

Speech by Mayor Logan K Howlett, JP
Bombing of Darwin Commemorative Service
Rose Garden, RSL Cockburn Sub-Branch
Monday, 19 February 2024

Good Morning Veterans, one and all.

As we gather here this morning we have remembered a dark chapter in Australia's history, although our focus need not remain solely on the past.

Today's Darwin boasts a thriving city and economy, driven by key sectors including tourism, mining, agriculture, and increasingly, defence.

However, the world remains complex, and it will take further generations to dim the candle as it relates to the attack on northern Australia, indeed attacks and activities down our coastlines.

Geopolitical tensions and power struggles persist.

Nations across the globe engage in posturing, reminding us of the importance of readiness and preparedness and the enduring RSL motto;

“The Price of Liberty is Eternal Vigilance”.

From China to North Korea and further afield, the possibility of conflict is real.

We are seeing this today with Ukraine and Russia, and now the conflict between Hamas and Israel.

The Bombing of Darwin serves as a stark reminder of the fragility of peace, but also the enduring strength of the human spirit.

Let us honour the past, learn from its lessons, and build a future where dialogue and understanding win over violence and division.

I know many of our veterans, their partners and their families continue to reach out for support and assistance, in some cases just someone to listen and in others more intense responses to their needs.

I am conscious of listening and hearing what many of our veterans are saying – we need to do more – we need to do more.

As we conclude this service, let us also extend our gratitude to the brave men and women of our current armed forces, who continue to safeguard our liberties with distinction and honour – following in the footsteps of our veterans.

Lest we forget.