

BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE

MASAYOSHI OHIRA

PRIME MINISTER OF JAPAN

Mr. Ohira, 67, has been Prime Minister of Japan since December 7, 1978. A veteran politician, he has held a large number of Cabinet posts, including, inter alia, the key portfolios of Foreign Affairs (twice), Finance and International Trade and Industry. He was Foreign Minister when Japan recognized China in September 1972. Mr. Ohira was one of the front-runners for the position of Prime Minister following the resignation of Mr. Tanaka in 1974 and Mr. Miki in 1976. His support in December 1976 was vital to Mr. Fukuda's successful bid for the party leadership. Prime Minister Fukuda appointed him Secretary-General of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, a position from which he eventually mounted a successful challenge to Mr. Fukuda during the party "primaries" in November, 1978.

Mr. Ohira and members of his parliamentary group (faction) are highly aware of Canada and have been instrumental in the establishment of the Japan/Canada