



Speech by

**MIKE REYNOLDS**

**MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE**

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Hansard 6 August 1998

**ABORIGINAL RECONCILIATION**

**Mr REYNOLDS** (Townsville—ALP) (10.18 a.m.): I refer to a headline in yesterday's Courier-Mail, 5 August, which incorporated the words "Aboriginal industry". I deplore the fact that that negative stereotype was used by the Courier-Mail, as the headline is against the objective of reconciliation and panders to the narrow policies of the One Nation Party.

No-one doubts the need for transparency, accountability and probity, which should be an essential component of the work of any public administration unit or community organisation. However, the headline used by the Courier-Mail reeks of sensationalism and racism and does little to bring about reconciliation and unity between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians. Ten per cent of the Townsville electorate are Aboriginal and Islander people. I am extremely proud of the contribution that that group of residents makes to the cultural, social and economic development of the Townsville electorate.

I wish to give an excellent example of the positive message published in my electorate the day before, on Tuesday, 4 August. I refer to the Marian Messenger from the Marian Catholic School, which is in the electorate of Townsville. The "Principal's Corner" column, written by the principal, Paul Lucas, states—

"Three events reinforced my faith in Australians on the weekend. The first was the Charters Towers conference between landowners and aboriginal land claimants. The second was the Townsville Multicultural Fest and Reconciliation Concert. The third, our response to the Aitape tidal wave.

Camilla Cowley is a cattle-farmer from Western Queensland who, on discovering that the local aboriginal tribe had made a land claim on her property, went to the land claimants and discussed the issue with them.

...

Now she travels Australia helping many groups like the one in Charters Towers. She says she was an ordinary person, a wife, a cattle farmer just three years ago. Now she is regarded as an 'angel of hope' in land claim resolutions."

Secondly, Paul discussed those who attended Sunday's Reconciliation Concert in the Strand Park—  
Time expired.

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