


Speech by

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MEMBER FOR INALA

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DEATH OF SOLDIER IN AFGHANISTAN, MOTION TO TAKE NOTE

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (9.44 am): Early last week Australia awoke to terrible news that, unfortunately and tragically, is also becoming regrettably common. We were told that yet another Australian soldier had lost his life in the ongoing campaign to rebuild and give a new beginning to the country Afghanistan. Combat engineer Corporal Scott Smith was the 39th Australian soldier to die in Afghanistan and the seventh serviceman to lose his life this year. It is a sad fact that these fine young men have been killed while trying to make a big difference, while trying to take this country out of its dark past and equip it for a democratic future. As we confront that important mission, it is a tragedy that we continue to be confronted also by this terrible death toll.

Corporal Smith was remembered last week by his family and his colleagues as a dedicated soldier. He was described as someone everybody wanted as a mate. The 24-year-old highly respected man had amassed an impressive and enviable list of achievements through his tragically short life. For the benefit of the House I would like to place some of those achievements on record. Corporal Smith has been awarded honours and awards including the Australian Active Service Medal with clasp International Coalition Against Terrorism, the Afghan Campaign Medal, the Australian Service Medal with clasp Solomons 2, the Australian Defence Medal and the Army Soldiers Medallion. During Corporal Smith's service in the Australian Army he was deployed on several operations, including Operation Slipper in Afghanistan in February 2010 and Operation Norwich in Australia in November 2011.

My heart, and those of my opposition colleagues, goes out to Corporal Smith's family and the families of those 38 additional soldiers killed in their bid to restore this country. May God rest their souls.