

87 Evans Street,
Shenton Park, 6008,
Western Australia.

RECEIVED

23 FEB 1999

Dear Shane,

Your letter arrived yesterday and was seen by Michelle and myself yesterday evening. I had already made a diary note for this morning to write to you and had agonised over what to say. Your letter seems to have simplified my task.

I have always believed in doing things for about five years with full commitment and then looking for new challenges. It is, of course, nice to be able to choose your time and not be pushed or knifed by those who owe you so much. However, no matter how the change is executed, one must simply judge the contribution on some scholarly basis removed from the worst of politics.

You have made a most significant contribution to the Northern Territory, not only in respect to internal matters, but also in respect to national and international perceptions of the standing and credibility of its leadership. For the first time both as a Minister and later as Chief Minister, you influenced national policy in a rational and thoughtful way.

Whatever you do now, retain your drive and enthusiasm and the willingness to take thoughtful risks. If I may add, I suggest you steer away from the comfort of surrounding yourself with those poorly qualified intellectually to challenge your enthusiasm for the intuitive and unable to do other than say "yes". These same people have the weakness of saying "yes" to anyone.

Michelle and I hope that our friendship continues and that when you visit Perth, for whatever purpose, you and all your family have time to spend with us. Josie, I am sure, has mixed feelings. However, I have no doubt, that your family life will be richer as you find the freedom to those things that matter and reject the trivial demands of living in politics.

Our love and best wishes to you all,

Sincerely,

Don

12 February 1999



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

MEMBER FOR PORT DARWIN

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30 April, 1999

Emeritus Professor Don Watts and
Mrs Michelle Watts
87 Evans Street
SHENTON PARK WA 6008

Dear Don and Michelle

Thank you for your letter of February 23. I apologise for not responding earlier but it has taken me some time to make my way through the avalanche of mail received following on from my retirement.

You were very generous in your observations that I had influenced national policy in a rational and thoughtful way. You can be assured that I will retain my drive and enthusiasm and I will always be a risk taker.

I always valued the time that we had together and you should never back away from your code name of 747. At least if you were going places, you were doing things and, invariably, in the interests of the nation and the Northern Territory.

Politics has its highs and lows, its rewards and disappointments. The failure of the Statehood Referendum was an obvious disappointment but I look back with a great deal of satisfaction from my time as a Minister, including 4 years as Chief Minister.

You can be assured that our friendship will continue into the future. You are both remembered very fondly in Darwin, particularly by Josephine and I.

You can be assured that our friendship will continue into the future. You are both remembered very fondly in Darwin, particularly by Josephine and I.

I now look forward to pursuing my own interests, including the possibility of serving as the Federal President of the Liberal Party.

My contact details are as follows:

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8 Zealandia Crescent

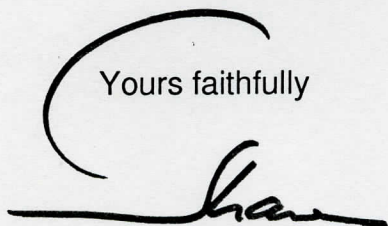
LARRAKEYAH NT 0820

Telephone (08) 8981 4834

Facsimile (08) 8981 9433.

Thank you again for your friendship and support throughout the years and be assured of my continuing friendship in the time ahead.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shane', with a large, sweeping flourish above it that curves from the left and underlines the signature.

Shane L. Stone