Speech By

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## MEMBER FOR MUNDINGBURRA

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ADJOURNMENT

Victory in the Pacific, 80th Anniversary Commemoration

Mrs POOLE (Mundingburra—LNP) (9.12 pm): 'Fellow citizens, the war is over'—the famous statement made by former Australian prime minister Mr Ben Chifley to signify our victory in the Pacific on 15 August 1945. It was a day for celebration and it continues to be so.

On Friday, 15 August 2025, Townsville commemorated the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, and Townsville turned out to celebrate the occasion with four days of events, including wreath-laying commemorations, a speech re-enactment, a community day, a parade, an aircraft flyover, a pilgrimage to the war cemetery and a VP80 Dinner Under the Stars in the magnificent setting of the Queens Gardens. We commemorated and celebrated with seven of our remaining veterans, aged from a sprightly 103 to a very young 99 years of age.

Almost one million Australians—men and women—served during the Second World War. They served with the armed forces, other supporting services like the merchant navy and the land army and contributed to the war effort in the workforce at home. Sadly, approximately 40,000 of our Australian service men and women did not return home. More than 17,000 of them lost their lives while fighting in the war against Japan.

This day is important to our great city, as Townsville was on the front line of Australia's war effort in the Pacific. Our city served as a key military centre for the allied forces. Our involvement in this war cemented our city's status as a garrison city. Today we are Australia's largest garrison city and we are a proud garrison city. We have Lavarack Barracks and the RAAF base—major bases that recognise Townsville's significance to our national military operations. Our involvement in the Pacific is far from words on a page. It lives on through the remaining pieces scattered throughout Townsville and it lives on through events such as VP80.

A lesser known quote from former prime minister Chifley's speech is, 'Let us remember those whose thoughts, with proud sorrow, turn towards gallant loved ones who will not come back.' Eighty years later, we continue to echo these sentiments and we remember the courage and service of all of our veterans who have given so much in all wars, conflicts and peacekeeping missions. Those who fought in the Pacific fought for our peace and our freedom. To those who made the ultimate sacrifice and those we remember on days like VP80: may they never be forgotten. To our veterans and our current serving men and women, we say thank you. Lest we forget.