



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

WEDNESDAY, 23 FEBRUARY, 1982.

CONDOLENCE MOTION FOR MR. A.A. ARMSTRONG

Mr. Speaker, I move, "that this House expresses its deep regret at the death yesterday of Mr. A.A. (Bill) Armstrong, Member for Riverina, 1965-69, 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".

Mr. Speaker, it is with great personal regret that I learned of the death of Bill Armstrong who held the seat of Riverina for the Country Party in this Parliament from 1965 to 1969. Adam Alexander Armstrong, M.C., O.B.E., or Bill as he was known to us all, was born on 1 July 1909 at Deniliquin, New South Wales and was elected to this Parliament in the by-election of 27 February, 1965, following in the footsteps of Hugh Robertson who had held Riverina for the Country Party from 1949 to 1965. He made his maiden speech on 13 May 1965 and although Bill was a Member of this Parliament for a relatively short period till 1969, he served it and the electors of Riverina with distinction.

During his time in the Parliament, he was a member of the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and was a member of the Parliamentary delegation which visited South-East Asia in June/July 1966. He served on a number of backbench committees especially the Committees on National Development and Economics and Finance and his interest in these areas enabled him to pursue his own interests so successfully, to the ultimate benefit of his electorate and country. Moreover, as a former President of the Conargo Shire and as Chairman of the Deniliquin Pastures Protection Board, he was able to bring to his Parliamentary duties a useful collection of community experience.

Like so many of his generation, Bill Armstrong saw military service during the Second World War. He served with the 38th Australian Infantry Battalion in 1939 and 1940, was made a lieutenant in 1940 and joined the 2nd AIF on 1 September 1942. He saw service overseas in the South-West Pacific area from 1943 to 1945 and was decorated with the Military Cross and mentioned in despatches.

Bill Armstrong's great love was racing. He was official starter for the Victorian Racing Club from 1951 to 1970 and I am sure Honourable Members will recall his presence at many a Melbourne Cup. It was for these and many other public services that he was made an Officer of the Order of the British Empire in 1972.

Mr. Speaker, to his widow, three sons and daughter, on behalf of the Government I extend our deepest sympathies at their sad loss. His service to his electorate and to this Parliament is a matter of public record. With his passing we, as members of this House, have lost a fine friend and colleague.

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