



17 September 2002

## **Andren Seeks Parliament Vote on Iraq Action**

Independent member for Calare Peter Andren tonight moved an amendment in the House of Representatives aimed at forcing Parliament to only support action in Iraq that has UN endorsement.

The amendment was seconded by Tony Windsor, Independent Member for New England.

“While it is one thing for the Parliament to debate the Iraq crisis, it is another for the Parliament to be able to indicate its support for a UN sanctioned action only and not any unilateral attack by the United States,” Mr Andren said.

“Under our Constitution the power to declare war lies with the British Monarch vested in the Governor General who in turn is instructed by the Executive. That means the Prime Minister alone can send Australians to war.

“I intend to call for a division of Parliament when debate finishes tomorrow on the Foreign Minister’s Iraq statement.

“I am disappointed the Opposition has indicated it won’t be supporting this amendment, even though it has been consistently arguing throughout the debate the exact sentiments contained in it.

“My amendment says: *While the House commends the Government for its strong condemnation of terrorists and their activities and its encouragement of Iraq’s compliance with United Nations resolutions, the House believes Australia’s Defence Forces should not be involved in any action in Iraq that is not carried out under a United Nations Resolution.*

“What can be simpler than that. It’s exactly the sentiment Australians are voicing in opinion polls that show strong opposition to any action in Iraq without UN endorsement.

“I am afraid both the Government and Opposition will oppose this amendment, and not allow the Parliament to express the legitimate concerns of the electorate.

“This is a chance for the Parliament to send a strong message to the Government, the United States and Britain that Australia’s political representatives don’t endorse military action outside the authority of the United Nations,” Mr Andren said.

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