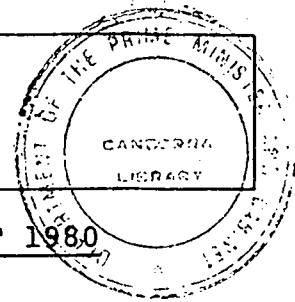




PRIME MINISTER



FOR MEDIA

TUESDAY, 19 AUGUST 1980

MR. OHIRA

Mr. Speaker, it is with deep regret that I also inform the House of the death, on 12 June, 1980, of the Prime Minister of Japan, Mr. Masayoshi Ohira and I move: "That this House records its sincere regret at the death of Mr. Masayoshi Ohira, Prime Minister of Japan, and express its deepest sympathy to his family and to the people of Japan."

Mr. Speaker, the House will wish to be advised formally that the Government extended its deep sympathy to the Government and people of Japan, and that I represented Australia at Mr. Ohira's memorial service.

Mr. Masayoshi Ohira led the Japanese Government at a time when changing international circumstances presented the Japanese nation with considerable uncertainties. A wisdom born of wide experience coupled with a deep personal commitment to the shaping of a better world for future generations, earned Mr. Ohira great international esteem. His wise advice and considered counsel gained him the respect of leaders around the world.

Mr. Ohira recognised the important role which Japan has to play in international affairs as a member of the Western alliance. He was concerned to enhance Japan's political and economic contribution to world peace and security. His understanding of the changing circumstances in Asia and the Pacific led Mr. Ohira to play an active part in seeking closer ties between the countries of the region.

His promotion of the concept of a Pacific community is an outstanding example of this. In January this year Mr. Ohira visited Australia. He was welcomed both as a representative of one of the countries most important to Australia, and as a national leader who strove to increase understanding and personal contact between the peoples of different countries. I believe that his visit made a lasting contribution to the strengthening of relations between our two countries. We all mourn his death.