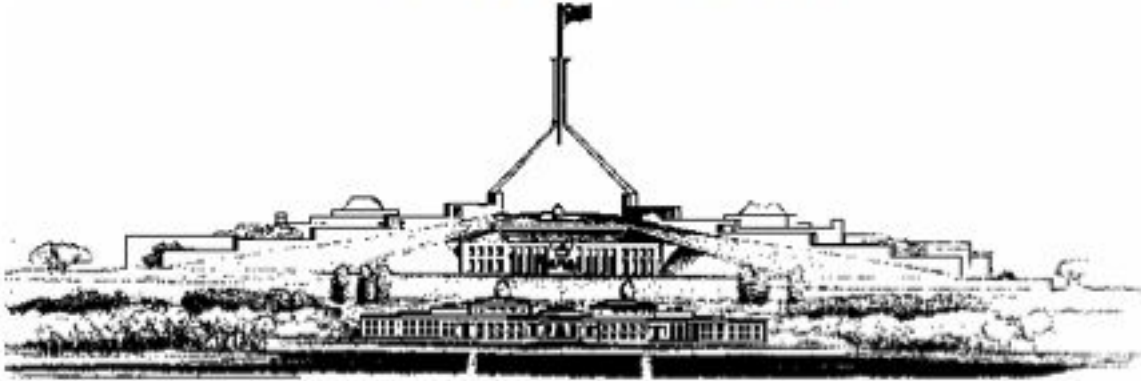




COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Federation Chamber

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

National Critical Care and Trauma Centre

SPEECH

Monday, 26 November 2012

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

Date Monday, 26 November 2012
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Questioner
Speaker O'Dwyer, Kelly, MP

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Ms O'DWYER (Higgins) (20:02): I rise to support my friend and colleague the member for Solomon, Natasha Griggs, in her excellent motion. I echo the words across the chamber from the member for Shortland and the member for Hasluck, who have spoken before me. It is often said that during the darkest of times amidst the violence, grief and hardship we also get to see the best of the human spirit: heroic deeds, self-sacrifice and caring. Certainly this was the case after the terrorist attack in Bali. It was only a few weeks ago that in this place we commemorated the 10th anniversary of the bombings. During that period we have had the opportunity to remember, to grieve with the families of the 202 people who were killed, 88 of whom were Australian citizens. We reflected on the ongoing impact of this terror on those that survived and those that helped the survivors. Many fine speeches were given in the House on both sides of the chamber, making it one of the more poignant moments in this parliament's history.

Today I want to focus on the excellent work done by the emergency workers in Bali many of whom risked their own lives to get critically injured patients to hospital in Indonesia and Australia. Within 26 hours of the attacks the first patients arrived at the Royal Darwin Hospital. Sixty-one patients arrived at Darwin and 48 were then taken to other hospitals throughout Australia to receive specialised medical care. The work of the medical staff in these hospitals in saving lives and treating patients will endure as one of the great achievements in Australian medical history.

This terrible terrorist attack made it clear that, despite the excellent work that was done, there was a need for a national critical care and trauma centre with a specific mission to respond to disasters and major medical incidents in our region. The Howard government delivered this in 2005 and the core focus of the National Critical Care and Trauma Response Centre is, as they say themselves, to be equipped, prepared and ready to respond to emergency events here and overseas. Sadly, the centre has been used regularly since its establishment, often multiple times in every year with the exception of 2007, for incidents such as the second Bali bombing, unrest in East Timor, the East Timor presidential assassination attempt, the Ashmore Reef SIEV 36 incident, the Pakistani floods, Cyclone Helen and the Ghan derailment. These kinds of incidents and the professional, highly skilled and immediate response from the National Critical Care and Trauma Response Centre only go to further prove the critical role that medical health and medical research play in our society. That is why I was so personally disappointed to see the kinds of cuts to medical health and research that we saw in the most recent MYEFO, with over \$1 billion ripped out of the sector. Without medical research we may not have the next Marie Stoner and Dr Fiona Wood, the Australian inventors of spray-on skin—a treatment that was so critical in the treatment of the Bali bombing victims.

Critical to the success of the NCCTRC is its ongoing program of education, training and research. I call on the government to support this motion to support medical research and to continue to support institutions like the National Critical Care and Trauma Response Centre, who do so much good work for our community and for our relationship with those regional communities overseas as well.

Debate adjourned.