

The Honourable Steve Bracks

Premier of Victoria

Melbourne Town Hall

Thursday 15 June 2006

- Professor **David de Kretser** – Governor of Victoria
- Cabinet colleagues
- Current and former members of the Victorian and Commonwealth Parliaments
- Current and former State and Commonwealth Departmental Secretaries
- Members of Ian Little's family
- Members of the Victorian public service
- Ladies and gentlemen

It is with great sadness that I join you here today to pay tribute to an extraordinary Victorian. Ian Little.

Much has been written and said about Ian since he passed away at home ten days ago.

Those words tell the story of man of enormous substance.

An outstanding public sector leader who was highly regarded by politicians on both sides of the House.

A thoughtful manager.

A highly respected voice in the national economic debate.

And, in the words of his former colleagues, a great thinker and a great listener.

Ian Little was also a devoted family man.

A loving husband.

A father.

A son.

And a brother.

And also a great friend, colleague and mentor to the many people who are here today.

As we have heard, Ian Little made a huge impact during his time at the Reserve Bank and the ANZ.

His contribution to our Department of Treasury and Finance was no less impressive.

I first met Ian when I was Shadow Treasurer.

And I was immediately struck by his integrity, professionalism and objectivity.

In April 2000, when I delivered our Government's first Budget, as both Premier *and* Treasurer – Ian was my Head of Department.

And, during my subsequent years as Chair of our Expenditure Review Committee of Cabinet – it was Ian Little, sitting to my left, who I – together with the Committee – often turned to for advice.

Advice that was, undoubtedly, vital to the sound management of the Victorian economy under both our Government and the former Government.

One of Ian’s greatest traits was his good judgement in people.

And his unwavering faith in those people.

Indeed, he never missed a chance to put on record his deep appreciation of what he called the “day-in, day-out commitment” of the men and women at DTF – without whom he said none of the Department’s achievements would have been possible.

I have talked to a lot of people since Ian’s death.

One thing they repeatedly referred to was his great wisdom.

He was also regarded as a “gentleman”, in the finest sense of the term.

And his efforts to make sure that his staff were not overworked or burnt out – particularly after Budget time – were greatly appreciated.

It is this genuine concern for others – together with the dedication he brought to one of the highest positions in the Victorian Public Sector – that we are honouring today.

A legacy which we hope to build on in the years ahead.

That is why I am announcing that the Victorian Government and Monash University will establish the **Annual Ian Little Lecture**.

Ian was educated at Monash University – graduating with an Honours Degree in Economics in 1977.

All Victorian Government Departments and the Victoria Police have proposed to me that they contribute to an endowment to Monash to establish the lecture as a lasting tribute to Ian Little.

It is a proposal I wholeheartedly agree with.

The Lecture will be delivered each year at Monash by a distinguished scholar or leader in public policy or economic management.

A fitting tribute to Ian Little’s invaluable contribution to economics and public policy.

In conclusion, I offer my deepest condolences to the family of Ian Little.

His wife, Clair.

His daughters – Kristina and Natalie.

His mother – Jean.

And his sister – Helen.

Ian's death is a great loss to us all.