



PRIME MINISTER

SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER, THE HON P J KEATING MP

TYPHOON MEMORIAL, NOYERS BOGAGE, FRANCE
6 JUNE 1994

EMBARGO: 11.00PM AEST

This is a monument to the good which unites the people of many nations with the people of France. It unites the Australian people with the people of France.

It is not the only such monument.

The Australian airmen of World War II whose sacrifice is commemorated at Noyers Bogage followed that heroic generation of whom more than forty thousand lie buried in the fields of France.

By their suffering and sacrifice, their courage and character, that earlier generation gave birth to a legend which still inspires and unites Australians.

As brave and selfless as any who came before them, as devoted to the cause of freedom, as faithful to their ideals, as full of hope, the Australians commemorated here lived by that legend - and died by it.

Like those who fought at Gallipoli and on the Somme, they went into battle knowing that death was more than possible - it was likely. And more likely each succeeding time.

Today in Noyers Bogage we honour the airmen of all nations who fought and died in the struggle to liberate Europe in World War II.

And, because we are Australian, we honour our countrymen especially. We honour those who left the place and the people they loved and crossed the world to defend freedom and advance the cause of justice.

Among those to whom we pay tribute today is Pilot Officer Don Mason, whose Typhoon was shot down on the eighteenth of June 1944 and whose aircraft and remains were not discovered until late 1992. It was this discovery which brought about Australia's association with the Typhoon Pilot Monument.

The
lin
equ
cal

Aue
soc

The
haz

And
hon
vail
our

We

Nor
peo
com
sca
goo
occ

I ki
live
have
peo

The
mat
ris
the

We
to
as
for

Our
the
and

That
valt
free
live

It
the
sacr
and

There is a thread in Australia's history which has always linked us to France. What the French called liberty, equality and fraternity Australians were inclined to call "mateship" and the "fair go" for all.

Australians had in mind the same ideal of a free and fair society. A better place for all men and women.

Those commemorated here, all those who flew those hazardous missions, knew the value of these things.

And their sacrifice made us know them better. When we honour their memory, when we say they did not die in vain, we mean that we know they made our freedom safe and our faith the stronger.

We mean that we will never forget.

Nor can we forget today the trials endured by the French people. The people of Normandy - the people of this community - endured loss and devastation on a terrible scale. They endured what we in Australia have had the good fortune never to endure - for we have never suffered occupation and tyranny.

I know that the airmen who fought this war - those who lived and those who died - would want it known that we have not forgotten the support they received from the people of France.

They would want it known that their own courage was matched by the French Resistance; by the people who risked their lives to protect them and help them find their way to safety and freedom on the ground.

We see this monument to the Typhoon Pilots as a monument to the courage of the French people as well. We see it as a memorial to their resilience, and to their desire for peace.

Our two countries are far apart in so many ways. But in the events of fifty years ago common values were proved and a story in common was written.

That is the reason for this memorial. It enshrines those values and the story of a generation who so believed in freedom and justice they were prepared to lay down their lives.

It honours their memory and tells new generations that the peace and freedom we now enjoy came by their sacrifice. It tells us that we must inherit their faith and pass it on to our children.

6727