

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 14 March 2018]

p705b-713a

Mr Mark McGowan; Dr Mike Nahan; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Roger Cook; Ms Cassandra Rowe; Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Donald Punch; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Dr Tony Buti; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Matthew Hughes

HON MALCOLM JOHN BRYCE

Condolence Motion

MR M. MCGOWAN (Rockingham — Premier) [12.01 pm] — without notice: I move —

That this house records its sincere regret at the death of Hon Malcolm John Bryce and tenders its deep sympathy to his family.

Mal Bryce, former Deputy Premier and member for Ascot, was a beloved political figure, local member, husband, father and grandfather. Can I take a moment to acknowledge the members of his family here today in the Speaker's gallery: his wife, Elizabeth; his children Sean, Fiona, Katrina and Samantha—they were just telling me that, against standing orders, they used to run around in the chamber here as children—and their partners Kane, Jax and Geoff; and his grandchildren Max, Abbie, Zoe, Luka and Saxon.

Mal was born to Eric John Bryce, a fitter, and Ruth Lucy Gibson on 10 April 1943 in Bunbury, Western Australia. His parents were fourth-generation residents of the south west. Before receiving his tertiary education at the University of Western Australia and Claremont Teachers College, he attended South Bunbury Primary School and Bunbury Senior High School where he was a much-loved alumni. In his professional life, he taught at Merredin Senior High and Bunbury Senior High School before being the acting senior master economics and history at John Forrest Secondary College. That was his final role before being elected to the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia in the seat of Ascot at a by-election in 1971. That previous role shines through in his maiden speech in which he gave an extended dissertation on the global economy, especially the scourge of stagflation—the defining economic problem of the 1970s. In that speech he highlighted the issue of Western Australia's unemployment rate, which had recently risen from 1.1 per cent to 1.46 per cent. We would obviously aspire to that unemployment rate today.

The by-election at which he was elected to the seat of Ascot was caused by the untimely death of former member and then Speaker of the Assembly, Hon Merv Toms. Given that the then Tonkin Labor government had a majority of one, the stakes in that by-election were very high as the government had been in power for only eight months after 12 years of Liberal–Country Party rule. However, the people of Ascot, in their wisdom, chose to elect Mal Bryce, who would faithfully serve them and the people of Western Australia in this Parliament for the next 17 years.

As local member, shadow spokesperson, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, minister and Deputy Premier, members here today, especially the new ones amongst us, may not be aware of the responsibility Mal had for how our current roles as parliamentarians are performed. He was responsible for the current system of electorate offices and officers. He modernised our state's electoral laws, and although he did not see them completed in office, he was a tireless campaigner to end the gerrymander with one vote, one value reforms. In his beloved portfolio of technology, he championed the idea that WA could be more than just an extractor of primary resources. In his valedictory speech in this Parliament in 1987, he noted his campaign against the belief that, and I quote —

... our eternal economic salvation depends almost exclusively on more and more exciting primary industry projects relating to mining, agricultural, and pastoral activity.

He delivered on that ambition as a minister, delivering Western Australia's first Technology Park in Bentley. He called for two more of them to be established, one of them in Cockburn Sound as a defence technology precinct. Obviously, that is now in existence. He established the first Australian government department responsible for information technology—the Department of Computing and Information Technology. He was a futurist, correctly predicting that WA's future economic performance would be defined by, and I quote his words —

... information technology, advanced materials, biotechnology, micro-electronics, aquaculture and medical technology.

He was also responsible for the establishment of many other features of modern Western Australian government and life, including Scitech and the Small Business Development Corporation. In his final speech to Parliament, he noted that Western Australia had never sent a scientist to our Parliament. The Parliamentary Library informs me that despite many teachers, lecturers and medical doctors, that is still the case.

Even after his parliamentary career ended with his retirement from this place in 1988, he continued to advocate for his passions. He was a pioneer for the internet in Australia, especially in how it allowed for engagement with business and government. In Ipswich, he was an architect of the nation's first online community. He served as chairperson of the Western Australian Technology and Industry Advisory Council. He was chairperson of the Australian Centre for Innovation and International Competitiveness at the University of Sydney. He was a foundation co-chairman of the Australian Greenhouse Information Service and a director of Bankwest. He was

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a member of the Prime Minister's Science and Engineering Council. He served as chairman of iVEC since its inception in 2003 to 2013, and oversaw its transformation into the Pawsey Supercomputing Centre at Technology Park Bentley, Western Australia.

Just on that, as I said, Mal was a futurist. He was talking about these issues before any parliamentarian had even heard of them. When he left Parliament, he referred to these issues. Every time people met him, he was always talking about the information superhighway. I remember the first time that I ever met him, over 20 years ago, he was talking about something and I did not even know what it was. He was far in front of everyone else in public life on those issues in, I suspect, not just Western Australia, but also the entire country. His vision on those issues was beyond anything members could imagine because it was so far advanced from the ordinary problems of the day. He was truly a visionary. The esteem in which Mal has been held in Western Australia cannot be understated. In 1989, he was made an Officer of the Order of Australia in recognition of his service to the Western Australian Parliament. In 2017, he was awarded the Pearcey Medal for his contribution to the national ICT industry. In 2017, he was awarded life membership of the Western Australian branch of the Australian Labor Party. He has been a beloved figure and mentor to many in the Western Australian Parliament and the Labor Party.

He was a great believer in Western Australia, the capacity of Western Australians and Western Australian democracy. Always a futurist, in his retirement speech he implored members not to worry about retiring, and when we feel that maybe we cannot do our job anymore, not to rely on inertia and doing our job on cruise control. Many people have taken that up! His reason for saying that was his belief that in a healthy democracy, there are always thousands of keen and competent men and women to take our place. Once again, he got it right, because the people of Ascot elected as his replacement another future Deputy Premier and highly respected Western Australian, Eric Ripper. Gifted with compassion, foresight and ambition for his state, Mal Bryce was an exemplary representative and will be sorely missed by this place, the Labor Party, and his family and friends.

In closing, I attended Mal's funeral service on Monday and heard some of the speeches by some of his friends over the years and some of the speeches prepared and delivered by some of his family members who are here today. One of the things I have not referred to about Mal is that he loved fishing. There is a famous photo of Mal going fishing. He was a genuine lover of fishing. He had some interesting experiences on boats, as one of his old friends relayed. He enjoyed and loved the ocean. Mal was also a very keen gardener. In his retirement years in particular, he took to gardening with a huge passion and was quite an expert gardener.

He had a deep love and respect for the Labor Party. He was one of the people who over the course of his life remained loyal. His loyalty was profound. I had many meetings with him and he raised lots of issues with me. In fact, the last meeting I had with him was a few weeks ago, when he talked about the future of work, which relates to his ideas, thinking and work on information technology and how we need to prepare for the jobs of the decades and centuries to come. He had some great ideas in that regard—ideas that we will take up. Mal did all those things, and they were all outlined in the speeches.

I want to concentrate briefly on Mal's love for his family. He loved his family greatly, which came through in the addresses at his funeral, and it is clear that the people from his family who spoke at his funeral loved him dearly in return. Mal's wife, Elizabeth, is here today. It is interesting that they met at high school, not even in their final year of high school but about three or four years before the end of high school. They were truly life partners and deeply devoted to each other. I know that his family will be feeling deeply the loss of Mal, and in particular the health difficulties that he faced in the last 18 years of his life. Today's condolence motion reflects a person who was a great Western Australian and highly respected. Mal did so much for our state, and he will be sorely missed.

Members: Hear, hear!

DR M.D. NAHAN (Riverton — Leader of the Opposition) [12.13 pm]: I rise to support the motion moved by the Premier and on behalf of the opposition offer my condolences to Mal Bryce's family on his passing.

In politics, there can be some enmity between both sides, but Mal Bryce will be remembered by both sides of politics as a thoroughly decent person. He was a thought leader before his time, who progressed innovation and technology in government.

Mal Bryce was a traditional Labor man, as the Premier has indicated. He was born in Bunbury. His father was a fitter. He was educated at South Bunbury Primary School and Bunbury Senior High School. He obtained a bachelor's degree and trained as a teacher at the University of Western Australia and the then Claremont Teachers College, before teaching at Merredin Senior High School from 1964 to 1966. He then spent the next three years teaching at his old school in Bunbury.

Mal had an interest in politics from a young age. In 1961, at the age of 18, he joined the Labor Party, and in 1966, at the age of 23, he was preselected for the federal division of Moore, a safe conservative seat. In 1970, he secured

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nomination for the third position on the ALP ticket for the Senate election of 1970, a notable achievement at the age of 27, in an era in which it was unusual for young candidates to gain preselection. Mal polled 43.2 per cent of the vote, which was insufficient to win the third ALP Senate seat, but he was the last candidate standing in the final distribution. The sudden death of the then Speaker, Hon Merv Toms, in October 1971 created a by-election for the district of Ascot, which straddled the Swan River and included most of Bayswater, Rivervale, Redcliffe and Belmont. At that time, the Tonkin government held a one-seat majority, and the loss of Ascot would have unseated the government and reversed the result of the 1971 election. Mal Bryce was selected by the ALP for this vital contest, contested by a high-profile Liberal candidate, the future Senator Fred Chaney. On 13 November 1971, Mal Bryce retained Ascot, polling 53.4 per cent of the vote and an absolute majority of 830 votes over four candidates. After the 1971 by-election, no minor party ventured to oppose him. He was a popular local member. In five subsequent general elections, he easily defeated successive Liberal candidates in a seat that was not always safe for Labor. At the 1977 election, his lowest margin was 2 400 votes, or 59.0 per cent of the vote, while in three other elections he polled more than double the votes of his Liberal opponents.

Mal Bryce soon made his mark in the Legislative Assembly and the public arena, partly as a strong proponent of electoral reform, as the Premier indicated. In Opposition after 1974, he served in various shadow portfolios, as well as in various party positions. Mal was elected Deputy Leader of the Opposition after the 1977 election, serving until 1980. Mal Bryce and Brian Burke set aside their former rivalry, and in September 1981 Mal regained the deputy's position, with Brian Burke being elected as leader. Brian Burke has said of him that "his personal ambition was submerged into a bigger, more generous ambition for the Labor Party". That was noted throughout Mal's career. They were to prove a strong, mutually supportive team, which eventually swept to electoral victory in February 1983.

In government, Malcolm Bryce was Deputy Premier and successively Minister for Economic Development and Technology; Industrial Development, Technology and Defence Liaison, Small Business and Communications; and Industry and Technology. Way back then, I was a senior bureaucrat in his department for a period of time. Prior to 1983, there had been no mention of technology as a portfolio responsibility. This was Mal Bryce's constructive political passion, and those who had interaction with Mal can still hear his cries to focus on technology and innovation. As I said at the outset, he was a thought leader.

As is well known, in February 1988, after exactly five years in office, both Brian Burke and Malcolm Bryce resigned as Premier and Deputy Premier and from Parliament. Mal was aged only 45 at the time. I can still remember, as I am sure can many members, the defining picture of Mal Bryce and Brian Burke walking side by side, fishing rods in hand, to do new things and go fishing. Mal did not ease into retirement but commenced a new career as a management consultant and company director in the field of technology. I kept up with him during all those years, and he pleaded with everyone he talked to, including me, to focus on technology because it was going to transform our lives, and he was right.

In 1989, Mal was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia. He enjoyed the respect of his political opponents, in an era of considerable partisan bitterness. He was never personally tainted by the controversies of WA Inc during the 1990s. Mal Bryce served in many corporate and institutional positions during his time, including as an adjunct professor at Curtin University, which fittingly awarded him an honorary doctorate in 1993. From 2001, he was an e-commerce consultant and company director, living at Australind near his original home town of Bunbury. Mal Bryce leaves a positive record in politics, business and community life. He achieved political success at a young age but gave in to neither hubris, bitterness nor rancour in parliamentary battles. He was a moderniser within his party and within government, and subsequently within the community, driven by his commitment to innovation and entrepreneurship and giving back to our community.

On behalf of the Parliamentary Liberal Party, I express our sympathy to Mrs Liz Bryce, to Mal's children, Sean, Katrina, Fiona and Samantha, and their partners, and to Mal's seven grandchildren. You can all be rightly proud of his service to our state.

MR V.A. CATANIA (North West Central) [12.19 pm]: On behalf of the Nationals WA, I rise to contribute to the condolence motion for Malcolm John Bryce, a former Labor Party member and Deputy Premier of this state. Firstly, I express our sincere condolences to his family and friends, especially his wife, Liz Bryce, their children—Sean, Fiona, Katrina and Samantha and their respective partners—and grandchildren. They are seated in the Speaker's gallery today.

Mal Bryce was 28 years of age in 1971 when first elected to this place in the seat of Ascot, making him one of the select group of Western Australian politicians who were under 30 years old when first elected to the WA Parliament. Malcolm was a highly respected WA politician with a parliamentary career that spanned 17 years, and he played an active role in the political lay party that extended well beyond that. As the Premier said, his

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achievements in technology and technological advancement clearly demonstrated it to be an area dear to him. He led the way in this Parliament and became the first Minister for Economic Development and Technology. He laid the foundations for so many of the improvements we see the benefits of today. We can add the establishment of the SciTech Discovery Centre and Technology Park Bentley, which is still home to tech-based businesses and various start-ups, to Mal's list of achievements in his short but very colourful career.

It is interesting to read the thoughts of former members in *Hansard*. My family and I have known Mal and his niece, Tammy March, who lives in my electorate, for a very long time. Tammy always speaks very highly of Mal, and she is now the president of the Carnarvon branch of WA Labor. We are friends, but may become frenemies in that respect!

It is interesting to see what Mal is recorded as saying in *Hansard* of Tuesday, 7 December 1971. We still have the same fights today. Although he thought well ahead when it came to technology, some might think he was backward-thinking on the electoral system and the metropolitan and country divide. He raised the issue of the number of electors in certain electorates and mentioned the Shire of Ashburton, which is now in my electorate. He said —

The supporters of the Lord Forrest at that time included nine members of the Legislative Assembly who together represented a grand total of 1,280 people. This figure included the seat of Ashburton, with an enrolment of 42 electors, of whom I believe only 11 were resident while the rest voted by proxy.

At the same time the seats of Kalgoorlie and Boulder with 17,000 electors on the roll were represented by two members in the Parliament. The district of Kanowna, containing 13,000 people, was entitled to only one representative; whilst a little elementary arithmetic indicates that 19 of the members who supported Lord Forrest represented the same number of people.

That fight continues today between the National, Labor and other major parties. He went on to say —

Lord Forrest rationalised this situation. Here I quote from an extract appearing in *Hansard* in which Lord Forrest said that the goldfields were “plains fertile in radicalism.” I could not for one minute believe this to be the reason why Governments in the State subsequent to the time of Lord Forrest, have discriminated against the people in the metropolitan area.

Those words probably ring true today, and it is interesting that he had the foresight to want reform to the parliamentary process; obviously, some people over this side disagree with that.

As someone who knew Mal for a long time, on behalf of the Catania family I offer my sincere condolences. He was a very respected individual, no matter the political allegiance. Mal had respect right across the board. I got to know him in his later life in his roles outside politics. He was always very active in pushing the advancement of technology throughout the state, but more importantly he was a good and genuine bloke. Tammy March speaks extremely highly of her uncle. She is very proud of being a member of the Labor Party and following in his footsteps. Condolences from the National Party and the Catania family.

MR R.H. COOK (Kwinana — Deputy Premier) [12.25 pm]: Thank you for the opportunity to speak. Mal was a giant on the public policy and political landscape. He had a profound effect upon my life as a politician and community member, and he was in large part an exemplar of how we should work as politicians—members of Parliament—and representatives of the community, but also how we should live our lives in the balancing of our passion for our work with our love of our families and making sure we have the opportunity to share in that.

I begin by acknowledging the members of his family in the Speaker's gallery: his wife, Elizabeth; his children, Sean, Fiona, Katrina and Samantha, and their partners, Kane, Jax and Geoff; and his grandchildren, Max, Abbie, Zoe, Luka and Saxon. Mal Bryce was a former Deputy Premier and member for Ascot who was a beloved political figure, local member, husband, father, grandfather and mentor. He was a lifelong member of the Labor Party who served as Deputy Premier between 1983 and 1988, and served in state Parliament for 18 years. He was a friend, mentor and great Labor champion. At the risk of giving away some of my pedigree, I take members back to about 1981 or 1982. It is a Scotch College politics class, and I think it is fair to say my moral compass had been well and truly set by this point in time by my family and I was very much a loner in this class of political radicals. We were allowed to meet a couple of living politicians and had a great presentation from Hon Allan Rocher, then member for Curtin. He gave an able and dedicated description of the life of a Liberal member of Parliament. Then we had this ball of energy come in the room. A future Deputy Leader of the Opposition—a position I did not aspire to—he was a man with incredible energy and enormous passion. He pretty much set the course for me at that point. From then on I understood where my political path lay—with the Labor Party. He made an extraordinary impact on me that day, and I aspired to be involved with the Labor Party from then on.

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Roll forward to about 30 years later; I am shadow Minister for Science at a SciTech function. A somewhat frailier Mal Bryce comes up and says g'day, and I tell him I am humbled to be in his presence. What struck me is that the same passion and energy was as present as it was back in the early 1980s, before he even served as a member of Parliament or Deputy Premier. He was still driven by his passion for science and equipping us to cope with the challenges that would confront us in the future as a community and an economy. He brought to that short conversation the same energy as he did back in the 1980s. I met with him on a number of occasions after that as he continued to mentor me on public policy and the life of a politician.

Last year I had the honour of hosting a lunch for former Labor Deputy Premiers. Don Taylor, a former member for my area, Ian Taylor and Eric Ripper joined me, and of course Mal Bryce was at that lunch as well. One would have thought we were there for him! I do not think any of us got a word in edgeways as he continued to present to us all that we needed to know, both as former Deputy Premiers and as serving Deputy Premiers at that time. One of his lessons was, "Young fella, young fella, never forget the power of the in-tray. You'd be surprised what can be resolved just by leaving something in the in-tray for a few days and all of a sudden that problem that you're presented with today can be resolved in the next few days because it takes care of itself!" I do not recommend that for all issues, but it is a powerful tool. His advice was always frank, very practical and incredibly helpful.

As other speakers have reflected upon, Mal Bryce was an incredible champion for the sciences—for many of the innovative changes that have taken place in the public sector. He was responsible for the establishment of the Small Business Development Corporation, the Scitech Discovery Centre, the Department of Computing and Information Technology, and of course I think his grand work was the stewardship of Technology Park, which of course now has the Pawsey supercomputer based at its location. That was in no small part to the ongoing championing and strength of leadership of Mal Bryce. The Square Kilometre Array also owes its place in our state in no small part to the work that he did in the sciences.

I, like the Premier, was honoured to be at the funeral for Mal Bryce on Monday. What struck me was the incredible warmth from his family. This is a man who obviously took as much care with the relationship of his family and worked on the love of and embraced his family as much as he did his professional life. I saw Liz and family as they were coming in today and they remarked that I am now in Mal Bryce's old office. They also remarked that they had the run of the place as kids! As they said, one of the few ways they got to see dad was to come up to Parliament House of an evening and hang out. I reflected upon the children of the former Attorney General and member for Victoria Park.

Mal was truly ahead of his time. Even though he had long left Parliament, his participation in public policy was as vibrant and as driven as it had always been. It was great to see at his funeral a number of people who worked with him when he was Deputy Premier. It is also true to say that a number of his former ministerial staff felt that they had never really relinquished their duties as his adviser. John Phillimore, who spoke at his funeral, and Warren Harding, who is in the Speaker's gallery today, were both advisers to him in Parliament. They worked with Mal as recently as a couple of months ago in the body of work that the Premier alluded to—the future of work. Mal Bryce was as energetic and passionate about public policy issues over the last few months as he was in the early days of his political career. Mal was always examining ways our future will be challenged and how we will survive the digital disruption to our lives and how we can thrive through that. He was a true visionary and a true exemplar of public policy.

I thought it was interesting that many of the photos at Mal's funeral involved him fishing. I am pretty sure this is the case: on the day that he took that walk down the beach with former Premier Brian Burke, with fishing rods and buckets in hand, he did not actually own a fishing rod at that point; he had to borrow the fishing rod to set up the photo! I think we are all guilty from time to time of the perfect media shot. Clearly, from those photos, fishing became a very important part of his life into the future because there were also some photos of some very successful fishing trips.

Mal's passion for the great Australian Labor Party never ceased. He had energy and commitment. The McGowan government celebrated its first anniversary in office this weekend. Of course Mal was an RSVP to that event. I am so desperately sorry that he could not join us.

Mal had this advice: Always turn up. Always be there. Always make sure that you are committed to your community. Members heard the Leader of the Opposition talk about his prodigious numbers as a member of Parliament in the following that he had in his local community. That is a lesson we can all learn. He retired at the age of 45 years while his energies were strong and his ideas were fresh. That is a lesson we can all learn. He continued to invest heavily in his personal life and in his public policy life. His central passion was to ensure he lived a very happy life. That is a lesson we could all learn as well. Thank you.

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MS C.M. ROWE (Belmont) [12.35 pm]: I, too, rise today to offer my deepest sympathy to the family of Hon Mal Bryce, AO—his wife, Elizabeth, and their four children, Sean, Katrina, Fiona and Samantha, along with his seven grandchildren. As we have heard, Mal Bryce was a true Labor hero. He served in the Legislative Assembly in the seat of Ascot, which is now mostly my seat of Belmont, from 1971—he was elected at the very young age of 28 years—through to 1988, when he resigned from state Parliament. During his parliamentary career he served as Deputy Premier to Brian Burke. He fiercely championed science and technology as well as electoral reform. The establishment of the Technology Development Authority, Technology Park and the Scitech Discovery Centre were all born out of Mal’s passion and foresight for technology, which we have heard about already from many members. In his extensive and successful career after leaving politics, Mal worked as a company director, a corporate manager, a management consultant, a digital strategist, an author and a public speaker, with a clear focus still on information technology. Mal was awarded an Order of Australia in 1989 in recognition of his contribution to the Western Australian Parliament.

I remember meeting Mal for the first time in 2012 and I was struck by his enthusiasm and energy for public policy. Over the years, he provided sound advice and much inspiration. It was really clear to me that he was truly one of a kind. Mal was a friend and a mentor. Locals in my electorate still recall his tenacious nature, his warmth, his dedication and his keen intellect. His work to improve the lives of his electors left an enduring legacy. He contributed so much to his electorate, to the Labor Party, and to the state of WA. He was a man of vision, he was a man of integrity, and he was certainly a man I deeply admired. He will be sorely missed by us all.

MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [12.37 pm]: I rise to support this condolence motion and offer my condolences to Liz Bryce, Sean, Katrina, Fiona, Samantha, and Mal’s seven grandchildren. I have an interesting story about Mal Bryce. Several years ago one of the more infamous constituents in my electorate contacted my electorate office and said, “A good mate of mine, Mal, has been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. I understand your husband has been fighting that. He’s doing it tough—could Hal give him a call?” So my late husband, Hal, struck up a friendship with Mal and the two of them supported each other through their illness. I suspect from what I am hearing about the fishing stories that it is likely a lot of those conversations may well have centred around fishing and boating. With wry amusement, I heard the Leader of the Opposition talk about the parting photo of Mal Bryce and Brian Burke walking along the beach with fishing rods. It is likely those fishing rods were Brian Burke’s and it is highly likely that he bought them from our shop. He was a long-time customer of Harvey’s Tackle in Scarborough. Over that time, the two men derived a fair bit of support from each other. I will never forget the kindness that Mal showed to me after Hal passed away. He did not need to do that. He was a very humble and kind-hearted man. A kind gesture like that is one that will not be forgotten by me, ever.

I also ran into Mal at a number of the cancer support and cancer research workshops. He got involved in supporting the Australian gastrointestinal trials group, which is a group looking at research into gastrointestinal cancers, trying to find a cure for a disease that has not had a result shift in over 40 years. Mal did not have to do that either. I do not really have much more to add except to say that he struck me as a very humble, very kind-hearted, lovely gentleman. I was very pleased to have met him and I was very pleased for my husband to have provided Mal with some support and for Mal to have struck up that friendship with my late husband. I offer my sincerest condolences. It is a very, very tough thing to go through an experience like you have been through and my heart goes out to you. I know that lovely family that Mal thought so highly of will all stick together and support each other as you move on through the rest of your lives with lovely memories.

MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury) [12:40 pm]: I also rise to speak to the condolence motion to Hon Mal Bryce and I would like to acknowledge Liz Bryce and their four children: Sean; Katrina; Fiona and husband Kane; and Samantha in the Speaker’s gallery, together with Mal’s grandchildren whom he affectionately referred to as his “grandies” on many, many occasions. I know as we are speaking here today that there will be many, many people on the internet in Bunbury and right around the world looking at today’s proceedings, and it is a reflection of the following that Mal had on an international level. I would also like to acknowledge his long-term friends who are in the Speaker’s gallery, Peter Kennedy and Warren Harding.

All that Mal has achieved over his life is woven into the life he has had with his family, and especially Liz, and that really came out at the funeral. I met Mal at the beginning of the Gallop government to plan for the implementation of an e-commerce platform for the south west. It was definitely one of those sit-back-and-listen moments! I cannot remember getting many words in edgeways, even though I valiantly tried as a public servant, but Mal clearly had the vision. He had the vision at a time when Amazon was still thought of as a river somewhere in South America and Ali Baba was definitely still firmly attached to the 40 thieves. This was extraordinary vision for the time, but then that was Mal—a person who not only talked about vision, but invented vision and then drove it hard—and from a public sector point of view, I knew all about that. Over the next 17 years we collaborated over

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many projects, and those projects were driven by Mal's passion to connect everyday people with knowledge, new ideas and an awareness of the future. We hatched a plot for Critical Horizons, which is a futures seminar and conference series still operating today, and in true Mal style all the presentations from those proceedings are on the world wide web, available to everybody. We collaborated on topics such as precision agriculture, the future of telecentres as learning hubs, online universities and the list goes on. He was a great believer in encouraging people to tell their own stories and learn from each other, and we had many a seminar on the impact of technology on business and industry, and we got small businesses around the table telling their stories to each other and learning from each other. I also used to plan for my conversations with Mal, because they would generally last for about an hour—you could not really think about a conversation lasting less than that—so my trips from Bunbury to Perth were pretty well punctuated with long discussions with Mal, generally thinking about the future and about innovation and what lies ahead, and he never lost that passion. He inspired me with his passion for knowledge and learning, and one of the things I really enjoyed was our mutual harassment of Telstra over what Mal referred to as a need for serious broadband. Serious broadband in Mal's mind was 10 to 100 megabits a second for homes, one to 10 gigabits for business and ubiquitous wireless all around. That was at a time when the Telstra boys were talking about one megabit a second if we were lucky.

He later became the master, and I was the apprentice, in the campaign to win the seat of Bunbury. He would insist on regular inspections of the soles of my shoes to prove the extent of my doorknocking and the keeping of a war book to ensure I followed up on the detail of every single inquiry or constituent matter that came up. He taught me the value of being a parish politician—looking after our electorates, advocating for our electorates and making sure that as far as possible people who were running policy agendas understood the need to marry those policy agendas to the needs of our electorates. The campaign was punctuated with plenty of visits to Mal's favourite Chinese restaurant, and I certainly learned about yum cha lunches! He never lost his Labor values. He always, always talked to me about the values of why I was standing for Bunbury. I was so pleased when my good friend Gordon Hill, in his last conversation with Mal, promised on behalf of us all that we would continue to fight and uphold those Labor values.

Mal's story has its beginnings in Bunbury, but it really starts with the love story between a head boy of the Bunbury Senior High School, Mal, and the head girl, Liz. That has carried on for over 50 years and together as a partnership they have made a fantastic contribution. On the day that Mal passed he was to give an address at the Bunbury Senior High School's centennial celebration. He was not able to do that, but in vintage Mal style he had an alternative outcome and planned for his great friend Peter Kennedy to deliver it on his behalf. It is perhaps symbolic that Mal's final address was delivered at the school he loved and his legacy will live on. Mal is a friend I will not forget and I pass on our deepest condolences to the family.

MRS M.H. ROBERTS (Midland — Minister for Police) [12:46 pm]: Malcolm John Bryce joined the Parliament in 1971 and rose to be Deputy Premier of the state. Although it is true that he left this place before some of the present members were even born, we all live with his achievements. Mal had been a teacher before he came to Parliament and he brought with him the insights of that honourable profession. He was keen on new technology and the economic and human benefits that it offered. Mal used his time in government to reform and create. Those businesses that have benefited from the support of the Small Business Development Corporation can thank Mal. Those firms that have located at WA Technology Park can thank Mal. Those of us who have taken our kids to Scitech can thank Mal. Mal's achievements in both the Parliament and post-parliamentary life were recognised through a number of honours. These recognised public life that went far beyond this Parliament and reflected on the dedication of a man with vision and imagination. He was a pioneer of e-commerce and a promoter of technological innovation, including the Pawsey supercomputer project at WA Technology Park and the Square Kilometre Array project. Mal was a man who saw public life as an opportunity to do something positive for the people of Western Australia. This was not only in his commitment to new technology, but also in his determination to bring real democracy to Western Australia. This was something, as has been noted, that he outlined in his first speech in this place in 1971 and then took the lead in with a series of incremental and actual reforms that have slowly but firmly guided the state to the point at which this house is fairly elected. I am sure the spirit of Mal Bryce will be there urging on the member for Cannington in his own endeavours to continue that process by reforming the electoral travesty that is the Legislative Council. Mal Bryce was a man of vision and achievement, of principle and passion. I mourn his passing and I extend my condolences to his wife, Liz, his family and his very many close friends.

DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale) [12.48 pm]: I also rise to contribute to this condolence motion for Hon Mal Bryce. Mal Bryce will always hold a very significant part in the modern history of Western Australia in politics and will forever be a Labor icon and hero. I think Mal as a politician is what we should all aspire to be as politicians—that is, people who are interested in politics for the purpose of improving the lot of our fellow citizens and also making the state of Western Australia a vibrant, modern place to live and work in.

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Over the last year or so I was fortunate to get to know Mal on a more personal level. I remember one particularly fantastic evening at his house with Mal and Liz, my wife, Mandy, and mutual friends Gordon and Di Hill sharing a meal of Chinese cuisine. As other members have mentioned already, Mal had many opinions and it was always hard to get your own opinion in front of Mal! During a wideranging discussion over Chinese cuisine, we talked about technology, electoral reform, economic reform and, interestingly, euthanasia. He had some very passionate and committed views on euthanasia, and I am sure that the current Joint Select Committee on End of Life Choices would have been interested to hear his views.

Anyone who met Mal would also be struck by his intelligence and his thirst for public policy development and debate, but Mal was also a person who was very caring of others and very respectful, and just a fair dinkum good bloke. I remember a few months ago, when he was going through a particularly bad period with his health, he asked me through Gordon Hill whether I would be the alternative executor of his will, to which I agreed. We then spent a number of days trying to contact each other and even though he was not in good health, he persisted until he finally got hold of me, only to say thank you; he thought it was very important to thank me for agreeing to be his alternative executor.

I think that exemplifies the person he was. Even though he was in ill health and suffering at the time, he thought it was good manners and respectful to show his appreciation when someone agreed to do something that he asked.

To Liz and to the family, condolences from me and Mandy. He will forever be an icon in Western Australian politics and the Australian Labor Party.

Members: Hear, hear!

MR W.R. MARMION (Nedlands) [12.51 pm]: I rise to speak to the condolence motion and to pass on my condolences to the family. I was at the 100th anniversary dinner in Bunbury for Bunbury Senior High School two weeks ago, at which Mal was scheduled to deliver the keynote speech. It was good that Peter Kennedy could take over and read out the speech that Mal had prepared, so Mal's speech was actually delivered by Peter Kennedy.

I was fortunate enough to be at Bunbury Senior High School in the period from 1967 to 1969. My form teacher in 1969 was Mrs Bryce. I know her as Mrs Bryce; it is very hard for me to say Liz, because for me she is Mrs Bryce and she still looks the same as she did then! I cannot believe that they were so young. I suppose we were so young in high school that the teachers looked old, but I cannot believe that Mal Bryce was in his early 20s when he was a teacher there. I thought he was a senior master of social studies; he probably was. We were fortunate at Bunbury Senior High School to have outstanding teachers, and Mal was one of them. It is not surprising that he went on to be Deputy Premier of Western Australia.

It is fair to say that I was probably a bit of a right-wing type at Bunbury Senior High School; there were at least three of us out of the 150! Mal was running a very serious campaign against the sitting member for Forrest, Gordon Freeth, later to become Sir Gordon Freeth. My parents knew Gordon Freeth and I and my little group of three or four were, I guess, razzed a lot about my family's connections with the Freeths. Mal had a little VW car with "Kirwan for Forrest" written all over it; you could only see red. Mal was running the 1969 federal election campaign for Frank Kirwan against the sitting federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, and he got Frank Kirwan across the line. So Mal, as the mid-20-year-old chairman of Frank Kirwan's election campaign, basically managed to unseat the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs. Obviously, he then went on to enter politics himself and eventually became Deputy Premier.

In my day a lot of people left school after doing the Junior Certificate, so on their last day, they could go around and cause some sort of hell in the school. I remember being in the foyer of Bunbury Senior High School, outside the principal's office, and there were photos of all the different prefects of the various years. I was looking at this photo and I realised, "There's Mrs Bryce and Mr Bryce!" They had both been prefects, but the interesting thing about Mr Bryce's photo was that his face had been blanked out. I actually inquired as to why Mal's face had been blanked out and was told that he had been a bit naughty on the last day of his final year—these days year 12—and he threw an egg. I asked, "What's wrong with that?" Apparently, the egg had hit a teacher! I could not believe this, because Mr Bryce was the most conservative person I had ever met, would not hurt a flea, and was, I believe, a great Western Australian. I could not reconcile Mr Bryce throwing an egg that unluckily hit a teacher! Unfortunately, the school had gone to the bother of blanking out his photo, which I thought was a big disgrace. It has bothered me ever since, because it was unfair; but anyway, he got over that, and became Deputy Premier!

I had the privilege later on in life to become Minister for Science. Mal was on the Technology and Industry Advisory Council, which he set up, I believe. He was still on that committee when I became Minister for Science. I knew Mal quite well by then; I had run into him at a few functions, and I will mention one story, before I forget it, about Capel Vale Wines and the duck logo on its bottles. He spent at least five minutes telling me that he had

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advised the owner of Capel Vale Wines that they should not have had a black duck on their bottles because it was not a very good marketing tool. He was constantly advising them to get rid of the black duck, and I think they have now faded it out so it cannot be seen so much and it does not have a great big black duck on it anymore; but I digress!

Mal explained to me, as the new Minister for Science, what we needed to do for technology; I am sure everyone in this chamber has heard Mal talk about that. I think he had thought that it was time for him to go, but I wanted him to remain on the TIAC. I changed the name to the science council and Mal, in true bipartisanship and as a terrific proponent of science, remained on the council. I know he was still passionate about technology until some weeks ago.

With those few stories, I pass on my best wishes to the Bryce family.

Members: Hear, hear!

MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington — Minister for Mines and Petroleum) [12.57 pm]: I rise to briefly pass on my condolences to the family of Mal Bryce. When I moved to Western Australia in 1989, Mal had already retired from Parliament. I met him through the Swan electorate council at that time and he set a great example that we should all follow in that when he left politics, he did not try to say what was bad about the people who followed him; rather, he gave proper advice about the ways in which they could improve. He was a positive influence on my small role in the party at that time.

When I became assistant state secretary, Mal, with a group of other people, helped to set up the Labor business roundtable. In 1999 Mal encouraged me to organise an event at which a speaker made a presentation on the opportunities available through the internet and the challenges for government in regulating the internet. In 1999, when most people would not have had a clue what the internet was, Mal was making sure that the Labor Party was thinking about how to respond in a policy sense to the challenges and opportunities presented by the internet.

On behalf of my wife, Hon Kate Doust, MLC, I note the huge assistance that Mal gave her in her role as shadow Minister for Science in the lead-up to the 2017 election. I know she found his help, advice, introductions and knowledge to be very helpful and a major part of her role. I know that she takes Mal's passing very much to heart.

When I was fortunate enough to join the McGowan cabinet last year, one of the first people to ring me up and ask to come and see me was Mal, and I was very, very pleased to once again have him come to sit in my office and talk to me. The first thing he wanted to talk about was the Technology and Industry Advisory Council, which he had set up as a minister. I had to disappoint him by letting him know that, although I was listed on the Department of the Premier and Cabinet website as the relevant minister, it was in fact passing to my good friend the member for Bassendean. He was very disappointed, because he had many good ideas about how to further develop the council and the technology park, and take other opportunities. I referred him on to the member for Bassendean, the Minister for Science, because I knew he would get a good hearing there as well. It just shows his enthusiasm and the fact that nothing could stop him from making sure that he was going to be useful.

He talked to me about one vote, one value because, as the member for Midland points out, that is now my responsibility. He again outlined his passion for the need for democracy to be implemented in full here in Western Australia. It is disappointing that we had not been able to achieve democracy in Western Australia before Mal passed away, because I think it would have been one of the great joys for him if we had been able to achieve one vote, one value for everybody in Western Australia during his lifetime. Having said that, I am appreciative of the fact that he and a number of other people with whom he was continually in touch continued to advocate in the community for one vote, one value. I understand that will only be achieved when the community understands why it is so important.

I want to finish by acknowledging Mal's life membership, conferred at last year's state conference. I know that everybody on this side of the chamber was there when Mal was awarded that life membership. It was one of those great occasions when we know that everybody in the room thought it was such a wonderful award. His speech was genuinely inspiring, and I think one of the reasons for that was that he put his life story and his contribution to the party in the context of the modern challenges. The point he made was that the ALP today has to face the issues of today. The history of the party is the foundation for us, but it is not the determination of our agenda. He made the point that the policies of the modern Labor Party could not be determined by its history. They must be determined by the challenges of the day. It was very insightful for a man who had made such a great contribution, before he entered Parliament, while he was in Parliament, and equally after he left. Vale Mal Bryce.

MR M. HUGHES (Kalamunda) [1.02 pm]: I rise to make a brief contribution to the condolence motion for Hon Malcolm John Bryce. I have listened with a great deal of interest to the contributions made by members of

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this place to honouring Mal's life and contribution to the state as a teacher, a member of this Parliament and a member of governments, and also his continuing involvement with and interest in technology and science. I got to know Mal Bryce directly very shortly after my election on 11 March. I got a phone call on 13 March, and the person on the phone said, "Mal Bryce here; congratulations, you've knocked off John Day. I want to come along and tell you how you can hold onto the seat and make it a Labor seat for a continuing future. I want to assist in organising your campaign. When can we meet?" Our meetings took place, all too sadly, on a series of Fridays over a few months, until the return of Mal's illness. I am deeply grateful to him. He was not at that stage inspecting the soles of my shoes, but no doubt, given half the opportunity he would have done so, in relation to my contribution to ensuring Labor was returned to government, and that we held onto the seat of Kalamunda.

Much more indirectly, I got to know Mal Bryce, through Fiona Bryce, who came to teach art at John Septimus Roe Anglican Community School, many years ago, when I was principal there. I have a very personal connection and relationship with Fiona. She is an exemplary teacher, and very evidently made a significant contribution to my school. Fiona, I want to express personally my deep condolences to you, to Liz, and to your family, including Mal's grandchildren. It is with great regret that my continuing association with Mal was brought to an end before it had really begun. I thank the house for allowing me to make a small contribution to this condolence motion.

The SPEAKER: I request all members to rise for one minute's silence in order to carry the motion, please.

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