



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

CONDOLENCES

Randall, Mr Donald James

SPEECH

Monday, 10 August 2015

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Questioner
Speaker O'Dwyer, Kelly, MP

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Ms O'DWYER (Higgins—Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer) (14:53): It is with deep sadness that we acknowledge in this place the passing of a unique Australian and an incredibly hardworking colleague. Don Randall was most certainly one of a kind. For the last 14 years Don Randall was a very dedicated representative of the people of Canning. Don's parliamentary career was simply the latest incarnation of a life steeped in service—a life steeped in service to and for the benefit of others. Of particular note, separate to his work as a local Perth counsellor in the Belmont City Council and as the federal member for Swan, Don was a special-needs teacher for almost 20 years. In my view, those who teach deserve special recognition for the precious role they play in the formation of young lives. While the rewards are priceless, the demands are also constant—requiring patience, judgement and incredible energy. Those who work with children with special needs need these skills and more.

We are incredibly fortunate in the Liberal Party to have people who come to parliament from all walks of life. Don's belief in people, family and community ultimately led him to serve in the federal parliament on behalf of his community. Don understood the importance of hard work and was a very strong local advocate, both for Canning and Western Australia. In his maiden speech, Don spoke of three key areas where he was keen to see greater individual responsibility, reward for hard work and dedication. These were: family, jobs and security. He worked in Canberra and his electorate towards achieving these things. Don also believe that he could always do more—more for his community, more for his colleagues and more for his family. This extended to his belief that has Australians we must always strive to be our best and never give up. Don spoke about the need for everyone in the community to work hard and to learn from one another. He particularly understood the importance of helping the most vulnerable in our society.

Don worked tirelessly to deliver for the people of his electorate. Over the years he was instrumental in getting the Perth Bunbury Highway moving and securing investment for sporting and community facilities in his community. This work with families with autism and Clontarf Foundation, helping young Indigenous Australians, was something he was particularly proud of. As chair of the Sri Lankan-Australian Parliamentary Friendship Group, Don fostered to a great relationship with members of the Sri Lankan community. He spoke often of the need to help the Sri Lankan people achieve peace in the region.

From a personal perspective, while I did not agree with Don on all issues, I certainly respected his ability to stand up for his beliefs and to be true to himself. There are, in my view, too few people in this place who are prepared to be counted, especially knowing it will not always make them popular or help their career. Don was a man of great courage and a man of great conviction. I think everyone in this place respected him for that.

The passing of Don came as a great shock to everyone in this place. The passing is a terrible loss not only for those in the federal parliament but more importantly for his constituents and especially for those who loved him most. When all is said and done, it is our personal relationships that are our most treasured legacies. To Don's family—Julie, Tess and Elliott—I send my deepest sympathies and hope that you find some comfort in the knowledge that the thoughts of those in this place are with you during this terrible and difficult time. Don, you have left us far too soon.