



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

National Memorial Walk

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central— ALP) (Premier) (9.43 a.m.): The Royal Australian Regiment has a proud record of service to this nation. Since it was formed in 1948, its personnel have served in hot spots across the globe: Japan, Korea, Malaya, South Vietnam, Cambodia, Somalia, Borneo and Sarawak, to name just some. That service has come at a cost: 685 soldiers of the regiment have fallen in foreign fields.

But those soldiers have not been forgotten. Their sacrifice is being honoured in a very special way at Gallipoli Barracks in Enoggera. Late in 1996, the Royal Australian Regiment Association began to build a National Memorial Walk at the barracks. Two years and a lot of hard work later, the walk consists of a landscaped area, trees with name plaques at the base of each, and a commemorative building designed to hold an honour roll of the dead.

In the 1997-1998 Budget, the State Government donated \$27,378 to the walk to pay for the manufacture and placement of gunmetal name plaques at the base of each tree. The 1,200 native trees in the walk were kindly donated by the Brisbane City Council.

I am pleased to be able to tell honourable members that tomorrow I will be handing over another cheque for \$23,290 to Major General Murray Blake, the chairman of the walk committee. This money will cover the costs of the honour roll for the commemorative building.

Sunday will be a proud day for the regiment. The Governor-General, Sir William Deane, will officially open the National Memorial Walk in a ceremony which celebrates the regiment's 50th anniversary. It seems to me to be most fitting that, while celebrating with the living, the regiment—the major infantry unit of the Australian Army—is remembering its brave dead. From Sunday the walk will be open to the public and it will be used on memorial occasions such as Anzac Day and Vietnam Veterans Day. I urge all honourable members and their constituents to take the time to visit the walk.
