



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR MUNDINGBURRA

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CITY OF TOWNSVILLE

Ms NELSON-CARR (Mundingburra—ALP) (7.02 p.m.): I bring to the attention of the Parliament the achievements of the City of Townsville—

A Government member: That fine city of the north.

Ms NELSON-CARR: That fine city of the north, yes.

The City of Townsville, of course, includes my electorate of Mundingburra. In recent weeks, the City of Townsville has advanced in leaps and bounds proving itself to be one of the most exciting cities in Queensland. The World Health Organisation has opened its only office outside of Geneva at the James Cook University's Douglas campus. The opening was marked by a ceremony held last week at the university where a starting cheque of \$250,000 was handed over by Placer Dome.

This marks the beginning of a new chapter in research at James Cook University, which is already world renowned for its fine research into tropical medicine at the Anton Breinl Centre based at the Townsville General Hospital. In addition, James Cook University will have its promised medical school that will begin operations by 1999. The Honourable Wendy Edmond is working right now for this very important and welcome achievement. I would like to take the opportunity of thanking her for her continued commitment. The people of Townsville and indeed north Queensland appreciate her efforts and dedication.

A new hospital is also being built adjacent to the James Cook University's Douglas campus. Advanced health care services will feature as part of the largest and most sophisticated regional hospital in Australia. Douglas is proving to be one of the fastest growing areas in Townsville, which includes housing developments in the area as well as Lavarack Barracks, new schools and major shopping centres within the radius. The Townsville General Hospital is also the first hospital outside of Brisbane to have a bone marrow transplant unit. It is by gaining coups such as these that Townsville is proving to be a major player in State and Federal issues.

It is estimated that 956,000 tourists came to north Queensland last year. Together they spent \$259m, which in turn injected \$134m into local pay packets and thus created 7,837 jobs. If last year was a good year for positive messages about the north, then that will continue this year. Two weeks ago, both the CulturalFest and the Reconciliation Concert were held in Townsville. Both drew record crowds of over 25,000 people. It was encouraging and gratifying to acknowledge that we all belong to such a positive and grateful community, a community that respects and appreciates the richness and diversity that other cultures have brought to our lives. Whether it be food, music, dancing, story telling, craft work or expertise in some areas of cultural understanding, the people of Townsville have shown that everyone is welcome in our city. With the Pandora museum opening soon, Townsville's tourism operators should be in for a boost.

Townsville has also been promised continued representation on the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation by Tourism Minister the Honourable Bob Gibbs. Mr Gibbs has also given \$300,000 to Townsville Enterprise to boost business travel to the area. I would like to take the opportunity now to thank Mr Gibbs for his hard work in this area on Townsville's behalf. The local housing industry in Townsville has given disability services in Townsville a boost of \$50,000 by providing labour and materials for a house to be sold to raise money for Multicap. The funds will go towards the building of a respite centre for people with profound physical and intellectual disabilities. It hopes to provide day care and emergency and home relief, a level of choice that until now has been available only in capital cities.

I was fortunate enough to attend the graduation ceremony for the north Queensland police academy last week. It was a wonderful experience to see those people serving their State in the challenging task of law enforcement. I wish them all the best in their chosen career and say thankyou for all their hard work and dedication to the cause. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate all the 700 primary and secondary school students who participated in the Tournament of the Minds contest on Saturday. In particular I congratulate the Holy Spirit School, which won the primary maths/engineering section of the competition. I wish all the other winning schools the best of luck in the Statewide competition to be held in Brisbane next month.

I would like to congratulate Ronald Cunningham, who was named Queensland Ambulance Cadet of the Year and Jamali Labelak, who was named Queensland Apprentice Chef of the Year, among many other recipients of awards. It is the excellence of our young people that makes Townsville's future so bright. North Queensland has been described as an economic powerhouse.

Time expired.
