



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**CONDOLENCES**

**Wood, Sergeant Brett, MG**

**SPEECH**

**Wednesday, 25 May 2011**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

<p><b>Date</b> Wednesday, 25 May 2011  <b>Page</b> 4550  <b>Questioner</b>  <b>Speaker</b> Mr ROBERT</p>	<p><b>Source</b> House  <b>Proof</b> No  <b>Responder</b>  <b>Question No.</b></p>
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(Fadden) (NaN.NaN pm)

Mr ROBERT (Fadden) (14:10): I join the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition and the Minister for Defence to honour Sergeant Brett Wood MG, who was tragically killed in action in Afghanistan, and to lend our prayers to five other soldiers wounded in this and subsequent actions. Just as our nation had started its healing after the loss of Sapper Larcombe we stand again to bid farewell to another, this time a decorated special forces patrol commander seasoned in battle, who had just fought his last fight.

Today is an ode to this fallen soldier, an ode to a grieving wife, an ode to a family left behind, an ode to the music he will never play, the ball he will never kick and the friends he will never see. If all we knew of Sergeant Wood was that he was an Australian soldier we would have known enough to eulogise his courage, determination, mateship and endurance, but the immutable march of time records so much more: a decorated warrior, a seasoned NCO, a tough patrol commander and a loving and gentle husband. As a special forces patrol commander Brett put his men first and himself last. His men's welfare was more important than his own bloody wounds. If his men were thirsty, he would share his last drop; if they were hungry, his last bite. He would split his ammo with them in the heat of battle, he would protect them under fire and he would lead them from the front. Brett was the first out of the Blackhawk and he was the last man back in.

Brett's death serves as a sobering reminder of the continuing dangers that daily confront our soldiers as they fight in Afghanistan for a world free of terrorism. As we lament Brett's loss we also pause to remember the 23 other Australians who have paid the supreme price in Afghanistan and the 174 who have been wounded in action. To Sergeant Wood's wife, Elvi, and his wider family, I say that your loss is Australia's loss and your burden weighing heaviest in your hearts will be shouldered by the entire nation. We grieve with you.

Brett, we will remember you as a titan who trod this earth and a warrior who served others in the finest tradition of the green beret you wore. You lived your commando motto: Foras Admonitio, without warning. We salute you, even now as we mourn your loss.

The SPEAKER: As a mark of respect, I invite honourable members to rise in their places.

*Honourable members having stood in their places—*

The SPEAKER: I thank the House.

Debate adjourned.

(Scullin) (NaN.NaN pm)

(Scullin) (NaN.NaN pm)