



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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# Noel Park DSO ED Remembered

**The Late Noel Park DSO ED, former Member for Tamworth for seventeen years has been remembered by the Federal Member for New England, Tony Windsor in a motion to recognise the Battle for Crete as an event of national significance and commemorate the important contributions of Australian, New Zealand, British and Greek soldiers and Greek civilians in the defence of Crete against the 20 May 1941 German invasion – a tragic event in which Noel Park bravely fought.**

**Speaking to the motion moved by the Member for Hindmarsh, Steve Georganas, Mr Windsor said:**

“It is with pleasure that I support this motion, and I congratulate the Member for Hindmarsh and the others who have spoken. The tragedies that occurred in the campaign for Crete were something that most, if not all, of us would support being recognised as a day of national celebration. It is definitely something that has brought the people of our two countries much closer together. The sacrifices that the Cretans and the Greek community made during that campaign and in other campaigns were quite incredible. The loss of women and children, as well as men, from the various communities and villages that protected people is something that we should never forget and is something that has created a very firm bond between peoples on different sides of the world.

The major reason that I want to speak on this motion is to recognise a former parliamentarian who has died but who served Australia in a number of theatres of war. He was in North Africa, Greece and Crete and had a couple of stints in New Guinea. He was one of four young Australian officers that were awarded the DSO during the Second World War. His name was Noel Park and he was the National Party member for Tamworth prior to my becoming involved in politics in 1991.

Noel Park served for 17 years as the member for Tamworth and gave extraordinary service to that community. But one of the things that he never forgot and that he talked about often was the way in which the people of Crete and the Greek community generally treated him and others. He was captured by the Germans and installed in a prison camp for a short time before escaping with others. He was protected by various villagers and community people and lived in a cave for a while. Subsequently, he took a boat with some others and was bombed by the British. The bombs did not go off, apparently. He was also bombed by the Germans and one of his party was injured. He subsequently made his way across to North Africa and, obviously, escaped. He went on to great service in other theatres of war and was injured twice in New Guinea. As I said earlier, he spoke very highly of the Cretan people and how they were quite prepared to sacrifice their lives for the people who were there to fight for them. To the day he died, one of his great memories was the way in which those people looked after him and others, and the story of his escape is one of real heroism.

So I pay tribute to Noel Ernest Park. He, above all people who have come from my electorate, would want to see this motion endorsed by the parliament, would want to see a commemoration take place and would want to see that the Greek people and the people of Crete are recognised and remembered for what they did for Australians. If they had not done that service for Noel Park, he would never have had the capacity to serve his community as a member of parliament and do so in the fashion that he did. His wife, June, is still with us, and I am sure that on his behalf she would ask that this motion be endorsed.”

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