

SPEECH FOR 3 BDE FAREWELL PARADE

15 MAY 09

Minister, Premier, Federal, State and Local government representatives, distinguished guests, and members of the third brigade. Let me start by congratulating you on an excellent parade. I am sure those watching this morning would like to join me in showing our appreciation.

On your behalf may i also extend a very special welcome to the parents, relatives and friends of these highly skilled soldiers on parade here today, especially to the many who have travelled great distances to be here. The support, interest and encouragement you have provided your sons and daughters throughout their careers, and their pre-deployment training for their missions, is very much appreciated. of course that continued support will be a key element of the operational success we all expect in the coming months

As the chief of army I am delighted to be able to join you and do two simple things. Firstly to farewell you as you depart on your deployments overseas and thank you for your preparedness to serve our nation, and secondly to the families.

You are about to embark on missions that will challenge you – physically, professionally, mentally. You will be operating in environments that are physically austere. You will be required to work

among, and with, complex populations of people who belong to different tribes and ethnic groups.

You will be far from your normal family support bases and normal forms of recreation and relaxation, but you have been very well prepared for these challenges.

Your commanders have ensured that you have received the individual and collective training to prepare you for your missions. You have been independently certified as ready to deploy.

The army has provided you with the best possible equipment and vehicles with which you will be operating.

You have established spirit in your teams – from section to unit level. It is this spirit that will get you through the hard times. You will all have hard days during your deployments. It is the support from you and from your mates in your teams that will see you through and you have been given good well defined missions to accomplish. In East Timor, you will be supporting the gains made over the last decade by providing peace and stability at the request of the government of that nation.

In Afghanistan, as part of the wider NATO force, you will be providing security to terrorised and disrupted communities through the conduct of a variety of training and reconstruction operations.

Regardless of the mission, your task is to ensure that Australia's interests are protected and supported through the provision of military capabilities and the promotion of international security and stability.

Many of your predecessors have already served in these locations. You must use their experience and their lessons to your benefit. While you have learned much during your pre-deployment phase, the hard-won experience of those who have gone before you will be invaluable and then, when it is time for you to return home, it is your obligation to pass on what you have learned – to those who will follow you, and to the wider army.

You are more than ready to join the ranks of the current generation of Anzacs. by your actions you will sustain the spirit of selfless service, mateship, perseverance and I fully expect to see the usual touch of aussie larrikinism that is at the heart of the ethos and values of our army.

I am proud of you. You embody our army values of courage, initiative and teamwork and you are ready to face the challenges of the coming months.

I wish you good luck on your missions, a safe return and good soldiering.