

**ANZAC Speech for National Cathedral**  
**by**  
**Rt Hon. Mike Moore, New Zealand Ambassador to United States**  
**25 April 2012**

(As prepared for delivery)

The Australian Ambassador the Honourable Kim Beazley and I welcome you to this magnificent National Cathedral to mark our most sacred and solemn day.

Greetings also to our colleagues and friends from the UK. Canada, France, India and a special welcome to our gallant Turkish friends.

So, it came to pass that on the 25<sup>th</sup> April 1915, the Australian and New Zealanders landed on what became known as Anzac Cove.

The objective was to knock Turkey out of the war and relieve pressure on the deadlocked western front.

In the blood, mud and fire Aussies and Kiwis became brothers - not in law but in fact blood brothers.

Much has been written about the charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava.

We all know Lord Tennyson's immortal words.

"Into the valley of death rode the 600

Theirs is not to reason why

Theirs is but to do and die."

The Light Brigade suffered a thirty three percent casualty rate.

At Gallipoli New Zealanders suffered an eighty seven percent casualty rate. The Aussies paid a similar price.

In our young countries half of all families were affected.

During the First World War forty two percent of all NZ males between 19 and 40 fought, with a casualty rate of fifty eight percent. Forty percent of Australian males fought, with a casualty rate of sixty eight percent.

(The Second World War figures were almost as high.)

We should always remember too, that 21,000 British, 10,000 French, 1500 Indians and 50 from Newfoundland, then not federated with Canada, perished as did 87,000 Turks.

From this furnace, three Nations were forged; Australia, New Zealand and modern Turkey.

The great leader Ataturk marshalled his troops with a famous order saying

“I do not order you to attack, I order you to die.”

The Turkish National Anthem has a compelling sentence and I quote

“What man would not die for this heavenly piece of land?”

No two Nations have sailed, marched and flown so far to make and keep peace. We have never been neutral, passive or indifferent to the demands of keeping and making the peace. It's the rent we pay for civilisation.

Australians and New Zealanders have served in the Boer war, the First World War, the Expeditionary Force that invaded Lenin's new Soviet Union, Second World War, Korea, Kashmir, Cyprus, Malaya, Borneo, what was Rhodesia, Vietnam. Iraq, the Gulf war, Somalia, the Solomon Islands, Namibia, Sierra Leone, Papua New Guinea/Bougainville, Lebanon Rwanda, Haiti, Timor Leste, the former Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, the list goes on and alas, will go on.

We had no military class. The ANZACs were described as "not military", anti-authority, but quite warlike. Indeed, a story goes of Montgomery being escorted by General Freyberg around our troops in North Africa.

"Freyberg" Montgomery barked crisply. "Don't New Zealanders return salutes?" "I've found if you give them a cheerful wave they will often wave back" Freyberg replied.

The veterans of the past were ordinary people – so, farmers, miners, clerks and builders charged across battlefields, in mountains and in the desert. Some fought on the high seas, some battled in the jungle, and some patrolled the skies. (Still do).

All contributed to the character and spirit of our nations. Sacrifice does not just build character, it reveals character.

Rather than this day retreating into the fog and mist of history, it is being recognised on a larger scale with each generation.

We do remember them. On the 25<sup>th</sup> April in every town, village and city in Australia and New Zealand in their tens and then in their hundreds and in the big cities in their tens of thousands we remember them .

Wherever you find a Kiwi or Aussie, whatever the country they wake up in on the 25<sup>th</sup> of April, there will be a solemn silence as they remember. It is when we hold our collective breath and hold back a tear.

Indeed there are thousands of young Australian and NZ men and women on the beaches, cliffs and gully's at Gallipoli on this day. It is their silence that deafens you at these services.

There will be no big brass bands, no triumphant, chauvinistic, bombastic speeches.

There will be a lonely, mournful bugle call, a collective tightening of the throat is all that can be heard from those assembled.

I'm not sure when or how it started but at home we now see hundreds of children, wearing their parents and grandparents medals ... on the other side of their coats. I like that.

This day we pause to remember our shared past and offer each other our support.

This is what ANZAC means. This is a living set of mate-ships in floods in Queensland, fires in Victoria and earthquakes in Christchurch, war and peace; at every level, this is mate-ship. Who do you call when you are in distress? No one. They just arrive.

Today I see representatives of the many countries who just arrived in Christchurch when we had our earthquake. Thank you.

Many of you will be remembering family and friends today who served in past conflicts overseas or you may have servicemen and women in your families currently deployed on overseas missions.

ANZAC Day is a time we think of family and we recognise the strain placed on the families of our service people; the partners and children who manage for long, lonely, anxious periods of time without their loved ones.

The birthday's missed, the school concerts, anniversaries, funerals of loved ones missed. This cost to families is irreplaceable and enduring.

Our ANZACs and all who have served our countries will be held in our hearts and minds forever. We do remember them.

We know we do not stand in the shadow of earlier generations but on their shoulders, the better to see the promised land.

Words – 987