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The Battle for Australia

Hon. Charlie Lynn MLC [*United Service* 65 (4), 15 – 16, December 2014] is among thousands of Australians misled by claims we fought a battle for Australia from 1942 to 1945.

Mr Lynn points out that many Australians at the time believed we faced invasion. That belief does not transform the campaigns fought to our north into a single, existential struggle that saved our country. To say this is not to belittle those campaigns (several of my relatives fought in them), but merely to see in hindsight things as they really were. While Australian offshore territory was invaded, there was no real threat to the Australian continent or system of government in 1942, and the Axis powers were defeated by military campaigns conducted thousands of miles from our shores.

If there was ever a battle for Australia, it was the scattered, pathetic but real resistance by some indigenous bands to the British occupation of our continent. Sadly, this resistance is subject to a similar sentimental exaggeration to the one misleading Mr Lynn and so many others.

Dr Craig Wilcox
Sydney, 5 March 2015