

QUT REMEMBRANCE DAY DEDICATION

11 NOV 17

PROFESSOR CAROL DICKENSEN, PROFESSOR MANDY THOMAS, PROFESSOR PATRIK WIKSTROM, VETERANS, SERVING MEMBERS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, GIRLS AND BOYS, IT IS A HONOUR TO BE HERE WITH YOU TO REMEMBER AUSTRALIA'S FALLEN AND ALSO TO RE-DEDICATE THIS UNIQUE MEMORIAL ON A QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY CAMPUS SIGNIFICANTLY LINKED TO OUR PROUD MILITARY HERITAGE.

TODAY WE COMMEMORATE THE 99TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SIGNING OF THE ARMISTICE IN 1918 WHICH BOUGHT TEMPORARY PEACE TO THE WORLD AFTER FOUR YEARS OF SAVAGE CONFLICT. ORIGINALLY CALLED ARMISTICE DAY, THE CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES AT THE END OF WWII SAW THE AUSTRALIAN AND BRITISH GOVERNMENTS CHANGE THE NAME TO REMEMBRANCE DAY AS AN APPROPRIATE TITLE FOR ONE DAY EACH YEAR WHEN WE WOULD COMMEMORATE ALL WHO DIED IN WAR. FROM GALLIPOLI THROUGH THE BATTLEFIELDS OF FLANDERS, THE DESERTS OF NORTH AFRICA, JUNGLES OF PNG, MALAYA, VIETNAM AND TO THE VALLEYS OF ORUZGAN, REMEMBRANCE DAY IS THAT ONE DAY ON WHICH AUSTRALIA REMEMBERS, REFLECTS AND COMMEMORATES THE SACRIFICE OF THOSE WHO DIED OR OTHERWISE SUFFERED IN AUSTRALIA'S CAUSE IN WARS, WAR-LIKE CONFLICTS AND ONGOING PEACE OPERATIONS.

IT IS WORTHWHILE REFLECTING A LITTLE ON WHAT REMEMBRANCE IS AND WHAT WE SHOULD ACTUALLY BE REMEMBERING ON A DAY LIKE TODAY. MEMORIES ARE USUALLY VERY PERSONAL THINGS, BORN OF PERSONAL EXPERIENCE AND CONTACT. WITH THAT INDIVIDUAL INVOLVEMENT MEMORIES ARE STRONG AND RELEVANT TO EACH OF US, THEY CHANGE LIVES AND SHAPE BEHAVIOUR. WORLD WAR ONE WAS AUSTRALIAS MOST COSTLY CONFLICT IN TERMS OF CASUALTY AND INJURY. OUT OF A POPULATION OF 5 MILLION APPROXIMATELY 418 THOUSAND ENLISTED AND 62 THOUSAND WERE KILLED IN ACTION. A FEW QUICK CALCULATIONS WILL TELL YOU THAT MEANS OVER 8% OF THE ENTIRE POPULATION SERVED AND THAT 1.2% OF THE POPULATION GAVE THEIR LIVES. IN THE COMMUNITY OF THE DAY THERE WAS NO ONE THAT WAS NOT TOUCHED BY

SACRIFICE, TRAUMA AND GRIEF. ARMISTICE DAY AND SUBSEQUENTLY REMEMBRANCE DAY BACK IN THESE TIMES WERE BEING REMEMBERED BY PEOPLE WITH DIRECT EXPERIENCE OF THE HORRENDOUS CONSEQUENCE OF WAR. THEY WERE NOT JUST REMEMBERING THE FALLEN, THEY WERE REMEMBERING WHY HUMANITY MUST STRIVE NOT TO EMBARK UPON UNLIMITED CONFLICT. IT WAS FRESH IN THEIR MINDS AND CARVED INTO THEIR SOULS.

IN RECENT TIMES THE WORLD HAS AVOIDED LARGE SCALE GLOBAL CONFLICT AND EXISTENTIAL INDUSTRIALISED WARFARE – THANKS BE TO GOD. TODAY WE ARE A DIFFERENT NATION WITH AN ARMS LENGTH UNDERSTANDING OF THE HORRIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF WAR. WE HAVE A POPULATION OF OVER 24 MILLION AND A STANDING DEFENCE FORCE OF LESS THAN 60 000. THIS YEAR WILL SEE SOME TWO THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED AND FIFTY DEFENCE PERSONNEL DEPLOY ON OPERATIONS. THAT IS LESS THAN .009% OF THE POPULATION WITH DIRECT EXPERIENCE WITH MODERN MILITARY CONFLICT. SINCE 2002 WE HAVE LOST 41 SOLDIERS IN COMBAT RELATED DEATHS AND HAVE SUFFERED 262 CASUALTIES. WITH THE EXCEPTIONS OF THE FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF THESE MEN AND WOMEN FOR WHOM THE SACRIFICE, GRIEF AND CONSEQUENCE IS AS SHARP AND BITTER AS ANYONE IN ANY TIME, OUR SOCIETY HAS EXCHANGED PERSONAL EXPERIENCE AND CONTACT FOR A MORE INSTITUTIONAL REMEMBRANCE. ONE THAT DUTIFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE FALLEN BUT IS WITHOUT THE SHARPENING FOCUS OF INDIVIDUAL LOSS OR UNDERSTANDING DERIVED FROM INVOLVEMENT.

I THINK THIS IS ACTUALLY A GOOD THING AND WE CAN CONSIDER OUR SOCIETY FORTUNATE TO HAVE HAD SUCH A LIMITED EXPOSURE TO WAR FOR SUCH A LONG TIME. BUT FOR MOST OF US TO STAY IN TOUCH WITH WHAT IS HAPPENING AROUND THE WORLD IN THE MANY AREAS OF CONFLICT AND FOR US TO ENSURE THAT WE CONTINUE TO STRIVE TO AVOID UNLIMITED WARFARE WE NEED INFORMATION TO REPLACE OUR LACK OF PERSONAL CONTACT. INCREASINGLY THE MEDIA IS PROVIDING THIS NEXUS BETWEEN AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY AND THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF CONFLICT AND THE MEMORIAL WE ARE REDEDICATING TODAY ALSO PAYS TRIBUTE TO THE JOURNALISTS KILLED IN WAR. THE MEMORIAL IS SET IN SANDSTONE FROM A PREVIOUS QUT BUILDING.

IT COMMEMORATES ALL OF THE FALLEN AND WILL HOPEFULLY INSPIRE FUTURE STUDENTS OF THE CREATIVE INDUSTRY FACULTY WHO WILL TRAIN AS JOURNALISTS AND FUTURE FILM MAKERS. IT IS LOCATED IN PARER PLACE, NAMED AFTER THE FAMOUS WORLD WAR 2 CAMERAMAN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ICONIC KOKODA FOOTAGE. DAMIEN PARER WAS KILLED IN ACTION IN 1944 BY JAPANESE MACHINE GUN FIRE AS HE FILMED ADVANCING FORCES IN MICRONESIA. HIS SACRIFICE BROUGHT THE AUSTRALIAN POPULATION THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT HAPPENED AT KOKODA AND IS AN AMAZING EXAMPLE OF HOW IMPORTANT THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN HELPING OUR SOCIETY UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY ARE NOT EXPERIENCING.

DESPITE OUR CURRENT PROSPERITY AND SECURITY WE LIVE IN VERY UNCERTAIN TIMES. THE WHOLE WORLD HAS EXAMPLES OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF HIGH END UNLIMITED WARFARE NOW IN MOSUL AND SYRIA, WE HAVE NUCLEAR WEAPONS BEING TESTED AND SABERS BEING RATTLED ON THE KOREAN PENEINSULA AND WE HAVE ISIS ATTEMPTING TO ESTABLISH FOOTPRINTS IN THE PHILLIPINES AND BEYOND. THE PRICE OF PEACE IS ETERNAL VIGILANCE BUT IT IS ALSO CAREFUL REMEMBRANCE. REMEMBRANCE OF THOSE THAT GAVE THEIR LIVES IN THE SERVICE OF OUR NATION AND REMEMBRANCE THAT OUR LEGACY TO THEIR SACRIFICE IS TO ENSURE WE DO OUT UTMOST TO ENSURE THAT WE DO NOT EXPOSE CURRENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS TO THE HORRIFIC CONSEQUENCES OF MODERN WARFARE.

LEST WE FORGET.