

TOAST IN REPLY-UNSWR 50th ANNIVERSARY REGIMENTAL
DINNER-14 SEPTEMBER 2002. (CHIEF OF ARMY LIEUTENANT
GENERAL P.F. LEAHY AO)

Chancellor of the University of New South Wales, Doctor John Yu, Colonel Young, Distinguished Guests,

On behalf of the Australian Army, John, let me thank you for your generous toast. In return I congratulate UNSWR on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary.

It occurred to me recently that my affiliations with the Australian Army and the University of News South Wales extend over nearly the same amount of time.

I entered the Royal Military College as an aspiring officer in January 1971. By the end of February of that same year I was enrolled as an undergraduate in the Faculty of Arts at this University. Ultimately, I graduated from both institutions in December 1974, under the arrangements, which then prevailed for the education of officers.

The links between the profession of arms and this University are deep and venerable. It was recognised in the late 1960's that the Australian Army required future leaders who were well equipped with a liberal education.

Examination of the global situation today thoroughly vindicates that the prescience of that judgement. The modern soldier can be engaged in a spectrum of operations from traditional warfare right through to sensitive humanitarian tasks.

The modern commander must be a warrior, a diplomat, a humanitarian worker, a lawyer and public relations expert all rolled into one. The modern battlespace is a complex environment and even tactical matters can have immediate, real time impacts on our National reputation and security.

Now, more than ever, we need men and women of judgement, intellectual breadth and cultural sensitivity to protect Australia's interests in a very volatile world.

In other words, the nexus between the military and our institutions of higher learning has never been more vital.

I commend this University for its superb contribution to the preparation of the leaders of the ADF. That contribution, which commenced in the late 1960s continues to this day.

And of course, even before that affiliation with the permanent forces commenced, UNSWR had forged the link between Athens and Sparta. For fifty years this Regiment has been training young officers for our Army. Your alumni are extremely distinguished.

I congratulate you on your past contribution to the Australian Army. And I wish you even greater success in the years to come.