



PRIME MINISTER

PRESS STATEMENT NO. 424

27 December 1974

DARWIN EMERGENCY: MESSAGES FROM HEADS OF GOVERNMENT

The Prime Minister's office has released the text of messages received from Heads of Government expressing concern and sympathy at the devastation caused by the Darwin cyclone.

New Zealand: "On behalf of my Cabinet colleagues and the Government and the people of New Zealand, please extend our deepest sympathy to the people of Darwin who have suffered so grievously as a result of the recent cyclone. Bill Rowling, Prime Minister."

Papua New Guinea: "I am deeply grieved and saddened to learn of the unfortunate cyclone disaster that has fallen upon the people and the city of Darwin. The Government and people of Papua New Guinea extend to you and the citizens of Darwin our deepest sympathy and sorrow for the loss of lives and property. M.T. Somare, Chief Minister."

Fiji: "I am deeply concerned to hear of the tragic loss of life and destruction at Darwin caused by cyclone Tracy. On behalf of the Government and people of Fiji, and personally I extend to you, to the people of Australia and the bereaved and suffering, our deepest sympathy at the sad time and trust that the mammoth task of rehabilitation and reconstruction will be speedily effected. Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara."

Nauru: "The Government and people of Nauru are deeply conscious of the tragic loss of life and widespread distress caused by the disaster at Darwin and join me in sending the Government and people of Australia our heartfelt condolences. Hammer de Roburt, President."

Ireland: "On behalf of the Government and myself, I wish to convey to you our great sense of shock at the disaster at Darwin and to express the deepest sympathy of all the people of Ireland. Liam Cosgrove."

Grenada: "Deeply saddened by the news of the disaster at Darwin. Government and people of Grenada share and lighten the burden of your grief at this time. Please extend our condolences to the bereaved and our sympathy to victims of the catastrophe who we pray would receive from God the strength and fortitude to meet this tragedy which might be a precursor to a

brighter future. Eric M. Gairy, Prime Minister."

The Indonesian Ambassador, Mr. Hertasning, and the British High Commissioner, Sir Morrice James, have also expressed their shock and distress at the Darwin tragedy. In a letter to the Minister for Defence, Sir Morrice James offered the use of an R.A.F. Hercules to help in evacuating people from Darwin and in carrying relief supplies into Darwin. He further offered to make available any Royal Naval ships in the vicinity to help in relief work. These include two frigates, two tankers and a stores ship. Sir Morrice said he hoped that many of these expressions of willingness to provide, or investigate the possibility of providing, help from British resources will be translated into positive action as a tangible expression of the sympathy of the British people for their friends in Australia.