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What does ANZAC Day mean to me. Speech 2019

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, good morning.

Before I begin I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of this land, the Noongar people, as well as those Indigenous soldiers who have served in this uniform, and whose contribution has not been as recognised as it should have been.

My name is Andrew Philp, and I am a Troop Leader in the Army Reserve at the 10th Light Horse Regiment. 8 years ago I was sitting where you sit today and I have been invited back talk to you about what ANZAC Day means to me, and why it is so special.

I had many things I wanted to share with you all. I thought I could share with you stories of the soldiers from my unit, the 10th Light Horse Regiment, who served proudly in Gallipoli, in particular in the trenches of the Nek. Soldiers who - on command - climbed out of the trenches and charged toward the enemy - toward certain death. Or I could tell you about the Light Horse at Beersheba, where my unit was involved in one of the last successful cavalry charges ever. In war that now had machine guns and aircraft, the Light Horse units charged the enemy on horseback with swords drawn – and they won. I would love to tell you about my great grandfather, who served in the same unit as me. Who this time a little over 100 years ago, was one of the first soldiers into the captured city of Damascus. I could tell you about the handwritten note my grandmother has from him which details how that was one of the proudest moments of what was such a sad war.

Perhaps I could talk to you about something more modern. I could tell you about the recent wars in the Middle East and my friends and colleagues who have served over there. The difficulty we have in fighting an enemy who doesn't wear a uniform and how even though that war is very different to the ones the original ANZACs fought, the sacrifice that those men and women made and still make is something we should consider and be thankful of this ANZAC Day.

But I'm not going to talk to you about those things. Not because they shouldn't be spoken about and not because they're not of importance on this great day. In fact, I'm not going to talk about war at all. What I want to speak about is something I reflect on every ANZAC Day, and something I would like you to reflect on this ANZAC Day and indeed every day. What I want to speak about is values.

I like to think of a value as something that helps me make a choice, when there is nothing else forcing me to choose. As an example: say you have some homework that your teacher has assigned, but you go home and get distracted watching cat videos on YouTube all night and you forget to do it. And then the next day your teacher asks if you had done it, but you

know she won't check, and you could get away with lying – would you? Now I don't want to get into who would and who wouldn't lie, but what I would say is that those people who tell the truth, who fess up to not having done it, for you one of your values is likely honesty. Because even though you could lie, you wouldn't feel okay doing it, it wouldn't feel okay inside – that's a value. It helps you make a choice.

For many years the Army had three values – these were instilled in us at recruit training. These values were pretty much what you would expect from an Army. They were courage, initiative and teamwork. That at all times you should be courageous in what you do, your plans should have a great deal of initiative and you should embrace crazy ideas and out-of-the-box thinking, and of course, above all teamwork drives everything we do. The team always comes first.

But there were some issues, and in this modern changing world, things weren't what they should have been. So in 2013 the Chief of Army, General David Morrison brought in a fourth value. A modern value to help the Army into this brave new world – that value was respect. Now, for an Army, respect as a value might seem like a strange choice. And on face value it might be, but when you did deeper, you realise that it's respect that will make us stronger. Respect for each other and respect for diversity. Respect for our traditions and those that have gone before us. But most of all, respect for ourselves and for this uniform.

With the inclusion of respect, I think that the Army's values are something that we should all strive toward. Something we should all use to help us in the decisions that we make. I would encourage you all to be courageous with your decisions, especially with the subjects you study, and be what you want to be; use your initiative and take calculated risks; be a great team member and when the time calls for it, be a team leader; but above all else, be respectful. Respect other students, respect your teachers, respect ANZAC Day and the sacrifice those soldiers made, and of course, respect yourself, for that what the ANZACs would have wanted. Thank you.