

PRIME MINISTER'S PRESS RELEASE

PRIME MINISTER'S MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE OF DARWIN

The following is the text of a message sent from London by the Prime Minister to Mr J. N. Nelson, Administrator of the Northern Territory, Darwin, and to Mr H. Brennan, Mayor of Darwin:

"I am horrified by the appalling loss of life and the destruction that have befallen Darwin on Christmas day.

The only city on Australian soil to suffer extensive damage from enemy action in war is now the scene of one of our worst natural disasters.

I am in touch with my Ministers and officials concerning relief measures and have directed that nothing be spared to bring aid to the homeless and afflicted.

The full resources of the new disaster relief organisation which the government established this year will be at the disposal of the local authorities and people of Darwin. Do not hesitate to request whatever assistance may be needed.

On behalf of the government I pledge a determined and unremitting effort to rebuild your city and relieve suffering.

Please convey to the people of Darwin my own profound sense of shock at this grievous and unseasonal calamity, and my heartfelt personal sympathy to all the victims.

E. G. Whitlam."

26 December 1974