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Melbourne Town Hall
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Ian's untimely death has stunned and saddened us all.

For his wife, Clair; his daughters, Kristina and Natalie; his dear mother, Jean; and his sister, Helen, his death is a huge personal loss. We can relate to what they must feel and from our different perspectives, express to them our feelings of shared sorrow and loss.

Ian's family knew him in ways that few of the rest of us did. He was a very private man in many ways. But, yesterday's funeral service gave us a better understanding of Ian as a husband, father, son and brother. Clearly, he was caring, loving, involved and good. A loss to his entire family.

His passing is also a loss to the broad professional world in which he spent many years. By conventional public service standards, his career has been a huge success. In recent years, prominent and important leadership roles at the ANZ, a transition to the Department of Treasury and Finance as Deputy Secretary and then Secretary.

In Treasury he led the Department through many changes and reforms under successive Governments.

By the normal standards of assessing a CEO and a senior public servant, Ian delivered – good advice, strong management, leadership. His department ran effective budget processes, developed excellent economic and financial advice, led the way on public private partnerships and many other initiatives. The Department as Ian led it is, without doubt, an exemplary model for others. It is his singular achievement as a public service leader.

Yes, there was creativity and, as many of his SCAM colleagues will recall his saying, agility.

But all of this is not the real measure of Ian, as impressive as it is. What made him different was character. Giving the right advice and doing the right thing are important. In Ian's case however, he advised and acted with integrity - overwhelmingly for the right reason. I always felt that Ian did commit himself to doing the right thing for the right reason.

As an adviser he relied on analysis and thoughtfulness and was faithful to the paths these took him down.

As a manager he was fair, compassionate, concerned and respectful.

As a leader he was imaginative, thoughtful and open.

It is these qualities which people observed and, since his passing, have remarked upon. But we should understand that all these qualities rested on an ethical and intellectual consistency which defined his character.

Some of the exchanges Ian and I had during meetings were robust; many of the personal exchanges were otherwise. I knew something of his concerns and how he saw his life. In those personal conversations I never heard an inconsistency between the more public and the somewhat private. This, too, is further evidence of that consistency which defined his character.

And so, Ian defines, for me, that particular sort of public service leader who is so important to the continuing success of our society – strong in character, sharp of mind, committed to making a difference but democratically responsive to the Government of the day.

For his SCAM colleagues, for those in his broader professional world, he is a great loss and will be missed. Ian leaves a wonderful example for all of us, as he leaves for his family cherished memories and a loved one, greatly missed.