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PRIME MINISTER

2/95

STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER, THE HON P J KEATING MP

JAPAN EARTHQUAKE

All Australians will have watched with sadness the tragedy unfolding in Japan following the powerful earthquake which struck the Kansai region in the early hours of 17 January.

Soon after the earthquake I wrote to Prime Minister Murayama expressing our profound sympathy towards those affected by this disaster. The Japanese Government was also asked if Australia might be able to assist in some practical way.

I am pleased to announce that the Australian Government will contribute to the relief effort by supplying about 200,000 litres of bottled Australian mineral water, valued at more than \$150,000. The mineral water is already in Japan as part of a commercial shipment, and therefore is available for immediate distribution in the disaster area. We will also assist with some internal transport costs.

The provision of fresh water to affected areas has been identified as a high priority by the Japanese emergency authorities.

SYDNEY

21 January 1995