



Speech by

JOHN ENGLISH

MEMBER FOR REDLANDS

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ANNIVERSARY OF PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENCE

Mr ENGLISH (Redlands—ALP) (10.28 a.m.): On Sunday, 17 June, the honourable member for Cleveland, the honourable member for Capalaba and I attended a function to celebrate the 103rd anniversary of Philippine independence. This function was organised by AFFAIR—the Australian Filipino Families Association in Redlands. I would like to thank Diane Bitossi, the president of AFFAIR, and her executive for the invitation to join with the Filipino community in celebrating their independence.

During the function we witnessed a mini-play highlighting the Philippines' struggle for independence from Spain. We also witnessed the moving artistry and athleticism of the Nalinac Variety Dancers. The Nalinac dancers demonstrated a number of Philippine folk dances. My parliamentary colleagues and I were also invited to learn the Tinikling dance, which involves dancing over two pieces of bamboo being rhythmically struck together. Our performance could best be summed up with the phrase: we had better not give up our day jobs.

Flor Birkett and all the performers should be congratulated on their efforts. This function highlights what multiculturalism is all about: retaining pride in their ethnic background but acknowledging Australia as their home. To borrow an analogy from the member for Cleveland, the rose is a beautiful flower, and a garden of roses is a beautiful garden. However, a garden with a variety of roses, carnations, tulips, gladiolus and daisies is even more beautiful. Variety is to be embraced. Variety is the spice of life.
