day of his passing. One of the organisations who are grieving at the moment more than any other is the Asylum Resource Centre in Melbourne. I have a statement from them that I would like to read, because Malcolm’s commitment to working with people in the local community never weakened, even in his later years, whether it was through the books that he wrote, the newspaper articles that he contributed, the speeches that he made at dinners or the statesman-like role that he fulfilled. He never forgot that in order to change things for the better you have to involve those on the ground—your campaigners, the volunteers and the people.

The last time I saw Malcolm was at the end of last year, in December. We both attended the opening of the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre’s new offices in Melbourne. It was such an honour to stand in that place, in a new building, full of vibrancy and hope and to hear stories from all over the world from people who have come to Australia by not the easiest of means, who took courage to leave their countries because of oppression, abuse and torture and who found their home in Melbourne. Malcolm Fraser stood on the stage, telling the crowd—there were about 1,200 people; it was at midday on a Thursday—how saddened he was about the current government’s policies, but that the people there could not give up. There is a famous quote from Mr Fraser about optimism that I think sums up very well how he kept the fire in his belly. He said:

You have to be an optimist … Why involve yourself in issues of public policy unless you are?.

As an eternal optimist myself, I am really struck by that. He never wavered. He was resolute in his convictions, but he was optimistic about the change that he could create.

I want to read a little statement from the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre as their tribute to Malcolm:

The Asylum Seeker Resource Centre has lost not only a fellow advocate but a true friend.
Someone whose involvement with the centre extended far beyond the purely professional to a warm and very personal friendship.

Mr Fraser's involvement with the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre began in April 2010, at the launch of his biography at Melbourne University.

Mr Fraser spoke about his long-held views about immigration and multi-culturalism as being integral to our nation—and he bemoaned the resurgence of harsh, punitive policies and attitudes towards asylum seekers and refugees, considering it a return to the ugliest side of the days of the White Australia Policy. The ASRC took the opportunity to introduce him to their organisation and asked for his support. After a brief sizing up, he asked: 'What do you want and when do you need it by?' I must say that that has always been how it was in my dealings with Mr Fraser. He was always willing to help, always willing to stand up and do whatever was needed but he just wanted to know when it had to be done by. This was a man who operated on time frames; he was not one for faffing around.

He had not heard of the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre at that time, but his ready agreement to be involved in it was driven by his strong personal beliefs that people in distress, people who have fled tyranny and oppression in their own lands should be welcomed by Australia with warmth, generosity and compassion. This was the start of a beautiful and strong friendship and a productive relationship. On one of Mr Fraser's first visits to this organisation, which is run primarily by volunteers, he was talking to people when he had an encounter with one of the volunteers. She said that, when he had been Prime Minister, she had pinned a picture of him to a dart board and had thrown darts at it. While everyone there who witnessed the exchange held their breath Mr Fraser simply replied, 'If you used to throw darts at me then it is you who has changed, not me, because my policies on this issue have always been the same.' Perhaps she was not throwing darts at Mr Fraser for his immigration policies—I am not sure—but the humble nature of that exchange says a lot.

For Mr Fraser, this was not just about a humane policy; it was about people, themselves, and what it means for our nation, what it says about the spirit of our people as a community and what it is that we are prepared to stand for and fight for. His commitment to multiculturalism and antiracism in this country is unchallenged from political leadership. There is absolutely no doubt in my mind about that. He is a hero of compassion. He is a hero of multiculturalism. No matter what side of politics you may belong to, that is the best foundation for tolerance and stability, for the safety of our nation and, particularly, for security in our region.

One of the things I would like to add about Mr Fraser's relationship with the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre—many people would not know this, particularly the newspaper editors and publishers—is that whenever a newspaper paid him a fee for writing on the topic of asylum seekers and refugees he sent that cheque directly to the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre. That was his way, in addition to his very public advocacy, of being true to his commitment on this issue. Everybody at the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre is mourning the loss of not only a powerful ally but an unwavering and a true friend.

As said, I think Malcolm Fraser in his later years engaged a new generation of people who want and are desperate for a caring community and for a country that stands for compassion and does not waver in the wind, even when the politics is not easy. Illustrative of his engagement with the new generation was how he was welcomed with open arms from the
Twittersphere. When Malcolm Fraser first came onto Twitter—it was 2013, from memory—he was sitting in my office. He had his iPad, and I thought, 'Gee, this is a funny sight,' seeing the towering figure of Malcolm Fraser in his suit jacket and waistcoat sitting back with his iPad trying to work out how to send his first tweet. It went off. People were asking whether he really was MalcolmFraser12, which was his handle, because he was at least 12 Malcolm Frasers behind on Twitter. He did not mind. He just stuck the 12 on the end. But he became engaged in the political debate online as much as he had always been part of the political debate in the traditional news sense. He was tweeting right up until only a few days before his passing. Malcolm did not pull any punches, in person or online. I will read just a handful of them. On 25 February, he tweeted:

Alarm over Abbott's view on Islam. Abbott dangerous to harmony, peace, a destroyer of wisdom.

That is from a man who does not mind whether his view is going to be unpopular. Another tweet:

Four reasons to raise women’s pay that should make men happy.

That of course was about equal opportunity in the workplace and trying to ensure that more women are executives running companies, because studies show that will lift profits.

Abbott government considers axing the Australian census to save money … Gov has no idea of what a Nation should be.

This was a man who continued to participate in the political debate right up until he died.

On Friday morning, when the news spread that Malcolm had passed away, there was an outpouring of sadness and loss, not just in the traditional means, but also in the Twittersphere. One person tweeted:

I kind of expected Malcolm Fraser to continue sending wonderful, compassionate tweets for forever. May he rest in peace.

Another tweeted:

Sad to hear of Malcolm Fraser's passing. A true Liberal and force for a fairer, more cosmopolitan Australia.

And another tweet:

The loss of Malcolm Fraser so soon after the death of Gough Whitlam is a double blow to Australia and its politics. Both giants among men.

Malcolm was a true leader of compassion, a man of conviction who did not mind that, when he spoke, people might not like what he said. He never wavered in what he thought was right, but he was always willing to listen if his view was wrong.

It strikes me that in the words of Malcolm Fraser over the years and the political courage he has shown there is a lot that we in this place and the other could all learn. Yes, there is a debate about whether he left the Liberal Party or they left him. I do not think that really matters. I think that history will remember Malcolm Fraser as a great man, a man of conviction, a towering figure in the life of our nation who remained unwavering to the last possible opportunity in championing the protection and the dignity of the most vulnerable, both here and abroad. He wanted a nation that continued to change and continued to grow. He gave it absolutely everything that he had. I would like to thank him for that.
Just in summary, I would also like to thank his family—Tamie, his children and his grandchildren—for sharing their husband, their dad and their grandfather with our nation. Malcolm Fraser says that life is not meant to be easy. Politics is not easy. This is a man who gave great sacrifices for building our country and making it a much better place. Thank you.

Senator FIFIELD (Victoria—Manager of Government Business in the Senate and Assistant Minister for Social Services) (12:00): For someone of my age, Malcolm Fraser looms large in the formation of one's political consciousness. He was the pre-eminent political fact for the best part of a decade. He was the largest and most dominant political figure at a time in the seventies and eighties when there were many big and robust figures, such as Anthony, Sinclair and Nixon, to name a few.

He was elected at the age of 25, which was an achievement in itself, but he was certainly no overnight success. He served on the backbench for more than a decade, but was always working and preparing. I think you could perhaps describe his disposition as that of coiled patience. Ultimately, a promotion came. He became a minister and then a shadow opposition leader. It was the events leading up to November 1975 that demonstrated his ceaseless, relentlessness and his purposefulness. He, at the time, was the embodiment of leadership. The pressure on Mr Fraser at that time can only be imagined. He was an outstandingly successful opposition leader. His role in seeing off the Whitlam government earned him an eternal place in the hearts of all Liberals. His tenure as the Prime Minister at the time was seen as cut short; but he is in fact the fourth longest-serving Prime Minister and was the second longest-serving Prime Minister at the time that he lost office. He spent seven years and four months as Prime Minister. He won three elections. These are significant achievements in and of themselves.

Much has been said about whether or not the Fraser government fulfilled its potential. As John Howard said over the weekend, 'In policy, context is everything.' A government must be judged according to its time. Mr Fraser certainly possessed insight about the changing world and the changing economic environment that he straddled. Dr David Kemp has recounted a discussion with Mr Fraser where, in the context of great change during his tenure, Mr Fraser described his as a 'transitional' Prime Ministership.

Mr Fraser perhaps suffered the fate that often befalls Liberal heads of government. He was put in place by the public as an administrator of sorts in the wake of the Whitlam government. When the job is seen to be done, the public sometimes decides that it is time to remove the administrator. I think Mr Kennett had a similar experience and served a similar time in office. Mr Fraser, a man often likened to the statuesque figures of Easter Island, wore his heart on his sleeve on election night in 1993. In his post-political life, he showed more of himself.

Mr Fraser's post-political life was full. The nation often does not know quite what to do with its former Prime Ministers—all the more so with one who was so young; he was in his early 50s when he left office. But Mr Fraser had his own answers for how former Prime Ministers should deploy their time and skills. In his post-political life, as in his period in office, he did do things his own way. Liberals such as myself were sometimes a little confused and perplexed by positions that he took on issues later in life. I think it is fair to say that all of us in this chamber are a little bit guilty of a certain selectivity in relation to Mr Fraser's views. Let me be no exception to that.

I refer to a speech that Mr Fraser gave to the 1982 Australian Liberal Students' Federation conference on 10 May 1982. He said:
One of the great causes for which the ALSF has fought and for which it continues to fight is voluntary student unionism. You have fought for the right of students to choose freely whether or not they wish to belong to a union. Whether or not they wish to pay student union fees without fearing that their student status will be threatened.

In this campaign, especially in relation to eliminating the diversion of compulsory fees for socio-political activities you have the full support of the Federal Government.

Well said, Mr Fraser. Mr Fraser often disagreed with those of us who followed and we often disagreed with him. But none of that should detract from his service as opposition leader, his service as Prime Minister, his patriotism or his commitment to the causes in which he believed.

I did not know Mr Fraser well, having only met him on a handful of occasions. Someone who did know Mr Fraser well is former cabinet minister Dr David Kemp, who served as the director of Mr Fraser's office. I will conclude with Dr Kemp's words from a tribute that he wrote in the weekend Financial Review:

In today's world, Fraser's liberalism, civility, deep personal interest in policy, complete rejection of the politics of personal abuse and his love of debate, combined with political skill, remain qualities for which our political system has a deep need.

Mr Fraser's was a significant life. He was one of the most substantial figures in Australian politics. He was a Liberal Prime Minister who did much good for the country, and we do right to remember him well.

Senator LAZARUS (Queensland) (12:07): I would like to pay my respects to the Rt Hon. John Malcolm Fraser and to support the condolence motion. I was only nine years old when Malcolm Fraser was sworn in as the caretaker Prime Minister as a result of Governor-General Sir John Kerr's dismissal of Whitlam as the Prime Minister on 11 November 1975.

As a very young Australian I was somewhat immune to the drama of politics and of course political life but still remember my parents talking about the Dismissal as though it was a very significant issue in the lives of many Australians. In fact, I was 17 years of age during the 1983 election, Mr Fraser's last election campaign, and therefore was not of voting age during the time Mr Fraser was in office. Today as a senator for Queensland I do appreciate the significance of what happened in 1975 but, more importantly, I also appreciate the challenges that Mr Fraser must have faced and the courage he showed in leading the country from 1975 to 1983.

Not long after I started in this place, I walked into my office and I was told that a Mr Malcolm Fraser wanted me to ring him. When I came to my senses, I thought: why would the great man Malcolm Fraser be ringing me? I did ring him, and he wanted to talk to me to share his passion for human rights and the need for Australia to embrace people in need. He was concerned by the way Australia was treating asylum seekers and how this was impacting Australia's reputation across the world. It was an absolute honour to receive a call from Mr Fraser, and I told him so. As a long-time Carlton Football Club supporter and member myself, it was also a great honour to receive a call from Carlton's No. 1 ticket holder.

Australia has lost a courageous man. Australia has lost a good man. I am saddened by the passing of Mr Fraser. My thoughts go out to Mr Fraser's wife, Tamie, and their children, family and friends during this difficult time. Thank you.
Senator RYAN (Victoria—Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Education and Training) (12:10): When I was on the flight home to Melbourne last Friday morning with a number of colleagues from this chamber and the other place, we all turned our phones on as we taxied towards the Qantas terminal at Melbourne and we all received the news at the same time; and the shock that was expressed by colleagues of all political parties on that flight, I think, has been reflected on by some colleagues in this place earlier—the shock that was felt throughout the community because this was completely unexpected. As a number of people have commented upon, for him to follow in such close proximity his old sparring partner and recent friend, Gough Whitlam, does bring to a close a particular era in Australian politics.

After all, Malcolm Fraser was a giant of Australian politics, for a number of the reasons that people have mentioned. He is one of only four figures that have taken my party from opposition to government. Along with the names Menzies, Howard and now Abbott, he will always be in that particular pantheon.

I think it is particularly apt that we are having this debate in this chamber; this particular building is in fact one of Malcolm's great legacies to the country. The project for building this modern Parliament House that of course took four decades to settle on, from the temporary home further down the hill, took a particular political personality, one who had to deal with the buts and barbs of what some might say are tabloid press and talkback radio about politicians building themselves a palace up on the hill. I dare say, if it was not for Malcolm's particular personality, we might still be down meeting in the smaller chamber, to which he brought so much historical fame through his actions in 1975.

Malcolm Fraser loomed large in my own development, not only as a member of the Victorian division of the Liberal Party but particularly because for someone of my age, born in 1973, while the events of 1975 were well beyond my memory, my first memories were often of selling newspapers, or reading them, with Malcolm Fraser on the front page. Of course, a very clear early memory of mine was that of the loss in the 1983 election and that press conference but also the ongoing arguments, even by my own family members, about what happened in 1975. I have to admit that those debates fascinated me and were one of the things that brought me into politics, and I was lucky later on in life to have the opportunity to teach about them at Melbourne University and to bring some of the players in to speak to students at various points, such as Malcolm's old colleague Tony Staley.

It has been said by a number of other people, and I think history points it out, that Malcolm Fraser represented the last Prime Minister of Australia's old era—as written by my friend David Kemp, a 'transitional' PM. The world was in transition from the postwar economic model and from some of the assumptions we made, even about social values. Most of those, I think, we were all happy we were in transition from. Malcolm was the last representative of the old era, where there was greater faith in government intervention. The Keynesian consensus had not yet broken down, although a number of the consequences of it were becoming more and more apparent in public policy.

But, of course, in 1975, that moment which will forever be taught and which Malcolm's name will always be associated with, while people have different views—and, as Senator Fifield said, we have all particularly talked about those areas with which we might agree on Mr Fraser—I think it is important to note as a senator that Malcolm Fraser stood for our constitutional arrangements. Malcolm Fraser stood for the rights of this place and for the
rights of the Senate. He maintained the principle that is written into our Constitution: that, to
govern, one needs supply through the parliament, not just through one chamber. That was the
case in the United Kingdom; they only moved away from that in 1909 and 1910, with the
'people's budget' crisis, and the elections that were held by Lloyd George. Australia has a
different constitutional arrangement, and Malcolm Fraser stood by that.

While other nations changed, certain players in Australia asserted that ours should change
with it. But there had not been a constitutional change, and Malcolm Fraser used the power of
this chamber to force key issues before the people at an election late in 1975. I make the point
that Malcolm Fraser often made: unlike other upper houses, this house has a directly elected
constitutional mandate. That was not the case in the United Kingdom, in the examples
brought forward by his then combatant Gough Whitlam, when he put the case that only the
confidence of the House was required in supply matters.

In 1975 Malcolm Fraser led the charge to use the constitutional mechanisms available to
him to force an election. He never resiled from that. It may be politically contentious, but it
was based on unquestioned constitutional authority. I have always thought that one of the
most interesting yet rarely written-about aspects of this is the fact that while he was resolute
in this, he led a party in which there were waverers. Yet he managed to maintain the support
of each and every colleague in this most tense of political moments.

I have never believed that the Dismissal tainted the Fraser government. This perspective
neglects the fact that there was an immediate election held, straightaway. The stories that talk
about the outrage—I do not wish to be too partisan on an occasion like this—of the events of
November 1975 tend to forget what happened in December. I know a number of people have
commented on an election and record parliamentary majority that I doubt we will ever see in
the likes of our lifetime.

It is also important to note that when we talk about Mr Fraser's time in government—and I
mentioned earlier the collapse of the Keynesian postwar economic consensus—while the
policies were illustrating their political challenges, there was not yet a consensus for change. I
note that the person who got elected in 1983 and beat Malcolm Fraser was known as a person
for consensus, but in 1975 that was not the tone of his political rhetoric. Our society changed
by the time Malcolm lost office in 1983.

Elements of government that we took for granted for decades, leading up to 1975, were, by
a substantial proportion of the population, considered to be under threat—a process of
genuine cabinet government, a process where cabinet ministers acted in a sense of solidarity,
appropriate financial controls and processes when seeking to burden the Australian taxpayer
with debt. Malcolm Fraser was of the view that these needed to be re-established. I make the
point that the subsequent Labor government, the one led by Bob Hawke that beat Malcolm
Fraser in the 1983 election, was rigorous about enforcing these particular standards.

Many Liberals have differed, at various points, with the Fraser government over the
direction of economic reform. A couple of points are important. Firstly, a number of the
platforms for reform, notably the Campbell inquiry into financial deregulation, were laid and
built and followed up by subsequent governments. I would also make the point that there was
not a consensus for liberal economic reform. The dries—people like Bert Kelly and John
Hyde—were beginning to make their voices heard but there was far from a community
consensus. That was reflected in the 1983 election, again, where we talk about the reforms
undertaken, with the support of the opposition, by the Hawke government. No-one seems to remember that the platform the Hawke government was elected on, in 1983, was not one that was profoundly liberal, economically. It did not talk about removing tariffs, removing financial controls and free trade. It was, in fact, a much more typical Labor economic platform.

My friend David Kemp wrote in the piece mentioned by Senator Fifield earlier, published late Friday and then again in The Weekend Financial Review, that Malcolm Fraser was a Prime Minister for his times. He said that he was often criticised 'by those who supported a more open competitive economy, in relation to tariffs, industry subsidies, floating exchange rates and deregulation' of the financial system. David Kemp went on to say:

The criticisms are often sharpest from those who believed that policy can be reformed by an act of will, for Fraser refused to exercise his powerful will to bring about reforms of which he remained to be convinced, and which he believed had only limited public support.

There is a particular insight here, for the reasons I just mentioned. There was not public support for those reforms that I am a passionate supporter of and that have done so much to deliver Australia prosperity over the last two decades. But he did lay the foundations for many of those. The Liberal Party he led did contain the voices that drove those reforms in subsequent decades.

I might also say that in a number of the arguments—whether it be for tariff cuts, which really started in Australia in the late 1980s with the industry statement and the policies of John Button, for labour-market reform, which started earlier on my side of politics in the mid-1980s but Labor only came around in 1990—we tend to look back and not understand the substantial time difference between those ideas emerging in Australia and a political consensus developing. I might also make the point that reflecting on our current experience that force of will is, indeed, not enough to guarantee that legislation might get through the Senate.

The Senate had a special place in Malcolm Fraser's life. As was mentioned, his grandfather served here in the first Senate. There was the 1975 crisis. During his term as Prime Minister, even when his government had a majority until mid-1981, on more than one occasion—in fact, on many occasions—large handfuls of senators from the government's side would vote against government legislation or vote very independently. It was said, as has been said about a more recent Senate, that Malcolm Fraser had a majority on most days, on most issues, but far from always.

There is an impressive list of administrative and constitutional changes that have been recounted by others. Notably, Malcolm Fraser was the most successful Prime Minister in our history when it comes to achieving public support for constitutional change. In a country that I am proud has not voted for change that often, because I have disagreed with most of the changes, he generated a consensus within the political structures and then support within the public for three referenda, on one day. I doubt we will see that like again, and it is a record that no Prime Minister—not even Robert Menzies—can even come close to matching. It reflected his ability, contrary to some of his public persona, to generate consensus and support, as he did within the Liberal Party during the difficult days of 1975.

As to the argument about whether politics changed, the Liberal Party changed or Malcolm changed I do not think it really matters. We have all changed. If a person does not change, in
response to circumstances that develop, to a world that changes, then I think we are at a much greater risk of being dogmatic. In 1971 in his Alfred Deakin lecture—and I should declare that I am a trustee—a comment he made with respect to Australia's international relations is quite prescient, given some of his later opinions. He made the point:

Strong ties to Britain prevented the full assumption of independence until the century had nearly half gone.

I obviously was not present at the time, but I think the use of those words by Malcolm Fraser was, in fact, a pointer to the direction of his views of the independence of Australian foreign policy. He also made the point:

Within existing levels of taxation, governments at all levels must learn to judge their priorities more harshly. There are many things which it is desirable to do, but we cannot achieve them all in this year or next.

That is as good a statement about the need for rigorous budget policy as could be made over subsequent decades.

It has been noted by many that he had unimpeachable views on race and on colour, and I think this is something for which he will be eternally remembered. He famously differed with many, even on our own side of politics, internationally as well as in Australia on the role of sanctions on the South African apartheid regime. On this I think he was correct—it is undoubted that sanctions and economic sanctions do impact on some of the most vulnerable in the societies we are sanctioning, but they also have an important role in de-legitimising a state that we believe lacks legitimacy and, at that point in our history, South Africa needed to be de-legitimised.

We serve in this place for a short period. We may come here with the passion of a thousand ideas, but we all need to prioritise. I cannot help but think that Malcolm Fraser's passion on race was partly about addressing one of the barnacles on the Australian body politic, to use a phrase that has been used recently. The formality of White Australia was ended by Harold Holt; the Whitlam government took further steps. But the stake through the heart of the White Australia Policy was driven by Malcolm Fraser, through the move to allow thousands of Indochinese refugees into Australia and through moves such as supporting multiculturalism, which I always believe my home city of Melbourne and my home state provides such a beacon for. The stake through the heart of White Australia was driven by Malcolm Fraser. Never again was Australia to have any policy that reflected in any way upon race. But it did not just take a move to have migration from countries we were familiar with such as those in Europe, from people with backgrounds that we had more cultural affinity with, such as the Christian refugees post-war; it took Malcolm Fraser to make the White Australia policy something about which we teach our students in a textbook by allowing in thousands and thousands of Indochinese refugees that have made our country so much richer, and who have blessed us with their passion for this new nation that they have adopted.

I had the privilege to meet Mr Fraser both via the Australian Liberal Students' Federation, as mentioned by my leader here in the Senate earlier, Senator Abetz, and also through the Liberal Party and most recently after the book he released—the joint publication he released with Margaret Simons. The member for Higgins and I, with the cooperation of David Kemp, held a function for Malcolm Fraser to talk about his book and his reflections in 2010. Dozens and dozens of Liberal Party members from around Melbourne turned up. They turned up
because they wanted to actually meet the person who in many cases had inspired them to join the Liberal Party—a person who they still believed, as they spoke about with passion, had saved the country from the ruin of the Whitlam government. I would also say that Mr Fraser lived up to his reputation and did not pull his punches on other opinions, including those of the Liberal Party of its time, to those people. And many arguments were held. People had arguments with him about everything from what happened in Zimbabwe to asylum seeker policy. But it was a measure of the person that, at that age—and he was then in his late 70s—he would still turn up to a Liberal Party event and have the argument. It was actually subsequent to his resignation from the party but prior to it becoming public, which I think also says something about his turning up.

I did have to, at the end of that evening, speak to a former Prime Minister in a way that I had never thought I would speak. This was at a church hall in Toorak Road, Melbourne, and Malcolm Fraser, at 79 years of age—strong, but showing the frailty of someone that age—did his absolute best to insist on walking 2½ kilometres home down Toorak Road, past not a notorious night strip but a place with a few hotels and nightclubs. I insisted with all my might that, no, I was not going to allow a former Prime Minister to walk home in the very dark streets of Toorak on his own. It got a little bit willing—polite, but willing—but he did, in the end, allow me to give him a lift home. He did enjoy the evening, but I had to plead with him that I could not cope with my name being on the front page as someone that had allowed a Prime Minister to walk home if he had slipped or if something had happened to him.

Malcolm Fraser was not always the easiest person to get along with, but, truthfully, I do not think any of us in politics are. The Prime Minister’s reference in the other place earlier today to his own experience with David Kemp is similar to one I had where, upon the odd criticism that a Liberal Party member of the eighties or nineties might have made of Malcolm Fraser, David Kemp made the point: ‘You cannot disown your past without diminishing your future.’ And I think today is a particular reflection upon that.

Malcolm Fraser left office at the phenomenally young age of 52; that was too young in many ways, but he made the most of every year after that. It is a challenge for our country, because I do not think we use our ex-politicians, and particularly our ex-Prime Ministers, as well as we could. Malcolm Fraser is a reminder of how much they have to contribute to public debate, to public life and to affairs of the nation and internationally. To all those members of the Liberal Party, and there are thousands who knew Malcolm Fraser and who joined for him, but particularly to his family and those close to him, we mourn your loss.

 Senator LAMBIE (Tasmania) (12:28): I rise to contribute to the condolence motion before the Senate following the death of Malcolm Fraser. The expression ‘lucky country’ has often been used as a term of endearment and a way to quickly describe why Australia is free, rich and beautiful. Often our nation's critics, including the famous historian Donald Horne, who wrote the words 'lucky country', attribute Australia's prosperity to our location in the world, our natural resources, our stunning environment and the powerful international friends who protect us. And, while there is truth in that argument, some critics give too little credit to the small number of politicians who have truly inspired and led the Australian people. If you agree that Australia is indeed the 'lucky country', then you have to concede that Malcolm Fraser was one of Australia's great political leaders and statesmen who made it so.
On behalf of the people of Tasmania, I sincerely offer my condolences and prayers to Malcolm Fraser's family, friends and colleagues. The people of Tasmania held Malcolm Fraser in high regard and reserved a special place in our hearts for him, and that can be witnessed by the headlines in our state's three main newspapers. The Advocate, which has covered west and north-west of Tasmania since 1890, ran a front-page headline which said: 'Tributes Flow to Fraser', and on page 2: 'Fraser understood what Tassie needed'.

The Examiner chose the headline 'Towering figure mourned'. On pages 6 and 7, it said: 'Fraser hailed as man of compassion who left indelible mark on history', 'Tributes to statesman', and 'Praise for a strong friend to Tasmania'. The Mercury—the voice of Tasmania—ran the headline 'Farewell to a statesman: Malcolm Fraser 1930-2015'. And there was 'Pretty fly for a PM', an article which referred to the fact that Mr Fraser loved Tasmania and fly fishing. Premier Will Hodgeman is quoted as saying that:

Privately, Malcolm had a soft spot for Tasmania. He was a keen angler and kept a fishing shack in the Central Highlands which he enjoyed visiting.

As is the case for all great leaders of our country, many different people will remember Mr Fraser for different events, speeches and actions.

Mr Fraser made great contributions to: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and reconciliation; primary industries; the environment by announcing the banning of whaling; refugees; human rights; world peace; and the welfare of the men and women of our Defence Force. His interest and care for our diggers was foreshadowed in his maiden speech in parliament on 22 February 1956 when he said:

I was very happy to note in His Excellency's Speech that adequate mention was made of defence, the necessity to maintain our armed forces and to develop them in the years to come. I think every Australian at present realizes that we cannot just sit down in our corner of the world and expect other people to allow us to remain quietly by ourselves. We owe a duty to ourselves, to future generations of Australians, and to the rest of the free world to play our part in the maintenance of world freedom and peace; and any effective foreign policy directed towards that end must, quite obviously, envisage an effective defence force.

It is interesting to note that, the day after Mr Fraser died, Australia's official population was calculated by the ABS to be 23,783,810 or approximately 1.2 million short of the total Australian population Mr Fraser talked about in his maiden speech when he said in February 1956:

At present we have slightly over 9,000,000 people in Australia, and when we consider that this country is equal in area to the United States of America, which has over 150,000,000 people, we must realize how sparsely inhabited this continent is. We may not have the same natural riches as the United States, but every honourable member will agree that the possibilities for development in this country are very great indeed. I am sure that I shall live to see the day when we shall have 25,000,000 people in Australia and then we shall be able to look the world in the face far more boldly and play a more effective part in the maintenance of world peace and freedom.

Since my election to this parliament as a senator, I had the pleasure of speaking to Mr Fraser for nearly two hours during two separate phone calls before the end of last year. Naturally he rang to speak about the plight of asylum seekers and strongly advocated on their behalf. It was a privilege to hear his voice and experience firsthand his charm and wisdom.

Malcolm Fraser was a loving family man, statesman and visionary. All who followed his life or met with him were left with no doubt that he was a proud Australian full of courage,
conviction, confidence and compassion. Malcolm Fraser accomplished the dream he described in his maiden speech. He helped Australia 'look the world in the face far more boldly and play a more effective part in the maintenance of world peace and freedom'. Mr Fraser showed mercy to the oppressed and those down on their luck. May he be granted mercy at the final judgement and rest in peace with the angels after a job well done here in the lucky country.

Senator PAYNE (New South Wales—Minister for Human Services) (12:34): I rise to join other colleagues to making some remarks of condolence here this afternoon on the passing of the late Malcolm Fraser AC, CH, Australia's 22nd Prime Minister. On Friday morning when the news became public of Mr Fraser's passing, the first thing that came into my head was the sound of Malcolm Fraser's voice, which I had always found so very compelling not just through my career in this place but when starting in politics at a much younger age. It was intimidating. It was imposing. His stentorian tones, I think, come to everyone's minds when you say the words 'Malcolm Fraser'. That voice, I think, will be sadly missed.

I think having the opportunity to pay respect and say some words in condolence motions such as this on the passing of Australian prime ministers—and we have had to do it too regularly in recent months—is a very important part of what we do in this parliament. As Prime Minister today, Mr Abbott is only Australia's 28th Prime Minister. We are a young country and we have had very few leaders relatively speaking. But the demands, tasks and burdens which we ask those individuals to carry, no matter which party they represent, are enormous. For operations such as this chamber and the House of Representatives that tend from time to time to get a little carried away with themselves and where there are not always the most edifying performances, one suspects, for those who are minded to observe, the opportunity to be much more edifying and to pay very serious respect to those who have taken on the burden of leadership as our Prime Minister is, in my view, very important. I think the way in which the parliament marks these occasions is something we should not lose.

As a champion for the people of the world and for the rights of the most vulnerable people, Mr Fraser was tireless. From refugees to Aboriginal Australians, in my view he was an irreplaceable part of the broad church that is the Liberal Party of Australia. In later years, of course, he even grew close to his old foe the late Australian Labor Party icon Gough Whitlam. Today I can say with great confidence that the passing of Mr Fraser has touched almost everyone in this place, no matter their political branding.

Serving three terms as Prime Minister, he was of course a central character in one of the most controversial events, if not the most controversial event, in our nation's political history—the Dismissal of Prime Minister Whitlam and his government by the Governor-General Sir John Kerr in 1975. That, if nothing else, marked an important place in Australian history for Mr Fraser, but there was so much—so much—more.

When he came here, aged 25, he was an Oxford graduate and he was a grazier. He won the Victorian seat of Wannon in 1955. He was the youngest member of that parliament. For those of us who were elected to politics in our 20s, I have to say that Mr Fraser's name was regularly invoked as a very good reason for choosing a 20-something political candidate whenever asked, 'How could you possibly imagine you might want to do this at such a young age?' I always thought that arguing the case of a former Prime Minister as my example in
point was very powerful. It took me some time to persuade the selectors that that was the case.

He married Tamara, or Tamie, Beggs a year after he became an MP. They forged an extraordinary partnership for our nation and for their family, of course.

Much has been said today in this place and in the other chamber of Mr Fraser's achievements as a minister and as Prime Minister and of the achievements of his government. I want to refer to a couple of specific and particular aspects of his career. He was regularly described as an ambitious backbencher, 'ambitious' of course being a dirty word when it coincides with 'backbencher' in the political sphere sometimes. He served on the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs from the very early sixties, from 1962, in an early indication of his recognition of Australia's importance on the world stage.

But it was not until 1966, some 11 years after he joined the parliament, following Robert Menzies's retirement, that Prime Minister Harold Holt then appointed Mr Fraser Minister for the Army. In 1966, as Minister for the Army, he visited Australia's troops in Vietnam. He also visited Thailand, Laos, Malaysia and the Philippines and made a very strong and real impression as an effective ambassador for Australia. He was later appointed by Mr Gorton, after Prime Minister Holt's death, as Minister for Education and Science. He entered cabinet as the Minister for Defence in 1969. However, he had what you could politely describe as a 'falling-out' with Prime Minister Gorton, and resigned from his portfolio in March 1971. Soon after, of course, as history tells us, Mr Gorton was replaced by Sir William McMahon, and he reappointed Mr Fraser to his previous portfolio of Education and Science.

That was a short-lived period for Mr McMahon as Prime Minister, as Mr Whitlam then swept to power in 1972 with the It's Time campaign. That was the first time that Mr Fraser had been confined to the opposition benches in his parliamentary career. I am sure it was a rude awakening, as it often is when one has to change sides in this building—or in fact in the previous building. But the then opposition leader, Sir Billy Snedden, was quick to utilise Mr Fraser's talent and experience and appointed him shadow minister for industrial relations in 1973. In a process that had become perhaps too familiar for those people close to Mr Fraser, it is fair to say, if I can put it this way, that Mr Fraser and Mr Snedden did not really see eye to eye given that the leadership ambitions of Mr Fraser continued to burn brightly, as he was entitled to do, and that led, when the coalition was defeated in May 1974, to Mr Fraser launching his first leadership challenge against Billy Snedden in November of that year, which was defeated. In March the next year, he was successful in obtaining the leadership of the coalition opposition. I heard Senator Fifield paying tribute to his leadership as opposition leader and his great success in that regard.

1975 became a very turbulent year. The Whitlam government was in great stress and distress, and the Fraser government put significant pressure on the government from the opposition by blocking money bills in the Senate. When the then Prime Minister refused to call an election, we all know that, on Remembrance Day 1975, the government was dismissed. Having been appointed caretaker Prime Minister, Mr Fraser promptly called an election and won in a landslide that December.

I remember well and adverted to the feeling in my own family in my home in December 1975. The excitement at that victory of the Fraser government and the team led by Mr Fraser was very much to the forefront in my family and amongst my parents' friends. The view was
that the election of the Fraser government would bring back stability for the nation after the chaos of the final months of the Whitlam government. There were some very special achievements that Mr Fraser brought to bear as Prime Minister in the ensuing years. I want to refer to a few of those.

The Fraser government created the Special Broadcasting Service, SBS, in 1980, really bringing much closer engagement with very diverse parts of our community through the production of radio and television news and programs in multiple languages. And they cemented the concept of multiculturalism through the creation of the Ethnic Affairs Council, whose policies were to promote social cohesion, cultural identity and equality of opportunity. For those of us who know and remember fondly our former colleague the former member for Kooyong, Petro Georgiou, his contribution working closely with Mr Fraser in the establishment and operation of the Ethnic Affairs Council was something that Petro made sure we never forgot.

It is perhaps as Prime Minister that he became best known for instituting Australia's first seriously comprehensive refugee policy, which was developed in response to the influx of the many Vietnamese asylum seekers fleeing their war-torn country. Between 1975 and 1982, about 200,000 refugee immigrants arrived from Asia, 56,000 from Vietnam, in addition to the 2,000 Vietnamese who made the treacherous journey, then by boat, without documentation. He was immensely proud that these and other refugees from Asia were welcomed by Australia with open arms and open hearts.

I was quite young at the beginning of that process; at the beginning of that stream of migration I perhaps did not appreciate the humanitarian importance of what Australia and Malcolm Fraser did in those years. It is quite some time ago, possibly 15 years ago, I remember going to the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre in Western Sydney, near Liverpool, which on three occasions has staged three separate exhibitions, beginning with Viet Voices in 1997, about the wave of migration. On the first occasion I was there, they had invited Mr Fraser, the former immigration minister, Mr Macphee, and other leaders of that time to attend. There were countless elderly Vietnamese community leaders who adored Malcolm Fraser and who saw Malcolm Fraser as saving not only them but also their families. They loved him, and that love for me translates in the way he changed the face of our country at that time. The face you see when you look at Australia in 2015 was fundamentally changed by Malcolm Fraser to be a diverse, cohesive, open community. Western Sydney itself changed as well—culturally and dynamically. It was a fascinating period, and his contribution to that time will remain with us forever.

Malcolm Fraser was an extraordinarily strong opponent of apartheid. He assisted in forming the 1977 Gleneagles Agreement and insisted that South Africa end apartheid if it wanted, for example, to participate in the Commonwealth Games. He even refused to allow an aeroplane carrying the Springboks rugby team to land in Australia to refuel en route to New Zealand, such was his disapproval of the apartheid regime. This, for me at the time as a year seven student, was an incredibly compelling issue. The fact that it manifested itself in Australia around sporting participation brought it back to Australian people in a way that perhaps it might not otherwise have come to the fore. My respect and regard for his stand on apartheid were immense. For me it turned him into a towering figure on the world stage and it really changed the way South Africans were required to operate. Not everyone in our party—
not then and not later—supported his principled stand. It was a matter of some contention even some years later, when, as a very new member of the organisation, I would speak up party fora and endorse and in fact applaud Mr Fraser's position on this issue. In New South Wales I often found that it was not widely held, much to my surprise. How times have changed.

Much closer to home, he worked extraordinarily hard to advance the rights of Aboriginal Australians, pursuing even in those early years constitutional recognition of Indigenous Australians and pursuing the provision of land rights, particularly to the Northern Territory. His government finally enacted the Aboriginal land rights act in 1976. The drafting of that legislation had been started by the previous government, and he progressed that as a bipartisan project to the point of fruition. The Fraser government also delivered the Aboriginal Development Commission Act in 1981, providing funding mechanisms for Aboriginal housing and businesses. Those measures, I suspect, he hoped would have delivered far greater returns to Aboriginal Australians than they did, but that conversation has been continuing for a very long time. I am indeed grateful that he began it in the way that he did.

After he was defeated and left the parliament, he continued of course his humanitarian work. He was appointed chair of the UN Panel of Eminent Persons on the Role of Transnational Corporations in South Africa. He continued to be prominent throughout the 1980s in the efforts to end apartheid and served as joint chair of the Commonwealth Group of Eminent Persons against Apartheid in South Africa. As everyone has said, he was indefatigable; having left the party—at what I now regarded as a very young age—he had many years ahead of him in which to continue to play a role in Australian society. I am not the first today—and I will not be the last—to say that he continued to speak his mind on a range of issues and was never afraid of who may take offence in the process. He was a small 'l' liberal right to the end. He was an outspoken critic of the Howard government on many issues, but particularly on those concerning refugees and Aboriginal Australians. Most recently, he lent his stentorian tones—that powerful voice—to the RECOGNISE campaign for constitutional recognition of Indigenous Australians. He was also a passionate advocate for Australia becoming a republic—something that is close to my heart as well.

For a couple of years in the late 1980s and early 1990s, I was a member of the federal executive of the Liberal party, and that was the first opportunity I had to come to know Mr Fraser personally and reasonably well. In 1982, when I joined the Liberal party in New South Wales, the very first event I attended under the tutelage of my very good friend Narelle Donoghue, who was the finance director of the New South Wales Young Liberal Movement, was a cocktail party. I am sure that is what it was called in 1982, though I am not sure that we would call it that now. It was a cocktail party at the Masonic Centre in Castlereagh Street in Sydney. Anyone who is familiar with the Masonic Centre will recognise its extraordinarily brutalist architecture did not really fit with the event of the day with the Prime Minister. I am not sure that is what it was called in 1982, though I am not sure that we would call it that now. It was a cocktail party at the Masonic Centre in Castlereagh Street in Sydney. Anyone who is familiar with the Masonic Centre will recognise its extraordinarily brutalist architecture did not really fit with the event of the day with the Prime Minister. I am not sure that it would be diminishing for me to go into some detail of how I stressed about what I would wear that day, Mr President, but, being not quite 20, it was an extraordinary opportunity for somebody who really wanted to become involved in politics to be in the same room as the Prime Minister of Australia. From the venue of such brutalist architecture, he gave a speech which was so compelling, so powerful and so engaging that those hundreds of
people stood there in silence—absolute silence—listening to the Prime Minister speak. Further, during my period on the Federal Executive of the Liberal Party, I gainfully supported his efforts for federal party presidency, with my friend, John Brogden, in particular. Sadly, that was not to be. But I suspect, in truth, it let him spend a great deal more of his time on other causes in the end. But it certainly got me into trouble along the way with a lot of other people who were not supporting Mr Fraser's efforts for the Liberal Party presidency at the time.

His advocacy for media diversity in this country took me one day to the Sydney Convention Centre to see him—I think on the first occasion this happened—share a stage with EG Whitlam to campaign for media diversity in this country. And, having lived through 1975—I think I was a university student when this particular campaign took place—that was indeed a powerful joint message. Mr Fraser never took a backward step when he wanted to make a point. I have referred briefly to the republic referendum campaign. I really welcomed his support and his leadership in that campaign, and I know there were many republicans on this side of the chamber who valued that enormously. To be able to look to your former Prime Minister and receive that support was very important for us in the referendum campaign.

Melbourne University law school once—some years ago now—invited me to share a platform with Mr Fraser in their Juris Doctor degree presentations. To go from that naive young Liberal of 1982 to finding myself on a platform—in any context—giving a speech with former Prime Minister Fraser was an extraordinary honour for me.

Mr Fraser went on and made a remarkable contribution to Australia's participation in the development sector, through his establishment of CARE Australia and his leadership of that great organisation. That is another indelible mark that he will leave on this country and on our contribution internationally in the development assistance space.

Just three years ago, in 2012, I went with my partner, Stuart Ayres, the member for Penrith, to hear Malcolm Fraser deliver the Gough Whitlam Oration at the Riverside Theatre in Parramatta. I mention that because there were only two Liberals in the room that day—at least, tagged and identified as such; only two Liberal elected representatives. It was an occasion upon which he shared with the nation and the world his views of the Australia-US alliance. I must admit, sitting in the front row that day I did twitch a little in my seat and think, 'I am not entirely sure Malcolm and I are going to agree on this point'. But his delivery of that oration, only three years ago—its lucidity, its strength, and its direct message on the issues that he found so very important—was a significant contribution in the annals of the Whitlam Institute, and I am very pleased that I attended on that evening. Attached to the Whitlam Institute at the University of Western Sydney are the Margaret Whitlam Galleries, which contain the most fabulous photographs of the first ladies of Australia, as they were known. Mrs Fraser and Mrs Whitlam, amongst others, are depicted in some of the photographs exhibited in that building. It is certainly something that I would encourage all to see if they have a chance to visit the university and the institute.

Whether it was on constitutional change or human rights, his advocacy for multiculturalism, his commitment to the environment, or his forceful stance on asylum-seeker policy, Malcolm Fraser was a true leader. He did differ with our political party in later years but, frankly, I have come to think about that as something that happens from time to time in families: it is not ideal, but it does happen; relationships do not always function as we would
hope. The opportunity to pay respect and to make remarks in this condolence debate today is a very important part of acknowledging the quite extraordinary contribution of the man to this nation. We send our condolences to Mrs Fraser, to their children and grandchildren, and we say that the loss of Malcolm Fraser is the loss of a great leader.

Senator RICE (Victoria) (12:57): I am glad and I feel very privileged to have this opportunity to speak on this condolence motion today for Malcolm Fraser. I attended a celebration of Harmony Day on Saturday in my home town of Footscray, and the Mayor of Maribyrnong, Councillor Nam Quach, spoke and paid tribute to Mr Fraser there. I last Nam the last time I met Malcolm Fraser, which was at the opening of the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre in Footscray in December last year. Malcolm gave a cracker of a speech at that event, which I will return to. But it was Nam's speech on that occasion that moved me the most, leaving me with tears in my eyes.

Nam spoke of his parents having been Vietnamese refugees; of their escape from persecution on a leaky fishing boat to a refugee camp with Nam's older brothers who were then only very, very young; and—upliftingly—of how they did not need to stay very long in the camp because they were promptly accepted as refugees to resettle in Australia. Nam was very moved to be sharing the platform that day with Malcolm Fraser: the man he and the broader Vietnamese community in Australia, quite rightly, feel an enormous amount of gratitude to. What would Nam's life—his family's life—have been without Malcolm Fraser's decision to accept tens of thousands of Vietnamese refugees? I was moved, thinking of Nam and his family, and thinking of the thriving, successful Vietnamese-Australian community, thinking of the contribution they have made to Australia in the last 40 years—to Melbourne, to my home town, Footscray—and thinking of the symbolism and the achievement of Nam, as a Vietnamese Australian from a refugee family, now Mayor of Maribyrnong—and thinking of how things are different now; thinking of the lives that we are destroying in detention centres in Australia, in Nauru and on Manus Island—the lives of people who likewise just want to contribute; to settle down and begin a new life, and to contribute to Australia.

Malcolm Fraser was a complex man. But what shines through to me, what prompted me to contribute to this condolence motion and to pay my respects to him, is his humanity, his willingness to learn and change, and his willingness to take a strong stand and speak out where he saw injustice. These are such important attributes for a leader to have. Like many others in this place, I came of age politically in the 1970s. As a teenager I was shocked and upset by the Dismissal. I grieved for the Whitlam government's education and health measures that were dispensed with over the following years. As a first-year university student in 1979 enjoying fee-free studies, I marched against Fraser's razor gang cuts and shouted 'Shame Fraser, shame' with the rest of them. Then, as a passionate campaigner to save the Franklin River, I was overjoyed with the Hawke government's election in 1983.

But times changed. Fraser's stance against apartheid, his founding of CARE, his heading up of the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group and his support for reconciliation with Indigenous Australia all shifted him in my eyes and in the eyes of many others. I know what tipped him for me from being a former Liberal prime minister who does some good things to something more—it was his reaction to the beginning of the race to the bottom on refugees, the Tampa incident in 2001. He said about that:

I guess we've got some people in Canberra who believe that what they're doing is right. I believe it is profoundly wrong.

I think putting the SAS onto the Tampa did more to damage Australia worldwide than any other single act of government.

His speaking out then, and as we later learned his almost resigning from the Liberal Party then, was in fact completely consistent with his views when he was Prime Minister, when he stated in 1981:

The less constructively a society responds to its own diversity the less capable it becomes of doing so. Its reluctance to respond, fuelled by the fear of encouraging division, becomes a self-fulfilling prophesy—the erosion of national cohesion is a result not of the fact of diversity but of its denial and suppression.

They are words that ring very true today. They were also consistent with his views a decade later, in 2010:

This is a demeaning debate, it's a miserable one. It also shows that the politicians who participated in this debate have contempt for all of us, for the majority of the Australian people. They believe that despite all the evidence to the contrary, that if they appeal to the fearful and mean sides of our nature, they will win support.

I met and heard Mr Fraser speak a number of times over the last decade. His care and compassion shone through each time. The events of 1975, and even earlier, with his role as defence minister sending troops including conscripts to Vietnam, seemed a long time ago—which brings me to the Malcolm Fraser I am grieving for today. This is the Malcolm Fraser who spoke out at the launch of the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre. His speech last December focussed on the asylum seekers legislation that was passed here on the last sitting day of last year. I want to quote from that speech at length, because his words are significant and they deserve to be heard as we mourn his loss:

Our democratic system depends on the "rule of law", it depends on due process, on properly produced evidence, on precedents and on a process that is open to appeal by a higher authority. This legislation gives to the minister, Scott Morrison now, or whoever it may be in the future, total arbitrary, dictatorial, tyrannical powers over the lives and fortunes of asylum seekers. It destroys the "rule of law" as we know it.

He continued in his speech:

Under the UN Refugee Convention, which Menzies signed onto in 1954, boat people were not illegal. The treaty says that those fleeing terror often travel by unorthodox means and often without papers. You could not go to a tyrant and say you have killed half my family, I want a passport and visa to leave this wretched country before you kill the other half of my family. It tears up international law, concerning what is called non-refoulement.

We must not send people back to countries where they might be subject to torture. This government now says people can change their behaviour, they can modify their behaviour and if they modify their behaviour they won't be subject to torture. Or they can live in another part of the country and they won't be subject to torture. How naive, how ignorant can this government be?

He went on to say, referring to the powers of the minister:

The minister's decisions are absolute, they are not subject to review. The determination procedures have been short-circuited to such an extent that any legitimate examination of a boat person's case would be almost impossible. This is a far cry from the Australia we used to know, but it is today's Australia.
Thank you, Mr Fraser, for your legacy, for your speaking out, and for your compassion and care and humanity right up to the final weeks of your life. You will be missed, your optimism and your belief that things can be change will be missed, as the ongoing campaign continues to bring back the care and compassion and humanity of the Australia we used to know. I extend my deepest sympathies to Mr Fraser's wife, Tamie, to his family, including his children and grandchildren, and to his many, many friends from around Australia and around the world.

Senator RONALDSON (Victoria—Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Centenary of ANZAC and Special Minister of State) (13:06): I am grateful for the opportunity to speak on the occasion of the death of Malcolm Fraser. Unlike some others, I will use my contribution to reflect and not for de facto political purposes—I have found that disappointing in some contributions today. Former Prime Ministers should be treated differently from the rest of us in public life. They have held the highest office in this land and, irrespective of our personal judgement of them, the office they hold demands our respect and those individuals who have held that office must also command our respect.

The rift between Malcolm and our party is a matter of great sadness. He had done so much for the party as opposition leader and then as Prime Minister, fighting the Labor Party, and similarly the Liberal Party had given Malcolm an opportunity to hold the high office he did. Like many of us, I fervently hoped that Malcolm's obvious angst with the party could have been played out behind closed doors, as former Labor PMs seem to be able to do. But, alas, that was not to be. Therefore, I want to reflect on far happier days.

I remember, as a young man, going to the Ballarat Civic Hall for my first political rally. I rather suspect that I had no idea why I was going, but it was a memorable experience that I will not forget. Malcolm was fundamentally a country boy. He was happiest when he was with those that he trusted—those with whom he had shared experiences. He was held in very, very deep affection, as the member for Wannon, by the people of Wannon and by many of us who live outside Melbourne. He was a frequent visitor to Ballarat. As I say, he was at his most comfortable when he was with country people.

There have been some terrific contributions today, and I do not want to repeat what has been said, but I want to talk about Tamie and the children. I have met the children over a number of years—not recently—but I want to talk about Tamie Fraser. She is someone that I have always admired and someone that I hold in the highest regard. This is a terrible loss for her and the family. Tamie is just one of those people—it does not matter who she has come in contact with over the years; I am sure everyone would share my views of her. She is a warm, engaging, caring, amusing and loyal person. I extend my deepest condolences to Tamie and to the family. This was a life that was taken early, but, nonetheless, I think, on any set of criteria, it was a life that was led to the fullest. I thank the chamber for the opportunity to speak today.

Senator BIRMINGHAM (South Australia—Assistant Minister for Education and Training) (13:10): I too rise to join in this debate marking the life of Australia's 22nd Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser. Malcolm Fraser was a giant of Australian politics: a towering man and a towering leader throughout his very long time in public life. A leader he was indeed. As controversial as the double dissolution of this parliament that ensued following the Dismissal of the Whitlam government was, and no matter what side of politics people sat on, throughout the years it became clear to all that there was no doubting Mr Fraser's ability to lead, to take
hard decisions and to stand by them. Yet alongside that hard-man image that many had of Mr Fraser over the decades was a man who would apply his courage to principles that demonstrated compassion, tolerance and a conviction to Liberal ideals.

The Fraser government faced difficult economic times. The aftermath of the world oil shock, record-breaking droughts, unsettled world markets and the fiscal legacy of the reckless Whitlam Labor government ensured that the Fraser government had a challenging period. As a national leader, Mr Fraser also faced a challenging public environment, not least due to the circumstances of his ascendancy and the demise of the previous government, but he enjoyed public endorsement at elections, particularly those of 1975 and 1977. His sometimes cautious approach to government has been criticised by some in hindsight but ensured, when you think about the era and times in which he governed, that he helped to heal the nation following his ascendancy to the prime ministership. It was those factors, and indeed his choices of governors-general Sir Zelman Cowan and Sir Ninian Stephen, that contributed to ensuring that the nation he left in 1983 as Prime Minister was a nation far better in terms of its national spirits, identity and direction than the one that he inherited in the chaos of 1975.

Many have spoken, as Senator Wong did, of the contradictions inherent in perhaps all of us as leaders in this national parliament, particularly perhaps in our prime ministers, and indeed through the life of Mr Fraser. Alongside those contradictions stood very much a man who is known for strongly defending anything or anyone he believed in, and a man who held his principles above political rhetoric throughout his life.

He also was a man who was a constant optimist throughout and beyond his parliamentary career. In 1980, as he faced his second-last election campaign and his last successful campaign as Liberal leader, he said at the commencement of a new decade:

We are entitled to be confident of our capacity to march through the decade ahead at a better pace than almost any nation. We are entitled to be optimistic about our future.

It was an optimism that he maintained. He maintained it right through to his last televised interview, shown last night. In the interview with George Megalogenis aired on the ABC, he said:

… if you’re interested in public policy there is one thing that is absolutely essential—even if it’s long term, you have got to remain an optimist.

An optimist, Malcolm Fraser was. Through that optimism, he was a man who changed Australia and the world for the better.

His achievements on the benches of parliament, in the cabinet room as the Prime Minister and as an advocate beyond the parliament are significant, real and numerous. He perhaps epitomized John Lydgate’s famous phrase, famous piece of poetry: you can please some of the people all of the time, all of the people some of the time, but never all of the people all of the time. It is certain that throughout Malcolm Fraser’s life—and I think we can say this with broad agreement—never did he please in a public discourse and political debate all of the people all of the time, but in almost all ways he pleased all of the people some of the time.

He incited important debates, fought important battles and achieved genuine reform. I want to touch on a few areas of particular achievement by Malcolm Fraser—areas that have overlapped some of the responsibilities and issues that I have pursued in this parliament during my nearly eight years here. The election of the Fraser government was a turning point
for environmental issues in Australia—a point acknowledged by a number of other speakers. By the time Malcolm Fraser became Prime Minister, the importance of protecting our natural heritage and the role of government in that protection was widely recognised. But Malcolm Fraser’s connection and association with, and commitment to, environmental issues far predated his time as Prime Minister. He had a personal connection that was of course not uncommon and to this day is quite typical of farmers and those involved in primary production who are intuitively conservationist in their actions. He demonstrated this through a long-term commitment as a backbencher and as a minister to the Australian Conservation Foundation.

In his first year of government, Malcolm Fraser implemented the recommendations of the 1975 commission of inquiry on Fraser Island, ending all sand mining on that Queensland island. Fraser Island also became the first listing on the Register of National Estate. The register was established by Malcolm Fraser. It is Australia’s record of natural, cultural and Indigenous places deemed worthy of future protections for generations to come. In keeping with that strong environmental protection record, the Fraser government enacted the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act. Our iconic red centre—which has for thousands of years been the focus of religious, cultural, territorial and economic relations among the Aboriginal peoples—Uluru, then better known as Ayres Rock, was proclaimed as the first national park under the act, with Kakadu added in 1979. These proclamations by the Fraser government not only recognised the unique environmental surroundings and cultural importance of those sites but also opened up the development of a sustainable tourism industry for the Northern Territory and modern economic opportunities for Indigenous peoples that could be pursued in a manner sympathetic to their cultural beliefs.

It was a credit to Malcolm Fraser’s forward-thinking approach to environmental matters that Australia was among the first nations in the world under his leadership to have places listed on the prestigious World Heritage List. The Great Barrier Reef, Kakadu National Park and the Willandra Lakes Region were all listed in 1981. Lord Howe Island and the Western Tasmanian Wilderness National Parks were also nominated by Fraser’s government and were listed in 1982. It was his government that banned drilling in the Great Barrier Reef and established the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, which is notably continuing the work he had commenced and pursued as minister for science back in 1965 in protecting the Great Barrier Reef.

Close to my heart, as many in this chamber would appreciate, are matters regarding the regulation, management and stewardship of our inland waterways, particularly the Murray-Darling Basin. Having personally been a part of many of the negotiations between basin states and within this parliament, I can sympathise with what Malcolm Fraser and the Fraser government may have been up against when deliberating over a new River Murray water agreement. They did what many had failed to do over a century of debates around water management in Australia: they reached agreement. In 1982 they were able to ensure the establishment of the new River Murray Commission to look at water quality as well as water quantity in the River Murray. This stands as an important step in the very long battle to achieve sustainable and effective management of our largest inland river system.

Alongside the environment, Malcolm Fraser had a long-standing interest in education. The ‘ever optimist’, as he was, was against free education for reasons of equality, which I will
touch on; but he championed the concept of tertiary colleges of advanced education. In the 1980s he lent support to then Prime Minister Bob Hawke in their pursuit of university reforms. Even before he became a minister, Malcolm Fraser had combined his interest in education with strong encouragement of the development of colleges of advanced education—colleges which focused on more immediate vocational preparation than universities did, in an area for which I am proud to have ministerial responsibilities today. He supported the great expansion of higher education and of opportunity for students under the Menzies government and the increased opportunity of scholarships for students from all walks of life. In 1968, when John Gorton became Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser succeeded him as Minister for Education and Science.

After a period as Minister for Defence under Gorton and then some time back on the backbench, he again served as Minister for Education and Science for most of the McMahon government. As Minister for Education and Science, Malcolm Fraser continued the growth of government support for Catholic and independent schools, arguing that this support outside of the government system was both fair and good economics. He said to the House in May 1972: The Government believes it has a responsibility to all Australian school children and for the first time in Australia's history the Prime Minister has taken steps that will give effect to that belief in a realistic and fair manner.

He expanded support for school libraries and for preschool teachers colleges. He promoted the study of Asian languages and culture, seeing Australia's future in Asia and also seeing the need for Australia to be genuinely multicultural. He expanded scholarships, both for students to complete their secondary education and for them to go onto higher education.

In 1972, as a minister who was expanding opportunity for students through Commonwealth scholarships, Malcolm Fraser opposed Gough Whitlam's policy of so-called free education. He did so on equity grounds. He argued the same grounds later in life, demonstrating consistency of principle and conviction, when Prime Minister Hawke, Treasurer Keating and Education Minister Dawkins were pursuing higher education reform and the re-introduction of university fees at the time that HECS was created. Malcolm Fraser said that a free education:

... would result in the gigantic inequality of a wharf labourer paying taxes to subsidise a lawyer’s education.

Many in this debate have reflected on the commitment Malcolm Fraser had to human rights. He was a leader of human rights in our country and also of those abroad. In particular, in the contributions I have heard, Senator Ryan and Senator Payne made very effective contributions regarding the role that Malcolm Fraser played in dismantling once and for all Australia's legacy around the White Australia policy; as Senator Ryan put it: 'putting the final stake through the heart of that policy.'

He was a tireless campaigner on social justice issues and human rights whose legacy will be felt for many a generation. He was a leader in the recognition of Aboriginal rights in Australia, and it was his government that passed the Aboriginal land rights act in 1976 that returned a large portion of the Northern Territory to its traditional owners. He had a deep interest in the advancement of our Indigenous people, while also understanding rural Australia like perhaps no other Prime Minister.
Many remember Malcolm Fraser for him welcoming the resettlement of tens of thousands of Vietnamese people in Australia, who have subsequently added a rich, new dimension to our national life. The impact of the Fraser government was best seen in its revitalised immigration program. During his time as Prime Minister, some 200,000 migrants arrived from Asian countries, including nearly 56,000 Vietnamese people who applied as refugees. The immigration program focused on resettlement and multiculturalism. It changed life in Australia, and I can but reflect on the impact it had on my own life. I grew up in Adelaide’s north, went to high school at Gawler High School, around the area of the Adelaide plains, a rich horticultural district full of market gardeners. Many of those who came as Vietnamese migrants in the Fraser era followed the previous generations of migrants, from Italian and Greek families, in setting up market gardens in the fertile areas of the Adelaide plains. My time at high school saw me attending school alongside students with names like Nguyen, Van and Tran, all of whom were the children of migrants, first-generation migrants, from those terrible days of the Vietnam War and who had been supported to Australia under Malcolm Fraser’s leadership, giving somebody like me a richer, deeper and more diverse exposure to the world through my secondary schooling.

Under Malcolm Fraser’s leadership Australia was of course also an unwavering opponent of apartheid. After he left office, Malcolm Fraser continued to work for the end of apartheid. His subsequent appointment to roles with the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Nations reflected his high international standing. Indeed, in his pursuit of equality of recognition he was ahead of his time not just in Australia but around the world. His work in standing up for equality and standing against racism in all of its forms is something that is to his enduring credit and legacy and that the Liberal Party should forever be proud of being able to associate with.

I was just eight when Malcolm Fraser lost office. I remember watching the news footage with my grandmother, who I then lived with. It is perhaps one of my first vivid political memories. One of the challenges with somebody who left office as someone as young, in relative terms, as Malcolm Fraser did, at age 53, is that no senator in the chamber today ever served in the parliament with him, and a debate like this sometimes lacks the personal stories or anecdotes that go with a person’s time in the parliament. I am, however, fortunate to have a link in my office. I am fortunate to employ Jim Bonner, a former journalist and very long serving Liberal Party staffer, who worked for Malcolm Fraser as a press secretary when Mr Fraser was Prime Minister. I invited Jim to provide some insight into the man, Malcolm Fraser, and into what it was like working with him. He told a story that in 1982 there was a Liberal Party meeting in Portland, in his electorate of Wannon. Malcolm Fraser was the guest speaker. Mr Fraser left early, much to the disappointment of the local Liberals, who wanted to get into his ear. But in news that would probably please Senator Cameron, given the contribution he made earlier, Mr Fraser headed instead to the Portland wharf workers smoko. They got a surprise to see him there but welcomed him in, and he spent the rest of the evening with the waterside workers. At the end of the night he was invited to have a coffee at one of their homes. Mr Fraser insisted that he ring the man’s wife first, to say that they were coming. When they arrived, being late at night, the wife greeted them in her dressing gown and with curlers in her hair, for she had not believed that her husband was bringing the Prime Minister to her home at that hour of night. Needless to say, the kettle had not been switched on. Pretty soon the neighbours arrived to check out what was going on and eventually even the lady of
the house warmed enough to get her box Brownie camera out so that her photo could be taken with the Prime Minister.

His explanation on the way home as to why he had wanted to leave the Liberal Party event and head to the wharves was that many of the wharfies had small blocks of land and supplemented their income by working on the wharves. There might have been members of the Waterside Workers' Federation, but to him they were his constituents first and foremost. He also noted that it was with the help of preferences that he won the seat of Wannon in his second election. He lost when he contested the seat the first time; but, after the ALP split, he benefited from Democratic Labor Party preferences and he reckoned that most of the wharfies probably had put the DLP first and him second. As for abandoning the Liberal Party meeting, Mr Fraser said that he already had their votes, but he needed to keep to those of those on the waterfront. Mr Fraser was a different person amongst the people who elected him to parliament. Canberra never saw that side of him. It is a testament that even as late in his career as 1982, as Prime Minister, he was still thinking of how to ensure the support of those to whom he owed his seat in this parliament.

Another story that Jim regaled me with is that Malcolm Fraser was a very keen car enthusiast. In fact, it was the faster the better for Malcolm Fraser, apparently. Sometime in 1981, his good friend and fellow Liberal MP Tony Street got hold a new Alfa Romeo from a Canberra dealer to try it out. The result was there for all to see one Sunday afternoon. Adelaide Avenue, the major road out the front of the Lodge, was apparently the scene of some exhaustive car testing, mainly to see how fast this Alfa Romeo could go. The Canberra police were apparently not impressed and the PM’s bodyguard in the accompanying car was hard-pressed to keep up. But this was not the first time Malcolm Fraser had indulged in his love of speed.

Once, apparently, on a trip from Portland to his home at Nareen in Victoria's western districts, the PM persuaded his Commonwealth driver to sit in the front passenger seat instead. With Mr Fraser behind the steering wheel, he put his foot down on the accelerator of the Holden Caprice and soon he was travelling at allegedly up to 160 kilometres an hour on the gravel back roads. The motor of the Caprice had been blueprinted by Holden to get maximum performance out of it. Of course, the Prime Minister wanted to see how it went for himself. When he got to his destination, there was uproar from the Victorian police, mainly because their vehicle had not been able to match the pace of the Prime Minister's vehicle. They threatened to book him if he ever did it again.

Mr Fraser had fraught relationships with some members of the Canberra press gallery. That is not new for a Prime Minister. If anybody feels in this day and age that certain journalists from time to time engage in campaigning, we can probably only imagine the situation and what it would have been in like in and after 1975. Today's journalists' predecessors were in many instances determined to avenge the removal of Gough Whitlam as Prime Minister and punish Malcolm Fraser for his role in Whitlam's sacking by the Governor-General.

Over subsequent years, relations never really improved between Mr Fraser and many members of the fourth estate. On many occasions, daily newspaper editors were regularly invited to dine at the Lodge with the PM as a means of him getting around their correspondents, who seemed to have little time for Mr Fraser and what he stood for. Even nearly seven years later, the mood in many cases was apparently one of mutual loathing. In
1981, the then PM aroused some antipathy by going fly fishing in upstate New York when on a visit to the United States and leaving the accompanying press pack in New York City. A free weekend in the Big Apple was no hardship to the journos, but it did not impress their editors when few stories were forthcoming from their journalists' time overseas. The result was an influx of anti-Fraser news reports in the Australian media.

No PM today would dare to take a weekend off in the midst of an overseas trip. It would seem that perhaps that was the last occasion that anyone did so. One year later, another visit to the US and New York was again on the itinerary. This time, there was no fishing and no weekend off in New York. It was a mighty trip through the United States and Canada and then to Japan and South Korea. It was nearly two weeks of international relations without a break. Soon, the reporters were fed up with a major foreign affairs obsession of the PM. It was one called north-south policy, whereby he was pursuing a policy arguing for developed nations to provide more help to less developed countries.

After just a fortnight of hearing about Mr Fraser's policy day in and day out, the journalists had apparently got to the stage of mouthing his words as he said them, for they knew them off by heart. By the time the Canberra reporters had spent three days in Seoul, they had enough. At the final press conference, they went on strike and they refused to ask any questions. They just wanted to get back on the plane and fly home. While the exact north-south policy concept of Malcolm Fraser's may have never prevailed, his commitment to helping developing and less developed nations would never wane. It was reflected very much in his post-political life, especially his time with CARE Australia and CARE International.

Malcolm Fraser, when he was Prime Minister, only operated from Old Parliament House in Canberra; but he was the Prime Minister to approve the building of this institution that we stand in today. In 1984, during a radio interview with Jim Bonner—his former press secretary, who had returned to the media after the loss of the Fraser government—he revealed that he had strong reservations about this new Parliament House. He said that it was too big and commanding and was in a position that dominated its surroundings. When his government approved the project going ahead, Mr Fraser said that he did not realise at the time that it would dwarf everything around it. When asked why he agreed to the structure of the new parliament, Mr Fraser confessed that even he did not always get his way cabinet and, on this occasion, his colleagues had overruled him. The irony is that someone in the bowels of the basement of this building is a plaque from 1982 commemorating the laying of the foundations, with the then Prime Minister's name—Malcolm Fraser—upon it.

Like many, perhaps most, of my colleagues, I was saddened by Malcolm Fraser's estrangement in recent years from the Liberal Party. Our broad Liberal church is strengthened by dissenters and debate within it. From those of classical Liberal thinking to those of conservative values and all shades in between, we should warmly welcome them, encourage their debate and encourage them to help shift us to a position whereby we have the best of all possible policies through such constructive and active debate. Mr Fraser did persevere, despite some of his misgivings, with Liberal Party membership over a very long period of time. I wish he had done so throughout his entire life. And I would say, on his passing, to those who may share some disillusionment in some ways with the modern Liberal Party—I would urge them—to remain engaged or to become engaged, because the best way to effect change, particularly change within either of our parties of government within Australia, is to
effect that change from within and by being involved, as Malcolm Fraser was for the overwhelming majority of his life.

Australia is a robust democracy, and our robust democracy tends to ensure that all Australian leaders are somewhat controversial figures. Malcolm Fraser was no less controversial and probably much more controversial than most in different ways, at different times, throughout his career. But, for all of the controversy throughout his life, in eulogising this man, it is clear that certain traits stand out. He was a man of conviction and of courage. He was a man of compassion. He was a man who led our country in a period marked by great social change and an emerging debate that would lead to great economic change. We should all give thanks for him, give thanks for what he contributed to the life of our nation, to the direction of our nation, to the development of policy within our nation.

Perhaps at this time of their grieving, we should, most importantly, give thanks to his family. I noticed reported today comments attributed to his daughter Angela, who said:
I guess over all those years he touched people in so many walks of life. And he was a man of many, many different sides, not just the political side and all his enthusiasms and things. He touched people and it was just very nice to hear …

It is pleasing to know that, in the marking of the life of Malcolm Fraser, the contributions in places like this, the contributions that Australians of all walks of life make through the media, make a difference to his family, because Angela Marshall, his daughter, went on to say when asked about sharing her father with the public:
"It was just our life, for us it was just our life. He was a politician from when we were born so that was just the way we lived. We didn't know anything else."

It is a selfless attitude shared not just by his daughter Angela but clearly by his wife, Tamie, of 58 years standing; his other children, Phoebe, Mark and Hugh; his grandchildren; and all of those close to him—that, for them, it was just life to share their husband, their father, their grandfather with the nation, to be part and parcel of the public debates of this country. We thank them for that sharing. We are richer for it.

Senator XENOPHON (South Australia) (13:41): My colleagues have already comprehensively outlined the achievements of the Rt Hon. Malcolm Fraser and his enormous contribution to our nation. I will be relatively brief and I do not need to restate what many of my colleagues have said. In addition to offering my condolences to his family and friends—in particular, his widow, Tamie, and his children—the gracious words of former Prime Minister Howard resonate:

Anybody who achieves what Malcolm Fraser achieved in his life deserves respect as a quite extraordinary Australian.

Another former Prime Minister, Paul Keating, a junior MP during the Dismissal, said this of Mr Fraser's death: it 'underwrites a great loss to Australia'. While, Mr Keating reflected, 'The great pity for him of the budget crisis of 1975 was that it de-legitimised his government, at its inception, and with it, much of the value he otherwise brought to public life,' Mr Keating also praised Mr Fraser for his significant and lasting contributions: his achievements for land rights, multiculturalism, refugees and, in Paul Keating's words, 'many other clear-sighted reforms'. His passion and commitment against racism, against apartheid in South Africa, his leadership role for Nelson Mandela's freedom were unwavering, although I understand how
his joy at Rhodesia becoming a democratic Zimbabwe had turned to despair with the increasingly despotic and ruthless Mugabe regime.

On our alliance with the United States, Malcolm Fraser has challenged us to reflect on that alliance even as recently as last year; and, in a robust democracy such as ours, that is a healthy thing. Philip Dorling, one of Australia's great investigative journalists, described Malcolm Fraser as 'an original and independent voice on Australian foreign policy'. It was observed by Philip Dorling, about Mr Fraser:

Early in the life of his government he observed that "the interests of the United States and the interests of Australia are not necessarily identical".

"Our first responsibility is independently to assess our own interests …

And he pointedly added:

"The United States will unquestionably do the same."

Malcolm Fraser's apparent stern demeanour and appearance—he was unkindly compared to Easter Island statues—belied a compassion and gentleness that were noted by veteran press gallery journalist Tony Wright, whose sketch on the day he died is worth repeating in part. It is headed 'The day Malcolm Fraser saved my career as a journalist', and he says this:

He was the very first person I interviewed, on my first day as a journalist. He seemed terrifying, this apparently born-to-rule minister for defence, the Vietnam War splitting the nation. And yet he ended up saving me, and probably my career.

…

... ... ...

The editor of the Portland Observer, who had barely finished hiring me, sent me to the Richmond-Henty Hotel overlooking Portland's harbour to interview Mr Fraser. He advised me to ask him about a pet subject, the wool-floor pricing scheme, about which I knew nothing. The assignment started badly when I spilled hot coffee over the minister's pants. It got worse when he launched into a long dissertation on wool pricing. Unable to keep up in my scrawled long-hand, I feigned expertise in shorthand and covered pages with squiggles and dots that meant nothing at all. Pouring perspiration, I figured my career was finished before it had started, and just wanted to get away.

Eventually, Mr Fraser twigged. "Well, Tony," he said, as I snapped shut my notebook with its useless notes, hoping only to escape with my life, "It's quite a complex subject - let's boil it down to a few sentences, and you can take them down longhand. I'll go slowly."

Those few sentences, dictated with the Received Pronunciation he had cultivated at Oxford, became a small front page story.

He'd saved my career, gently.

I would like to also conclude in terms of other matters he has raised, even recently in terms of Palestine. I saw the Australia Palestine Advocacy Network this morning, and they mentioned to me that Malcolm Fraser signed the Canberra declaration on Gaza, talking about an end to Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories and the blockade of Gaza and that he was a passionate supporter of human rights and many causes around the world.

I would like to conclude with some poignant and powerful words in yesterday's Sunday Age. It quotes Phong Nguyen in terms of a migrant family who came out here with tens of thousands of others as a result of Malcolm Fraser's policy to essentially smash the White Australia policy. Liam Mannix's piece is just a few paragraphs. He says:

For much of his life, Phong Nguyen has felt as though he had two fathers.
He barely knew his own father, who spent 13 years in a North Vietnamese hard-labour camp. They were reunited later in life in Australia – before Huong Xuan Nguyen passed away a few months ago at the age of 84.

When Malcolm Fraser died at the same age, early on Friday morning, Mr Nguyen mourned a second time.

"The news of his death is not just a national mourning for Australia, but for us," Mr Nguyen said.

"For every one of us, he is more precious and more respected than our own parents and great grandparents."

Very emotional words by Mr Nguyen. But, as Senator Wong pointed out in her contribution, the contribution of the Vietnamese community to the nation, including in my home state of South Australia, would not have occurred were it not for Malcolm Fraser's far-sighted policies. Our country is better and richer for the contribution of the Vietnamese community; and, for the Nguyen family and tens of thousands of others who are like them, Malcolm Fraser's leadership made all the difference to them.

His loss will be deeply felt as it will be by Australians from all walks of life, from all sides of politics. Vale Malcolm Fraser.

Senator IAN MACDONALD (Queensland) (13:47): I want to associate myself with the very fine words of our leader, Senator Abetz, on a very fine man. I also acknowledge the dissertation by Senator Brandis on Mr Fraser's qualities and philosophy, and I do want to acknowledge the very generous contributions that have been made by all other senators. I extend to Tamie Fraser and their children and extended family my sympathies and condolences.

I will not repeat the details of Malcolm Fraser's life and works, but I do mention with pride some of the highlights of his government. As a Queenslander and Northern Australian and one who has always had a very enduring interest in the environment, I was particularly pleased at his declaration of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, the abolition of sand mining on Fraser Island and the creation of Kakadu National Park. As a lawyer back in those days, I well remember the formation of the Australian Federal Police and, particularly importantly in the town that I practised in, the abolition of estate and death duties. As a one-time minister in the areas of the Northern Territory and the Australian Antarctic Division, I experienced at first hand the benefits of the awarding of Northern Territory self-government and the creation of the AAD in Hobart.

I also acknowledge Mr Fraser's opposition to apartheid and his destruction of the White Australia policy that had been so prominent in Australia in the early years of our nation. I acknowledge the introduction of freedom of information, the indexation of pensions and the creation of the Australian Institute of Sport amongst many other initiatives that will mark Mr Fraser's time as Prime Minister of our country.

I well remember him firstly as army minister and subsequently defence minister at the time of the Vietnam War, something that I and most young people at that time strongly supported. We were those who willingly went into the birthday ballot. He prosecuted the war with skill, and his support for Vietnamese refugees following the war is legend. He was a regular visitor to the north, particularly to the then relatively newly established Lavarack Barracks in Townsville.
I have a very proud and fond recollection of him at a function in those days at the house of the then President of the Liberal Party in my town, Billy and his wife Wendy Muguira, who are still active stalwarts of the party, at their then house on Brandon Road in Ayr. He was a very tall and imposing figure and, as someone very interested in politics but quite removed from it at the time, I was particularly impressed to be at the same barbecue function with him. I remember him as a very tall and imposing figure and I still have this vision of him as defence minister at a barbecue in the backyard, actually talking through the hills hoist that was there because his height was greater than that of the hills hoist at the time. As I say, I fondly remember him addressing the party faithful at that time.

We were always so very proud in those days that we as a Liberal Party in what had been traditionally a Country Party town had a Liberal farmer as Prime Minister of our nation. His support for the party around that time was an influence in my decision to stand as a Liberal candidate in the state election in 1983.

But it was his courage at the time of the dysfunction of the Whitlam government that will stay in my mind for as long as I live. As a youngish follower of politics in those days, I was proud of the way he was seen to have saved Australia at that time. The Left have never forgiven him for his part in that change of government, but I always had the greatest and enduring admiration for his courage, determination and leadership at that time of crisis. Rarely acknowledged is the fact that Whitlam was actually sacked not by Fraser but by a Governor-General the Labor Party had appointed. But Fraser's leadership and role at the time was vindicated, as is appropriate in a democracy, by one of the largest electoral victories ever following the events of November 1975—something that those who pontificate every 11 November still do not accept.

Malcolm Fraser's public life finished as it started—determined, thoughtful, caring and courageous. May he rest in peace.

Senator WHISH-WILSON (Tasmania) (13:53): I rise today to make some quick comments about Malcolm Fraser and to get on record my sincere gratitude for the work he did to prevent whaling. I thought I would start with my earliest memory of politics, which was in grade 1 when I lived in Karratha—walking down the street in the tail edge of a cyclone to collect something for my mum and dad and looking at a car with my head down and seeing a sign on the back of a car saying: 'Shame, Fraser, shame.' When I got home about 20 minutes later I asked my mum and dad about it and, although my memory is not very clear on exactly what they said, they did try to explain to me what was going on in politics at the time. I enjoyed meeting Malcolm Fraser here in the Senate chamber last year when he was here for the migration debate. I went over and shook his hand and said how grateful I was for everything he was doing.

The real reason I would like to very quickly get on record is the magnificent work that Mr Fraser did and the courage and the leadership and the conviction he showed to not just pass a law in this country that banned whaling, which was a very controversial thing to do at the time; but he also set up Australia's role in the International Whaling Commission as a nation that showed leadership on this issue thereafter. I wanted to quote from an interview he did a long time ago on this with The Age, with Melissa Fyfe, the environment reporter, back in 2004. She said he was being very modest in his interview. When she asked him about the decision to ban whaling 25 years ago, he said: 'Well, it barely raised a sweat.' And the reason
he said it barely raised a sweat—and I want to put this in perspective—is that in 1979 conservation issues themselves were not high on the government's 'to-do' list.

A ban on whaling was opposed very, very strongly by the Western Australian government, particularly by Sir Charles Court, who is a man I grew up around the corner from in Perth, Western Australia. I certainly remember the very powerful figure that he was, but the Western Australian government lobbied very hard to prevent whaling from being banned. But Mr Fraser said it did not raise a sweat. It was not an issue for him. He said the key reason was that if a decision is right, you do not worry about it and you do not really feel the pressure. I think that is something that we would all understand being in here in this place with the decisions that we make sometimes. If a decision is right, you do not have to worry about it. So he said it really did not raise a sweat.

I think it is really important to point out that it was his daughter that actually raised the issue for him. She was only 11 at the time, she had just come back from boarding school—her name is Phoebe. He says in his 2010 book, Political Memoirs, that he recalled the day in 1977 when she came home from boarding school deploring whaling's barbarity and demanding to know his opinion. Didn't he think whaling was cruel and should be stopped? A little later in 1977, with that year's election looming, the evangelically pro-whale organisation, Project Jonah, presented him with a petition signed by 100,000 Australians asking for an end of whaling. But he said that, thanks to Phoebe, they were already preaching to the converted because he already found whaling abhorrent. In a 20 March 1978 speech, he announced a government inquiry into whaling:

I abhor any activity that might threaten the extinction of any animal species, particularly when it is directed against a species as special and intelligent as the whale. Later on, legislation was passed in 1980: submission 3759 had a draft bill for the Whale Protection Act, which became law in June 1980, and that act contained a provision for the repeal of the Whaling Act 1960. It is fascinating to compare the legislation from 1960 which, to quote Malcolm Fraser, 'essentially treated whales as an unfeeling commodity like coal' to what he put in place in 1980, talking about the majesty of this animal and our close connection with this animal in nature.

As I said earlier, this really set the agenda for Australia in the International Whaling Commission and for later people such as Labor's Peter Garrett, who took action on this in the international whaling court. If Sea Shepherd's founder, Paul Watson, does not mind me perhaps pinching some of his prose—I understand there is going to be a state funeral on Friday for Malcolm Fraser—on Friday for Malcolm Fraser, ex-Prime Minister, the church bell rings while out to sea 'the great whale sings'. I say that because, just recently off the coast of Tasmania, for the first time ever, we have had a pod of blue whales there for nearly three weeks. I think that is fantastic—and good on you, Malcolm, for all the work you did.

Senator McKENZIE (Victoria) (13:58): I rise as a Victorian National Party senator to pay my respects and speak to this condolence motion on the passing of the 22nd Prime Minister and maybe our last pastoralist Prime Minister, the Rt Hon. Malcolm Fraser—a great regional Victorian.

With land holdings and practice in my home state of Victoria in the magnificent western district, sheep, wheat and grain were at the very heart of former Prime Minister Fraser's work ethic and, indeed, he has been described as a workaholic. It was all about the work for the
former Prime Minister. When a man of his stature, his contribution and his personal integrity passes, it is timely for us not only to recollect, retell and share in the telling of his personal and professional contribution to our nation, which so many senators from all sides of politics have done here today, but also to make a brief contribution about his role as a strong coalitionist and the relationship between the Liberal Party and the National Country Party during his leadership. They won strong majorities in 1975 and 1977 elections, and they won a third term together in 1980. As I have mentioned, Malcolm Fraser's roots were in agriculture. His government reconfirmed and reinforced Australia's trade relationships, particularly in our region.

I thank Mr Fraser so much for his strong relationship not only with the National Country Party but specifically with its leader at the time, Doug Anthony. If anyone saw the great Doug Anthony talking to *Lateline* like it was 1979 last week, you could just imagine what a fantastic and fabulous partnership that was that led our nation through some very difficult times, particularly in the late 1970s and early 1980s. It was their strong friendship professionally and personally that allowed them to manage the coalition and manage our nation very strategically. They were strong coalitionists. They were both pragmatists and regional Australians. They understood each other very well, they understood their constituencies and they understood our nation as it was at the time.

In opposition, this was evidenced by stories of Mr Fraser talking to Doug Anthony about whether he was going to leave Gorton's cabinet and seeking advice about what he was going to do. In the Senate impasse and supply crisis Fraser is known to have said that the support of the Country Party was 'critically important'. In government, they faced nasty internal shocks. This strong professional relationship helped them to massage the issues, reach a consensus for the common good and keep the coalition solid.

Mr Fraser took care to include the Country Party ministers when visiting delegations came from overseas and to always ensure that those out and about knew that it was a partnership between the National Country Party and the Liberal Party governing our nation. He similarly sought advice of the National Country Party on the difficult decisions about his Treasurer, Mr Lynch. He went to 'Black Jack', someone he had a good relationship with that was developed over the decade that he spent on the backbench. In the words of former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser: 'I trusted his judgement. We had a drink and he said there was only one thing to do: get rid of him now.'

Mr Fraser was also prepared to stand up and take our nation forward despite some of the difficult conversations that that must have caused internally within the coalition and particularly the National Country Party. I am thinking of issues with the Queensland branch of the National Country Party over some other former prime ministers' policy settings. Also in opposition he set up a rural backbench committee that was chaired by a Liberal. The Liberals in opposition in 1972 had a rural spokesperson. There were not too many people in the National Country Party at the time who really appreciated that. It was a double-edged sword—because of his interest in pastoral interests and rural issues, he was sometimes critiqued from within his own party for being too close to the Country Party and it was sometimes said that they wielded too much power within his particular government. What those who make that criticism fail to consider is that, because of his rural background, because he set up the rural spokesperson and because he was seen to be championing similar
interests, that grew the Liberal Party’s support with constituencies and stakeholders in rural areas much more than had existed in the past.

Mr Fraser was, again, a great supporter of the then Country Party becoming the National Country Party on its way to becoming the great National Party as he saw that it would enfranchise so much more of regional and rural Australia but also lead to a better relationship between the coalition parties. He was a workaholic. I know that Senator Scullion, the National Party leader and also the Indigenous affairs minister, earlier this morning praised the former Prime Minister’s work on this particular issue. It is a legacy that his acumen married with his principles and a real desire to see and effect change resulted in lasting change in this particular area, which has had so much of a flow-on effect.

Mr Fraser attended and was a keynote speaker at the 1975 federal convention of the Country Party. When we talk about his friendship with Doug Anthony, I am reminded of a quote of his. He said, 'Politics is not a business where you make a great many friends, friends who you go fishing with or shooting with.' But Doug Anthony and the National Country Party were very much this Prime Minister’s friends. Doug Anthony was not just somebody for him to go fishing and shooting with, because they both stood up for issues and they both stood up for their constituencies.

I only met Malcolm Fraser once. He was the first Prime Minister I can remember in my lifetime. He was a guest speaker at the Bendigo Writers Festival prior to the federal election where he was supporting Sarah Hanson-Young’s election to this place. There had been a fair amount of water under the bridge since he and Doug Anthony had been striding the halls of Old Parliament House together. As a new National Party senator, I asked him as I was getting my book signed if he had any advice for the National Party. He said, 'The National Party has to stand up to the Liberal Party. You have to stand up for your issues and you have to stand up for your constituents.' I said, 'That is very good advice, Mr Prime Minister. Can you please put that in my book?'

So that is now in my signed copy of the memoirs, which I really treasure. He was so gracious—a bear of a man—and he was right: our relationship works when we are each standing up for our constituencies and we understand and have a pragmatic approach to how our relationship can work.

He also said that Doug Anthony was the best leader the Nationals had ever had. I cannot compare that fact, because Warren Truss, the great Leader of the Nationals today, is the only leader that I have ever had the privilege to serve under. But I do agree that Doug Anthony was a great leader. So was Earle Page, so was 'Black Jack', so is Warren Truss, but so was Malcolm Fraser. A great leader in parliament, a great leader in his community, he was honest, he was a regional Australian, and I think that country-mindedness saw him be able to develop relationships and have a work ethic that he needed to get the job done.

I give my condolences to his family, friends and colleagues, particularly Doug Anthony and those that worked with him closely. The people of western Victoria and Wannon remember his contribution very, very well. I would like to agree with Senator Birmingham about conviction and courage and add 'principles and pragmatism' to the characteristics that made him a great Australian. Vale, Malcolm Fraser.
Senator SMITH (Western Australia) (14:08): I also rise in support of the condolence motion and to recognise the distinguished contribution of a former parliamentary leader of the Liberal Party and 22nd Prime Minister of this Commonwealth, the Rt Hon. Malcolm Fraser AC, CH.

When I was growing up and first became aware of who and what a Prime Minister was and what they did, it was Malcolm Fraser who was occupying the office. I am not sure whether it is because I was shorter back then or that Mr Fraser and his predecessor, Gough Whitlam, were both so tall, but they really did seem like giant figures to us in those past times.

Although I was alive at the time of the Dismissal, I was much too young to really fully appreciate what it was all about or what its significance would come to mean to me as I came to my political consciousness. My appreciation of and fervent faith in our nation's constitutional arrangements would emerge a little later in life. But, listening to the contributions of other senators this morning and early this afternoon, it has become obvious to me that much of what happened in my earlier life was the direct consequence of a man known as Malcolm Fraser. His decisions affected the life of an ordinary Australian family, the Smiths, first of Port Hedland and later of Nollamara in Perth's northern suburbs.

His strident belief in the causes of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War meant that my father, as a young soldier, was to serve in Vietnam in 1967-68. His pursuit of national service for young Australian men, in order to fulfil our commitment in Vietnam, meant that my father's youngest brother was to be conscripted and to serve in Vietnam.

I remember as a young Western Australian primary school child being put in front of the television to watch the opening of the 1980 Olympics in Moscow and being ever so slightly conscious of the controversy that was to surround Australia's participation in those events. I remember as a young child travelling to Western Australia and to the township of Albany, in the Great Southern part of the state, in the 1970s and witnessing for myself the operations and activities of the whaling station and the whaling industry that had been such an important element of the local economy in Albany. Of course, as we have heard from contributions today, in November 1978 that whaling station was to cease, whaling was to end, as a direct consequence of the decisions of one man, Malcolm Fraser.

In 1983 I remember watching the local Liberal campaign in the federal electorate of Stirling with astonishment that the local federal member, Mr Ian Viner, was operating a very lacklustre campaign, a campaign that lacked energy. Little did I realise that I was witnessing firsthand the end of Malcolm Fraser's prime ministership. Of course, I come to this Senate as a senator for Western Australia as a result of one of the successful constitutional amendments that were stewarded under his prime ministership. The vote on the constitutional reform initiative that was known as the Constitutional Alteration (Senate Casual Vacancies) 1977 proposal, which became law on 29 July 1977, was a powerful demonstration that sensible constitutional reform, and reforms seen as making an addition or an improvement to our constitutional structures, can and will be endorsed by the electorate.

But I think it is worth acknowledging today that, of all the things that can be said about our former Prime Minister, he was not someone lacking in courage. He was a man of courage in thought, courage in convictions, courage in action. He looked at a situation, he made his judgements and he backed himself. And, for a long time at least—he is the nation's fourth longest serving Prime Minister, no less—that judgement has proven to be correct. Indeed, in
dealing with the situation in the so-called constitutional crisis of 1975, Mr Fraser, it has to be said, put himself in quite an exposed position. He put himself in a position where he would be shown to have been right or he would have been shown to be very, very wrong, and where the verdict would be rendered by the whole electorate, and in a very public way.

Gough Whitlam's style has often been referred to as 'crash through or crash'. I believe Mr Fraser was a less bombastic individual than his predecessor as Prime Minister, but nonetheless he was every bit as determined and tenacious as Gough Whitlam. Ultimately, as history shows, he was far more shrewd. Mr Fraser is someone who gives rise to various shades of opinion within the modern Liberal Party. That is, of course, the nature of politics. A more embarrassing legacy, however, would be to have been a former national leader and not have invoked any reaction, not have invoked any critical analysis.

But all Liberals and, I would argue, all Australians are in Fraser's debt for rescuing the country from the economic carnage left behind the Whitlam government. The idea that you would cut spending and make efforts to reduce the size of government were not, in 1975 or 1976, orthodox ideas. Margaret Thatcher had only just become leader of the Conservative Party and was not considered an odds-on favourite to win office at the 1979 British election. Ronald Reagan was pushing his message of smaller government, but it was not finding enough of an audience—he had lost his fight for the Republican presidential nomination in 1976 to Gerald Ford.

So, although Mr Fraser is criticised for failing to follow the Thatcher-Reagan pathway with 'sufficient zeal'—and today is not the time for those arguments in depth—it is worth bearing in mind that, in many ways, he was actually blazing the trail on economic policy, at least in those ways of imposing spending restraint. Those ideas would not gain widespread acceptance in the United Kingdom or the United States until Malcolm Fraser was into this third term as Prime Minister.

Importantly for me, I would add that, throughout his time in office, Mr Fraser remained steadfast in his support for Australia's federalism, something that was, and still is, very important to Western Australia. It is interesting to look back to 1979 in this respect. The Labor Party, at its conference that year, passed a motion supporting constitutional change, such that instead of referendums requiring the 'double majority'—a majority of voters in a majority of states—Labor wished to change to approvals requiring only a simple majority. Needless to say, this would have entirely destroyed the basic framework of our national Constitution, the framework of our Australian federalism. The whole point of the 'double majority' is that it protects smaller states from being overridden by the larger ones. Mr Fraser as Prime Minister put the case when he told the House of Representatives in October 1979: The Government is not prepared to contemplate that kind of proposition. It needs to be understood that this federation is a compact between six States. The States entered into the federation under certain terms and circumstances.

The States that are smaller in population believed that in a country as large as Australia, they would need some protection against the capacity of those in New South Wales and Victoria to change the Constitution to suit themselves at the expense of those in South Australia Western Australia, Queensland and Tasmania.
Therefore, the provision in the Constitution that one needs not only a majority of voters but also a majority of States is a very real safeguard and a very real protection for the less populous States. It is a protection that the Government believes is appropriate to Australia's circumstances.

Fortunately, Labor's proposition failed to impress and Labor governments have since had the good sense not to go near it.

In paying tribute to Mr Fraser today, I would like to acknowledge his commitment to federalism and thank him for standing up and being a bulwark against the kind of reactionary constitutional inanity that abounded in the aftermath of 1975. Because what happened in 1975 showed that our Constitution was not broken; it showed that it works well under stress. On behalf of the many, many Liberals across Western Australia, I extend my condolences to Mrs Fraser and the Fraser family. Vale, Malcolm Fraser.

**Senator McGrath** (Queensland) (14:18): I rise to support the condolence motion moved by the Leader of the Government in the Senate, Senator Abetz. I rise to speak about a Prime Minister of whom I have no direct memory of his service in this parliament or even remembering him on television. To me Malcolm Fraser is as historically distant as Menzies or Lyons, but no less significant.

His legacy did cast a political shadow across my family and my own philosophical base. In the great cathedral that is the modern Liberal Party, I fear that Malcolm's and my pews would be on different sides of the cathedral, but I am certain we would still be under the same roof. As a minister, he was responsible for conscription—a ballot in which my father was called up for Vietnam and eventually saw six years' service in the army. I should point out that my father saw this as service for his country and did not blame Malcolm Fraser personally for this; he was cheerfully handing out how-to-vote cards for the Liberal Party in the 1970s and still does so today.

While as a liberal Malcolm Fraser's political path wandered away from the Liberal Party in later years, I share Senator Brandis's view that Malcolm Fraser's inherent values of individualism and liberalism changed little from his salad days in Oxford to the Dismissal to the Lodge and to his eventual passing. When you read his maiden speech—it is fascinating what people say in their maiden speeches—it is fascinating to see the issues that Australia would face in terms of infrastructure and water. He concludes by saying:

There is one final thing that I should like to say. I was too young to fight in the last war, and I owe a debt of gratitude to those who fought in World War I, as well as in World War II. But I am not too young now to fight for my faith and belief in the future of this great nation, in which the individual is, and always shall remain, supreme. … But all these things will mean nothing if one thing is ever forgotten — that the individual happiness of each citizen is, and must remain for ever, the first thought of our national leaders.

His first words in this parliament were about individualism and liberalism. Later on I shall quote some other words which show his inherent belief there.

As a Queensland senator, I wish to pay homage and commemorate the service of Malcolm Fraser as Prime Minister and as leader of the Liberal Party. I do not intend to go through the record of his service as prime minister, but I will touch upon two things: his righteous opposition to the Soviet Union and in particular his righteous work in defending the Baltic republics—and a special place in heaven is there for that alone for Malcolm Fraser—and to his work in allowing Vietnamese refugees fleeing another communist dictatorship to come to
this country. I do note also that he was a strong supporter of voluntary student unionism, although he does get a little cross against his name because, while Prime Minister and having control of the Senate, he did not bring in voluntary student unionism. He did say at an ALSF conference in 1982:

One of the great causes for which the ALSF has fought and for which it continues to fight is voluntary student unionism. You have fought for the right of students to choose freely whether or not they wish to belong to a union.

They were righteous words back then and they are still very good words today. Whatever we think of Malcolm Fraser in his later years, I owe—and I think my party owes—Malcolm Fraser a debt of gratitude for leading and holding the party together as supply was blocked. I give thanks that Malcolm Fraser as Leader of the Liberal Party instructed the senators in the old Parliament House to block supply. I give thanks that Whitlam was sacked. And, while the events of 1975 perhaps defined Malcolm Fraser as a person and perhaps defined that political era, I note that as the leader of the party he was determined to turn on the lights and fix up our economy, and as a believer in democracy and the will of the people, we should always remember that he was returned three times as Prime Minister. While the Left whinge and have a little whine about the events of November 1975, I note that in 1975 and in 1977, Malcolm Fraser was returned as Prime Minister in landslide elections. The Australian people, despite the hot air of the Left, not only supported and approved of his actions in 1975 but also supported his actions as Prime Minister in 1975 and afterwards.

I would like to quote a couple of paragraphs from a speech he gave to the 1983 Young Liberal National Convention being held in Adelaide. These were his closing remarks; particularly as he was framing the coming election, he said:

This is what faith in Australia is all about. It is what our commitment to freedom and private enterprise means, it is the path which realism dictates for 1983 and it will make our nation stronger and more self-reliant than ever.

Socially, we must continue to build on Australia's excellent record as a genuinely liberal society. A society which rejects uniformity and which has what someone recently described as a "zest for differences" which generate innovation, ideas and progress. The differences between us as individuals, the variety that different and distinctive cultures and attitudes give to Australia, are an essential part of the community's driving force. Tolerance of differences and their encouragement also engenders in individuals respect for their own community and social system. By creating a liberal, dynamic society we can make Australia really great and set an example to the rest of the world.

So today we mourn the passing not just of a prime minister but also of a bridge to a different Australia, a different politics, and a deed of noblesse oblige. To his family and to his friends: we thank you for sharing your husband, your father and your friend with us. And we thank Malcolm Fraser for his work as Liberal leader in ridding Australia of the Whitlam government, and for his service as Prime Minister from 1975 to 1983. I would like to close with some remarks from Malcolm Fraser's final press release as Prime Minister, dated Sunday, 6 March 1983:

It has been a great honour and privilege to have been Prime Minister of Australia.

During the election I said that what happened to Malcolm Fraser as an individual was of no account. I meant that. But what happens to Australia, to our way of life and to the kind of country we leave our children is of great and lasting significance.
The values and principles by which we live, the human relationships which guide us, and the values to which we aspire as Liberals will not change.

I urge Liberals everywhere to keep the faith.

Senator WRIGHT (South Australia) (14:25): I too stand today to offer a personal reflection on the life and legacy of former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser, and to offer my sincere condolences to his family and loved ones.

I was 14 in 1975 and I have a clear memory of that time and of the circumstances in which Malcolm Fraser became the Prime Minister, and also of the debate and discussion that was occurring around Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War at that time. It is fair to say that, at that age and as an older teenager, I certainly had a few differences with Mr Fraser's opinion about those issues, and about what had occurred. But, since that time, my respect and admiration grew and grew as I saw that, fundamentally, throughout his life he stood firm on principles that he believed in very clearly right back then, principles like the dignity and equality of people, and the importance of delineating and upholding important fundamental human rights. I also saw something that I admire—that is, a willingness to change and to grow as the evidence before him—and before any of us—changed his understanding about things. An example that commentators have been reflecting on since his death is his stance on foreign affairs, and the importance of Australia maintaining independence in foreign affairs and not being subservient to any ally, including the United States.

My father was a conservative and a staunch Liberal party supporter: if anyone had told my father about the situation that I would be in now, making these reflections—I well remember some very robust arguments around our kitchen table in the 1970s between my father and my older brothers and sisters; in particular, about the Vietnam War and about the Dismissal—or that one day, in the second decade of the 21st century, I would be shaking hands with Mr Fraser after a forum on refugees, and that he would be kindly disposed to say hello to me and to speak with me, I doubt my dad would have been able to believe it. To me, that is one more example of having lived long enough to learn and realise that we just do not know where life is going to take us. We think we do when we are young, but if we live long enough we are constantly surprised. It has reminded me of something that I think is really important to take through life, and that is the importance of humility—the idea that we can be pretty sure that we are right, almost 100 per cent sure sometimes, but that we always allow the possibility that new information may come in, or that we may experience new things that we could not possibly have imagined before, which will cause us to grow and to change our minds. Having seen the rapprochement between former Prime Minister Gough Whitlam and former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser, I think that forgiveness and humanity in human affairs and public affairs is also very important. The other thing I take from Mr Fraser's legacy is his courage—the courage to identify what is important and to make principled decisions, even if they are not popular and even if they are not necessarily understood by those around us. In particular I am talking about decisions that he made, which I will go through and talk about in a minute, that relate to human rights particularly and his stance on welcoming refugees and asylum seekers to Australia and always being mindful of the inherent humanity and dignity of every person, which of course started in the 1970s with his approach to Vietnamese boat people fleeing the Vietnam war and has continued through what has occurred in more recent times.
Many people have spoken about the many aspects of Malcolm Fraser's legacy but I will focus today particularly on his unswerving stance on human rights. We know that Mr Fraser established the original Human Rights Commission in 1981, and he has been a strong defender of that organisation ever since. As recently as February this year he spoke out powerfully in defence of the president, Professor Gillian Triggs, describing her, among many other accolades, as a very good distinguished lawyer. At that time he felt the need to defend her because Professor Triggs was being attacked by the current Prime Minister and members of this government. He also spoke out powerfully in defence of the work of the commission in inquiring into the issue that has bedevilled governments of both complexions—the detention of children in Australia. In an article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* of 4 February, Mr Fraser offered a more general reflection on the state of human rights and the rule of law in Australia:

Because of the increase of arbitrary powers, not subject to appeal or review, that the government has granted its own ministers, the work of the commission is more necessary than it has ever been.

In that article he talked about the expansion of ministers' powers, without any judicial review, without any possibility of appeal, and about the extension of ASIO's powers curtailing basic rights and freedoms, arguing that this is consistent with a clear wish by the government to place its actions outside the rule of law. Malcolm Fraser was always an upholder of the rule of law, understanding just how fundamentally important that is for the kind of Australia that we all say that we want to live in. He went on in that article:

These actions make the Australian Human Rights Commission even more important to safeguard remaining freedoms and to prevent a full introduction of a police state …

These are serious words, and I think this is a time that we need to consider how serious those words are and why he felt moved to write them. In 2000, Mr Fraser was awarded the Human Rights Medal for his leadership in human rights. The judges at the time pointed out that he had provided national leadership in the pursuit of human rights over a long period. Mr Fraser showed consistent support for reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians, and many people have commented on his staunch, unwavering leadership in the fight against racism both nationally and internationally.

In 1976 he legislated land rights for the first time in the form of the Northern Territory Land Rights Act, and I know how important that legislation was for Aboriginal people in Australia. It still remains some of the strongest land rights law in this country. As has also been noted by many, he was a leading figure in the Commonwealth in the fight against apartheid, which after many years resulted in a democratic and inclusive South Africa and ended white minority rule in what we now know as Zimbabwe.

After Mr Fraser left politics, he was joint chairman in 1985 of the Commonwealth Group of Eminent Persons against Apartheid in South Africa. He had met Nelson Mandela while Mandela was in prison, saying of him to the ABC:

I suppose I see in Mandela all the aspirational things we would like to be, but we know in our hearts we often fall short.

It strikes me that in showing courage and leadership in matters that are so important, Malcolm Fraser did not fall short.

I turn to the issue of refugees. It is notable that Malcolm Fraser accepted Australia's responsibility towards asylum seekers, welcoming them as a result of a war in which he willingly enabled Australia to participate. Following the end of the Vietnam War, of course,
there were many people fleeing Vietnam and during the Fraser years Australia welcomed 200,000 immigrants from Asia, more than 55,000 of whom were Vietnamese boat people. The South Australian Governor, Hieu Van Le, a very admirable and impressive man in his own right, has paid tribute to the opportunity he received, as a boat person fleeing the Vietnam War and coming to Australia, from the Fraser government and Malcolm Fraser's open and far-sighted response to our responsibility to refugees from a war that we had participated in. In Australia we have all benefited from the opportunities that were given to so many people who fled then, and have fled wars and conflict and persecution throughout Australia's history. I would like to think that we will continue to benefit from opening up our hearts and offering protection to those people who come to us seeking asylum.

Mr Fraser remained staunch in his stance on the decency and the humanity that we needed to offer people seeking asylum in Australia. That was one of the core principles that he never wavered from. He lived long enough to see, I think with great sadness, the slippery slope that we have ended up on in Australia in terms of the way we treat refugees. In 2011, in conversation with Melbourne University political scientist Professor Robyn Eckersley, Mr Fraser lamented that refugee policy by both Liberal and Labor parties had ended up playing 'to the rednecked people in the Australian community' because that would get the votes. For many years he criticised the bipartisan approach of the major parties to refugees. In 2013 wrote in *The Age*:

Kevin Rudd and Tony Abbott are proving there are no depths to which they will not sink to persuade the Australian people they are the toughest in relation to asylum seekers. The demonising of asylum seekers continues apace. Unfortunately there is no indication that the situation has changed since that time; it is arguable that it has become even worse. As recently as last December, Mr Fraser spoke at the opening of the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre in Footscray. He stated—it must have been sad for him to do this—that Australia was becoming known around the world as one of the most inhumane, uncaring and selfish of all the wealthy countries. It is a sad thing to reflect on but is certainly something for which he can take no responsibility or blame, because of the strong stance that he made and continued to make in relation to asylum seekers and refugees.

I could say so much more, but I might finish by reflecting on the words of Fred Chaney, who is one of the ministers who served in Mr Fraser's government. Fred Chaney was an excellent Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and has gone on, post-parliament, to do some excellent work in human rights and dignity in Australia. He said of Malcolm Fraser:

In my view, the great virtue he had is that he extended the honourable and honoured notion of mateship to people who had traditionally been excluded from our definition of mateship.

I thought: what a wonderful legacy. That is something so proudly Australian and something that Australians so dearly want to believe about ourselves and that we all aspire to. We often say one of our hallmark qualities is that we know what mateship is and we honour the concept of mateship. Whether we actually do that in real life, either among ourselves or to those who are strangers or on the outside, is a question that we all need to ask. For a leader like Malcolm Fraser to take that concept and then to say, 'We will extend that to those who are traditionally excluded from our definition of mateship and ensure that we behave towards those people so that they have dignity and we acknowledge their humanity,' is a great thing. It made me think that one of real hallmarks of leadership is behaving and acting such that one expects the best
in those who are led, to bring out the best in all of us. I think that that is something that Malcolm Fraser worked very hard to do all his life. It is with great sadness that I note his passing. Vale Malcolm Fraser.

Senator FIERRAVANTI-WELLS (New South Wales—Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Social Services) (14:39): I also rise to speak on the passing of the Rt Hon. John Malcolm Fraser AC, CH, former member for Wannon and our 22nd Prime Minister. As parliamentary secretary responsible for multicultural affairs and settlement services, I would like to highlight his legacy to the multicultural society that we enjoy today.

Last Saturday we celebrated Harmony Day. Harmony Day is a celebration of our cultural diversity. It is a day of respect for everyone who calls Australia home. This, of course, was the 15th anniversary of Harmony Day. Our cultural diversity remains one of our greatest strengths. It is really at the heart of who we are. Today, we identify with about 300 different ancestries; we speak about 300 languages, including Indigenous languages; and almost half of us were either born overseas or have at least one parent born overseas. We are one of the most culturally diverse yet socially cohesive nations on earth. Cultural diversity has been very good for Australia. It has been good for our communities, it has been good for business, and it has been good for the economy. It has been good for Australia. Indeed, the 2014 Scanlon Foundation report, Mapping social cohesion, says that 92 per cent of Australians feel a sense of belonging, 88 per cent express pride in the Australian way of life and 85 per cent believe multiculturalism has been good for Australia.

The Australia that we know today had its genesis in the Fraser years. I have been involved in the multicultural space for 35 years. Just after the Fraser years, I started my activities in the broader community—activities which I have been very, very proud to be involved in. I have seen multicultural Australia grow. So today, in paying tribute to Mr Fraser, I want to speak about his legacy in this space. I know that a lot has been said about his life, but I want to particularly look at the multicultural Australia that we enjoy today and Mr Fraser’s contribution to that. We have talked about racism. Today we have programs like Racism. It Stops With Me. It is a successful program. These are things which we started to talk about during the years of Mr Fraser’s government.

I would like to highlight that in 1977 Mr Fraser established the Special Broadcasting Service to provide multilingual radio and television services, to help new migrants integrate into Australian society. Indeed, after leaving office, Mr Fraser was a staunch public defender of the multicultural broadcaster. I remember growing up with radio 2EA and listening to its programs, and I remember how they provided very important information to my parents and to our household. I grew up in Wollongong, a very multicultural city, and SBS and radio 2EA were very important in our daily lives.

In 1977, the Fraser government created the Australian Ethnic Affairs Council as a policy-advising body. The council pushed for policies that promoted social cohesion, cultural identity and equality of opportunity. Over the course of its time in office, the Fraser government expanded services for new immigrants, including English language classes, translation services and on-arrival accommodation assistance—services which are so fundamental today, not just to our multicultural society but also in our settlement services, which have become amongst the best in the world. Today, we also have the Australian Multicultural Council, which had its antecedents in the Australian Ethnic Affairs Council. He
created multicultural resource centres and established the Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs.

We have heard much about the large-scale Asian immigration to Australia where we accepted 50,000 Vietnamese refugees fleeing from communism. On a personal note, yesterday I met Dr Peter Thang Ha, President of the New South Wales chapter of the Vietnamese community. I met him at the Assyrian festival, which the Prime Minister also attended yesterday. He said to me that next Sunday they would be having a commemoration to remember Mr Fraser. Many identify him as being the person who helped them come here to Australia. There are many people, Vietnamese Australians, who have made an absolutely fantastic contribution, a major contribution, to the rich tapestry of our multicultural society. One of those refugees who benefited from the policy was the former head of SBS, my dear friend Quang Luu, who fled to Australia by boat in 1975. Mr Luu went on to become the first Vietnamese-born barrister in Australia and led SBA's radio network from 1989 to 2006. I would like to quote Mr Fraser on Asian migration when he said:

We were also working to get people to understand that the idea and the reality of a multicultural Australia could be an enormous strength to this country, not a weakness.

There is strength in this kind of diversity so long as we understand what it's about. Today we do understand the benefits of a multicultural society. As I said, it has been good for Australia. It has been good for our communities; it has been good for business; and it has been very, very good for Australia.

For a long time after 1975, Mr Fraser was largely defined by the blocking of supply and, of course, the Dismissal of the Whitlam government and the subsequent electoral vindication. My colleagues and many others in the Senate have spoken about that, but I have to say that 1975 is very important for us to remember in our history, because it really did demonstrate the power of the Senate. Today our Senate is one of the most powerful upper houses in the world. It is a powerful upper house, and the extent of that power was demonstrated in 1975.

Regrettably, Mr Fraser's falling-out with the Liberal Party was a sad time. Other colleagues have reflected on that, and, given the time, I will not continue on that. I will conclude by offering my condolences to Mrs Tamie Fraser and all her family on the passing of Mr Malcolm Fraser.

Senator CANAVAN (Queensland) (14:47): I too would like to contribute to this condolence debate on the passing of the Rt Hon. Malcolm John Fraser. It is the first condolence debate which I have contributed to, and I made a decision to do so because I have always been fascinated by the very challenging views that Malcolm Fraser held throughout his life. Sometimes I feel it is a bit of Rorschach test for people when you ask them what they think about Malcolm Fraser. You can pretty clearly determine what side of politics they are on and what they think about a range of other issues, because he had views across such a wide range of policy areas that challenged people, were quite controversial and inspired people to want to respond to them. I think we should celebrate that. Perhaps in this corner of the chamber, though, we are a little bit different. I think Malcolm Fraser was probably associated with or endorsed by candidates from all political parties, except probably The Nationals and Country parties. He was probably a bit like Billy Hughes in that regard. He was a member of six political parties, but not the Country Party. As Billy Hughes said when someone pointed this out: a man has to draw a line somewhere.
Malcolm Fraser is a great demonstration of the diversity of what being a conservative means at times. There is no guide book, ideology, Bible or gospel for conservatism. It is a principle and a cause that responds to the events of the time and seeks to protect and cherish different aspects of our society, depending on the time. We should always remember that Malcolm and his generation grew up either fighting in the Second World War or, in Malcolm Fraser's case, living in the shadows of the Second World War. I think many of his views on individual freedom, on the protection of our country and society and on the need to defend those freedoms flow from that experience. While many on our side of politics are challenged by many of his views, I think we should always celebrate that. He brought a considered and contemplative approach to public policy issues, and he was still contributing to those issues right up to his passing last week. His passing was too soon, because clearly he was still a very vibrant contributor to our public debate, and it is a sad loss to the wider debate which we are part of that he is no longer here.

I want to spend a brief time, though, going back to the formative years of Malcolm's life and to put his wider views in the context of the experience of the Second World War and the environment of Australia at the time—right back to the beginning of Malcolm's political career. He was only 25 years old when he headed down to Hamilton, on the southern coast of Australia, to participate in a preselection for the Liberal and Country Party of Victoria, as it was then called. It was a happy coincidence that it was 22 years to the day from when he was made Prime Minister in 1975 that this preselection took place on 11 November 1953. At that preselection, Malcolm gave a speech from his heart, and I just want to quote a little bit from that. He said:

Each man from the street cleaner to the industrialist behind a rich desk has an equal right to a full and happy life. Each one has an equal right to go his own way, unhampered so long as he does not harm our precious social framework. The wish that men may continue to enjoy this right is the real reason that urges me to enter a lifelong fight against socialism, and I feel that this fight is worthwhile because of the unique and individual characteristics I find in every person.

That is something which speaks to my heart as well. I just want to note a couple of amusing anecdotes. On that night, Malcolm faced a fierce opponent, a former senator of this place. Senator Magnus Cormack was his main opponent. After giving his speech, which was clearly quite captivating, a supporter of Senator Cormack decided to ask Malcolm a very tough question about US antitrust law. He thought he would flummox the young Malcolm; but, unfortunately for him, Malcolm had just finished a stint at Oxford and had just finished writing an assignment on that very topic—so he expanded for five minutes. He was very knowledgeable on it, and he succeeded.

Later on, he started campaigning, as we all do for our seats. And I just love this story. During that campaign, he went to a small town called Dergholm. When he arrived in the town during the campaign there was meant to be a political meeting. Only one person had turned up—I think we can all appreciate how that feels. Malcolm proposed to this one person, his audience of one, that instead of having a meeting as was planned why didn't the two of them just go to the pub and have a beer. His audience of one, however, had different ideas. He said, 'I came here to hear your policy, and if your only policy is to buy a beer I'm not going to vote for you.' Fraser told him that that was absurd: 'How can I make a speech to an audience of one?', but the man insisted, and said, 'You get up there on that platform and give me a policy.' So Malcolm did. He got up on the platform and started speaking. He gave a speech of almost
10 minutes to this audience of one. Then, in the middle of a sentence, his audience got to his feet and started for the door, calling over his shoulder, 'If that's all the policy you've got, we may as well just go have a beer.' I love that story. It is a very Australian one and it is probably something that is familiar to all of us.

I will cut my remarks short, because I know there are other speakers still, but I will go back to the points I made about Malcolm's focus on defending Australia. We, and particularly my generation, take for granted the security and peace that we benefit from, but we are still a rather sparsely populated continent on the edge of a very volatile world. That was obviously very clear and present for Malcolm's generation. It was still present in the 1960s, when he came to the Australian parliament. Others have noted in this debate that he was a strong, ardent and vigorous supporter of the Vietnam War at the time. I note that he was influenced in this regard not just by the Second World War but by his study at Oxford of the historian Arnold Toynbee. Toynbee's principles of sacrifice, discipline and survival come through all of Malcolm's speeches, particularly his early ones. After he went to Vietnam and the US in 1964 he said in a debate in parliament:

In the past, civilisations have been destroyed and peoples have disappeared from the earth because they could not withstand the dangers that beset them. I cannot assume that Australia's survival is inevitable any more than was the survival of past civilisations that did not and would not accept the challenge that confronted them. Our survival requires courage, a sense of duty and direction, and some greater sacrifice from every one of us.

During that debate on the Vietnam War Malcolm also forcefully advocated that the United States should not rule out the use of nuclear weapons in Vietnam. That is something that I think has been forgotten in our debate. Indeed, as late as the 1980s Malcolm said to his biographer, Philip Ayers: 'It is not a question of advocating the use of nuclear weapons, but unless the enemy knows you are prepared to you are hamstrung.' Clearly, whether it was on the topic of nuclear weapons, apartheid, the defence of Australia or the rights of the individual, Malcolm had challenging and interesting views on all of these topics.

I will conclude on something that is more important to this chamber. One of Malcolm's key initiatives was to encourage the development of better parliamentary committees. In 1965 he was involved in producing a report entitled Parliamentary committees: a comparison between the United Kingdom and Australian practice. He argued for the committee system in Australia to be expanded. This was carried through in the 1970s under him as Prime Minister, making it one of his earliest initiatives. That is something that all of us senators should be thankful for, as we now have a committee system that is the envy of most parliaments around the world.

I extend my condolences to Mr Fraser's family and friends and thank him for being so actively involved in public life for over six decades.

Senator DI NATALE (Victoria) (14:56): 'Malcolm Fraser was the reason I joined the Labor Party and he was also the reason I joined the Greens.' They were the words of one of my staff members this morning, and they point to the very many different reflections and perspectives that we have heard here today. It is a legacy that I want to reflect on. I will not dwell too much on the different contributions that he made through his political career, but do want to mention a few.
The great multicultural nation that is modern Australia owes much to Malcolm Fraser. I stand here very much as a product of multicultural Australia. It is on the backs of families like mine and the many, many families from the many cultures around the world that the Australian nation has been built. We owe Malcolm Fraser a great debt for that.

He oversaw a huge change in Australia's cultural make up. As Prime Minister he was the steward of the wave of Asian migration, with many tens of thousands of people from South-East Asia, including 50,000 Vietnamese refugees, making Australia their home. Fraser granted entry to 2,059 Vietnamese boat people, who arrived without papers, without documents. He welcomed those people in. He established a whole range of resources: translator and English language services and so on. He set up the Human Rights Commission in 1981. He was a staunch opponent of South Africa's apartheid regime. He was a champion of Indigenous issues, setting up the Aboriginal land rights act of 1976. Unusually for a man of his vintage, he was absolutely colour blind.

He made an enormous contribution to the environment, as we heard earlier. It was the Fraser Liberal government that banned whaling. He signed a number of international conventions that protected endangered species. He made a big contribution in the Antarctic. He banned exploration and drilling for petroleum in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. He stopped sand mining on Fraser Island. Senator Abetz in his contribution, earlier, said, 'He did all that without a Green in sight.' That is absolutely true, because that was an era when standing up for the environment was a non-partisan project, when being a true conservative was to conserve, when being a conservationist was to preserve the natural order of things. It was a non-partisan project, and it was as much a conservative project, a Liberal project, as it was a Green project.

People of different ages have different memories of Malcolm Fraser. I spoke to someone on the weekend who said to me that he will never forgive Malcolm Fraser for the Dismissal. My own personal reflections of him are very hazy. I was too young to remember the Dismissal. I do not remember being particularly fond of him as Prime Minister, but I was only a young fellow. My wife, Lucy, worked with members of his family through his humanitarian work. His work at CARE is fondly remembered. His families' work and his own work in that space has been enormously welcomed. Later in life, there are people like my fellow senator Sarah Hanson-Young and the relationship they had.

The big question for me is: did he change or did the world around him change? I think the answer is both. He clearly changed his mind on some issues. He went from being a cold war warrior and being an advocate and supporter of the Vietnam War, who oversaw conscription and the so-called lottery of death, to somebody who became a trenchant critic of the US foreign policy. He argued, much like I do, for more independent, non-aligned foreign policy.

That does not explain everything. He was also right when he said that his politics had not changed but his party had. His actions in government and statements in later life were entirely consistent when it came to the issue of refugees and asylum seekers. He was a champion for Vietnamese refugees, just as he was a champion for the refugees currently being held in offshore detention. For many, many people, he articulated how they feel about that issue today. He gave them permission and he gave them validation to feel the way they feel today. It is very hard to imagine anyone today bringing in tens of thousands of immigrants—or
refugees, specifically—from overseas in the face of fierce political and committee opposition. But he did that. He showed leadership on that front and he is to be congratulated for that.

I do want to thank him for both of those things. He showed that in a profession like politics, where having a closed mind is considered a virtue, it is okay to change your mind and that independence of thought is too important to sacrifice to the altar of party loyalty. You hear terms like backflips, cave-ins and flip-flopping. He made it clear that his first priority was to ensure that he looked to his own conscience before he looked to his party. That is a lesson that I think we can all learn from today. Most importantly, what I want to thank Malcolm Fraser for is for reminding us that some values are universal values, which transcend cultures and transcend political fashions. They are, indeed, universal. Care for human rights, protection for the vulnerable and looking for the environment will never be out of fashion, as they are universal values.

Many of us today are going to talk about Malcolm Fraser's life, myself included, and will reinforce our own political opinions and judgements by looking to those things that he did and by looking to those things that we support. We will use that as an opportunity to pay tribute to this man. But ultimately, they do not mean much. The public speeches, the commentary and the opinion pieces are not going to be the ultimate arbiter of Malcolm Fraser's life. Time is the only judge of that. I am very confident that time will be kind to Malcolm Fraser. Vale, Malcolm Fraser.

The PRESIDENT (15:03): Just in closing the debate, I will reflect on two matters. The first one is the first time that I met Malcolm Fraser. I was a police officer as part of his security contingent. After having a few things thrown at him during the day, at the end of night at the hotel he wanted to speak with us. I was very impressed. Those things stay with you. I had never met a Prime Minister before. That was the first one I had ever met. I was impressed by his demeanour and the way he handled himself through the day. He was very easy to work with from a police perspective. Also, the final time I saw Malcolm Fraser, after having encountered him throughout his life, was on 28 November last year when he was back in Tasmania at Launceston airport. I had a brief encounter with him then. They are my two reflections that I wish to share with the chamber.

On behalf of the Senate, I extend our deepest sympathy to Mrs Tamie Fraser; their children, spouses and grandchildren; and all of his close personal friends. Senators, I ask you to join with me in rising in our places to consent to the motion.

Question agreed to, honourable senators standing in their places.

Senator ABETZ (Tasmania—Leader of the Government in the Senate, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public Service and Minister for Employment) (15:05): I move:

That, as a mark of respect to the memory of the late the Right Honourable John Malcolm Fraser, AC, CH, the Senate do now adjourn.

Question agreed to.

Senate adjourned at 15:05
NOTICES

Presentation

Senator Smith to move:

That the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit be authorised to hold private meetings otherwise than in accordance with standing order 33(1), during the sittings of the Senate, as follows:

(a) Thursday, 14 May 2015, from 10.30 am;
(b) Thursday, 18 June 2015, from 10.30 am, followed by a public meeting; and
(c) Thursday, 25 June 2015, from 10.30 am, followed by a public meeting.

Senator Fawcett to move:

That the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties be authorised to hold private meetings otherwise than in accordance with standing order 33(1) followed by public meetings, during the sittings of the Senate, as follows:

(a) Monday, 15 June 2015; and
(b) Monday, 22 June 2015.

Senators Smith, Singh and Di Natale to move:

That the Senate—

(a) notes that:

(i) 24 March 2015 is World Tuberculosis Day,
(ii) World Tuberculosis Day is an annual event that marks the anniversary of German Nobel Laureate, Dr Robert Koch’s 1882 discovery of the bacterium that causes tuberculosis (TB),
(iii) TB is contagious and airborne,
(iv) TB ranks as the world’s second leading cause of death from a single infectious agent—people ill with TB disease can infect up to 10 to 15 people every year,
(v) the theme for World Tuberculosis Day in 2015 is ‘Reach, Treat, Cure Everyone’,
(vi) in 2013, 1.5 million people died from TB worldwide with 40 per cent of deaths occurring in countries in the Indo-Pacific region,
(vii) TB is a disease linked to poverty and failing health systems, and an important health security threat in our region,
(viii) Papua New Guinea (PNG) has the highest rate of TB infection in the Pacific, with an estimated 39,000 total cases and 25,000 infections each year,
(ix) cases of multi-drug resistant TB continue to increase worldwide, rising from 450,000 cases in 2012 to 480,000 cases in 2013, and in Port Moresby, the capital of PNG, almost 5 per cent of new TB diagnosis and 25 per cent of relapse cases are multi-drug resistant,
(x) TB is the leading cause of death among HIV positive people, given that HIV weakens the immune system and in combination with TB is lethal, each contributing to the other’s progress, and
(xi) TB is considered to be a preventable and treatable disease, however current treatment tools, drugs, diagnostics and vaccines are outdated and ineffective; and
(b) recognises:

(i) Australia’s resolve to continue to work towards combatting the challenge of TB in the region by working with partner countries to build strong and sustainable health systems, and by supporting the discovery, development and rapid uptake of new tools, interventions and strategies as recognized in the World Health Organization (WHO) End TB Strategy,
(ii) that the WHO End TB Strategy was endorsed by all member states at the 2014 World Health Assembly and aims to end the TB epidemic by 2035,

(iii) that the Australian Government funding of health and medical research is helping to bring new medicines, diagnostic tests and vaccines to market for TB and other neglected diseases,

(iv) that the development of new, simple and affordable treatment tools for TB and multi-drug resistant TB is essential if the End TB Strategy goal to diagnose and treat all multi-drug resistant TB patients is to be met, and

(v) the importance of building robust and sustainable health systems which ensure that new treatments and medical technologies reach patients, particularly those in greatest need.

Senator Rhiannon to move:
That the Senate—
(a) notes that the Abbott Government has allocated $14.6 million in public funding to advertise its failed higher education changes; and
(b) calls on the Abbott Government to:
(i) direct the Federal Liberal Party to return the $14.6 million of public money allocated to its higher education advertising campaign, and
(ii) shut down its publicly-funded highered.gov.au site, which was designed to advertise the failed changes.

Senators Rice and Wright to move:
That the following bill be introduced: A Bill for an Act to amend the Automotive Transformation Scheme Act 2009, and for related purposes. Automotive Transformation Scheme Amendment (Sustainable Jobs in the Auto Component Industry) Bill 2015.

Senator Siewert to move:
That the Senate—
(a) notes that the Healthy Welfare Card is a paternalistic approach to social security, and that income management has not resulted in any significant improvements for the communities that it has been trialled in;
(b) condemns the Government for spending money on another unproven program, while cutting millions of dollars from much needed social services; and
(c) calls on the Government to abandon the healthy welfare card proposal, and instead to work directly with affected communities to develop cooperative programs that address local need.

Senator Wright to move:
That the Senate—
(a) notes the commitment made by the current Minister for Education and Training (Mr Pyne) in the 2013 federal election to introduce a needs-based disability loading under the Gonski school funding reforms by 2015;
(b) recognises that more than 100 000 students with a disability do not receive any funded support at school; and
(c) calls on the Government to keep its election promise to properly resource disability education, and include necessary funding for a needs-based disability loading in the upcoming federal budget.

Senator Wong to move:
(1) That the following matter be referred to the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee for inquiry and report:
The proposed China-Australia Free Trade Agreement, with particular reference to the impact of the agreement on Australia’s:

(a) economy and trade;
(b) domestic labour market testing obligations and laws regarding wages, conditions and entitlements of Australian workers and temporary work visa holders;
(c) investment; and
(d) social, cultural and environmental policies.

(2) That, in conducting the inquiry, the committee shall review the agreement to ensure it is in Australia’s national interest, and have regard to the report of the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties on the proposed agreement.

(3) That the committee report within one month of the tabling of the report of the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties on the proposed agreement.

DOCUMENTS

Order for the Production of Documents

Tabling

The following document received on 20 March 2015 was tabled:


Indexed Lists of Files

Tabling

The following document received on 20 March 2015 was tabled pursuant to standing order 61(1) (b):

Indexed lists of departmental and agency files for the period 1 July to 31 December 2014—Statement of compliance, pursuant to the order of the Senate of 30 May 1996, as amended—Australian Taxation Office.

COMMITTEES

Report

The following report and documents were presented and authorised for publication on 20 March 2015 pursuant to standing order 38(7)(a):