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PRIME MINISTERFOR MEDIATUESDAY, 28 AUGUST 1979LORD LOUIS MOUNTBATTEN

Lord Louis Mountbatten gave a lifetime of service to the United Kingdom. He joined the Royal Navy in 1913 and ended his military career as Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee in 1965, spanning more than half a century.

During the Second World War he was commander of forces which played a major role in the liberation of South East Asia and Burma.

Lord Louis Mountbatten was, however, more than a military commander. He was a most distinguished servant of peace and of the modern Commonwealth. He negotiated the independence of India for the United Kingdom and remained to become India's Governor-General. Until very recent times he was President of the United World Colleges. The objective of the United World Colleges is to bring young men and women of different nations together for the last years of schooling, the purpose being to create understanding between peoples and between nations, to avoid the fear and hatred that can lead to war.

He was a great military commander. He understood the ultimate futility of war and the need to try and build a more secure world. I doubt if any man has given greater service to the United Kingdom or to the wider cause of mankind during the last half century. That Lord Louis Mountbatten and his grandson should be murdered in a violent and callous act of terrorism is a stark and horrible reminder of the total ruthlessness and indiscriminate terror with which modern political murderers pursue their cause.

That somebody who had done so much could be killed towards the end of a long and constructive life emphasises the futility and barbarity of violence. Lord Louis Mountbatten had done so much for peace. On behalf of the Government and people of Australia I convey my deepest sympathy and sorrow to his family, to her Majesty the Queen and to the British people.