



Mr. Yeend

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PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

1 MAY 1979

CONDOLENCE MOTION: THE HON. FRANK STEWART

Mr. Speaker, I move that this House expresses its deep regret at the death on 16 April, 1979, of the Honourable Francis Eugene Stewart, a Member of this House for the Division of Lang from 1953 to 1977, and for the Division of Grayndler since 1977 and a Minister of the Crown from 1972 to 1975; and that this House places on record its appreciation of his long and meritorious public service and tenders its profound sympathy to his widow and family in their bereavement.

We were saddened to hear during the recent recess of the death of the Honourable Frank Stewart, a long-standing and highly respected Member of this House.

Mr. Stewart's untimely death takes from the Parliament a man who had given the country much, and had so much more to give. His passing takes from his wife and six children a loved and respected husband and father.

Frank Stewart was born in Belmore, Sydney, on 20 February 1923 and was educated at St. Mary's Cathedral College. Frank was always a keen sportsman. He had been a first class Rugby player, and was an excellent tennis player.

Before entering the Parliament, he worked in the State Department of Transport for 14 years. This period was interrupted by his four years service in the Australian Infantry Forces during World War II. He served in New Guinea and achieved the rank of Sergeant.

In 1953, Frank Stewart won a by-election to the Sydney metropolitan seat of Lang, which he represented continuously until it was abolished in 1977. He then contested, and won, the new seat of Grayndler, which generally coincided with the area of his former division.

During his 26 years as a Federal Member he served with characteristic conscientiousness on several Parliamentary committees. He was an active member of the Standing Committee on Printing from 1959 to 1969 and the Joint Committee on Parliamentary and Government Publications from 1962 to 1964. Frank Stewart held the position of temporary Chairman of Committees from 1964 to 1969.

More recently -- over the past three years -- he served as Deputy Chairman of both the Standing Committee on Expenditure and the Select Committee on Tourism. In addition, on numerous occasions, he represented the Parliament and his Government at international conferences.

During the term of Labor Government, Frank Stewart held Ministerial appointments, including Minister for Tourism and Recreation and Vice-President of the Executive Council. He also assisted the Treasurer and other Ministers in their portfolio responsibilities. As Minister for Tourism and Recreation in the Labor Government, he demonstrated his ability as a capable and hard-working administrator and as a man with a sharp sense of his responsibility to this Parliament.

Frank Stewart was a man widely respected for his integrity and resolution in holding to his convictions. He was recognised as an adherent of the "old school" of the Labor Party. He was also a highly principled and deeply religious man - a Roman Catholic who actively pursued moral causes.

All Honourable Members will recall the force and conviction with which he espoused his views. Though many Members of this Chamber may have disagreed with him at times, I believe that his Parliamentary colleagues on both sides of the House had a respect and affection for him-- for his character, honesty and single-mindedness of purpose.

We all feel a great deal of sadness at the loss of a colleague who distinguished himself as a Parliamentarian, a Minister, and a dedicated member of his Party.

On behalf of the Government, I extend to his widow and family our sincere sympathy at the passing of a fine Australian.