

HON GEORGE MAXWELL (MAX) EVANS, MBE

Statement by President

THE PRESIDENT (Hon Kate Doust) [1.02 pm]: Today, we will be dealing with a condolence motion for Hon George Maxwell (Max) Evans, MBE. Before I give the call to the Leader of the House, I would like to acknowledge the family of Hon Max Evans who are sitting in the President's gallery today, in particular his wife, Barbara.

Condolence Motion

HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the House) [1.02 pm] — without notice: I move —

That this house expresses its deep regret at the death of Hon George Maxwell (Max) Evans, MBE, a former member of the Legislative Council for the Metropolitan Province and the North Metropolitan Region, and places on record its appreciation for his long public service and tenders its profound sympathy to his wife and members of his family in their bereavement.

I want to start by acknowledging the family, friends and colleagues of the former member, particularly the family members who are in the chamber today.

I was elected to Parliament in 2001. That was the year that Hon Max Evans finished his 15-year career as a member of Parliament. Although I did not have the privilege of serving with him, I have tapped the memory of Hon Ken Travers who did serve with him. I have some insight into Hon Max Evans from Hon Ken Travers. I am certainly aware of Hon Max Evans' reputation for being a genuine, honest person who was committed, respected and someone whose word you could trust, which is not always the case in our line of business.

Hon Max Evans was born on 29 November 1930 here in Perth and passed away on 30 April 2019 aged 88. Son to Victor and Joyce, he attended Thomas Street State School in Subiaco, and then Scotch College between 1943 and 1948, where he was a prefect in his final year. He married his wife, Barbara, on 20 December 1958 and together they had four children—Felicity, Peter, James and Richard.

Before entering Parliament, Hon Max Evans was an accountant for 28 years. He worked at Hendry, Rae and Court, where he later became a senior partner, and was acknowledged as an award winner for his service to the accounting profession. His accounting background set him up with a particularly unique financial skill set that he brought to cabinet and to the achievements that he accomplished as a minister in Richard Court's government.

As Minister for Finance, Hon Max Evans is widely acknowledged as introducing the accrual accounting system, the superiority of which was described in an article in *The West Australian* earlier this year as —

... now widely recognised, with the previously used cash system tending to understate the State's unfunded liabilities and making it difficult to plan big projects.

As Minister for Racing and Gaming, he helped shape the community-oriented structure of Lotterywest—then the Lotteries Commission—and opposed the introduction of pokies in WA.

Our former colleague Hon Ken Travers described him as a classic finance minister—great on numbers and detail, and conservative in his approach to spending. He also described him as not being a natural politician because he was frank in his views, and if he disagreed with something that his government was doing, he would say so. If Max said he would try hard to change something or to advocate on his constituents' behalf, he would do exactly that. Even if he returned to those constituents saying that he had not been able to shift the position of the government or that the relevant minister had not budged, they could trust that he had done everything possible to move their position.

I am told that Hon Max Evans had one indulgence as Minister for Finance—a love of travel to expand his knowledge. His frankness came out whenever challenged about his travel. He never apologised but explained what he had learnt, and how his staff hated to travel with him because of his punishing workload. He would point out that he had regularly travelled for work when in the private sector and he was not going to change that now. His frankness and work ethic earned him respect.

As a member for the Metropolitan Province, and later the North Metropolitan Region, I am told that when Hon Max Evans was delivering a speech in Parliament on something he was particularly passionate about, he had a tendency to become quite animated and would talk quite fast, and challenged Hansard! In the opening lines of his valedictory speech, he even mentioned that he requested another member to kick him should he start speaking too quickly!

Hon Max Evans' influence extended well beyond Parliament. He was clearly a member of various organisations, holding several leadership positions throughout his life, and he had a successful sporting career. He held professional positions in the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Australia. He was the president of the then Perth Chamber

President; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Peter Collier; Hon Jacqui Boydell; Hon Alison Xamon; Hon Simon O'Brien;
Hon Alannah MacTiernan

of Commerce in the mid-1980s, president of the WA Chamber of Commerce and Industry, honorary treasurer for the Australian Chamber of Commerce, secretary of the WA branch of the United World Colleges (Australia) Trust, chair of the Western Australian Committee United World Colleges, and a life member of the Australian Pensioners' League, now Retirees WA.

A lifelong passion for scouting saw him become Scoutmaster at Scotch College between 1949 and 1964. In the mid-1960s, he was District Commissioner for Scouts, Commissioner for Boy Scouts and Deputy Chief Commissioner for Western Australia. He was Chief Commissioner between 1967 and 1976, and had been an Honourable Commissioner since 1976. His significant involvement with the scouting community was recognised in 1972 when he was appointed as a Member of the Order of the British Empire for services to the community and then again, in 2008, when he was awarded the National President's Award for eminent achievement and meritorious service to the scouting movement.

As a member of the state athletic team, Max was the state's 220-yards champion in 1951, and again in 1955. He won one gold, two silver and three bronze medals in Western Australian relay teams. He played A-grade hockey and was involved in organising an international hockey tournament in Perth in 1979. It is clear his sporting genes were passed on to his family, including to his son Peter.

I will finish with some further reflections that have been passed on to me from Hon Ken Travers. I am told that Hon Max Evans was a person of contradiction. For example, he drove a big blue Rolls-Royce and often parked it right in front of Parliament so you always knew when he was in the house. But it was not that he was pretentious or showing off; it is just that he loved that car. I am told that he was quite an understated person as well. Hon Ken Travers reflected that you would often find out only by accident that he had made sizeable donations to various causes and to the arts. On one occasion, Hon Ken Travers was discussing with Hon Max Evans a large statue in the forecourt of Perth railway station. Hon Max Evans pointed out very casually that he owned it and had donated it, so that it could be shared. He was generous, but he did not want his generosity publicised.

Hon Max Evans came into the world of politics with a clear passion and purpose in the area of finance, and he pursued that throughout his career. He was a very effective member of the Parliament, a successful minister, an active member of the community and a committed, honest and respected person. I understand that he would often use the phrase, "You should leave the camp site in a better place than you found it." By all accounts, he left this Parliament in a better place than when he arrived. On behalf of the government and the Parliamentary Labor Party, I express my sincere condolences to the Evans family for their loss.

HON PETER COLLIER (North Metropolitan — Leader of the Opposition) [1.10 pm]: I stand on behalf of the Liberal Party to support the motion. George Maxwell Evans was born on 29 November 1930 and grew up in West Perth, the son of a business manager. He attended West Perth state school in Thomas Street and joined the Subiaco Scouts aged 10. At Scotch College from 1943 until 1948, he served as a prefect, represented his school in athletics, hockey and tennis, and qualified as a King's Scout in 1945. In 1947, he was invited by the headmaster to establish the school's own scouting group. His interest in politics was foreshadowed by his establishment of a debating society and his membership of the Legion of Liberty, soon renamed as the Young Liberals.

Max immediately began his professional career as an accountant, joining Hendry, Rae and Court in 1949, qualifying as a chartered accountant in 1954, becoming a partner in 1958, and remaining a senior partner until 1991. His standing in the profession and the business world resulted in service as a member of the National Forward Planning Committee of the Institute of Chartered Accountants from 1981 to 1983, president of the Perth Chamber of Commerce from 1983 to 1984, treasurer of the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry from 1983 to 1985, and president of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia from 1984 until 1985. In 2001, he received a meritorious service award for outstanding service to the accounting profession.

From 1951 to 1955, Max was a member of the state athletics team. A 220-yards champion, he won silver and bronze medals, culminating with the relay gold medal in the 1955 Australian athletics championships, defeating a world record-holder. From 1949 until 1962, he played A-grade hockey. He was later to take pride in the gold medals his son Peter won in swimming at the 1980 Olympics and the 1982 Commonwealth Games.

His enthusiasm for scouting led to service as Scoutmaster of Scotch College from 1949 to 1964, award of the Gilwell badge in 1951, and successive appointments, from 1964 to 1976, as district commissioner, Commissioner for Boy Scouts, deputy chief commissioner, and Chief Commissioner for Western Australia at the age of 36. He led Western Australian contingents to scouting jamborees in 1967 and 1970. His exceptional contribution to scouting was recognised by the award of Member of the Order of the British Empire in 1972 at the comparably early age of 41, together with a National President's Award for scouting in 2008.

In other aspects of community service, Max was secretary of the Western Australian branch of the United World Colleges Trust from 1971 to 1984, and its chairman from 1984. In 1991, he was awarded honorary life membership

of the Australian Pensioners' League. His commitment to Scotch College continued throughout his life. He served on the committee that enabled the building of the P.C. Anderson Memorial Chapel, and in 1982 was made a college council life governor.

A lifelong Liberal who had campaigned in Sir Charles Court's first election in 1953, Max had not been a recent office-bearer in the Liberal Party organisation when, in 1985, he sought preselection for the Metropolitan Province of the Legislative Council, to be vacated by the late Hon Ian Medcalf. His professional and community service and standing was a factor in defeating seven other candidates, some with extensive political experience. The 1986 election was, for once, no walkover in what had been a safe Liberal seat comprising the Legislative Assembly districts of Cottesloe, Floreat, Nedlands, Subiaco and Perth. The Australian Labor Party stood aside to facilitate a potentially formidable challenge from a former Australian Democrats senator, the late Jack Evans. Max Evans not only campaigned energetically as the Liberal candidate for the then safe Labor seat of Perth, but also enlisted his son Peter for an essential supporting effort. Max was elected with an absolute majority of 3 882 votes—52 per cent against 42.2 per cent for Jack Evans and 5.4 per cent for an independent Labor candidate. His six-year term was cut short by the 1987 restructure of the Legislative Council, when the Metropolitan Province was absorbed into the present North Metropolitan Region. In 1988, he secured the second position on the Liberal Party ticket for this region led by Hon George Cash, and was re-elected at the 1989, 1993 and 1996 elections, either in third or second position. Only six months after his election in December 1986, he was appointed shadow Minister for Budget Management, which was a natural fit given his accounting experience. He was to continue in this role in opposition until 1993, also serving as shadow Minister for Sport and Recreation from 1988 to 1992.

Max played a decisive role in uncovering and analysing the complex web of government business dealings known to history as WA Inc. Thanks to his expertise as shadow Minister for Finance, he was an essential member of the opposition management team from May 1992. With the election of the Court coalition government in 1993, Max served nearly seven years as both Minister for Finance and Minister for Racing and Gaming. Max deserves to be long remembered for the fiscal discipline he imposed as Minister for Finance, notably through the adoption of accrual accounting, a system that no longer risked understating the government's liabilities. He may not have been a fluent speaker in the Parliament, but in cabinet he could be relied upon to produce a spreadsheet and give a thorough critique of any ministerial or public service spending proposal. Max Evans contributed greatly to Western Australia gaining the maximum credit rating in the 1990s.

Max did not drink or gamble, but he was a particularly effective Minister for Racing and Gaming who prevented the introduction and proliferation of poker machines in an era when far less attention was paid to the social impact of problem gambling. He was sceptical of the supposed benefit to government revenue on the grounds that the more money a government has, the more it will spend, and it probably will not spend it wisely. At the same time, he understood the challenges faced by the hospitality industry, and ensured that the racing industry was properly funded. He refused the approaches of Tattersalls to take over the running of Lotterywest, as he had an accountant's scepticism of its business model and a concern that it would result in lottery income being absorbed into consolidated revenue. As Hon Kim Beazley emphasised at Max's funeral on Monday, we have him to thank for the continued community grants that are provided through Lotterywest and envied by other states that have shown less foresight.

In December 1999, Max stood down from cabinet in a pre-election ministerial reshuffle, and retired at the 2001 election. He was not replaced as Minister for Finance, with responsibilities given to other ministers. He was a very hard act to follow. He left a reputation for unshakeable ministerial honesty and competence, warmly attested in St George's Cathedral on Monday by both our state Governor and his former cabinet colleague, Hon Colin Barnett. Max's concern for both his state and its fiscal integrity continued into his retirement. In 2005, he co-authored the publication entitled "The Great Scam: 100 Years of Federation and What it Has Cost Western Australia: A Review".

Max was a pioneer home-movie maker who captured for posterity a major slice of local history. He was a motoring enthusiast who drove his 1975 Silver Shadow Rolls-Royce to Parliament House and later generously donated a Model T Ford and 1948 Mark VI Bentley to the Motor Museum of Western Australia. He lived life to the full and well.

Personally, I knew Max for almost 30 years, primarily through the Curtin division of the Liberal Party. I always enjoyed his company and that of his wonderful wife, Barbara. In addition, he always offered me valuable advice, as both an aspiring and a full member of the Legislative Council. For that I will always be extremely grateful. I respect Max for all that he was, and I will always regard him and Barb as valued friends. Max and Barbara Evans enjoyed 60 years of a most happy and supportive marriage. We extend our sympathy to Barbara, to their daughter, Felicity, their sons, Peter, James and Richard, and to their granddaughters, Amanda and Emma.

HON JACQUI BOYDELL (Mining and Pastoral — Deputy Leader of the Nationals WA) [1.18 pm]: I rise on behalf of the Nationals WA to add our condolences to this motion today. I am so very pleased that Max Evans' family,

and particularly his wife, Barbara, could join us as the house remembers his service to this Legislative Council and also to the community at large. As we have seen already, it was quite extensive. When Hon Max Evans read his maiden speech into this place in 1986, I had just left school so I was one of the aspiring young people who Max spoke about. He wanted to see an education system that supported young people through their sporting achievements and their educational aspirations. Looking back on that time and from reading his speech, it is really important to me that when I would have been 18 years old, not even thinking about Parliament or politics, a member of this place was thinking about my future as a young person and was trying to create a better environment than the one in which they started themselves. I am forever grateful to people who deliver community service in that way.

His maiden speech referred to some of the priorities he set out for himself, particularly given his experience in accounting, budgeting and some of the other things he suggested government do differently, which he achieved. Sometimes, as members of this house, that does not always happen over the term of our parliamentary career. We do not get to receive a ministerial portfolio or have the opportunity in government to set a formula for what we believe is a better place. However, he certainly did that and I congratulate him for that, and his family for supporting him through that. Without their support, as all members in this house know, we as individual members alone cannot achieve those things, because it is a big job.

I think when the budget was handed down last week, it was a very good time to remember the life of Hon Max Evans. When reading his maiden speech, one of the things that jumped out at me and that I had a bit of a laugh about had me thinking, "That's exactly right. That is how government should approach what they do." I will quote from his maiden speech and some of the budgetary points he made at that time. He said —

In my time in business I found that people in authority enjoy spending other people's money.

That captured my attention immediately! To continue —

They often have little to spend themselves and find that it is a nice feeling to be in a position to put their names to newly-erected buildings. However, they must have respect for other people's money when they work out the expenditure estimates and reduce them until the revenue matches them.

That is a hard thing to do. As the Minister for Finance, he certainly did that later in his career. It is a timely reminder to members how we in government, and as members of this house, a house of review, look at our estimates hearings, budget speeches and contributions to how government should go about expenditure and being responsible about it. That really captured my attention.

His commitment to small business was something that I could relate to and he was concerned about the continued support of small business in Australia and the challenges that sector faced. Some of those challenges still face small business today due to land tax, payroll tax, workers' compensation and stamp duty. They were all areas of interest to him and to which he felt he could make a change and create an environment that was more profitable and that enabled small businesses in particular to operate in a freer environment.

From reading some of his comments about people in the sporting environment, I think he was also a man who felt they should be able to access something like a gifted and talented program and have their sporting achievements recognised through to a possible career. In 1986 and prior to that, it was difficult to be a full-time professional sportsman. I think some of his comments and ideas around how in an education system we go about supporting people in a sporting career were really useful and we see that being played out now. That is an adopted process of our education system, particularly through the Australian Institute of Sport, and educational colleges, in which people are dedicated to particular sports and professional sportspeople are developed through that process. That was an idea he brought to this house and was fully supported. I think we all understand the importance of sport in children's lives, as it creates balance in this ever-increasing pressure cooker of social media and 24/7 scrutiny. It is important for young people to have balance, and sport brings that to them.

In his achievements through the scouting organisations, he recognised that children and people need to bring balance to their lives. Those things are exceptionally important and will remain so. I do not know what the next 20 years will hold in terms of social media and internet scrutiny for our young people. However, they need a way to balance that in their lives. He supported that and supported young people being able to fulfil their aspirations.

As a member of this house, I congratulate him and his family on his achievements. They were many and varied as recognised by this house. He was, clearly, a long-term, passionate and active community member well into his retirement and that, again, shows what sort of community spirit he had.

I will conclude my remarks and, on behalf of the National Party, pass on my condolences to his family. We thank him for his service to the people of Western Australia and I thank him for his commitment to people like me, who, when I was 18 he considered to be important.

HON ALISON XAMON (North Metropolitan) [1.26 pm]: I rise on behalf of the Greens and as the member for the North Metropolitan Region to support this motion and to acknowledge the passing of Hon Max Evans. On

behalf of the Greens, we wish to express our condolences to the family and friends of Max Evans. I was not lucky enough to know Mr Evans personally but I, along with all Western Australians, have received the benefit of his hard work as a minister in this place.

Max Evans accomplished a number of things across his 12 years in this house, most notably in his role as Minister for Finance and Minister Assisting the Treasurer. His background, as has already been extensively spoken about, was as an accountant. He did not come into this Parliament until long after he was well established and already very well respected within his field. In fact, he took his seat for the first time at the age of 56. However, he brought those years of experience and that very deep knowledge of understanding financial management and operations to the Parliament, and I think we are all the beneficiaries of his work and expertise.

His projects have allowed us to have a very clear picture of government landholdings, for instance. I note that in his valedictory speech, the government discovered that it owned three times as much land as was originally estimated. As has been said, he also introduced net appropriations and accrual accounting, which enables agencies to carry forward funds from one year to the next. He pushed Treasury to have the budget prepared in advance of the start of the financial year and the budget passed by 30 June. This, of course, ensures that agencies have the full financial year to undertake their new capital expenditure plans. These reforms have also made a huge difference to the certainty of budgeting for agencies and the accountability of their spending against their budgets. These are important reforms for both the government as well as the Parliament.

As has already been said, I also note that Mr Evans had a long and distinguished involvement in the scouting movement and was an elite athlete for a number of years in a number of sports prior to entering Parliament. He led a life of excellence in many fields and obviously had a deep commitment to community service. I think the world, particularly Western Australia, is a better place, thanks to his commitment and service. I once again offer our condolences to his loved ones, in particular his wife, Barbara, his children and his grandchildren.

HON SIMON O'BRIEN (South Metropolitan) [1.29 pm]: I am moved to make the following observations on this bittersweet occasion. I remind the house that the purpose of a condolence motion is, in the first instance, to offer our comfort and sympathies to the family of our late colleague, and to pay respect to his legacy and to put that on the record. As a house it is also, whether we served with him or not, to learn from his example and thereby enhance his legacy and, through all those mechanisms, provide a meaningful level of support to all who are saddened by his passing.

I want firstly to acknowledge the presence in your gallery, Madam President, of Barbara Evans. I have already spoken to Barbara outside and passed on thanks from my wife, Joy, who remembers her very kindly as a senior minister's wife who took the wives of new members under her wing and helped them out at functions, making sure that they were all right and knew what to do, and felt comfortable. More than one member's spouse would be grateful for that service, amongst many, that Barbara Evans provided over the years. I would also like to acknowledge Richard, who is here with his wife, Kim; Felicity; and grandchildren, Emma and Amanda. All the comments I am about to offer are provided to, I hope, give some level of comfort to all of you.

The other day—it seems like only the other day; it must have been a few months ago, now, but recently—Laurissa at my office came in and said, "There's a Mr Max Evans to see you." But what her body language betrayed was, "Simon, there's this mercurial personality who's about seven foot long with a shock of white hair and a beaming smile, who has just pulled up in a Rolls-Royce, complete with the silver lady on the front, and I think you really need to see him, because he obviously knows you!" So I went out and made proper introductions to Laurissa and Max, and then Max and I sat down and had a good old catch-up. He was wont to do that from time to time. I asked him what brought him down to the wild country of Applecross on that occasion, and he said, characteristically, "I thought the Roller needed to go out for a run, so I thought I'd come down and say hello!"—as one does! We had a great catch-up.

We have heard that Max was the last Minister for Finance in the Court government; in fact, there was not a Minister for Finance after his pre-election resignation. I was the next Liberal Minister for Finance, and Max came around to see me after that. The term "big shoes" just does not do it justice, but he would give me advice—some of which I comprehended, and all of which I appreciated—even though my role and his were slightly different in terms of responsibility. But gee, it was great to see him, and I really appreciated it. I look back on that conversation—what was to be our final conversation—with such great fondness, so thanks for that, Max.

My first term in Parliament coincided with Max's final term, and it was a steep learning curve for me. To watch a master such as he was a great experience. I would commend the records of the house to all members here; they will learn things simply by reading his contributions in *Hansard*; I promise members that they will learn things. One such thing would be what the Leader of the Opposition has just reminded us of—the adage that when governments have more money, they sometimes feel encouraged to spend more money on things that they should not spend money on.

President; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Peter Collier; Hon Jacqui Boydell; Hon Alison Xamon; Hon Simon O'Brien;
Hon Alannah MacTiernan

On the second day I was in this place, I found myself on the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations and Muriel Patterson, who many members will know, was the other Liberal on that committee. It was always interesting when Max was the minister being examined by the estimates committee. I recall one occasion when he said, "Look, Simon, would you mind asking us this question? We've got to get it out there before the press deadline tonight." There was obviously some misinformation going about the town that probably would have affected a whole lot of important things, so he just needed a vehicle to get something on the record. I dutifully asked the question and he read out a prepared response and said, "Thanks very much." I thought, "Wow! Between me, the new young upstart in here, and the Minister for Finance, we've really achieved something today!"

Then, on another occasion—having learnt from this, and thinking that that was how it worked—he came in, this time I think as a minister representing another minister. He gave Muriel and I a piece of paper, and on the piece of paper was a list of questions with some dot points under each one. We thought, "He obviously wants to be asked these questions, even though he's only a representative minister", so we made sure we asked these questions—every single one of them. Max did not seem too worried; he would just gesture at the director general he was with and say, "Oh, he can answer that." This poor bloke was sweating more and more and then, of course, we found out afterwards that in fact these were questions that they did not want asked! In the nightmare scenario that someone came up with one of these topics, there were some suggested answers. Max thought that was a tremendous joke, although the director general did not. In retrospect, I think it was quite funny, too!

But there is no doubt about it: this rascal was great at his job and, indeed, at just about every endeavour throughout his life. As Minister for Finance; Racing and Gaming, it is true that he did some travel for official purposes, but then again, he would have done that in a private capacity anyway. He took his job seriously and he would go to the races at Belmont Park, at York, at Longchamp—possibly more than once, I think. I do not know if he ever got to Louisville, Kentucky, but anyway, we will find out about that on another occasion. He would say to us in discussions and in helping us to learn where we sat in this place, "Being a Minister for Racing and Gaming has nothing to do with horses and nothing to do with liquor and cards; it's about money. That's the truth of the matter." The penny drops when one gets that sort of advice from Max Evans; that is why he was the Minister for Racing and Gaming—because it was about money, and he was the best man at the time to look after the interests of the state in that particular capacity.

Heck, he used to walk the walk as well. We have all seen ministers go from the dining room corridor to the ministers' offices up the end here. There was a time when just outside, in the courtyard, there was a smokers' corner inhabited by rascals like Hon Bruce Donaldson, Hon Greg Smith, Hon Kim Chance, Hon Ljiljana Ravlich and me. We would be out there, having a puff, and Max would walk past. At this time a charge was being levied by the state government on the consumption of tobacco; there was also one on petrol at the time. It did not last long, but for a while it brought some shekels in. Max would walk past; he was abstemious and a former Scoutmaster, but he did not admonish us. He would say, "Good on ya, you keep smoking there. We need the revenue!" This happened on a number of occasions, and we would say, "Righto, Max. We're on the job", and reach for another. Then, of course, the terrible day came when the inevitable High Court challenge was upheld, because there is no constitutional right for the state to charge an excise, so that particular avenue of revenue was cut off. Max did not even break step over those sorts of things. He took them all in his stride and the next time he strode past us out there he said, "Righto, you can stop smoking now—there's no money in it for us." We kept smoking anyway.

I want to share quickly a couple of anecdotes that members might find instructive about the character of this great man. It has already been mentioned that he spoke very quickly and sometimes tended to mumble; that was mentioned at his funeral the other day. I do not know whether that is completely fair. The fact is that he had such a quick mind that his mind was always several sentences ahead of where his mouth was. He was like a virtuoso delivering a medley of his greatest hits every time he answered a question. He would start with the first half of a sentence, move straight into the middle part of the next sentence and then into the last bit of the third sentence. Those of us in the Liberal party room obviously knew Evans-ese and so we were comfortable with it. But on one delicious occasion, 18 June 1997, Dr Chrissy Sharp, who many members know, had been in this place for a little while and asked a question of him. I think it must have been in a representative capacity. I recall her saying something like, "I'm not trying to be rude, but could you please speak a bit slower because I can't understand anything you are saying." Hansard was a little more circumspect and recorded it as follows. After a very long question in a couple of parts, Hon Chrissy Sharp concluded with —

I humbly request the Minister for Finance to answer clearly because I always have great difficulty hearing his answers in this House.

Good ol' Hansard, hey! Hon Max Evans replied. I remember this: I thought he might have even been slightly irked for the one time in his life. He said —

Extract from *Hansard*
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President; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Peter Collier; Hon Jacqui Boydell; Hon Alison Xamon; Hon Simon O'Brien;
Hon Alannah MacTiernan

It is for that reason only that we give members a printed copy of the answer; I hope the member can read the answer. In this case, it will not matter, because the question requires detailed research, and I therefore request that the question be placed on notice.

Max, 1: Chrissy, 0.

Another extract I urge members to read in addition to his maiden speech is from his final speech given on Thursday, 23 November 2000, which was something of a valedictory speech. This is an example of the contribution he was capable of making, within this house, within cabinet and within other forums to which he had access. I know that those of us who have been here for a while will appreciate the strength that this sort of character can bring to a government and others, and perhaps newer members might benefit from the example. Max was talking, in the middle of a lot of things, about things he had done. Then he went outside his own portfolio. Members may recall that in the late 1990s there was a real issue that resolved itself through an ambitious program of infill sewerage works. There were real problems with septic tanks all over the metropolitan area. That was not his portfolio area, but here is what he could bring to the cabinet table. I quote from *Hansard* on that day —

A minister is supposed to go the races and anyone can do that. However, one of the best initiatives was to stop the \$50 levy to be placed on every resident in Western Australia for the infill sewerage program, and Hon Peter Foss will remember that—he was the minister. A great story was put for putting a \$50 levy on every household in Western Australia—good, bad and indifferent. The Premier and others thought it was a great idea. Environmentalists said that it was a good idea and that it would cut out the septic tank problems. However, they did not ask the people who could not afford \$50 ...

Luckily for me, I could read a balance sheet. That was referred to earlier, and I thank members for their comments. I knew the Water Corporation balance sheet very well because it had received a gold medal award in the preceding couple of years. The balance sheet covered everything; it was great. It indicated how much money it had. It was a very liquid organisation; —

Pun intended, I should think —

it had money coming out of its ears. The developers put in \$100m. It had a double rate of depreciation, and I will tell members about that one day; the tax factor is quite interesting. It depreciated on a reducing balance and then depreciated it on a replacement cost, so it was a double whammy. The total was \$150m, when it should have been \$75m. I knew that the cash was available, and Peter and I changed all of that even though it was seen to be a very good idea. It has borrowed some money in the end, but it will have spent the \$800m. That was one of the good achievements. It happened and it was not a great impost on people.

I did not speak as quickly as Max delivered that, but I remember him delivering that news and I thought: wow, here is a person who through the abilities that he brings in from outside has had a major effect on the whole city and on all those households that were going to be hit up for extra expense. He also drove the creation of a government property register that realised colossal benefits for the state.

Members might also be interested to know that Max was the one who saw to it that cars were provided for members of Parliament, and for very good reason. Admittedly we did not get a Roller, and I do not think he got himself an electorate car, but Max was always thinking about others. We have heard also about the tremendous contribution he made by reserving the proceeds of the Lotteries Commission in perpetuity for our community, which is something that is the envy of every other state. These are just a handful of examples of many of how Max Evans has made a difference and made this a better place.

I go back to almost where it started, with the scouts. We have all heard the expression, “It takes a village to raise a child.” For a lot of kids, a scout troop is that village. Max was very satisfied that in the time of the Court government and the revival of a new cadets movement, it was considered that youth organisations were suddenly cool again, and everyone could be involved. That had a big spin-off and benefit to the scouts that has accrued to this day. He understood, as we all need to understand, that the benefit of scouting is not only about learning how to tie knots, polish shoes, fix a pushbike, iron a scarf, cook a basic meal and all those other very useful life skills; it is about providing a support mechanism, an ideal mentor mechanism, for children, regardless of their circumstances and background during their formative years when they most need positive role models and a secure environment. As we have heard, Max would often refer to the old adage: always leave the camp site in a better condition than you found it. I think that if we all adopted that attitude in everything we did, the world would be a better place.

Farewell, Max. You certainly left the camp site in a better condition than you found it.

Members: Hear, hear!

President; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Peter Collier; Hon Jacqui Boydell; Hon Alison Xamon; Hon Simon O'Brien;
Hon Alannah MacTiernan

HON ALANNAH MacTIERNAN (North Metropolitan — Minister for Regional Development) [1.48 pm]: As someone who also served with Hon Max Evans during my first term in Parliament, I would like to associate myself with the remarks that have been made today. I was talking to Hon Tom Stephens, one of our colleagues in this place who also served with Max. The phrase that came up was that Max was always reliably gentlemanly in his dealings. In those years that I was here between 1993 and 1996, a lot of biffa went on in this chamber and some very strong political contests took place. Max was in there as a warrior for the other side. One of the things that really distinguished Max is that there was never a sense that there was any personal antagonism and, indeed, there were always good personal relationships with Max and the people on both sides.

Members across the chamber have outlined his very real achievements. It says something to me about the ability of people, after having an established career, to come to this place and make a contribution. We need to think about how we can ensure into the future that we have that pathway for people who have developed very relevant skill sets that will help in the proper administration of government in this place. I heard all the stories, and I agree with Hon Simon O'Brien about the purpose of remembering those on the other side, but also honouring the individual. We came to understand just how much this question of service was so deeply embedded in Max when we heard about his very early days from establishing the debating society to being involved in the scouts and all the commitments that he took on because he felt that he had a contribution to make to keep the show on the road and to keep society moving forward.

I particularly remember after he retired often seeing him and Barbara and a number of their friends who were great participants in the Araluen tulip exercise at Araluen Botanic Park each year making their contribution to ensuring that the public could have this magnificent experience of the tulip festival once a year—an effort that was driven on the back of massive volunteerism.

I was very interested to hear Ken Travers' comments. As Tom and I were saying, Ken and Max had a shared passion for forensic scrutiny of detail and minutiae, which sometimes would drive other members a bit nutty. Both of them made a substantial contribution to this state through that incredible attention to detail.

To Barbara and the family, I absolutely want to share the condolences of this house and say that you should be so proud of the man that was Max.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon Kate Doust) [1.52 pm]: I also pass on my condolences to Mrs Barbara Evans and the members of the family who are present today. Unfortunately, I did not have the opportunity to work with Hon Max Evans; I know of him only by reputation. Certainly, having listened to the number of speakers today, I know that he not only had a full life before and after his time in Parliament, but also made a significant contribution through a range of changes that we are still reaping the benefits of in not just this place, but also the broader community. It certainly helps to have a very effective accountant; it is something that we all look for. Obviously, he did a great job here.

Hon Simon O'Brien is correct; it is very important that we move these condolence motions to acknowledge the work of each member and the contributions they have made. As Hon Alannah MacTiernan said, people come to this place at varying points in their work life, at different ages and with different experiences. For the family members who are present in the gallery while these motions are being debated, it is important to acknowledge the contribution of those members, because those families have quite often given up so much for their loved one to participate and be in this place. It is very helpful and perhaps eases the burden of grief that they are dealing with to hear the positive things that their family member did while they were here. Obviously, Hon Max Evans was respected across the spectrum of this chamber for not only the work he did and the things he achieved, but also the manner in which he conducted himself in this chamber.

With those few words, I pass on my condolences to the Evans family and thank them very much for the contribution that Hon Max Evans made. In putting this motion, I ask that members now rise and stand in their places to indicate their support for the motion and to observe one minute's silence in memory of the late Hon Max Evans, MBE, an esteemed former member of the Council.

Question passed; members and officers standing as a mark of respect.

The PRESIDENT: I advise that in accordance with our custom and practice, a copy of the *Hansard* transcript of this condolence motion will be forwarded to Hon Max Evans' family.