



PRIME MINISTER

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOHN MALCOLM FRASER AC CH

Our country has lost its 22nd Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Malcolm Fraser.

As our nation's leader between 1975 and 1983, he restored economically responsible government while recognising social change.

In a long and active retirement, he maintained a keen interest in our country's direction.

The constitutional crisis of 1975 was one of the defining political events of our nation.

Malcolm Fraser held true to the belief that his actions were in the best interests of Australia. He was determined to 'turn on the lights' and restore Australia's economic fortunes.

The greatest win in Australian political history confirms that he had correctly read the mood of the public.

The friendship he built in later life with Gough Whitlam spoke volumes about the character of both men at the centre of the crisis: in their own different ways, they were both fierce Australian patriots.

Under Malcolm Fraser's leadership, self-government was conferred on the Northern Territory, the Commonwealth Ombudsman was established and our first Freedom of Information laws were enacted.

Following the Hilton bombing, he established the Australian Federal Police. Later, he introduced legislation to establish a crimes commission following the Costigan Royal Commission.

He commissioned the Campbell Report of 1981 which laid the foundations for eventual deregulation of the financial system.

Under Malcolm Fraser's leadership, Australia was an unwavering opponent of apartheid and after he left office, Malcolm Fraser continued to work for the end of apartheid. His subsequent appointment to roles with the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Nations reflected his high international standing.

He had a deep interest in the advancement of indigenous people.

He banned sand mining on Fraser Island. As well, the first Australian sites were placed on the World Heritage List and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park was declared.

He welcomed the re-settlement of tens of thousands of Vietnamese people in Australia who have subsequently added a rich, new dimension to our national life.

He was rightly proud of his government. As he said when he conceded defeat: *Australia is handed over... in as good a condition or better condition than any other Western country in the world.*

Flags will be lowered to half-mast today and on the day of Mr Fraser's memorial service. On Monday, the Parliament will honour our 22nd Prime Minister.

Throughout his life, Malcom Fraser was supported by his wife Tamie. All Australian prime ministers and governors-general have benefited from her continued work with the Australiana Fund.

The sympathies of all Australians are extended to Tamie and their children and grandchildren.

20 March 2015