

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY 01ST DECEMBER 2015

GOVERNMENT HOUSE PRECINCT LAND DEDICATION BILL

Second Reading

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 19 November 2015.)

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (11:37): I rise to speak to the Government House Precinct Land Dedication Bill 2015 and note that this bill is to dedicate a portion of land from the Government House Precinct to become part of the site for the ANZAC Centenary Memorial Garden Walk. It has been acknowledged that these grounds have been legislated under the Government House Domain Dedication Act 1927. This bill when it becomes an act—and I am sure it will because the bulldozers have already moved in so we probably have to get the legislation to catch up to the works—will reflect the new boundary that is 10 metres west of its current location.

This project has been approved since early last year and it will symbolically link the state's principal site of remembrance, the National War Memorial on North Terrace, with the Torrens Parade Ground and the Pathway of Honour. The link will obviously signify remembrance and that is symbolised by the National War Memorial service symbolised by the Torrens Parade Ground—and this is the site from which many South Australians in the past have left to serve the nation at war—and loyalty symbolised by Government House.

This project is tri-funded, and there happens to be \$3 million from the state government and \$5 million approved from the federal government, contingent upon the Adelaide City Council's \$2 million commitment. This ANZAC Centenary Memorial Garden Walk has been the preferred project for the Veterans Advisory Council to commemorate the centenary of ANZAC in South Australia. It is a unique opportunity to create a commemorative space in the heart of Adelaide and its memorial precinct. It certainly does represent a once-in-a-century project to complete harmony with the City of Adelaide, surrounding memorials, parks, gardens and the River Torrens, and I think it certainly will when it is completed be a flagship project that will benefit every South Australian and honour the ANZACs and all other service men and women who have served this great country. It will obviously contribute greatly to strengthening pedestrian connections between the city and the Riverbank.

The ANZAC Centenary Memorial Garden Walk will be located close to many of Adelaide's key landmarks and destinations. It will extend from one of Adelaide's main north-south pedestrian routes, Gawler Place, and connect strongly with Adelaide's most lively streets. It will also reinforce the identity of North Terrace as the cultural boulevard of Adelaide and open up a strong connection between the city and the River Torrens.

I note that previously this project has had the support of and been approved by the Public Works Committee. I am very pleased—and it is probably only because

the work started before the legislation process—that the work has started on this project in the centenary year of ANZAC as we commemorate all the service men and women, the many hundreds of thousands who have served over the years and the many tens of thousands who have paid the ultimate sacrifice for us to enjoy the lifestyle we do in this great state and this great nation.

It is not just those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice. Certainly the returned men and women who suffer what is sometimes seen—well, it is not seen but unseen trauma—as post-traumatic stress disorder and similar illnesses pay a lifetime penalty. After service men and women have come back from various conflicts, it has been noted that many deaths have happened because they could not cope with life afterwards. I think we treated our Vietnam veterans more than shabbily after their service for this country, and some service men and women who have returned from the wars in the Middle East of recent times have also paid a high price that in the main is unseen.

As I have indicated in this place before, my brother served for 23 years and became a warrant officer at the end of his career. He served in Rwanda and Iraq, and he does not seem too bad, but I guess you never know. Certainly, I am aware of friends of his who, having managed to get past the military psychological doctors and perhaps do one tour too many, have suffered and ultimately the stresses of having served have cost them their family and, in some cases, their life. We do need to pay a great homage to the people who have served our country in any way, shape or form—whether it is here in-country or overseas, it is all an essential part of service to keep this state and this great nation safe.

In all the time I have been growing up there have been various troubles around the world. Currently, issues with Islamic State are again creating a powder keg in the Middle East, but this has essentially gone on for decades since World War II, and well before World War II there were plenty of issues in the Middle East. I praise our present service personnel for all their activities in regard to what they are doing in this world, and there would be a lot that we do not know about.

There are the guys who are unseen on the ground who are doing great work we never hear about—usually the SAS—and that is the way it should be. We do not need to know what they are doing, but I can assure you that they are keeping us safe and doing great work. They cannot even come home and talk about where they have been, and they cannot talk about it when they leave. It is that exemplary service that keeps this country safe.

We also have at least one naval vessel in the Middle East, and we have pilots flying there who do eight-hour runs and so they have to do mid-air refuelling. The skies are getting very busy in the Middle East around Syria and Turkey, as we saw the other day with the downing of a plane from Russia. I am sure—and I hope so anyway, and I am sure they have—that the communications are worked out between all the countries whose pilots are flying in those spheres so that everyone can know where everyone is and act accordingly so that they can all stay as safe as possible in the skies. Yes, it is a war zone, but we do not need unintended consequences with the number of different countries that are involved in this war against IS, which includes our traditional allies as well as Russia's heavy involvement that has come in recently.

In regard to this bill, I think that this is a great idea that has happened here. I salute in my contribution the present Governor, the Hon. Hieu Van Le. It is interesting when you talk about his wartime experience when he was in Vietnam and how genuine he is about thanking the diggers for the very reason he and his wife are where they are today. It is a very moving story.

He is a great man. I met with him many times when he was the Lieutenant-Governor, and I commend him for his service. It just shows that there is opportunity. It does not matter where you come from, and many people in this great state should look to Hieu Van Le and realise what they can achieve in their life and, because of that, I think we would have a much better state and country.

I salute his support for this project and let's see that we can get it up and going because, obviously, there is not much of the centenary left of ANZAC. However, obviously, there will be commemorations for the next three or four years, especially in regard to the centenary of World War I—and it is a commemoration not a celebration because we lost over 100,000 service personnel who paid such a huge price.

I had a great uncle serve then and I have had uncles serve during conflicts ever since. As I said, my brother served for 23 years. We should never forget that just because you cannot see, perhaps, a physical injury or acknowledge someone's death from serving this country there are many demons out there. I salute all our service men and women.