



Speech by

Dr PETER PRENZLER

MEMBER FOR LOCKYER

Hansard 25 November 1999

ANZAC DAY AMENDMENT BILL

Dr PRENZLER (Lockyer—ONP) (12.30 p.m.): I rise this afternoon to put on record my support for the Anzac Day Amendment Bill 1999. I do not think I can stress enough the importance of funding such as that which the Anzac Day Trust provides. I am sure all members would agree that the highest honour should be afforded to those who fought for our freedom in the various wars. These ex-servicemen and women and their dependents should never be forgotten and should never be seen as a burden upon our society. Funds such as those that the Anzac Day Trust provides are always moneys well spent. It allows the rest of us to give a little back to those who gave so much for our country.

The Anzac Day Amendment Bill 1999 provides a little security to those organisations that have depended upon the Anzac Day Trust. Changing the basis of the fund from that of a proportion of various taxes to a grant indexed to the CPI will most certainly provide much more security to organisations such as the RSL, Legacy and TPI service organisations. The grant will allow trustees of the fund to plan ahead. This should lead to greater efficiency and better use of resources and should lead to better benefits in the long run. It should also allow some of the trustees to sleep a little bit more peacefully each year when the deposit is due, not to mention those who depend on the fund for their quality of life. I am sure that this security is invaluable to those people, and I support and encourage it completely.

When I first started reading this Bill my only concern was making such a change and how the sum of the grant would be determined. If anything, organisations such as the Anzac Day Trust rarely have too much money and, more often than not, could do with a little bit more. I was concerned that a change to the grant may lead to the trust receiving less money in the long run than would have been the case had this Bill not been introduced. I am pleased to see that the calculation of the grant is based upon past averages. Such a historic basis is a very fair way of determining the sum of the grant, and I am sure it is acceptable to those administering the fund. The grant linkage to the CPI is also necessary and essential to ensure that such a good cause is not short-changed due to the passing of this Bill. The volatility of taxation makes it a bad basis upon which to contribute money to important funds such as the Anzac Day Trust Fund. I believe that this Bill has addressed that problem and that it does so in a fair and very practical way.

As the president of the small Kalbar sub-branch of the Returned Services League of Australia, I can assure members here today that the Anzac Day Trust funding does become an important part of our sub-branch's financial input, as I am sure it does to many other small sub-branches throughout Queensland. Kalbar is only a small sub-branch, with some 30 members, and unfortunately we have no poker machine profits to rely on. I take this opportunity to put on record my thanks and in particular the thanks of the secretary of the Kalbar sub-branch, Mr Greg Smith, to the Anzac Day Trust Fund for the kind donation of \$1,000 that it made to our sub-branch this year to help us to erect a war memorial at Kalbar. That is something that Kalbar has never had, and we thank the trust fund very much for that.

I reiterate my support for this Bill and the securing of funds to support such a worthwhile and necessary cause: aiding ex-servicemen and women and their families. I commend the Minister and the Government for not allowing a fund as important as the Anzac Day Trust Fund to suffer through insufficient funding. I trust that the various organisations that benefit from the trust agree with the sum allocated in this Bill; I know that they do. Again, I say that funds such as those that the Anzac Day Trust

provide allow the rest of us to give a little bit back to those who gave so much to us. I take this opportunity once again to thank the Minister for bringing this Bill into the House. I commend it to the House.
