

From: Richard [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, 24 May 2020 3:36 PM
To: Committee, Public Works (REPS) <pwc@aph.gov.au>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: [REDACTED] Australian War Memorial

Dear members of the Public Works Committee,

I write to put some views about proposed extensions to the Australian War Memorial.

I am a retired Commonwealth public servant, who, from my earliest days in Canberra in 1963, would often visit the War Memorial and ponder about Australia's enormous sacrifices in wars, especially in the two world wars. The Memorial and its exhibits were completely appropriate to the times and to the memory of the tens of thousands of Australian youth who died.

As a school cadet who learned to handle a World War One Lee Enfield rifle on the Dean Range at Port Adelaide, later as a national serviceman in the RAAF base at Williamstown in New South Wales, and later again as a professional observer of our military efforts in the Vietnamese Civil War, I came to appreciate and understand both the effectiveness and of the ADF, and the destructiveness of warfare. As it stands, the War Memorial reflects and mirrors my perspective.

But I now find the proposal to extend the Memorial into an exhibition of war fighting machinery a distortion of its original purpose. It should not become an advertisement for American, British or French military technology. It should not be supported by the weapons industry, or become a money-making machine to create in Australian youth a morbid curiosity about the latest killing technology. It should not be a carnival of warfare.

Instead, it should continue to be a place of quiet reflection about the folly of war and as a place to honour and grieve for the tens of thousands of young Australians who were drawn into conflicts not of their making, and from which Australia would not necessarily benefit. If we do not remember history, we are bound to repeat it.

I for one, remain completely opposed to the unnecessary and extravagant extension of the Memorial, and the war machinery it is proposed will be exhibited in it.

My wife, Dr Alison Broinowski AM joins me in these sentiments.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Broinowski

RICHARD BROINOWSKI AO

