



## PRIME MINISTER

E. & O.E. - Proof Only

20 September 1983

THE PRIME MINISTER MADE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT AT THE  
LEBANESE RALLY OUTSIDE PARLIAMENT HOUSE THIS AFTERNOON:

I want to thank you for being here to express your very very deep concern at the time of tragedy in your country. I want to assure you that the Australian Government is conscious of the tragedy which is happening in Lebanon and it is happening because of the existence in your country of foreign forces there and it is the clear position of the Australian Government that all those foreign forces should be removed from the Lebanon.

The Australian Government, both in direct submissions to the countries concerned and at the United Nations, will continue to put that position, so that the people of Lebanon can have brought to an end the tragedy which has cost the lives of thousands and thousands of your fellow citizens.

The people of the Lebanon are the people who have suffered most in the tragedy of the Middle East and they are suffering not simply because of internal problems that you have but most particularly because other countries and other forces are trying to fight their battles in your country.

They should leave your country and allow the people of the Lebanon to live in peace so they can develop in peace the economy of Lebanon so that all Lebanese - all young Lebanese people in particular - face the opportunity of growing and living in a country at peace.

Now the capacity of Australia is limited in what we can do, but as I have told your representatives, your Ambassador, the representatives of your Church, and the representatives of your community organisations, I give you the pledge that everything that the Australian Government can do, will be done.