

Mrs BUTLER (Lyons) - It is my privilege to speak today in support of Tasmania's former Premier, Paul Anthony Lennon, the man who rang me when I was unsuccessful after the 2002 election.

Ms Wriedt - What a lovely thing to do.

Mrs BUTLER - Yes. There was certainly a lot of empathy and understanding there and I very much appreciate that.

I first met Paul through the activities of the Labor Caucus when they visited the town of St Helens in the mid-1990s. I had some interesting conversations with him about private-public partnerships and public ownership of assets and many other current issues at the time. My impression of him then was that he was a strong person who had a well-developed intellect that was kept hidden behind a natural shyness. He engaged in a discussion about other global issues, including how to judge a good single malt; he was quite skilled in that and we do share a favourite. I continue to find that mixture of mask and openness an intriguing feature of Paul Lennon's make up.

Mr Speaker, a foundation member of the Break-O-Day branch of the Australian Labor Party and octogenarian known to you, Alan Yates, first joined the ALP in Fingal in 1946. Were you there? No.

Mr SPEAKER - I was door-knocking the area at the time.

Mrs BUTLER - Perhaps you were conceived near there. The honour of life membership was bestowed on him in April 2000. Alan was thrilled and surprised that the Honourable Paul Lennon personally attended the function at Bicheno held in honour of this award. Paul Lennon's speech showed a close knowledge and understanding of Alan and his philosophy of life, his belief in fairness, social justice and equality. He mixed freely, enjoying the company of people from all sides of politics. Alan still talks proudly about that memorable night. Many other high-profile members had been unavailable but Paul Lennon honoured his old mate and, in that, all that he stood for and the traditions that accompany that length of commitment to our party.

As a director of the TT-Line, I was thrilled that the Government decided to purchase the two beautiful red roll-on, roll-off vessels that are currently in use as *Spirit of Tasmania* I and II. As directors, we always knew that both Jim Bacon and Paul Lennon read our board notes whenever we met with them and they were right up on what was going on on the board. It was a time of intense lobbying by Incat and I well remember that Premier Jim Bacon was very straight-talking about Incat's approach at that time. I think there were lots of comments about looking after mates, and so on. What a fantastic contribution to the State's economy those two vessels have made.

I well remember the open day when *Spirit of Tasmania* I and II were on display in Hobart, and as I recall, the first person to go on board that day was Paul Lennon, the Infrastructure minister with a huge smile. I think the Minister for Economic Development at the time, Lara Giddings, was next, and a very fresh-faced Will Hodgman was also enjoying the visit. There was great excitement on that day, as members of the public realised that we had up-to-date, world-class vessels that would deliver passenger comfort and safety in

addition to the capacity to deliver freight to the Melbourne markets early on a daily basis. I think they still travel at about 23 knots.

Following the purchase of *Spirit of Tasmania* I and II, it was my pleasure as a director to host the then Deputy Premier Lennon and Mrs Margaret Lennon on the inaugural visit from Melbourne to Devonport on board *Spirit of Tasmania* II, while the sister ship left from Devonport for Melbourne with Premier Jim Bacon and Mrs Honey Bacon. We were in awe of the well-designed facilities on board after the comfort zone of the dear old white *Spirit*, and explored all over it. Security measures since then have precluded the extent of access that we enjoyed at that time, but it was just a wonderful trip and I will never forget it. I still value keepsakes from that night. Paul Lennon, in the classic navy blue jacket and open-necked shirt, stood outside on the back deck as the ship pulled out of its berth, surrounded by Tasmanians, some of whom were regular customers from various industries, and of course there were quite a few people involved with horses on board so he had some fantastic conversations with people all through that journey. Three directors stayed on board to see the cross-over with *Spirit of Tasmania* I in the middle of Bass Strait, and I do not recall Paul Lennon being there at that time, but it was great fun and there was lots of hooting and catcalls going on to the other vessel.

I must make comment on the terrific commitment shown by Premier Lennon in the terrible December 2006 fires that affected the east coast. I think it was the next day that Mr Llewellyn and Mr Lennon flew up by helicopter and met with the then general manager and the mayor of Break-O-Day, Robert Lee, and set about doing whatever was needed to help the people. He had rung me the afternoon before and said, 'Make sure you stay with the people', and that is what I endeavoured to do through that time.

Every support that could have been mustered was mustered for the people, and I will never forget what Paul Lennon did in that instance. Bridges and roads were rebuilt, all the infrastructure that was needed, but there were all of those extra dimensions involved with fundraising and making sure that people's emotional wellbeing was taken care of, as well as their physical wellbeing. Then he returned to a big day of thanks, along with David Llewellyn again, to acknowledge the hundreds of volunteers who gave so willingly of their time to help their fellow Tasmanians at that time.

I will also never forget the day when Ms Putt came across the Floor from the Greens. There was a bit of discussion about what Mr Mansell had said in regard to the hand-back of Cape Barren, and then the agreement happened. That was when I was first elected and stands out in my memory as a wonderful thing that can happen when you have those negotiation skills and commitment. You can make such a difference. History changes in front of your eyes.

Thank you so much, Paul Lennon. You were supportive of me personally. He was always listening. As long as you knew the detail of what you were talking about you got a jolly good hearing; if you did not know the detail then it was your job to go back and sort it out. Best wishes for a brilliant future together and the State of Tasmania is better off for your having been here.