

Speech

Address By

His Excellency General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd)

On the occasion of

Anzac Day Dawn Service

Pukeahu National War Memorial, Wellington, New Zealand
25 April 2015

Ata Marie tatou.

It is a great honour to be here on New Zealand soil, among friends, as we mark this momentous day.

Standing beside your Governor-General in this early morning light I am reminded of the bonds between our two nations—the bonds of brothers and sisters, and of allies, first given voice 100 years ago today.

Together we begin a day of commemoration across our two great nations.

We remember the extraordinary deeds of thousands of men and women.

We pay our respects and we honour their legacy.

It is a day full of emotion, pride and gratitude—of solemnity and remembrance.

And it is a day that further reinforces the bond between our two peoples.

At this hour, off the Gallipoli peninsula a century ago, the soldiers of the newly formed Australian and New Zealand Army Corps waited for the moment to come ashore and do what they knew they had to do, and they had only each other and themselves to rely on.

They were ordinary, everyday people—farmers, bank clerks, posties and shop assistants.

Some were so young they hadn't even finished school.

By the end of the day, and those that followed, they were no longer innocents.

They had experienced war in all its dreadfulness.

They had become soldiers.

They had all shown courage—some extraordinary valour.

And in doing so, many had fallen for the last time.

That day, a century ago, they had fulfilled their solemn duty and served their countries.

Above all, they had served each other—and together they had become Anzacs.

The proudest of terms, the mightiest of labels.

Anzac Day Dawn Service

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Because it showed that being an Australian or a New Zealander—Kiwi or Aussie—stood for something.

It stood for everything.

They created a bond that it is so strong that it still lives with us today.

A bond built on trust, respect and a shared experience.

And it binds our countries together—forever—in a way that nothing else can.

And that is the Anzac legacy.

And it is what these people did, and what they gave us, that we commemorate on this day.

The Anzacs fought side by side from that first dawn through to dusk.

And today we stand side by side—from this dawn through to dusk—in New Zealand, in Australia and in Turkey to remember them.

Lest we forget.

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