

HON RAY YOUNG - CONDOLENCE MOTION

DR GALLOP (Victoria Park - Premier) [12.02 pm]: I move -

That this House records its sincere regret at the death of Hon Raymond Laurence Young and tenders its deep sympathy to his family.

Raymond Laurence Young was born on 7 September 1938 in Mt Magnet, Western Australia. He was the son of Laurence Jesse Young, a printing machinist and musician, and Grace Eleanor Smith.

Ray Young was educated at the Maylands Primary School, Perth Modern School and Perth Technical College. His first job was with David Jones (WA) Ltd until 1957, which coincided with study to become a chartered accountant at night school. After national service in 1958 and a career as a chartered accountant, Mr Young entered this Parliament in 1971. He was the member for Wembley from 1971 to 1974, and subsequently the member for Scarborough from 1974 to 1983. Ray Young served the Parliament through the Public Accounts Committee and was chairman from 1974 to 1975 and 1977 to 1978. He became a minister in 1978 and performed well in a number of portfolios, which included health, community welfare and consumer affairs. He is perhaps best known for the stand he took on the Government's handling of the so-called Tresillian affair in 1977.

In Dr Harry Phillips' chapter in *The House on the hill : a history of the Parliament of Western Australia, 1832-1990*, he states -

One unwelcome alteration to the Court Government team was the resignation in mid-1977 of Ray Young, the Parliamentary Secretary of the Cabinet. This office had been created in 1975 with a salary equivalent to that payable to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly. Young, who had been spoken of as a prospective Premier, denounced the Government's handling of what had become known as the 'Tresillian affair'. A Friends of Tresillian group, supported by newspaper comment and parliamentarians from both sides of the House, resisted the transfer of the retarded children residing in Tresillian Hospital, located in the Premier's Nedlands electorate, to a refurbished hospital at Forrestfield, some 30 kilometres from the city. Only widespread criticism and party dissension broke the Premier's resolve on the issue and the move was postponed, though ultimately the hospital was still sold to the Nedlands City Council for use as a community centre.

That story speaks for itself in terms of Mr Young's character and commitment. It is not surprising that he served as the chairman of the Authority for Intellectually Handicapped Persons and the Disability Services Commission of Western Australia, and was also a board member and president of the Cystic Fibrosis Association of WA Inc.

Ray excelled at cricket and played at first grade level. He was a member of the university and Subiaco districts cricket clubs and was a past president of the Subiaco-Floreat cricket club.

On behalf of all members of this House I extend our deepest sympathy to Ray Young's wife Sheenagh and his four children Laura, Angus, Greg and Amanda.

MR BARNETT (Cottesloe - Leader of the Opposition) [12.07 pm]: Ray Young died very suddenly within months of being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.

As the Premier said, Ray Young was elected to Parliament as the member for Wembley in February 1971 and after that seat was abolished, he became the member for Scarborough until losing the seat in 1983. He served the Government of Sir Charles Court as the Government Whip, Cabinet Secretary, member and chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, and the Minister for Health, Community Welfare, and Housing and Consumer Affairs.

Ray Young was a man that could honestly be described as a thoroughly decent human being with a keen sense of humour. He was a man of conviction and compassion with a fierce sense of duty and of right and wrong. His debating skills were legendary in this Parliament and he was considered by many to be premiership material before losing his seat.

Ray Young was a high achiever in a number of areas. He won a scholarship to Perth Modern School and at the age of 21 years was an associate of the Australian Society of Accountants. After further studies he became an associate of the Institute of Chartered Accountants. In 1983, he was made chairman of the Authority for Intellectually Handicapped Persons, and in 1993 the Disability Services Commission was established mostly due to his efforts. He was also a board member and past president of the Cystic Fibrosis Association and a former chairman of the Forrest Place City Station Committee.

Ray Young in every respect was a very fine individual and human being. He was a compassionate man with a great sense of duty and responsibility. Ray served this Parliament and this State well and indeed the

Dr Geoff Gallop; Mr Colin Barnett; Dr Elizabeth Constable; Mr Pandal; Mr Max Trenorden; Mr Paul Omodei

communities and groups he was associated with, particularly in the areas of health and those suffering from illness or some form of disability.

On behalf of the Liberal Party and its supporters, I extend our heartfelt sympathy to his widow Sheenagh and to his four children.

DR CONSTABLE (Churchlands) [12.09 pm]: I offer my condolences to Sheenagh and her family, and it is with much personal sadness that I speak during this condolence motion for Ray.

I first met him in 1980 when he was the Minister for Health. At that time disability services came under the health portfolio and was indeed part of the Department of Health. The prevailing philosophy guiding services for the disabled at the time was based on a medical model. However, Ray could see beyond that model and believed it was an inappropriate policy that categorised people with disabilities in this way. Therefore, he set out to separate disability services from the health portfolio. The first step in achieving that goal was to set up the Ministerial Advisory Committee on the Intellectually Handicapped, and I was privileged to be a member of that committee. Ray wanted major changes in the delivery of services to intellectually disabled people and their families.

He wanted to move dramatically away from the entrenched medical model, and the committee included a number of parents of children with intellectual disabilities who had the task of helping to achieve that goal. The Liberal Party lost Government before Ray Young's vision for the changes and improvements in service delivery for people with intellectual disabilities could be put in place. However, the upshot of his foresight was the establishment of the Authority for Intellectually Handicapped Persons that was set up by the Labor Government after the 1983 election. I believe evidence of the high regard in which Ray was held was his appointment as chairman of that authority until it was subsumed by the Disability Services Commission under the Court Government. I have no doubt that Ray Young made a lasting contribution in the area of services to people with disabilities in this State. He set what we now know as the course that Disability Services has taken. Indeed, he helped to change attitudes towards disabled people in a very big way. He changed policies, attitudes and services. If each of us could achieve what he achieved in this area we would make a very important contribution to our State.

At the beginning of the Floreat by-election campaign in July 1991, Ray Young was one of the first people to offer his assistance to my campaign. During the by-election, and in subsequent elections, he was a wise adviser and a campaign volunteer. As coincidence would have it, as the member for Wembley and Scarborough he had represented much of the area within the boundaries of the old electorate of Floreat and current electorate of Churchlands. Between 1991 and last year when he died, he phoned me often and gave advice on a current issue before the Parliament or with an idea or information he thought might interest me. Similarly, there were numerous times when I sought his advice. I saw him on a number of occasions during the last few months of his life. Despite suffering great pain, his attitude was always positive and inspirational to those around him. I valued greatly the opportunity he gave me to serve on the ministerial advisory committee that led to major changes in services to people with disabilities. I am privileged to have followed in his footsteps in the electorate; and I am fortunate that I had Ray Young as a friend.

MR PENDAL (South Perth) [12.12 pm]: I want to associate myself with the condolence motion. I knew Ray Young for 31 years. I first met him when I was a member of the press gallery, and he had been endorsed as a Liberal candidate for the seat of Wembley in 1971. Ray Young was an outstanding member of Parliament and he was a person of outstanding intellectual gifts as well. I knew him both as a private citizen before he entered the House, when he was a very successful chartered accountant in his own practice, and later as a member of Parliament. I then saw the rise that was inevitable in his political career. He became the cabinet secretary in the Government of Sir Charles Court. It is widely known that the job of cabinet secretary was created to accommodate Ray Young following the view of many that he should have been in the Cabinet, but there was no room for him. He was later promoted to a position the Cabinet after a comeback which followed the incident to which the Premier referred - the Tresillian affair - which caused a great deal of anxiety, political turmoil and embarrassment for the Government of the day. Ray Young had that staying power and, dare I say, sense of destiny that he and everyone else who knew him understood he would not be long out of the Cabinet once that period had passed. He was in all respects a person who could have gone on to become the Premier of Western Australia.

He had everything going for him at an intellectual and personal level and in a family sense. His business background equipped him to be a successful political leader and his sense of compassion that was ultimately put to such good use at the Disability Services Commission made him something of the social conscience of the Liberal Party at a time when many people felt that it did not have one. The potential for him to be Premier was sadly cut short because of something that hangs over every one of us in this Chamber. He faced the electors at a

Dr Geoff Gallop; Mr Colin Barnett; Dr Elizabeth Constable; Mr Pandal; Mr Max Trenorden; Mr Paul Omodei

time when the tide was going out for the Liberal Government. The tide was sufficient to take him with it and he lost the seat and, therefore, he was out of Parliament.

Ray Young was something of a republican - a republican with a difference. He saw the inevitability that we would, in the not too distant future, adopt a republican form of government in Australia. Ray Young, without necessarily supporting any of those models that were discussed at the constitutional convention in Canberra towards the end of the 1990s, did not believe that any of those models was suitable for Australia or Western Australia. Typical of his creative ability Ray came up with his own model for a republic. Throughout the course of his last year he was not short in coming forward in trying to dissuade members of the current Parliament that we should begin to go down the path that he envisaged. I recall having lunch with him in June of last year when he was in the absolute peak of physical condition. He looked good. He had time on his hands to devote to things like a new republican model. It was my last luncheon with him in good circumstances. Within eight weeks pancreatic cancer was diagnosed, and everyone was warned that it would take him quickly. That advice was right, because by the end of November he was literally, sadly and tragically, a shadow of his former self.

A luncheon was put on in the cabinet dining room that a few of his friends pointed out to him might even have been a last supper! He could see some of the humour - maybe macabre at that. Some of the members who attended were Alan Ridge, Ray O'Connor, and Ian Medcalf, the former Attorney General. It was bipartisan as it also included Ian Taylor, the former Labor Leader of the Opposition, and the member for Churchlands and I were very happy to be there. They were people whom Ray Young chose deliberately to be there. Ray knew, like many people with a terminal disease, that he would not make it. He spoke in very positive terms - almost heroically so - and was an inspiration to those who were there. It was a wonderful occasion and, if we can say that occasions like that are joyous, this one was joyous. No-one was under the slightest illusion that he was going to make it; nonetheless those people wanted to give that comfort to him. He in turn wanted to let them know that to the very last he would be going down with a fight, and that some of those things that used to churn around in his incredibly active and creative mind would be considered even well past his death.

The memorial service held at Perth Modern School was a magnificent ceremony - I use the word advisedly. It did him justice; it did justice to his widow Sheenagh and to the children of that marriage, and also to his former wife Val and adult children of that marriage. Whatever sadness was evident on that occasion, everyone was united in the fact that we had lost a great Western Australian - I use that word advisedly too - a great member of the Liberal Party and a potential Premier, and above all a man with an immense amount of compassion that he showed in that period as the chairman of the Authority for Intellectually Handicapped Persons. This job was given to him not because he was a successful ex-Minister for Health but because of the nature of the man. He was a good, compassionate fellow who, if he could put his arm around someone to give them some encouragement, would do so. He did it in that job, as he so superbly did it in all the other jobs that were given to him. Western Australia is the poorer for his passing, and I extend my condolences to everyone associated with him, particularly the intimate members of his family

MR TRENORDEN (Avon - Leader of the National Party) [12.21 pm]: I knew Ray Young primarily as a result of his reputation in this House. I met him a number of times in recent years. I enjoy seeing ex-members coming into this House and having meals in the dining room as they do from time to time. That is where I met Ray Young. I was taken with his manner and his friendly and open personality. When he greeted someone he had an open look that took them in as a person. One does not meet a great number of people like that. I appreciated the fact that he was still interested in politics even though he had been long out of this House. His parliamentary performance has been alluded to, so I will not go through that again, other than to say that he will have permanent standing in the history of the Western Australian Parliament.

I was particularly taken with Ray one day late last year when I went into the parliamentary dining room and he was having lunch with a group of friends. I think it was a different group from that referred to by the member for South Perth. Ray was unable to eat. It was clear that he was terminally ill. I felt great compassion for him. He maintained great strength of character sitting among those people. His days were numbered and he was enjoying their company in a relaxed manner. All members knew he was gravely ill and his position was terminal. His courage was a great credit to him.

Ray Young served diligently in this Chamber and continued that service outside - that has been alluded to by other speakers - and that was an indication of his character. The National Party extends sympathy to his family. He is definitely a loss to this State.

MR OMODEI (Warren-Blackwood) [12.24 pm]: I share with other members sympathy for the passing of Ray Young. I must confess that I did not know Ray Young well while he was in Parliament but got to know him in recent times as the former Minister for Disability Services. I knew him by reputation as being one of the best Ministers for Health to have served this community. I got to know him well when he left Parliament and became Chairman of the Authority for Intellectually Handicapped Persons. In that role he carried on the work

Dr Geoff Gallop; Mr Colin Barnett; Dr Elizabeth Constable; Mr Pental; Mr Max Trenorden; Mr Paul Omodei

commenced by the current Deputy Premier. He then became the first Chairman of the Disability Services Commission in Western Australia.

Ray Young, of course, was well known for his position on the Tresillian affair, and I suppose it was about that time when people became aware of his character and his commitment for people with disabilities in Western Australia. He assisted Kevin Minson prior to 1993, when we were in opposition, in forming the coalition's policy on disability services, and then, as I said, became the first Chairman of the Disability Services Commission. He resigned at the end of 1994, but always maintained his interest in what was happening with people with disabilities in this State. He was not only a successful politician and a successful businessman, but also a very compassionate person who served this State over a long time.

I was always struck by Ray Young's presence. He always looked young. He always had a presence about him. He presented himself well and, particularly in the disability sector, was renowned for his contribution and the way he communicated with people with disabilities, no matter who they were or what organisation they represented. I join with other members in this Parliament in recognising Ray Young. This State has lost a very loyal and compassionate person, and I sympathise with his family for their great loss.

Question passed, members standing.