



Speech By  
**Trevor Watts**


**MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA NORTH**

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**ADJOURNMENT**

**National Servicemen's Day**

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (9.21 pm): On Saturday, 15 February it was a privilege to represent the people of Toowoomba North at the National Serviceman's Day Memorial Service held at the National Service Memorial in Toowoomba. For those who do not know, Barry Vicary founded the National Servicemen's Association in Toowoomba in 1987. I would like to thank the president, Keith Shepherd; the secretary, Pat O'Sullivan; the treasurer, Dennis Gillbard; and past president Bill McMillan for the service for the nashos on that particular day. Present was the Harlaxton RSL Brass Band, who always do a great job, and the Toowoomba Choral Society.

For those people who are not aware, 287,000 young men were called up for service in the Army, Navy and Air Force between 1951 and 1972—212 paid the ultimate sacrifice on active service: two in Borneo and 210 in Vietnam. The call-up, conscription, was used when voluntary recruiting was insufficient. National service was reinstated in two schemes: in 1951 to 1959 because of the Korean War and in 1965 to 1972 due to conflicts in Borneo and Vietnam. The first scheme, from 1951 to 1959, was for the Navy and Air Force six months full-time training at the age of 18 and for the Army three months full-time training, followed by part-time service in the Citizens Military Forces. There were 227,000 called up and they remained in reserve for five years.

For the second scheme, from 1965 to 1972, the call-up was at age 20 for two years full-time Army service—20-year-olds, two years full-time. They went to Borneo and the Vietnam War. Selection was based on a birthday ballot. Not all eligible men were called up, but if your number came up then off to conflict you were sent, or you were certainly trained to do so. There were 64,000 young men conscripted and 19,500 served in the Borneo and Vietnam conflicts. Others served in support roles in Malaysia, in Papua New Guinea and obviously in Australia, and 35,000 served six years in the Citizens Military Forces as an alternative.

I think it is really important for us to note that these were conscripts. These were people who were asked by politicians to serve the nation and put their lives on the line in certain circumstances. Although they are now ageing—and Keith, who made a great speech on that day, is getting close to 90—we should always commemorate the service they gave. Lest we forget.

*(Time expired)*