



Speech by

Hon. STEVE BREDHAUER

MEMBER FOR COOK

Hansard 30 July 1998

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Tsunami Disaster, Papua New Guinea

Hon. S. D. BREDHAUER (Cook—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Minister for Main Roads) (10.26 a.m.): I rise briefly to support the condolence motion before the House. I do so for two reasons. Firstly, my electorate of Cook shares a border with Papua New Guinea and many of my constituents in the Torres Strait are of Papua New Guinea descent. These people are Australian residents. There are traditional links between Torres Strait Islanders and the people of Papua New Guinea. Whilst those links are not connected with the area in which the tsunami occurred, there is no doubt that the people of the Torres Strait—and particularly those who are of Papua New Guinea descent—feel remorse for and express their sympathy to the people affected by this tragedy.

I also rise as the far-north Queensland representative in the Beattie Cabinet because of the strong links that exist between north Queensland—particularly the Cairns region—and New Guinea. As others have mentioned, those links are in areas such as education, business, mining and trade. However, there are very strong personal links. A significant number of residents of Papua New Guinea send their children to school in Cairns. The Cairns region has very strong social and personal ties with Papua New Guinea. On behalf of the people of north Queensland—and particularly those in the Cairns region—I express my condolences to the people of Papua New Guinea who have been affected by this tragedy. We have talked about the number of people who have been affected and we have talked about the relief efforts that have been undertaken. I add my thanks to those who have contributed. Because of the very special relationship that exists between the people of far-north Queensland and the people of Papua New Guinea it is appropriate for me to rise in the Parliament and add my condolences to those expressed by others.
