

SECONDARY SCHOOL ANZAC DAY SPEECHES

SECONDARY SCHOOL 1

ON THIS ANNIVERSARY OF THE LANDING OF THE AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND ARMY CORPS TROOPS AT GALLIPOLI, WE COMMEMORATE THE EVENT WITH A SPECIAL SADNESS BECAUSE FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE MEN WHO MADE THAT FATEFUL LANDING ON THE 25TH OF APRIL 1915 ARE ALL BUT GONE.

IT IS APPROPRIATE THEREFORE, THAT WE REVISIT THE REASONS WHY WE COMMEMORATE ANZAC DAY AND EXACTLY WHAT IT MEANS TO US AS A NATION AND AS INDIVIDUALS.

IT HAS OFTEN BEEN SAID THAT AUSTRALIA CAME OF AGE ON THE MORNING SOME 14 YEARS AFTER FEDERATION. THAT MAY BE TRUE AND PERHAPS THAT IS WHY WE HOLD THE DAY IN SUCH HIGH REGARD IN OUR NATIONAL CALENDAR. IT CERTAINLY IS NOT TO CELEBRATE A GREAT MILITARY VICTORY, BECAUSE THE LANDING AND SUBSEQUENT BATTLE AT GALLIPOLI WAS NOT THAT. THE ANZAC FORCE WAS LANDED AT THE WRONG PLACE AFTER SETTING OUT AT ABOUT 3.30AM FROM THE FLEET OF SHIPS ANCHORED OFFSHORE, ON A NIGHT SO DARK THAT NOT EVEN THE SHORELINE WAS VISIBLE. THEY INITIALLY ENCOUNTERED FAIRLY LIGHT RIFLE FIRE FROM THE TURKISH DEFENDERS BUT THE TURKISH POSITIONS

WERE QUICKLY REINFORCED AND BY MID MORNING THE AUSTRALIANS AND THE NEW ZEALANDERS WERE FACED WITH WITHERING RIFLE AND MACHINE GUN FIRE FROM ABOVE. AT THE END OF THAT FIRST DAY 2,000 MEN LAY DEAD FOR THE GAIN OF ABOUT SIX SQUARE KILOMETRES AND AN ADVANCE OF SCARCELY ONE KILOMETRE INLAND, WHERE THEY CLUNG DESPERATELY TO A SMALL FOOTHOLD. IT WAS A MILITARY DISASTER FROM ANY VIEWPOINT, EXCEPT FOR THE WELL-PLANNED AND SUCCESSFUL EVACUATION WHICH FOLLOWED SOME EIGHT MONTHS LATER. THE FINAL COUNT OF THE DEAD WAS 250,000, OF WHICH 10,000 WERE ANZAC TROOPS.

BUT OF COURSE IT IS JUST NOT GALLIPOLI WE REMEMBER ON THIS DAY, NOR IS IT EVEN THE FIRST WORLD WAR. THIS IS A DAY SET ASIDE FOR US TO COLLECTIVELY GIVE THANKS TO ALL THOSE MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE PUT THEIR LIVES AT RISK AND IN MANY CASES PAID THE SUPREME PRICE. WE ALSO ACKNOWLEDGE THE LOSSES AND SACRIFICES OF THEIR FAMILIES. THESE MEN AND WOMEN DID NOT START THE WARS IN WHICH THEY WERE INVOLVED, THAT WAS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE DAY AND OUR GOVERNMENT IS THE AGENT OF THE PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA. THE SAILORS, SOLDIERS AND AIRMEN AND WOMEN THEREFORE, WERE FIGHTING ON BEHALF OF ALL THE PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA.

WHAT THEY DID WAS TO OFFER THEIR VERY EXISTENCE WHEN THEY WERE TOLD THAT THEIR COUNTRY NEEDED THEM. I SAY THEIR COUNTRY, BUT IN MANY CASES, PARTICULARLY IN THAT FIRST WORLD WAR, THEY WERE DOING SO FOR A COUNTRY WHICH WAS NOT THEIRS BY BIRTH OR EVEN CITIZENSHIP, FOR MANY OF THEM HAD BEEN BORN OVERSEAS AND WERE AUSTRALIAN BY IMMIGRATION.

ANZAC DAY IS THEREFORE A DAY FOR ALL AUSTRALIANS, REGARDLESS OF RELIGION, RACIAL BACKGROUND OR EVEN PLACE OF BIRTH. IT IS A DAY TO COMMEMORATE THE BRAVERY AND SELF-SACRIFICE OF PAST AND PRESENT GENERATIONS. IT IS A DAY TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE SELFLESSNESS OF ALL THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN PREPARED TO LAY DOWN THEIR LIVES FOR AUSTRALIA SO THAT IT CAN BE A PLACE OF FREEDOM FOR ALL. ON THIS ANZAC DAY WE THANK AND RECOGNISE THOSE WHO SERVED IN THE FIRST AND SECOND WORLD WARS, KOREA, MALAYA, VIETNAM AND MORE RECENTLY, CAMBODIA, SOMALIA, RWANDA AND THE PERSIAN GULF.

ANZAC DAY IS NOT A DAY FOR HONORING WAR, FOR WAR IS NOT SOMETHING TO BE HONORED. WAR IS SOMETHING WHICH IS USED AS A LAST RESORT WHEN DIPLOMACY HAS FAILED AND IT IS USED BY A NATION TO SAFEGUARD ITS SOVEREIGNTY. WE DO HOWEVER, ON ANZAC DAY, HONOUR THE PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA WHO HAVE UNDERTAKEN WARFARE TO PROTECT THAT SOVEREIGNTY, NO MATTER HOW DISTASTEFUL IT MAY HAVE BEEN TO THEM PERSONALLY AND IN SPITE OF THE RISK OF LOSING THEIR LIVES.

TO THEM, ON ANZAC DAY, WE SAY:

'BE PROUD OF WHAT YOU HAVE DONE, AS WE ARE PROUD OF YOU. PARADE YOURSELVES CONFIDENT IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT YOUR DEEDS ARE APPRECIATED BY THE AUSTRALIANS FOR WHOM WHO SERVED, NO MATTER WHICH OF AUSTRALIA'S BATTLES YOU HAVE FOUGHT. YOU HAVE HELPED CREATE A TRADITION WHICH OUR RELATIVELY YOUNG NATION CAN DISPLAY WITH HONOUR IN ANY COMPANY. WE THANK YOU FOR ALL OF THIS'.

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WE MEET TODAY NOT TO CELEBRATE OR GLORIFY WAR, BUT RATHER TO REMEMBER THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED OUR COUNTRY DURING CONFLICT AND CRISIS.

WE REMEMBER TOO, THOSE WHO SERVED ON THE HOME FRONT, SUPPLYING MATERIAL AND MORAL STRENGTH TO OUR FIGHTING FORCES FOR THEIRS WAS NO LESSER SERVICE TO AUSTRALIA.

ON ANOXIC DAY, WE SALUTE NOT ONLY THE SPIRIT OF THE ANZACS BUT, IN PAYING TRIBUTE TO THEM, WE TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO DEDICATE OURSELVES TO STRIVING FOR OUR COUNTRY AS THEY DID AND UPHOLDING THEIR FINEST QUALITIES OF COURAGE, COMMITMENT, ENDURANCE AND MATESHIP.

ANZAC DAY IS MORE THAN A NATIONAL HOLIDAY, BUT RATHER A FUNDAMENTAL AUSTRALIAN TRADITION. WHEREVER AUSTRALIANS OR NEW ZEALANDERS ARE TO BE FOUND TODAY, IT IS LIKELY THAT AN ANZAC DAY SERVICE OF SOME DESCRIPTION IS TAKING PLACE. SUCH IS THE FEELING THAT AUSTRALIANS HAVE FOR THE 25TH OF APRIL.

ANZAC DAY IS NOT MERELY A DATE, OR SOME REMOTE CAMPAIGN, BUT RATHER A SPIRIT. IT IS A TIME TO REFLECT ON THE QUALITIES OF PAST GENERATIONS OF AUSTRALIANS WHO IN HARDSHIP DISPLAYED COURAGE, DISCIPLINE, SELF-SACRIFICE, SELF-RELIANCE, RESOURCEFULNESS AND FRIENDSHIP. EVEN AS THE NUMBERS OF EX-SERVICEMEN AND WOMEN GROW SMALLER, THE SPIRIT OF ANZAC DAY, WHICH WAS BEQUEATHED TO US FROM BATTLEFIELDS LONG AGO, WILL LIVE ON BECAUSE IT IS A REFLECTION OF THE VERY HEART OF OUR NATION.

EVERY NATION REMEMBERS SOME PAST EVENT, SOME BATTLE, OR SOME DEFINING MOMENT OF HISTORY. OUR DEFINING MOMENT CAME IN 1915 AT GALLIPOLI, A CAMPAIGN WHICH, IF NOT AN OUTRIGHT DEFEAT, WAS CERTAINLY NOT A SUCCESS.

HISTORY SHOWS THAT, FOR A PEACE LOVING PEOPLE, WE HAVE BEEN A FORMIDABLE ADVERSARY, WHEN STIRRED TO ACTION AND ALSO REMARKABLY SUCCESSFUL AT THE BUSINESS OF WAR. ON EVERY OCCASION WHEN AUSTRALIANS HAVE BEEN CALLED UPON TO PROTECT FREEDOM, THEY HAVE DONE SO GENEROUSLY, EFFECTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY.

GALLIPOLI WAS NOT THE FIRST OCCASION ON WHICH AUSTRALIANS HAD SERVED OVERSEAS. IN 1885, NEW SOUTH WALES SENT A CONTINGENT TO THE SUDAN WAR AND AS THE TWENTIETH CENTURY DAWNED, AUSTRALIAN CONTINGENTS ALSO SERVED IN THE BOER WAR. ALTHOUGH AUSTRALIANS DIED IN ALL OF THESE WARS, NONE HAD THE INTERNATIONAL OR DOMESTIC IMPACT OF THE GALLIPOLI CAMPAIGN.

THE YOUNG MEN OF GALLIPOLI WERE THE FIRST ANZACS, ORDINARY YOUNG AUSTRALIANS DOING THEIR BEST IN A CAMPAIGN OF INTENSE FEROCITY. THEIR CASUALTIES, HERE HORRENDOUS, NEARLY 8,000 AUSTRALIANS WERE KILLED, AND 78,000 WOUNDED, AND TO WHAT END?

THE CAMPAIGN WAS A FAILURE, AND YET OF ALL THE BATTLEFIELDS ON WHICH AUSTRALIANS HAVE DIED, IT IS THE DISASTROUS GALLIPOLI CAMPAIGN THAT HAS COME TO SYMBOLISE THE AUSTRALIAN SOLDIER'S COURAGE, DETERMINATION, FIGHTING PROWESS, HUMOUR AND MATESHIP. THE ESSENCE OF GALLIPOLI WAS THAT IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY AND POTENTIAL DEFEAT, THE AUSTRALIAN SPIRIT TRIUMPHED.

GALLIPOLI WAS NOT THE ONLY BATTLE OF THE GREAT WAR. AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE WAR A QUARTER MILLION AUSTRALIANS FROM A NATION OF ONLY 5 MILLION HAD BEEN CASUALTIES, AND SIXTY THOUSAND AUSTRALIANS HAD BEEN KILLED; A TRAGIC AVERAGE OF ONE PERSON FOR EVERY SEVENTEEN IN OUR POPULATION, EITHER DEAD OR INJURED AS A RESULT OF WAR.

I PAUSE TO REFLECT WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN HAD WE NOT LOST SUCH A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF OUR FINEST YOUNG MEN:

- . THE RELATIONSHIPS AND FAMILIES THAT WERE NOT ABLE TO DEVELOP;
- . THE POTENTIAL LEADERS OF INDUSTRY, TRADE AND COMMERCE THAT WERE LOST; AND
- . THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THAT WAS STYMIED.

THE PRIDE AND GRIEF OF AUSTRALIA FOLLOWING GALLIPOLI FORMED A BOND, SO STRONG THAT IT MADE A STATEMENT TO THE WORLD THAT WE HAD COME OF AGE AND THAT OUR ARMED FORCES AND OUR PEOPLE WERE TRULY OF ONE NATION. BY COMING TOGETHER ON 25 APRIL EACH YEAR, THIS SPIRIT OF NATIONAL UNITY IS REKINDLED.

ANZAC DAY REMINDS US THAT WARS ARE TO BE AVOIDED, BUT WHEN NECESSARY WE MUST STAND UP FOR OUR VALUES.

IT REQUIRES US TO REFLECT ON THE PAST WITH PRIDE, BUT ALSO TO LOOK AHEAD AND BUILD ON THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF OUR PREDECESSORS. BY DISPLAYING THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ANZAC SPIRIT, COMRADESHIP, UNSELFISHNESS, COURAGE AND TENACITY OF SPIRIT, WE CAN ENRICH THE AUSTRALIAN TRADITION.

WE HAVE THE NEED OF THE QUALITIES OF THE ANZACS STILL, AND WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO DRAW ON THEM, FOR THEY CAN ONLY MAKE OUR COMMUNITY BETTER AND OUR NATION MORE CONFIDENT. LET US ALL REMEMBER ANZAC. IN PARTICULAR, WE SHOULD PASS ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE OCCASION TO OUR YOUTH.

THE ANZAC SPIRIT EXISTS IN EACH OF US SO THEREFORE LET US BE GUIDED BY THE ANZAC SPIRIT IN FACING THE NATIONAL AND PERSONAL CHALLENGES AHEAD, AND LET US STRIVE TO BE WORTHY OF THE MEMORY OF THOSE WE HONOUR TODAY.

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ANOTHER YEAR, ANOTHER ANZAC DAY: ANOTHER TIME TO PAUSE AND REFLECT ON WHY WE, AND THOUSANDS LIKE US GATHER AT SERVICES SIMILAR TO THIS THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND. THE NUMBER OF VETERANS DWINDLE YEAR BY YEAR BUT THE MEMORY OF THEIR COURAGE; THEIR DETERMINATION AND THEIR FRIENDSHIP WILL LAST FOREVER. IT IS REKINDLED AROUND THIS TIME EVERY YEAR BY THOSE WHO ARE LEFT BEHIND. IT IS PASSED ON TO SONS, DAUGHTERS, AND GRANDCHILDREN. SOMETIMES IT MAY NOT BE APPARENT IN THE YOUNG – BUT REST ASSURED IT IS THERE.

THE FIRST ANZACS GATHERED IN THEIR THOUSANDS TO 'ANSWER THE CALL'. IN AUGUST 1914, WHEN GREAT BRITAIN DECLARED WAR ON GERMANY, MEN – YOUNG MEN – SOME NO MORE THAN BOYS, RUSHED TO JOIN THE LONG QUEUES AT ARMY BARRACKS AROUND AUSTRALIA. SOME BELIEVED THEY HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO PROTECT ENGLAND FROM INVASION. SOME THOUGHT IT WAS A ONCE IN A LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY TO TRAVEL, WHILE OTHERS JUST DIDN'T WANT TO MISS OUT ON SOMETHING EXCITING. 'DON'T WORRY', THEY TOLD THEIR MOTHERS, WIVES AND GIRLFRIENDS, 'IT WILL BE OVER BY CHRISTMAS'.

THE FOLLOWING YEAR ON THE MORNING OF APRIL 25TH, THESE ANZACS PREPARED TO LAUNCH THEMSELVES AGAINST THE TURKS AT GALLIPOLI. CAN YOU IMAGINE THE FEAR; THE NERVOUSNESS; THE EXCITEMENT – THE DOUBTS THESE YOUNG AUSTRALIANS FELT. BY THE END OF THAT FIRST DAY, 2,000 ANZACS LAY DEAD. A WEEK LATER 6,500 ANZACS HAD BEEN KILLED OR WOUNDED. BUT THE COURAGE, THE DETERMINATION AND THEIR MATESHIP KEPT THEM TOGETHER. THEY HAD WON THE FIRST OF MANY BATTLES BUT AT A TERRIBLE COST. FROM GALLIPOLI THROUGH THE WESTERN FRONT TO THE MIDDLE EAST, WHERE THE AUSTRALIAN LIGHT HORSEMEN CONTINUED THE BATTLE. THEIR ANZAC SPIRIT SAW THEM THROUGH SOMETIMES HORRIFIC CONDITIONS.

WHEN THE 'GREAT WAR' ENDED IN NOVEMBER 1918, OVER 61,000 ANZACS WOULD NEVER SEE AUSTRALIA'S SHORE AGAIN. BUT THEIR SPIRIT CAME HOME – THE SPIRIT OF ANZAC. THROUGHOUT THE YEARS MANY MORE YOUNG AUSTRALIANS WOULD ANSWER THE CALL. AGAIN IN 1939, THE GERMAN EMPIRE STRUCK TOWARDS WHAT MANY STILL CONSIDERED 'THE MOTHERLAND'.

TO OUR NORTH, A 'YELLOW PERIL' WAS CONFRONTING OUR OWN HOMELAND. THE ANZAC SPIRIT FLARED AGAIN. YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN ANSWERED THE CALL TO HELP THOSE IN NEED. THEY DID SO BECAUSE THEY BELIEVED IN WHAT THEY WERE DOING AND HAD THE COURAGE, THE DETERMINATION AND THAT ANZAC SPIRIT.

WE IN AUSTRALIA HAVE NEVER HAD OUR COMMUNITIES DEMOLISHED, OR OUR FREEDOM REMOVED. TO SOME, WAR HAS ALWAYS BEEN A LONG WAY OFF – NOT OUR CONCERN. THE WORLD IS A MUCH SMALLER PLACE THESE DAYS. WITHIN A DAY'S TRAVEL YOU COULD BE IN SYDNEY – OR ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD. WE DO LIVE IN A LUCKY COUNTRY, BUT WHILE WE STRIVE FOR PEACE ON EARTH, WE MUST BE READY TO ANSWER THE CALL IN TIME OF NEED.

THE THOUSANDS OF YOUNG ANZACS WHO FOUGHT FOR FREEDOM AND JUSTICE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD DID SO THAT GENERATIONS TO COME COULD LIVE WITHOUT THE HORRORS OF WAR. THAT THEY COULD ENJOY THEIR FREEDOM AND THE KIND OF LIFE ALL ANZACS WISHED FOR.

AT THIS SERVICE TODAY, REMEMBER THE ANZACS. REMEMBER THEIR COURAGE, THEIR DETERMINATION AND THEIR SPIRIT. TO THE VETERANS – HOLD YOUR HEADS HIGH – YOU HAVE SERVED YOUR COUNTRY WELL. TO THE FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF DEPARTED COMRADES, REMEMBER THEY GAVE THEIR LIVES SO THAT YOU COULD SURVIVE. TO THE YOUNG, REMEMBER THAT THIS WORLD IS BEING PASSED TO YOUR HANDS. USE IT WELL AND REMEMBER, THAT WITHOUT THE SACRIFICES OF THE ANZACS, YOU MAY NOT HAVE HAD A WORLD SUCH AS YOU KNOW IT IN WHICH TO LIVE.

THROUGH THE MISTS OF YEARS – THROUGH THE GULFS OF TWILIGHT – COULD WE BUT LISTEN HARD ENOUGH, WE MIGHT CATCH SOME MESSAGE OF HOPE AND ENCOURAGEMENT FROM THOSE WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES FOR OUR FREEDOM. A MESSAGE WHICH MIGHT HELP US TO CREATE A BETTER WORLD THAN THAT IN WHICH THEY LIVED.

WE MIGHT HEAR 'WE ARE THE DEAD.... TO YOU FROM FAILING HANDS WE THROW THE TORCH; BE YOURS TO HOLD IT HIGH. IF YE BREAK FAITH WITH US WHO DIE, WE SHALL NOT SLEEP.....

KEEP THE SPIRIT OF THE ANZACS ALIVE.

SECONDARY SCHOOL 4

ON THE 25TH OF APRIL 1915, A GROUP OF VOLUNTEER AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND SOLDIERS FOUND THEMSELVES WADING ASHORE BEFORE DAWN AT A SMALL BEACH ON THE GALLIPOLI PENINSULA IN TURKEY; NOW KNOWN AS ANZAC COVE. THEY WERE MEMBERS OF THE AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND ARMY CORPS, AND CALLED THEMSELVES ANZACS. MANY OF THESE MEN WERE ONLY TEENAGERS, SOME AS YOUNG AS 16. ALL WERE ANXIOUS TO PROVE THAT AS THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THEIR NEW NATION THEY WOULD NOT BE FOUND LACKING IN COURAGE AND MILITARY ABILITY; AND THAT THEY COULD ACQUIT THEMSELVES AT LEAST AS WELL AS THE SOLDIERS OF OLDER, MORE ESTABLISHED COUNTRIES OF EUROPE. THE EVENTS OF THE FIRST ANZAC DAY ARE THE UNBREAKABLE AND PERMANENT FOUNDATION FOR OUR NATION BUILDING. THE QUESTION OF NATIONAL IDENTITY IS VERY IMPORTANT.

THE AUSTRALIAN NATION WAS AT THE TIME OF GALLIPOLI ONLY 14 YEARS OLD; AND IT HAD YET TO FORM AN IDENTITY TO CALL ITS OWN. IT BELIEVED IT HAD ACHIEVED NOTHING GREAT OR HEROIC FROM THE NATIONAL STANDPOINT, BUT WAS ABOUT TO BE CALLED UPON TO DO SO.

FOR EIGHT MONTHS AFTER THE FIRST LANDINGS, THOSE YOUNG ANZACS UNDERWENT A 'TRIAL BY ORDEAL'. 36,000 AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND SOLDIERS WERE KILLED OR WOUNDED AT GALLIPOLI.

IN THAT TERRIBLE BATTLE AT GALLIPOLI, AND IN THE ASSOCIATED HOSPITALS AND TRAINING CAMPS, YOUNG AUSTRALIANS EARNED A REPUTATION FOR COURAGE, SELF-RELIANCE AND MATESHIP. THE EXPERIENCE DREW AUSTRALIANS TOGETHER AS A NATION AND ESTABLISHED AN AUSTRALIAN CHARACTER AND SET STANDARDS FOR ALL THE SOLDIERS, SAILORS AND AIRMEN WHO FOLLOWED THEM IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR, AND IN ALL SUBSEQUENT WARS.

AT GALLIPOLI SO MANY YEARS AGO, THOSE YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN FOUND OUT WHAT IT IS TO BE AN AUSTRALIAN. OUR VAST DRY COUNTRY WITH ITS HARSH BEAUTY, OPEN SKIES AND TINY POPULATION HELPS SHAPE HEALTHY, CONFIDENT, COMPETITIVE AND FREEDOM LOVING INDIVIDUALS WHO; WITH GOOD LEADERSHIP AND HIGH MOTIVATION, CAN MORE THAN MATCH THE BEST PEOPLE IN THE WORLD IN WHATEVER THEY DO.

I BELIEVE THIS IS WHY AUSTRALIANS COME TOGETHER EVERY ANZAC DAY. WE DO IT TO REMEMBER THE ANZACS AND THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS; AND WE SHOULD REMEMBER THEM NOT AS OLD SOLDIERS FROM A FORGOTTEN WAR, BUT AS THE YOUNG AUSTRALIANS THEY WERE IN 1915. WE MUST CELEBRATE THEIR TRIUMPH OVER GREAT ADVERSITY. THEY SET VERY HIGH STANDARDS FOR THOSE WHO FOLLOWED THEM.

THE ANZACS THOUGHT OF THEMSELVES AS AUSTRALIANS, ALTHOUGH MANY COULD TRACE THEIR ORIGINS BACK TO OTHER COUNTRIES AND DIFFERENT CULTURES. THEY UNDERSTOOD THAT WHERE WE COME FROM TO LIVE IN THIS GREAT COUNTRY IS OF FAR LESS IMPORTANCE THAN WHAT WE BECOME IN TIME: AUSTRALIANS.

OVER THE YEARS THE NUMBERS OF THE WORLD WAR ONE AND TWO VETERANS WHO SURVIVE TO MARCH ON ANZAC DAY HAS REDUCED DRAMATICALLY. IN TIME, ALL THE VETERANS OF MORE RECENT WARS WILL ALSO DISAPPEAR. IF WE WISH TO REMEMBER INTO THE NEXT CENTURY THE EXAMPLE OF SERVICE TO THE NATION THEY SET FOR US SINCE APRIL 1915 WE SHOULD REPLACE THOSE MEN AND WOMEN WITH THEIR CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN, GREAT GRANDCHILDREN AND FRIENDS.....PEOPLE LIKE YOURSELVES.

THE AUSTRALIAN CHARACTERISTICS CONFIRMED AT GALLIPOLI MUST NEVER BE FORGOTTEN, AND WE NEED TO REINFORCE THEM IN OUR EVERY DAY LIVES. THE ANZACS SHOWED US THAT AUSTRALIANS HAVE A UNIQUE QUALITY WHICH ALLOWS US TO HOLD OUR HEADS HIGH IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. WE HAVE THE ABILITY TO FACE CHALLENGES TOGETHER AND OVERCOME THEM, TO PUT COMMUNITY BEFORE SELF, TO BE COURAGEOUS, DETERMINED, SELF-RELIANT AND STRONG COMPETITORS.

THEIR ACTIONS FORGED WHAT HAS BECOME KNOWN AS THE ANZAC SPIRIT AND THAT SPIRIT HAS BEEN THE DRIVING FORCE BEHIND ALL AUSTRALIAN SERVICEMEN AND WOMEN EVER SINCE...LATER IN WW1 AND WW2, KOREA, MALAYSIA, BORNEO, AND VIETNAM, ALL OF WHICH HAPPENED LONG BEFORE YOU WERE BORN. IT IS ALSO PRESENT IN THE PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS OUR SERVICE PEOPLE UNDERTAKE TODAY.

THIS IS THE SPIRIT OF ANZAC; HANDED DOWN OVER THE YEARS FROM ONE GENERATION OF AUSTRALIANS TO THE NEXT AND NOW TO YOU. IN RECENT YEARS THE SPIRIT OF ANZAC HAS CAPTURED THE IMAGINATION OF SO MANY YOUNG PEOPLE.

FOR THE SAKE OF THE FUTURE OF THIS GREAT COUNTRY, WE NEED TO
CARRY THE SPIRIT OF ANZAC WITH US ALWAYS AS WE CONTINUE THE TASK
OF BUILDING A BETTER AUSTRALIA FOR YOUR FUTURE.