

## **PART II**

### **THE QUESTION PAPER**

Questions are printed in numerical order

An index to questions appears at the end of Part II

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### 20 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

Is the Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch promoting the sale and/or use of Townsville Stylo to African countries?

#### ANSWER

The Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch is aware of experimental work being conducted in the Sahelian region of Africa with several species of stylo leguminous pastures. A prominent Northern Territory farming advisor has been seconded to both private and international consultancy agencies to carry out this work south of the Sahara in several of the new African nations. He has indicated the prospects for providing stylo seed to this area and would no doubt promote Northern Territory seed if adequate stocks of the required varieties were available from local producers.

### 23 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS—

Following the tabling of the report of the Select Committee on Rural Land Settlement, what steps has the Australian Government taken to arrange a final settlement with the pilot farmers and when is it expected that the matter will be finally resolved?

#### ANSWER

The main problem in reaching a settlement with the pilot farmers is that one farmer wishes to leave his block and one wants to stay. Thus two equal offers must be made to each farmer at the same time; an offer to surrender the lease with compensation for time and money invested if a farmer chooses to leave and an offer to remain on the lease with a restructured debt which can be serviced from expected income. Budget studies on this latter proposition have indicated that a cattle breeding and fattening operation alone is barely viable. However, the efforts of one farmer in diversifying into cropping with a measure of success over the past two years will improve the viability.

In view of the above it is expected to finalise negotiations with the farmers in the next two to three months.

### 64 Mr KILGARIFF to Mr POLLOCK—

In view of the increasing problems associated with the consumption of liquor in the Territory, what action has been taken—

- (a) to set up a Liquor Commission;
  - (b) to review the types of liquor licences;
  - (c) to review the hours of trading under various licences; and
  - (d) to set up overnight shelters and detoxification units?
2. How many licences to sell liquor are current in Alice Springs; what are the different types of licenses and how many are there of each?
  3. What is the minimum amount of liquor that can be sold under each licence?
  4. How many licences of each type were granted in Alice Springs in 1973, 1974 and 1975?

#### ANSWER

1. (a) The Minister for the Northern Territory has agreed in principle to the establishment of a Liquor Commission. This advice was forwarded to the President of the Legislative Council for the Northern Territory on 11 June 1974.
- (b) (c) and (d) Unfortunately action to implement the Minister's decision lapsed after the cyclone but it is now being re-activated. Certain aspects of the report of the Board of Inquiry which recommended, amongst other things, the establishment of the Commission, are being considered with the specialist recommendations made by Dr Milner, consultant to the Government on alcohol and drug dependency problems.

#### 2. 52 licences current Alice Springs.

Publications . . . . .	3
Private Hotels . . . . .	4
Restaurants . . . . .	12
Storekeepers . . . . .	16
Clubs . . . . .	8
Liquor Merchants . . . . .	9
Total . . . . .	52

3. Liquor Merchants . . . . . Minimum 2 gallons
- All other licences . . . . . Any amount

4.	1973	1974	1975
Publication . . . . .	Nil	Nil	Nil
Private Hotel . . . . .	Nil	1	Nil
Roadside Inn . . . . .	1	2	Nil
Restaurant . . . . .	1	1	Nil
Liquor Merchant . . . . .	1	Nil	Nil
Wine Licence . . . . .	Nil	Nil	Nil

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### 5. Licences pending—

Publicans . . . . .	1
Private Hotel . . . . .	1
Wine . . . . .	1
Storekeepers . . . . .	1

Figures quoted above current at 16 May 1975.

### 98 Mr STEELE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

1. How many applications for assistance have been received by the Business Assistance Committee?
2. Have any of the applications been approved?

#### ANSWER

1. 300 applications have been received.
2. 82 applications have been approved.

The above figures apply as at 30 April 1975.

### 126 Mr MacFARLANE to Miss ANDREW—

1. Is it a fact that Katherine power house is in disrepair, has no engineer, two of its generating sets are out of action and the remaining two operate at only 70% capacity?
2. What is proposed to be done to upgrade the power house and when?

#### ANSWER

1. Certain problems have arisen due to the late commissioning of the No. 6 set at Katherine, requiring postponement of maintenance on some sets. However, statements that the power station is in a state of disrepair cannot be supported.

The five (5) sets at present installed are available and in reasonable condition although some maintenance is outstanding. Each set would be capable of at least 85% of its site rating and this figure could be expected to improve as outstanding maintenance is completed. The commissioning of the No. 6 set in May 1975 will facilitate the additional maintenance required.

It is not proposed to employ a professional engineer to run the Katherine Power Station.

2. The installed capacity of the Katherine Power Station will be increased by 1.7 MW with the commissioning of the No. 6 set in May 1975 and by the commissioning of a further 2 MW set in May 1976. It is anticipated that this expansion of the station will meet Katherine needs to early 1979.

### 129 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

Further to the answer given to question 60—

- (a) how many Aborigines or other health workers have undertaken the 2 year training course;
- (b) for how long was Rita Bapi trained, and did she qualify to use simple medicines; and
- (c) in the 2 year training course are any other subjects taught and, if so, what are they?

#### ANSWER

- (a) The Health Worker Training Programme began in July 1973. The course is of 2 years duration. None have yet graduated. There are 31 students in training.
- (b) The Health Worker referred to in the question commenced training in November 1974 and has had the first 6 one-month instruction sessions in Darwin. The first session is largely of an introductory nature. Apart from minor dressings, ointments etc. she would not yet be expected to dispense medicines.
- (c) The curriculum for the training program is:

Disease and disability . . . . .	15%
Growth and development . . . . .	15%
Environment and environment change . . . . .	15%
Culture, culture change and conflict . . . . .	15%
Family health . . . . .	10%
Adults—life and work . . . . .	10%
Communication—groups and communities . . . . .	10%
Resources and sources . . . . .	10%

### 150 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTIS—

What aspects of decentralisation does the Country Liberal Party support?

#### ANSWER

The Country Liberal Party supports decentralisation of population to solve the overcrowding problems characteristic of our larger cities, for decentralisation of industry for balanced economic growth, decentralisation of administration to give people rapid public service, and decentralisation of government so that electors can be in close contact with their representatives.

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We believe that effective decentralisation in the Northern Territory in all these fields depends on constitutional development with transfer of executive powers to an elected legislature so that Territorians can make decisions affecting decentralisation.

153 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

An Aboriginal, Mr Yogi Kelly was reported on the ABC news service of 20 February as having impersonated a police officer for the purpose of obtaining spirits—on what grounds was this man classified as an Aboriginal?

ANSWER

An Aboriginal is defined as a person of Aboriginal descent, either in whole or in part, who identifies himself as such and who is accepted by the Aboriginal community as such. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs accepts this definition in the implementation of Government policies particularly directed towards the Aboriginal community. Mr Yogi Kelly was not classified by that Department as an Aboriginal and is not aware if he meets the criteria contained in the definition referred to above.

The statement that Mr Kelly was an Aboriginal was made during an appeal against the sentence. The grounds for this statement are not known.

154 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. How many of the Aboriginal Justices of the Peace appointed recently by the Government are literate?
2. How many had convictions recorded against them prior to their appointments and what were the details in each case?

ANSWER

1. All the recently appointed Aboriginal Justices of Peace are literate.
2. It is not the practice to provide any record of any convictions which a person may have outside the requirements of a Court.

155 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. Now that Aboriginal community areas have been established at Urapunga, Roper Valley, Hodgson Downs, and Elsey, has the general health of the communities improved?
2. Are the health facilities and general conditions at these places comparable with those available to the Wattie Creek community?

ANSWER

1. No significant changes have been recently observed in the health of the people at Urapunga, Roper Valley, Hodgson Downs and Elsey, but such changes are not easy to measure.
2. The Wattie Creek community has the advantage of being situated close to the larger community at Wave Hill Settlement which has a permanent health centre.

The Elsey community is visited weekly from the Katherine Community Health Centre. Urapunga has access to the health centre at Roper River which is 20 miles away. There is a subsidised nursing sister at Hodgson Downs. Roper Valley, Hodgson Downs and Urapunga are offered visits by the Aerial Medical Service and are also visited by sisters with the mobile health clinic, currently based at Roper Valley.

156 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. Does the Government have plans to make the Katherine hospital an area hospital catering for centres south to Elliott, east to the Queensland border and west to Kunnunurra?
2. Will aerial medical services for the region be conducted from Katherine?
3. If there are plans, when will they be put into effect?

ANSWER

1. The Katherine hospital is already an area hospital and the general intention is to build up its resources as a medical centre for the surrounding rural areas.
2. and 3. Aerial Medical planes are based on Darwin because of maintenance requirements but these planes do use and will continue to use Tindal Airport for the provision of routine services to the Katherine area.  
At present the Queensland border area including the Borroloola district is serviced by aircraft based at Gove.

159 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. When will private and intermediate wards be provided at the Katherine hospital?
2. When will television receivers for the entertainment of patients and staff be installed at the hospital?

ANSWER

1. There are no plans at the present time to build private or intermediate wards at Katherine Hospital. However, intermediate beds will be designed for Medibank purposes.
2. Television sets are already available at Katherine hospital for the entertainment of patients and staff.

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### 160 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TUXWORTH—

Will the historical trees at Daly Waters and at Roper Bar be preserved and, if so, when?

#### ANSWER

The Department of the Northern Territory has no plans for I presume preservation of a historical tree at Daly Waters and has no knowledge of a historical tree at Roper Bar.

### 162 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. What study has been made of the needs of children, particularly deprived children, in Katherine?
2. Have the YMCA or the YWCA been encouraged to take an interest in the youth of Katherine?

#### ANSWER

1. During 1973 and 1974 investigations were held into ways and means to establish a satisfactory youth service for Katherine and surrounding districts. Discussions were held with Katherine Action Group, Katherine Citizens and Youth Club, Darwin YMCA, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Department of Education and Department of the Northern Territory and it was agreed there was an urgent need for a Youth Worker to be located in the district.
2. Unfortunately it was not possible to proceed with filling of a position of Government Youth Officer during 1974, but action to re-advertise the position is being taken at present. In addition, the YMCA has considered establishing an officer in Katherine but has been unable to proceed for financial reasons.

### 164 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TUXWORTH—

When will the road to the Mataranka Pool from the Stuart Highway and the road into the Mataranka Wild Life Reserve be sealed?

#### ANSWER

Sealing of the Mataranka access road to 3.7 m is included on Development Roads Programme proposals for 1975-76 and, subject to budgetary considerations, work should commence during that year.

### 165 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

What further delay can be expected with the provision of reticulated electricity at Mataranka, now that the generator sets intended for the purpose are being used for pumping at Darwin River Dam?

#### ANSWER

Whilst one of the Dorman Diesels from the Mataranka Power Station was used for pumping at Darwin River Dam, immediately following Cyclone Tracy, for a period of 5-6 weeks, it was not the cause for delay to completion of the Mataranka Power Station.

Due to the closure of roads during the wet season, certain other supplies have been delayed and this has caused postponement of commissioning of the power station. It now is anticipated that the Diesel generating sets at the Mataranka Power Station are expected to be commissioned in early June 1975.

### 166 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

I refer to the January issue of "Bunjji" and the article "Fred Fogarty Freed—Bunji Lives" and ask—

- (a) what is Fred Fogarty's real name and nationality;
- (b) has he been naturalized;
- (c) has he a criminal record and, if so, what is it;
- (d) is he a ticket-carrying Communist; and
- (e) was he freed because of heroism or simply because "Fannie Bay Gaol crashed to the ground"?

#### ANSWER

- (a) Frederick Stewart Fogarty. Born—Miles, Queensland, 19 April 1931. Nationality: Australian by birth.
- (b) Not applicable.
- (c) Information of this nature is always made available to a Court which is dealing with a particular person, but otherwise it is not made public.
- (d) as far as is known he is not a "ticket-carrying Communist".
- (e) Mr Fogarty was included in a total of 22 prisoners released on 26 December 1974 under the authority of the Chief Stipendiary Magistrate.

The decision was taken to release the prisoners in view of the security facilities available at that time and was taken in the best interests of the community. Selection was based mainly on length of sentence remaining.

He was not singled out for special consideration but was included in a group released to ease the accommodation problem of prison authorities.

### 171 Mr MacFARLANE to Miss ANDREW—

Will high voltage cables be placed underground in Darwin following the damage caused recently to exposed cables?

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### ANSWER

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission decided in principle at a recent meeting that all distribution should be placed underground. Consequently all new 11,000 volt primary distribution mains will be underground and a programme for the undergrounding of existing 11,000 volt lines is being developed.

Transmission lines (i.e. 66,000 volt and higher) will remain as overhead construction but designed to meet cyclonic conditions.

#### 174 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

1. What was the total number of public servants of all types, including school teachers, in the Territory in 1974?
2. How many dependants of public servants were in the Territory in 1974?
3. How many productive people are in the Territory now?

### ANSWER

1. According to official Public Service Board statistics, the total number of full-time Australian Public Service staff employed in the Northern Territory in December was 11,197. This figure would not include teachers employed by the Commonwealth Teaching Service.
2. and 3. It is not possible to answer this part of the question.

#### 175 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

1. How many people in the Territory were charged with the offence of drunkenness in the 12 months preceding the removal of this particular offence from the statutes?
2. How many people have been charged with offences in which drunkenness was a contributing factor in the period since drunkenness was declared not to be an offence?

### ANSWER

1. Number of people charged with the offence of drunkenness between 21 October 1973 and 21 October 1974: Males 5,261, Females 1,013, Total 6,274.
2. Statistics in relation to part 2 of the question are not maintained, therefore an answer cannot be supplied.

#### 177 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

1. Are the Commonwealth Hostels intended to house only Australian Government employees?
2. Is it intended to change the name to Australian Hostels?
3. Will the Board of Directors, including Mrs Whitlam, inspect the substandard facilities at the Katherine Hostel?

### ANSWER

1. Australian Government hostels in the Northern Territory which are now operated by Commonwealth Hostels Limited are intended primarily to accommodate Australian Government employees. Other persons are admitted when accommodation is available.
2. A change in the company's name is under consideration.
3. The Minister for Housing and Construction as well as Directors of Commonwealth Hostels Limited have inspected Katherine hostel. The complete rebuilding of the hostel on a nearby site is proceeding: the first new accommodation block was opened on 2 March and construction of a second accommodation block is well advanced.

#### 178 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

Will the cafeteria in Block 8 Mitchell Street, Darwin, remain after the emergency is over and, if so, is it intended to repair the floor, upgrade facilities, install airconditioning, and then escalate prices, or merely to repair the floor and leave conditions and prices as at present?

### ANSWER

The cafeteria in Block 8 Mitchell Street, Darwin, was designed as Australian Government Food Service to cater for Australian Government employees. Though incomplete, and damaged by Cyclone Tracy, it was opened on 13 January 1975 at the request of the Department of Services and Property to provide an emergency food service for the community. The cafeteria closed on 19 March 1975 after the requested period of emergency operation had been completed, but primarily because of serious operational problems, particularly safety hazards to which staff were exposed.

Repairs are being affected to enable the cafeteria to operate at standards observed for Australian Government Food Services. Such standards include pricing of meals to recover prescribed operating costs. It is expected that when repairs are satisfactorily completed the Department of Services and Property will request the Department of Labor and Immigration to operate the cafeteria through its food service section as a normal Australian Government Food Service.

#### 182 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TUXWORTH—

1. What long-term plans have been made for the disposal of effluent at the Katherine Low Level Reserve?
2. When will the ranger at the Mataranka thermal pool be provided with standard accommodation?
3. When will toilets, reticulated water and camping sites be available at Edith Falls?

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### ANSWER

1. Connection to Katherine Sewerage System.
2. Ranger will be accommodated at Mataranka Township when permanent position approved.
3. Attempts to obtain a suitable quote have been made for two (2) years. It is hoped to arrange a contract for completion of work in 1975-76.

### 183 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TUXWORTH—

1. When will the Kintore Caves be developed to enhance the status of Katherine as a tourist centre?
2. What alternative is planned for the unsatisfactory licensed operation of the Sixteen Mile Caves Reserve near Katherine?
3. Will a report on the Cutta Cutta caves be published following the 3 day visit to the caves by a Mr Hamilton Smith?

### ANSWER

1. There are no plans to develop Kintore Caves in the near future as the demand is being met at Sixteen Mile Caves.
2. It is proposed to appoint a Board Ranger.
3. Mr Hamilton Smith was a member of a group from the Australian Speleological Foundation which visited the caves at the request of the Reserves Board. The group prepared a report on behalf of the Reserves Board to assist in Management/Development plans for the caves. It is not intended to publish this report.

### 188 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. In view of the fact that Hodgson Downs is only 20 miles from a development road, why was it necessary to evacuate a sick child on 22 February 1975 by helicopter?
2. When will an aerodrome be established at Hodgson Downs or when will the Roper Valley-Hodgson Road be upgraded to all weather standard?

### ANSWER

1. Official records do not show any air evacuation on 22 February 1974. There was an evacuation on 22 February 1974. A helicopter was used because Hodgson Downs was inaccessible by road at that time.
2. The provision of an aerodrome on a pastoral property is the responsibility of the owner. Advice and assistance to do this is available from the District Airport Inspector, Air Transport Group, Department of Transport, Darwin.

Access roads to pastoral properties are provided to the standard of dry weather accessibility for conventional drive light vehicles.

The Roper Valley-Hodgson Downs Road will be graded during the 1975 dry season.

### 192 Mr MacFARLANE to Miss ANDREW—

Does the Department of Education recognise the need for nutritional supplements for deprived children rather than just "free lunches" and, if so, what does it intend to do to satisfy the need?

### ANSWER

Under the administrative arrangements existing the need for nutritional supplements is one for consideration by the Department of Health, the Department of Education and the Department of the Northern Territory.

Where it is indicated by a medical officer on health grounds that special nutritional supplements are necessary, these are provided. In the cases of families in necessitous circumstances direct assistance for the provision of meals is provided to the families as a whole.

In cases where a child or children are suffering because of parental neglect, direct interim assistance in the provision of meals is made. At the same time consideration of legal action against the parents is undertaken.

### 194. Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

1. Has a new site for the King River bridge on the Victorian Highway been chosen and, if so, when will tenders be called and the new bridge built?
2. Is the Dunmara—Top Springs road to be upgraded in view of its frequent use as an alternative road to Victoria River Downs and West Australia when the Victoria Highway is cut?

### ANSWER

1. Two possible sites are being investigated for a new bridge over King River on the Victoria Highway. The project is listed on the draft forward programme for 1976-77.
2. Major gravelling improvements on the Dunmarra—Top Springs section of the Buchanan Highway are listed on the draft forward programme for 1977-78. Minor gravelling improvements are listed on the draft 1975-76 maintenance programme.

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### 196 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TUXWORTH—

1. What support can tourist operators in Katherine expect from the Government or the Tourist Board by way of the provision of facilities for the accommodation of tourists now that such facilities in Darwin are depleted?
2. Does the Government recognize the value of tourism as the second most important industry in the Territory, and, to maintain this position, will the Government consider the provision of tent villages for tourists at Howard Springs, Berry Springs and Batchelor?

### ANSWER

1. So far as the Department of the Northern Territory is aware there has been no approach, of the kind mentioned in the Question, to Government for assistance to the tourist industry in Katherine or elsewhere in the Northern Territory outside Darwin.
2. If an approach is made for provision of tent villages at such places as Howard Springs, Berry Springs and Batchelor this will be considered.

### 197 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

1. On how many days since 25 December 1974 have road or rail communications between Darwin and the following places by the routes indicated been cut:
  - (a) Katherine
  - (b) Kununurra via Top Springs
  - (c) Kununurra via Victoria Highway
  - (d) Alice Springs via Stuart Highway
  - (e) Adelaide
  - (f) Mt Isa via Three Ways
  - (g) Mt Isa via Balbarini
  - (h) Longreach via Mt Isa, and
  - (i) Townsville via Mt Isa?

### ANSWER

1. Road or rail communications have been cut between Darwin and the following centres since December 25 for the number of days stated—
  - (a) Katherine—Nil
  - (b) Kununurra via Top Springs—8 days
  - (c) Kununurra via Victoria Highway—11 days
  - (d) Alice Springs via Stuart Highway—30 days
  - (e) Adelaide (sections in N.T. only)—30 days
  - (f) Mt Isa via Balbarini—32 days
  - (g) Mt Isa via Three Ways—16 days
  - (h) Longreach via Mt Isa (sections in N.T. only)—16 days
  - (i) Townsville via Mt Isa (sections in N.T. only)—16 days
2. The following action has been taken to reduce flooding on the various sections—

Proposals for a three year Improvement and Maintenance Program for the Stuart and Barkly Highways have been prepared and are about to be submitted to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works. These include proposals to substantially upgrade major stream crossings on these highways.

Work has already commenced on the Tarcoola to Alice Springs standard gauge rail link due for completion in approximately five years.

### 199 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. How many Aboriginal are there at the "Rockhole" camp in Katherine?
2. What area of land do these people desire, require or have title to?
3. What improvements on the land are envisaged?
4. What is the estimated cost of the proposed improvements; was a previous estimate varied and, if so, who prepared the previous estimate and why was it changed?

### ANSWER

The population of Aboriginal people living at the "Rockhole" camp in Katherine varies between 50 to 70 people.

The community (through the Kalano Community Association Incorporated) have been granted title to an area of 32 acres. Approval to the transfer of title was agreed to by Lands Branch in December 1974. This area of land includes what is known as the "Rockhole" camp and extends from the main road down to the river. Although this area does include an area of water frontage, it would not be considered prime agricultural land.



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Improvements envisaged on this area are basically in the form of a housing programme. A Housing Association has been formed amongst the local residents and plans for the building of up to ten houses over a three year period are well advanced. A consultant firm of architects have submitted house plans for approval by the committee members of the Association. Also included in the programme are plans for the construction of a communal kitchen and communal ablution blocks. It is also envisaged that at a later date a vegetable farming project will be commenced. The estimated cost of the proposed improvements is \$250,000. This is the initial estimate for this project.

### 203 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

1. Has the price of superphosphate and other fertilizers risen?
2. Has the bounty or subsidy been withdrawn?

### ANSWER

1. The price of superphosphate and other fertilizers has been rising over the last year due to the rock phosphate price increase, manufacturing costs and removal of the bounty.
2. The national bounty expired on 31 December 1974. The matter of a bounty has however been referred to the Industries Assistance Commission for enquiry. The Northern Territory scheme of providing a subsidy on the cost of the freight on superphosphate to the Port of Darwin was estimated on 1 July 1973.

### 204. Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

1. Will facilities for loading and unloading double decker transports be incorporated into the Government yard and dip at Elliott (and other places)?
2. Will the Government insist that all cattle travelling to tick free areas or interstate are clean dipped before loading so that they will not be held up at Government dips?

### ANSWER

1. At this stage provision for loading and unloading double decker transports is not being incorporated in the construction of the new Government yard at Elliott and is not being considered for other dip sites. Although originally it seemed that there would be a need for this facility, which could still be added at a later stage, discussions with transport operators have revealed a trend to double decker vehicles being fitted internally with suitable loading ramps.

2. The suggestion would require all properties wishing to send cattle to tick free areas or interstate to have their own dips for treating cattle before loading. Some pastoralists have this facility, in many cases it is one of the covenants in the pastoral lease and in all cases it is a facility which we recommend should be provided for proper animal husbandry on the property to control tick, a debilitating pest of cattle.

However it is not considered that the provision of dips on all properties both small and large should be made compulsory at this stage. In so far as travelling stock are concerned the dipping of cattle under Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch supervision at strategically sited Government dips is proving to be an effective method of controlling tick to provide clean dipping facilities under supervision where this is required by importing states.

### 208 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. Does the Betting Control Board recommend to the Administrator's Council the amounts to be distributed to racing from the revenue of the Board?
2. Were the last amounts distributed decided upon by the current Administrator's Council or by the previous Council?
3. Were the recommendations by the Betting Control Board for Adelaide River, Pine Creek and Timber Creek race clubs for much smaller sums than those allocated by the Administrator's Council?
4. Are the sums to be received by Mataranka, Daly Waters, Larrimah, Katherine and Borroloola race clubs all lower than those recommended by the Betting Control Board?
5. What expertise in racing does the Administrator's Council possess?

### ANSWER

1. Yes.

Section 94KD(2) of the Lottery and Gaming Ordinance, which is the relevant section, provides: "The proportion of the prescribed revenues of the Commonwealth that is payable to racing bodies under the last preceding sub-section shall be divided amongst such registered clubs within the meaning of Part V of this Ordinance, and such companies, associations or other bodies of persons established for the purpose of promoting, conducting or controlling the sport of dog-racing, and in such proportions as the Administrator in Council, after consideration of the recommendations of the Board, determines."

2. The distribution of prescribed revenue from the 1973-1974 financial year was determined by the present Administrator's Council.

3. No.

4. No.

### 209 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

Will the Government consider the development of Tindal as a strategic base rather than rebuild the RAAF Base at Darwin on the grounds that Tindal is better located strategically; the provision of housing is easier

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and cheaper in Katherine; and the Government would have less complaints about the disturbance to residents occasioned by air exercises?

### ANSWER

Optimum strategic disposition is a major factor in deciding location of deployments of defence forces, but economic and other factors also apply. Despite cyclone damage, RAAF Darwin represents a significant national investment and present plans provide for continued RAAF capability in this area. Should other national considerations lead to a Government decision to re-locate Darwin airfield, the option of development of the RAAF Base at Tindal will be fully assessed in conjunction with other options available.

#### 210 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TUXWORTH—

1. I refer to the advertisement in the "Katherine Informer" of 21 February for the supply of 3000 gallons of water every 5 weeks for Cutta Cutta Caves and ask: is the water for the domestic use of the ranger or for public toilets?
2. What use is made of the bore reported in the Reserves Board Annual Report of 1974 as having been successfully sunk?
3. Will accurate counts of visitors to the Katherine Gorge, Katherine Low Level Reserve, Mataranka Pool, Cutta Cutta Caves and Edith Falls be kept?

### ANSWER

1. The advertisement for the supply of water was placed in the "Katherine Informer" by a Mr K. Guy, who conducts tours to Cutta Cutta Caves on behalf of the lessee Mr Seidel. I presume water is for his own use and not for public toilets.
2. Bore was sunk and equipped by Reserves Board and is used to supply water for public toilets and is available to lessee or representative of caves.
3. It is not possible to count visitors to Katherine Gorge, Katherine Low Level, Mataranka Pool, Cutta Cutta Caves and Edith Falls until tickets for entry are issued. This is not being done at present.

#### 211 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

1. Have any Aborigines been found to be infringing the laws relating to hire cars by transporting people for a fee?
2. Was the recent accident which resulted in the death of Clancy Roberts caused by mechanical failure or a "rust bucket"?

### ANSWER

1. No reports or complaints have been received relating to hiring of cars by Aborigines for a fee.
2. The accident in which Clancy Roberts was killed (4 March 1975) was caused when the vehicle which was being driven by a Joe Doctor became uncontrollable when the deceased, who was a passenger, pulled at the steering wheel and attempted to gain control of the vehicle (Roberts was alleged to have been intoxicated). The vehicle overturned and crushed Roberts. The vehicle was a 1967 Valiant Station Sedan, registered No. NT 96350, which is reported to have been in a reasonable condition.

#### 212 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

1. Are Aborigines engaged in pastoral enterprises subject to the same laws with regard trespass, wrongful branding, unlawful killing, etc. as other Australians?
2. Has the Stock Squad been instructed not to prosecute Aborigines accused of cattle stealing, unlawful killing and associated offences and, if so, what are the terms of the instruction?

### ANSWER

Aboriginals engaged in pastoral enterprises are subject to the same laws with regard to wrongful branding, unlawful killing, etc. as other Australians.

With regard to trespass, Section 37(b) of the Crown Lands Ordinance states that all N.T. Pastoral Leases must contain a reservation in favour of Aboriginal inhabitants of the Northern Territory. Section 24(e) defines this reservation as the right to enter on any pastoral lease for defined purposes. These purposes include the right of access to water and right to hunt indigenous species of animal life.

The police officer in charge of the activities of the Stock Squad has advised that no special instructions have been issued in matters relating to stock offences involving Aboriginals.

#### 213 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

Will research be carried out into improved preservation of potatoes, onions, apples, oranges and other lines to avoid losses due to deterioration without cold storage under Territory conditions?

### ANSWER

There is a continuing programme of research into the technology of preserving fruit and vegetables by the Division of Food Research of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation. Many methods of storage, in addition to cold storage, are being examined.

#### 214 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

1. What are the prospects for the shipment of live cattle to South East Asia in 1975?
2. What loading facilities are available or are to be made available?

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### ANSWER

1. The prospects for the shipment of live cattle from Darwin to South East Asia in 1975 appear to be good.

An airlift of several hundred live slaughter cattle to Burnei has already commenced.

A number of enquiries have been received from prospective exporters and it is known that negotiations for sales are taking place. It is too early to predict how many cattle might be exported by plane and ship in 1975 but figures in the order of 5000 to 20 000 seem possible at this stage. The longer term future of the trade however remains uncertain.

2. There are presently no permanent facilities at the Darwin wharves for the export of live cattle, but the problem has been examined by a number of prospective shippers who seem satisfied that adequate loading arrangements can be made with cranes and containers at the ship's side. The loading operations will be carefully observed by Department of Northern Territory officers and Port Authority officials. If an economic loading rate cannot be achieved and the trade appears to have reasonable prospects then other arrangements will have to be considered.

### 216 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

Is it a fact that there is no provision for extended credit at concessional rates to rural industries in the Territory?

### ANSWER

The only credit presently available to rural industries at concessional rates is through the Rural Reconstruction Scheme administered by the Primary Producers' Board. Since that scheme was introduced, following amendment to the Encouragement of Primary Production Ordinance in December 1972, there have been six applications for loans of which three have been approved and one not approved.

Rural Reconstruction finance is primarily used to restructure existing debts at higher interest rates and provide some development capital where this is needed to increase the debt servicing capacity of the producer. The interest rate for rural reconstruction finance is 4½ %.

In addition, as stated by the Minister for the Northern Territory in a press statement of 21 April 1975 and again in his second reading speech to the States Grants (Beef Industry) Bill on 21 May 1975 carry on finance for beef producers is also available. Northern Territory beef producers will be able to obtain carry on finance on the same basis as the states at 4 % concessional interest rate. The carry on finance scheme will be administered by the Primary Producers' Board and full details will be announced shortly.

### 223 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

In view of the fact that poor communications east and south of Mt Isa led to a beer rationing situation in that town and the same poor communications affect the supply of Darwin, will he enlist the co-operation of the Queensland Government to make a joint approach to the Australian Government for funds to seal to all-weather standard the roads between Townsville and Mt Isa and between Longreach and Mt Isa?

### ANSWER

Yes. I have already made such an approach to the Queensland Government.

### 224 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

Before Christmas 1974, the Rural Health Sisters responsible for the Elsey Community Area stated that the health of the Aboriginal community had improved 100 per cent since their move to Duck Creek. I ask:

- what is the general condition of the community now;
- how many children have been hospitalized since Christmas 1974;
- how many children are hospitalized now;
- what was the nature of the complaints for which the children were hospitalized;
- is the main cause of the illness suffered attributed to malnutrition; and
- will the Department of Aboriginal Affairs ensure that an appropriate amount from Social Security payments is spent on food for the dependants of recipients?

### ANSWER

- The People camped at Duck Creek have a similar pattern of health problems to that encountered in most Northern Territory Aboriginal communities.
- Ten children from this community have been hospitalized since Christmas 1974.
- On 3 April 1974 one child from this community was in hospital.
- Diarrhoea and chest infections usually with mild to moderate undernutrition.
- As in most Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory, the children's resistance to infectious diseases would be undermined by under-nutrition and this should therefore be regarded as an important causative factor.
- Aboriginals are encouraged, as part of the overall community education program, to allocate a reasonable proportion of their income for family maintenance purposes but the Department of Aboriginal Affairs is not empowered to issue a direction to this effect.

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### 244 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. Was an investigation made into the reasons for the attack on Aboriginal Patrol Officer Campbell in Katherine on 11 March 1975 by Aborigines exiled by the Hooker Creek Council and, if so, what were the reasons?
2. What action was taken against the assailants?
3. What action will be taken to ensure that Aborigines who are not amenable to control by their own community do not intimidate or maltreat people outside their own "country"?

### ANSWER

It is understood that Katherine Police investigated a brawl, in which Mr Campbell was involved at Katherine on 11 March 1975, and that some arrests were made.

Apparently Mr Campbell has not availed of the opportunity offered by the Police to lay charges for assault and it seems that this is because the brawl arose out of a domestic argument.

Where cases of intimidation or maltreatment are reported and it appears likely that charges can be laid and sustained then Aborigines involved are advised of their rights in the situations. However, such incidents are rare.

### 245 Mr WITHNALL to Mr EVERINGHAM—

1. Is the new building code being used at present without being lawfully promulgated?
2. When will the building code be legalised?

### ANSWER

1. No.
2. The Northern Territory Draft Building Manual 1975 was adopted by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission on 17 April 1975 and has effect in the Darwin Area as defined under the Darwin Reconstruction Act 1975.

The draft Northern Territory Building Manual 1975 was adopted in declared building areas outside the Darwin area following normal legal/administrative action required pursuant to the Northern Territory Building Ordinance and Regulations.

### 246 Mr WITHNALL to Mr EVERINGHAM—

1. In view of the fact that at least two persons, to my knowledge, have been misled by the Commonwealth as to the payout figure of loans owing to the Commonwealth on houses, will he find out and tell me how many such mistakes have occurred?
2. Is the making of these mistakes due to the locating of half the Finance Branch in Brisbane or was it due to an incorrect method of calculation decided on before the movement of staff to Brisbane?
3. When will the Finance Branch be brought together again for the improvement of efficiency of its operations?

### ANSWER

1. Some confusion has arisen concerning the difference between the insurance payout figure for improvements on a leasehold and the payout figure for discharge of the mortgage. In some cases the owner has asked for one when in fact the other was needed.
2. To avoid this confusion the department now provides both figures in response to all requests and identifies each clearly.

Where the loan or purchase was made prior to the commencement of the reserve price system the insurance payout figure should have been sufficient to pay out the amount owing under the mortgage. In the case of loans after the reserve price system commenced the view was taken that as the Government's equity in the land had not been destroyed, repayment of the full loan from insurance funds would not be sought unless the mortgagee so desired.

Unfortunately, in both cases, there were inconsistencies in the manner in which the Government's equity in the improvements was recorded in departmental records. Because of the urgent demand for insurance payout figures from home owners, and the prolonged delays which, with a reduced staff and damaged filing systems, were probable in verifying doubtful calculations the Department chose to use the information then available and rely on its existing mortgage security to obtain repayment for the amount outstanding for the land (if any) and any error of calculation in the insurance payout figure.

These difficulties have been resolved now that the financial records of the department are properly housed and adequate staff is available in Brisbane.

3. The timing on the return of detached elements of the Department from Brisbane was given in Part 3 of the answer to question No. 225.

### 247 Mr MacFARLANE to Miss ANDREW—

When will an engineer be appointed to take charge of the operation of the Katherine power house?

### ANSWER

The Department of Housing and Construction advises it is not intended to appoint a professional engineer for the sole purpose of taking charge of the power station at Katherine.

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

An Area Engineer has been appointed to take charge of all ESU operations in Katherine and he will be released as soon as his current contract commitments in Darwin make it possible.

248 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

What was the reason for the delay of almost two weeks before the late Mr Clancy Roberts of Katherine could be buried?

ANSWER

In view of the fact that a coronial enquiry had to be made into the death of Mr Clancy Roberts and, because of his position as a leader amongst Aboriginal people in the district and the necessity to make arrangements for many people to attend the funeral from throughout the district, together with the time needed to arrange a burial at the locale chosen, the delay seems reasonable. There appears to be no evidence to suggest that there was undue loss of time.

249 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Will the establishment loans being granted to Darwin businessmen be matched by similar loans for pastoralists who have suffered from the disastrous collapse of the world beef market?

ANSWER

No. No similarity is seen between the situation of Darwin businessmen whose premises and stock were destroyed in Cyclone Tracy and the situation of Northern Territory pastoralists who have experienced a drop in prices offering for live cattle.

The Government has however announced that a substantial loan on favourable terms is to be made to enable the Katherine Meatworks to open in 1975 and has announced that in addition to the Territory pastoralists share of the \$20m made available to the Commonwealth Development Bank for carry on finance loans at current commercial rates, specific assistance in the way of loans to a reasonable limit at a very low interest rate are to be offered to N.T. producers under a national scheme of assistance to the cattle industry. Details of this scheme will be determined following discussions to be held with the States.

252 Mr MacFARLANE to Miss ANDREW—

When will the power house at Tindal be reactivated?

ANSWER

The Power Station at Tindal is not part of the ESU establishment. Its operation comes under the control of the Department of Defence (Air Office).

From time to time the Tindal Power Station has been used to supply a small part of the Katherine Township, this being done with the co-operation of the Air Office. Future use of the Tindal power station will be requested if the need arises.

253 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

When will a coroner be appointed to Katherine?

When will a permits officer be appointed to Katherine to authorize travel to and from Darwin?

ANSWER

It is not proposed that an appointment of a coroner to Katherine be made at this time. Dorrit Gisela Eirmann, who is the Clerk of Courts at Katherine, was appointed as a Deputy Coroner under the Coroner's Ordinance by the Administrator of the Northern Territory on 28 February 1975.

A permits officer took up duties in Katherine on a full-time basis on 18 March 1975.

255 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

I refer to the report on the Katherine Power House you furnished in February and ask: were the capacities for each generator listed those of the makers up to 20 years ago or were they the output of each generator was capable in 1975?

ANSWER

The information sought is set out in the following Table:

Generating Set	Original Site Rating (KW)	Present Continuous Output (KW)
No. 1	970	800
No. 2	529	450
No. 3	529	450
No. 4	970	800
No. 5	1725	1500
No. 6*	1725	1500
Portable Dorman	474	450

\* This set is due to be commissioned in mid 1975.

256 Mr PERRON to Mr RYAN—

Did the N.T. Port Authority submit applications for capital expenditure to the Federal Government in 1972/73, 1973/74, or 1974/75 and, if not, why were applications not made?

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### ANSWER

**1972/73**—For the financial year 1972/73, the Port Authority made application for funds totalling \$858,000 which were to be supplemented by a further \$270,000 for Capital Works out of the Port Authority's own funds. No funds were made available by the Government and the Port Authority actually expended \$738,000 on Capital Works out of its own funds.

**1973/74**—During this year, funds were not requested from the Government, as it had been made quite clear that any money made available would be on an interest bearing repayable loan basis, and would only be made available if it was considered the money was to be used for a viable operation. The Authority budgeted for \$281,500 to be spent on Capital Works, but in effect expended \$154,000 during the year.

**1974/75**—Application was made to the Government for a grant of \$101,000 to provide an Inshore Fishing Facility, and budgeted to spend \$182,500 on Capital Works out of its own funds. To date funds have not been received for the Inshore Fishing Facility as requested.

### 257 Mr PERRON to Mr RYAN—

1. Is it a fact that Port Authority staff who left Darwin after the cyclone and only returned recently have been paid for the period they were absent?
2. Is the period of absence being classified as annual leave?

### ANSWER

1. In all cases staff of the Northern Territory Port Authority were paid in accordance with Public Service Board Circular No. 1975/4, Darwin Cyclone Disaster—Conditions of Service, and any amendments thereto.
2. No member of the Port Authority's staff was obliged to take annual leave to cover any period of absence during this period.

### 258 Mr PERRON to Dr LETTS—

Does the Darwin Reconstruction Commission intend to have the facilities in the port upgraded or increased?

### ANSWER

The draft report on 'Darwin Planning Guidelines' says: "The port area is expected to continue its current essential role. Should long term development occur in East Arm, as was proposed, it is unlikely that all port activities will be removed."

The National Materials Handling Bureau is examining the development of the port for the Northern Territory Port Authority and a submission is expected in June.

No commitment to consider upgrading or increasing port facilities could be given before this report has been examined.

The relationship between the Authority and the Darwin Reconstruction Commission responsibilities with regard to development programming over the next five (5) years is being investigated.

### 259 Mr PERRON to Mr RYAN—

1. Has the N.T. Port Authority applied to the Government for special financial assistance to repair facilities damaged during the cyclone, and if so, with what result?
2. If no application has been made, what is the reason for the delay or for the decision not to make an application?
3. In view of the closing down of Francis Creek Mine, does the authority intend to repair its bulk loading facilities?

### ANSWER

1. Under its agreement with the Government, the Port Authority provides for an Insurance Reserve Fund, and any deficiency in its insurance reserve will be made up by the Government. An advance made in respect of such a deficiency would be regarded as equity capital and interest would not be payable thereon. The Government will therefore finance repairs to Port Authority facilities damaged during the cyclone. Preliminary estimates of cyclone damage, which exceed \$2m, have already been forwarded to the Government. The Government has so far provided an advance to the Authority of \$200,000 and will be providing more in accordance with the Authority's estimated cash requirements which so far have been tabled for the period ending 30 November, 1975.

2. Not applicable.

3. As mentioned in the answer to question 1, the Authority's insurance is underwritten by the Government. Damage to the bulk loading facility has been assessed at approximately \$250,000. Whether the facility will be repaired will be determined by the Government.

It should be noted that the Authority has not yet fully discharged its responsibility to the Government in respect of repayments on the stockpile and loading equipment. The final payment of \$231,000 is to be made in June of this year. Repayments on the Iron Ore Wharf continue for a further 22 years.

### 261 Mr DONDAS to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Is it the Government intention to provide recreation fares to Darwin residents in the private sector and, if so, when?

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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### ANSWER

The Government provided recreation fares to Darwin residents in the private sector until 31 March 1975. Consideration is being given as to whether it would be appropriate to extend this period, and, if so, under what conditions future fare concessions should be granted.

262 Mr DONDAS to Dr LETTS—

1. How many permanent officers and how many temporary officers are employed by the Department of the Northern Territory?
2. How many officers of the Department have been transferred interstate and what branches do they represent?
3. Will all these officers be transferred back to Darwin and, if so, when?

### ANSWER

1. The Department of the Northern Territory employs 938 permanent officers and 448 temporary employees.
2. Approximately 200 officers and employees of the Department of the Northern Territory have been temporarily transferred to Brisbane. The Branches represented are:
  - Establishment and ADP Branch
  - Finance, Supply and Transport Branch
  - Forward Planning and Major Projects Co-ordination Branch
  - Legislation Branch
  - Mines Branch
  - Urban Development and Town Planning Branch
  - Commercial and Industrial Affairs Branch
  - Local Government and Services Branch.
3. It is intended to return all functional areas that have been temporarily relocated outside the Territory to Darwin as soon as possible. The timing of the return to Darwin depends upon a number of factors including the availability of suitable accommodation in Darwin.

265 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW—

1. When will the Nakara Primary School open?
2. When will the Wanguri Primary School now open?

### ANSWER

1. The Northern Territory Education Division has asked the Department of Housing and Construction for the return of Nakara School by commencement of third term. Whether this can be achieved is dependent on the extent of the repairs to be carried out and whether the required carpeting can be obtained.
2. Housing and Construction have advised that Wanguri is programmed to open in April, 1976.

268 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW—

1. How does the current number of enrolments of school children in Darwin compare with the corresponding period in 1974?
2. How does the number of school teachers employed now compare with the corresponding period in 1974?

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### ANSWER

1.		<b>March 1974</b>	<b>March 1975</b>
	Government Pre & Primary Schools	7 351	3 700
	Government High Schools	2 532	1 664
	Non-Government Schools	1 132	762
	Total	11 051	6 126
2.		<b>March 1974</b>	<b>March 1975</b>
	Government Schools	657	302
	Non-Government Schools	64	28
	Total	721	330

### 270 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK—

1. When will the Casuarina Hospital open?
2. What other medical facilities will be provided in the Casuarina District?

### ANSWER

1. The Casuarina Hospital is now scheduled for completion in January 1978.
2. The Department has made certain recommendations to the Construction Commission on this matter. Further information will need to await decisions by the Construction Commission.

### 271 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW—

1. What remedial steps has the Price Controller taken in response to the many complaints about high prices in Darwin?
2. Have any persons in Darwin been charged for over-charging since 24 December 1974?

### ANSWER

1. All price complaints received by the Controller of Prices are thoroughly investigated and where necessary a justified price is negotiated or fixed by order under Section 20 of the Prices Regulation Ordinance. A continuous programme of research and investigation is being undertaken to check price levels over a wide range of commodities and services.
2. No.

### 273 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. Will the adoption of orphans from Vietnam and other places overseas be as difficult to arrange as the attempts at adoption of children made by Territory residents under normal circumstances, as witness the applications of A. J. Gorey of Mataranka and R. Bathgate of Katherine, or will the procedure be simplified?
2. How many Territory residents have indicated willingness to adopt war orphans and of these how many are Katherine residents?

### ANSWER

1. It is not proposed to relax standards or to establish new procedures in the case of the adoption of Vietnamese orphans in the Northern Territory. Prior to the cyclone there was a considerable waiting list of applicants and it was possible to find the best possible adoptive parents for a particular child. It is of note that Section 10 of the Adoption of Children Ordinance spells out that the welfare of the child is paramount.
2. Thirty-seven applications have been received throughout the Northern Territory to adopt Vietnamese orphans and of these six have come from the Katherine area.

### 274 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

In answer to question 207 it was stated that "Funds have been allocated for expenditure in 1974-75 year for a new toilet block" in Katherine opposite March Motors. Will tenders be called and let in the three months remaining of the financial year?

### ANSWER

Tenders have been called, the successful tender has been selected, approved and authorised and will be announced shortly. The contract will be let this financial year.

### 275 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

1. Have approaches been made by the Red Cross Society to the Government for the enlarging and improving of the Old Pioneers' Home at Katherine?
2. What progress has been made in having houses built for pensioners on the area of land near the Old Pioneers' Home in Katherine?



## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

3. Some years ago the Government undertook to survey the need for aid to elderly people in Katherine and I now ask, was the survey carried out and, if so, with what result?

### ANSWER

1. The Australian Red Cross Society, Katherine Branch, has notified the Department of Social Security that it is considering the installation of four transportable type units in the Pioneer Home area. As yet no formal application has been lodged.
2. The Department of Social Security advises that the subject of houses for pensioners on the area of land near the old Pioneers' Homes in Katherine, has been taken up with the N.T. Housing Commission. The Housing Commission has now acquired three of the six acres formerly held by the Red Cross in that area for the purpose of erecting new design units of self contained flats.
3. A survey on the need for accommodation for elderly people in the Katherine area was carried out by the Department of Social Security and the action indicated in answers (1) and (2) emerged following that survey.

### 276 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Are payments of wages and salaries to employees and staff in Government departments in Katherine frequently delayed, and, if so, will he make representations for the appointment of a resident paymaster?

### ANSWER

Following Cyclone Tracy there were a few instances of late payment of salaries and wages to employees and staff of Government Departments in Katherine. These delays were of short duration and resulted from new arrangements necessary following cyclone damage. All concerned Departments advise that new arrangements are working satisfactorily and that wages and salaries are now being paid on time. Each Department does have a paying officer in Katherine.

### 277 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

Are any trials being undertaken or is research being conducted with the object of growing sugar cane commercially in the Territory?

### ANSWER

No trials or research into commercial growing of sugar cane are being conducted in the Northern Territory. The Kimberley Research Station at Kununurra, West Australia, maintains sugar cane variety stocks and does some limited trial work under irrigation, the results of which would be applicable to the Northern Territory if sugar cane production became feasible.

It should be noted that sugar requires about 60 inches of rain spread over about nine months of the year so that there would not be any chance of growing the crop under Northern Territory dry land conditions. Further, sugar requires a tremendous infrastructure of transport facilities including deep sea ports plus crushing mills. The Queensland coast has all these facilities and could increase Australian production if required with little or no increase in infrastructure.

The Ord area would offer best prospects for sugar growing in this region with available irrigation water and a settled farming community.

### 278 Mr PERRON to Mr RYAN—

1. Has the Port Authority objected to the Cities Commission proposal to have the Frances Bay Arterial Road traverse land which was intended for small craft facilities?
2. Has the Port Authority supplied details of their medium and long term port development proposals to the authorities replanning Darwin?

### ANSWER

1. The proposed alignment of the Frances Bay Arterial Road does not encroach on the area proposed for small craft facilities. It lies behind the existing Frances Bay Access Road.
2. The Port Authority's reconstruction programme and preliminary development proposals have been given to the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. Several investigations are in hand and will be completed by June this year which will enable the Port Authority to finalise its medium and long term development plans.

### 281 Mr STEELE to Miss ANDREW—

1. What is the current annual cost of operation of the Prices Control Board and how many staff are employed?
2. How many additional staff will be required for the policing of controls on the prices of building materials? Will they be recruited interstate and, if so, where will they be accommodated; and what will be the cost of operating the branch in 1975-76?

### ANSWER

1. (a) The operating cost of the Prices and Consumer Affairs Branch for the full financial year 1974-75 will amount to approximately \$198,000.
- (b) The approved establishment of the Branch comprises at present 22 positions, of which five positions have been transferred to Brisbane.

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

2. (a) At this stage it is not envisaged that additional staff will be required for the control of price movements of building materials, as it is the aim of the Branch to arrive at fair prices by way of price justification rather than by direct price control. Should the imposition of direct price control become necessary, up to six additional officers may be required to cover the increased work load. The additional staff will be either recruited locally, in which case no additional accommodation will be required, or transferred temporarily from Brisbane requiring only single hostel or motel accommodation.

(b) The budgeted operating cost of the Branch for the year 1975-76 is \$308,000.

282 Mr STEELE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

When will Strata Titles legislation, necessary for the future development of the Territory, be introduced into the Assembly?

ANSWER

The subject of Strata Title legislation for the Northern Territory is presently under consideration but it is not possible at this stage to accurately state when a bill for this purpose will be ready for introduction.

The form of any such legislation necessarily depends upon the system of land tenure applicable in the Northern Territory, which is presently under examination by the Commission of Inquiry into Land Tenures.

(My comment on this information is, "Humbug".)

283 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

Will he make representations to the Government for the relocation in the Katherine area of the Radio Australia facility destroyed at Cox Peninsula?

ANSWER

No, but I will ask the Government what action it proposes for replacement of the Cox Peninsula facilities, and may make appropriate recommendations after receiving and considering this advice.

284 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

I refer to recent reports of children having been withdrawn from Roper School because of a leaking roof and other maintenance problems and ask:

- (a) have the positions on the 1969 Roper establishment of one Builder/Carpenter (European), seven Builders Assistants (Aboriginal) and one Plumber's Assistant (Aboriginal, been maintained and, if so, how many people have been trained in these positions in the intervening years; and
- (b) why was it not possible for some of these trained or partly trained people to have made at least temporary repairs to the school roof?

ANSWER

(a) No. Up until 1973 it was difficult to keep the position of Carpenter (Tradesman) occupied on a regular basis. In December 1973 the establishment was reduced to three Trades Assistants (Building) and there has been little emphasis on using these positions since as the local Housing Association developed and as other Departments became responsible for on-going repair and maintenance.

(b) Temporary repairs were made until recently when the Department of Education arranged to let a contract for this work. The nature of repairs needed are beyond local resources.

285 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

The answer to question 380 appearing in the February/March 1970 Hansard refers to Welfare Officers "watching and observing what goes on" with regard to Aborigines drinking in hotels and other places and I ask: Do officers of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs still continue with this practice and do they counsel Aborigines observed to be over-indulging to desist?

ANSWER

The Department of Aboriginal Affairs does not arrange for officers to observe Aboriginal people drinking in hotels.

286 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

Why was it necessary to have Territory police recruits trained in Adelaide rather than in Alice Springs or other places that could be used?

ANSWER

Police recruits are being trained in Adelaide as a result of the facilities at the Darwin Training Centre suffering major damage during the cyclone. There is no other centre in the Northern Territory that could supply facilities and accommodation required for the recruit schools, which comprise of an average of thirty members.

The SA Police Department were able to supply training facilities and accommodation, therefore this course was accepted.

It is pointed out that the recruits are trained by NT Police training staff who have been temporarily posted to Adelaide for this purpose.

287 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

What were the circumstances of the incident on a lonely Central Australian road during Easter 1975 involving Mr W. Waudby of Mt Wedge station and a group of Aborigines?

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### ANSWER

Circumstances are not known. Mr Waudby has been spoken to and stated he did not wish to make any complaints or supply a statement concerning the incident.

#### 288 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

1. What is the reason for the delay in letting the contract for the building of Housing Commission homes in Katherine?
2. What is the estimated waiting time for a Housing Commission home in Katherine and how many applicants are there for such homes?

### ANSWER

The Housing Commission has attempted to undertake several housing projects in Katherine this financial year including—

- (a) the building of 3 houses for the Northern Territory Reserves Board;
- (b) the building of 11 medium density units in Quinn Street, which were advertised in August, 1974 and 3 tenders were considered by the Commission in August 1974;
- (c) the building of 14 single unit brick dwellings for which tenders were called in September 1974 and tenders were considered by the Commission in October 1974;
- (d) the Commission is currently calling tenders for 14 transportable factory-built houses in Katherine.

With respect to the 3 houses for the Northern Territory Reserves Board, the Commission has been awaiting a decision by the Government for 6 months on the provision of special funds to build these houses.

With respect to the medium density units in Quinn Street, the lowest tender received was about \$29,000 per unit. The other two tenders were very much higher. It was decided to make further investigation into the financial standing of the lowest tenderer who subsequently withdrew his tender in September 1974. As the result of this, the contract was re-advertised in September 1974, when again three tenders were received, the lowest this time being over \$39,000 per unit, which was far too high for acceptance by the Commission.

In October 1974 having received completely unacceptable tender prices, the Commission decided to negotiate with contractors from Katherine, Darwin and Alice Springs in an effort to obtain an acceptable contract price. However, no other contractor has been prepared to submit a tender price. The present position is that the contractor who withdrew his tender in September 1974 has now contacted the Commission and is anxious to negotiate again to complete the project and it is anticipated that he will submit a price by about mid-May for the Commission's consideration.

With respect to the tender for 14 single unit brick dwellings, only one acceptable price was tendered in September 1974, but in the Commission's opinion this particular tenderer would have had considerable trouble in completing a contract for 14 houses, so that the Commission in December 1974 offered this contractor a contract for 5 houses at the price previously submitted but was prepared to negotiate within specified limits. Mainly because of the cyclone in Darwin, it was not until April 1975 that an acceptable price for 5 houses was achieved. A letter of acceptance has been forwarded to the contractor. It is therefore expected that work will proceed on the construction of these houses immediately.

With respect to tenders being called for 14 transportable units, because of the Commission's inability to let a contract for medium density units and the inability of virtually all contractors to submit satisfactory prices for brick dwellings in single units or medium density units, the Commission investigated the possibility of introducing transportable factory-built houses into Katherine and Tennant Creek. Tenders are now being called for 14 factory-built houses at Katherine and tenders will close in June 1975.

Apart from the problems referred to above, the Commission has had advice that there seems to be a decrease in demand for Commission houses in Katherine. In fact, the waiting time for Commission houses and flats has remained fairly constant over the past 12 months which may indicate that the demand for Commission houses in Katherine is small. This concern had been increased by the doubts surrounding the future of the Northern Meat Exporters for whom the Commission provided 10 houses in 1972, some of which were unoccupied at 21 April. Before the announcement to provide further Government financial assistance to Northern Meat Exporters, there was a real possibility that these 10 houses could revert to the Commission and would therefore have been available for general allocation.

2. The estimated waiting time and number of applicants are as follows:

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

	Number of Applicants	Waiting time
Houses . . . . .	38	10 months
2-Bedroom Flats . . . . .	6	5 months
1-Bedroom Flat . . . . .	8	8 months

### 290 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TUXWORTH—

Has any further attention been given to the request of the Tourist Board made in 1970 for the provision of public toilets at Larrimah, Daly Waters, Dunmarra and Borroloola?

#### ANSWER

Correspondence was entered into between the Department of the Northern Territory and the Tourist Board on the subject of provision of Public Toilets and the possibility of their lack of maintenance. The Board agreed with the Departmental attitude that toilets in remote locations should be adequately maintained or they become a serious health hazard, are then objectionable to tourists and result in adverse publicity for the Territory. Since that time consideration is given to establishing toilets on locations where adequate maintenance can be provided on an assured long term basis. In locations where there is only one facility e.g. hotel or a store, it is considered that it is the proprietor's responsibility to erect toilet facilities for his customers.

The deplorable lack of cleanliness in several of the public toilets established throughout the Territory has been a source of concern to the Department of the Northern Territory, the Department of Health and the Tourist Board. The major problem is the difficulty experienced in obtaining a suitable contractor to undertake the task of regular maintenance of the blocks. This occurred particularly in locations where there was only one establishment such as a store or a wayside inn. There was no guarantee that after the first maintenance contract expired, the local contractor would be interested in re-negotiating a further term. It then became an expensive operation to maintain these units and in some cases they were actually closed. Prior to closure, the toilets became such health hazards that complaints from the travelling public were numerous and the Department of Health asked for action.

However, any application for a public toilet is treated on its merits but unless there is adequate guarantee that the blocks will be maintained satisfactorily for the life of the unit, erection of toilets is avoided in locations other than towns where there are sufficient residents to undertake the cleaning contract.

Currently there are no proposals for erection of public toilets at Larrimah, Daly Waters, Dunmarra or Borroloola.

### 291 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TUXWORTH—

Will Mr S. Ruhman be granted permission to cross part of the Katherine Gorge Reserve with his proposed guided tours?

#### ANSWER

No.

### 293 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

What was the result of the approach made five years ago (see question 371 February/March 1970 Hansard) to a church group to sponsor the provision of a hostel for convalescent people in Katherine?

#### ANSWER

The North Australia Baptist Home Trust approached the Department of Aboriginal Affairs in May 1973 with a proposal to build a hostel for convalescents and outpatients of the Katherine Hospital. (At that time the Department of Aboriginal Affairs was responsible for the General Community Welfare function). Because of difficulties associated with funding this type of accommodation, the proposal has temporarily lapsed although the Baptist Homes Trust has indicated that it still is interested to develop the proposal when possible. In the meantime a 22 bed hostel which has been established for young people by the Baptist Homes Trust in Katherine may be able to provide some accommodation for convalescents from time to time.

### 294 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

Will he investigate the 1968 Water Resources Branch internal report on a reticulated water supply for Katherine and endeavour to have its recommendations carried out or at least made public?

#### ANSWER

Yes.

### 295 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

What was the result of the negotiations being carried out in 1970 between the Northern Territory Administration and the Baptist Homes Trust (see question 349 February/March 1970) for a long term low interest loan scheme in connection with the building of a hostel for outback children interested in attending Katherine Area School?

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### ANSWER

The Baptist Homes Trust had proposed building small hostels for secondary school children and primary school children in Katherine and had acquired leases over land for this purpose. However, their investigations revealed that there was no substantial need for this type of accommodation and in the light of these results, the leases were surrendered.

The Department of Education advises that it has provided in its program for 1975-76 for the construction of a drop-in residential centre to enable outback students of the Katherine School of the Air to live in at the school in Katherine for short periods throughout the academic year. The centre is designed to accommodate eighteen students in single and double rooms and also contains units for staff and a housekeeper. In addition provision has been made for a dining room with kitchen facilities, common room for the students and a common room for the staff.

#### 296 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

1. Will the new Building Code, if and when it becomes law, require changes in associated regulations such as those pertaining to the Plumbers and Drainers Licensing Board and, if so, will all the new associated regulations come into force at the same time as the Building Code?
2. What are the other associated regulations that will have to be amended or replaced as a result of the introduction of the new Building Code?

### ANSWER

1. The Darwin Reconstruction Commission has approved the Building Code for the Darwin area under the Darwin Reconstruction Act. Section 15(6) of the Act provides that "the erection of a building . . . shall be deemed to be not in contravention of any Ordinance of the Territory or any regulation or by-law under such an Ordinance." Consequently it is not essential to amend any Territory legislation although as far as possible it is proposed to conform with such legislation.

In as far as it is proposed to adopt the new Building Code for the rest of the Territory pursuant to the Building Ordinance and Regulations the Code will have to comply with existing Territory Regulations.

2. Investigations are proceeding to see whether any amendments are necessary. It is not possible at this stage to specify what amendments are necessary.

#### 297 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

Is the area blocked on the Stuart Highway at Newcastle Waters or Newcastle Creek?

### ANSWER

Newcastle Creek.

#### 298 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

Do the inland routes of Queensland, through Mt Isa and the Townsville to Mt Isa railway offer cheaper and quicker supply routes to the Territory than either road or rail routes via Alice Springs from Adelaide and Melbourne?

### ANSWER

No. Information received from North Australia Railways gives the freight cost of general cargo between Melbourne and Darwin via Alice Springs as \$248.96 per tonne whereas the cost via Mt Isa is \$304.52 per tonne.

It takes approximately two weeks for freight to reach Darwin via the Alice Springs route and approximately three weeks via Mt Isa.

#### 299 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

Will he explain why the parallel air services provided by the airlines between Alice Springs and Darwin which do not provide Tennant Creek and Katherine with a service each day of every week are tolerated when it is the Government's expressed desire to avoid parallel flights?

### ANSWER

Airlines are making rescheduling arrangements to serve Katherine and Tennant Creek with at least one daily service in each direction. New schedules will be introduced before 1st July.

#### 300 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

By whom and on whose authority was Mr Ian Barker Q.C. briefed to represent Aboriginal defendants at Katherine on April 14 and 15?

### ANSWER

The Aboriginal Legal Aid Service.

#### 301 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

When was the Acting Director of Aboriginal Affairs notified of the incidents which took place in Katherine on Sunday 13 April involving a large group of Aborigines from Hooker Creek?

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### ANSWER

The Director of Aboriginal Affairs or his delegate discussed alleged incidents involving Aboriginals and other persons in Katherine, with Katherine field officers, at various times from Monday 14 April onwards. No record has been kept of the exact times.

### 302 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

Are Aborigines visiting towns like Katherine for special functions, such as rodeos allowed to bring firearms, spears, boomerangs, etc. with them?

### ANSWER

Aboriginals visiting towns like Katherine for special functions may bring with them whatever the law allows every person to bring in similar circumstances. The question of what is allowable in any particular case that is not specifically prescribed is a matter for interpretation by the Police and subject to review by the Courts should the Police feel that some enforcement of regulations are necessary.

### 303 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

Are attempts made to instruct unsophisticated Aborigines such as those from Hooker Creek in acceptable social behaviour in towns, and, if not, will attempts be made?

### ANSWER

Generally Aboriginals learn what is or is not acceptable social behaviour in the same manner as do other people. That is, from a variety of sources including parents, the school, peer groups, work supervisors, etc. The Aboriginal people at Hooker Creek also discuss such matters in local sessions of the Council and these discussions are carried into the community at large.

### 304 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

In view of the existence of the Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch advisory services, why is it necessary for the Department of Aboriginal Affairs to spend nearly \$700,000 on consultants for pastorals and farming enterprises?

### ANSWER

The Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch of the Department of the Northern Territory does provide an advisory service to pastoral and agricultural concerns in the Territory. However, it is felt that Aboriginal ventures, as least in the initial stages of development require more than just an advisory service and in most instances where considerable financial assistance has been made available by the Government, consultants have been retained as General Managers to the projects.

Recent advice from the Branch indicates that their staff resources are limited and they are unlikely to be able to provide more than casual assistance.

The Consultants fees for this type of service are of course substantial but in total for the Northern Territory would amount to only a fraction of the \$700,000 suggested.

### 305 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

How many lepers are:—

- (a) in the Territory;
- (b) in each district of the Territory;
- (c) arrested cases;
- (d) hospitalized; and
- (e) incurable?

### ANSWER

Before providing the figures requested the following explanation is offered on the interpretation of leprosy statistics; especially as these have been used by some in the past to give the impression that large numbers of infectious cases roam at large in the Northern Territory and elsewhere in Northern Australia to the peril of the rest of the population.

Effective treatment for the disease is relatively recent and it is the practice to keep patients on the leprosy register to ensure their efficient follow up even when the disease is no longer infectious and has been arrested. The patient's name is kept on the register until such time as the case can be considered to be a definite cure.

The specific answers to the Honourable Member's question are:—

- (a) there are currently 840 names on the leprosy register;
- (b) the numbers for each district are:

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### Northern Region

Bagot . . . . .	9
Bamyili . . . . .	30
Bathurst Island . . . . .	39
Borrooloola . . . . .	25
Daly River . . . . .	17
Darwin . . . . .	64
Delissaville . . . . .	5
Garden Point . . . . .	6
Katherine . . . . .	37
Mudginberri . . . . .	7
Port Keats . . . . .	53
Roper River Area . . . . .	30
Snake Bay . . . . .	19
V.R.D. Area . . . . .	62
Wave Hill Area . . . . .	35
Sub Total . . . . .	438

### East Arnhem Region

Elcho Island . . . . .	57
Goulburn Island . . . . .	8
Croker Island . . . . .	6
Maningrida . . . . .	122
Oenpelli . . . . .	75
Milingimbi . . . . .	30
Rose River Area . . . . .	21
Yirrkala . . . . .	24
Sub Total . . . . .	343
Southern Region . . . . .	59
Total . . . . .	840

- (c) 820 of these are arrested cases.
- (d) 20 patients are in hospital.
- (e) Leprosy is no longer incurable.

368 Mr WITHNALL to Mr EVERNGHAM—

What are the Government's intentions in respect to each of the following Ordinances reserved for the Governor-General's pleasure on the dates indicated:

Administrative Actions (Investigation) Ordinance 1972

1.6.72

Criminal Injuries (Compensation) Ordinance 1973

11.12.73

National Parks Ordinance

11.5.73

Housing Ordinance 1974

26.6.74

National Parks Ordinance 1974

20.3.74

Crown Lands Ordinance 1974

20.3.74

Public Parks and Garden Ordinance 1974

20.3.74

Succession Duties Repeat Bill 1974

24.10.74

Land Tenure (Transitional Provisions) Bill 1975

13.3.75

Local Government (Extension of Terms of Office) Bill 1975

13.3.75

## ANSWER

Administrative Actions (Investigation) Ordinance 1972

No final decision has been made in respect of this Ordinance due to the introduction of the Ombudsman Bill 1975 in the Australian Parliament. The matter will be reconsidered after Parliament has dealt with this Bill.

Criminal Injuries (Compensation) Ordinance 1974

The Australian Government is presently giving further consideration to this matter having regard to current developments relative to the question of compensation. Implications arising from the National Compensation Bill 1974 also require consideration in relation to the Ordinance.

National Parks Ordinance 1973

National Parks Ordinance 1974

Public Parks and Gardens Ordinance 1974

Crown Lands Ordinance 1974

The Australian Government is presently giving further consideration to all of these Ordinances having particular regard to the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1975, which commenced on 13 March 1975. Discussions are presently in progress as to the effects of this Act on the existing National Parks and Gardens Ordinance and the Northern Territory Reserves Board established under it. A decision on the reserved Ordinances will be made as soon as possible after these discussions have been concluded.

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### Housing Ordinance 1974

The policy on the sale of houses, including the sale of Housing Commission houses and Australian Government houses, is currently under review and discussions on this matter are presently taking place. Consequently a decision on this Ordinance is not possible at the present time.

### Succession Duties Repeal Ordinance 1974

The Australian Government is giving further consideration to this Ordinance with a view to making a decision shortly. Amongst other matters, it is having regard to proposals that have been made for transfer of executive responsibility to the Northern Territory and consequent implications as to the financial responsibility.

### Land Tenure (Transitional Provisions) Repeal Ordinance 1975

This Ordinance was reserved because of doubts as to whether it came within the provisions of the Northern Territory (Administration) Act, section 4W(a). It is intended in the near future to submit to the Governor-General a recommendation that he assent to this Ordinance.

### Local Government (Extension of Terms of Office) Ordinance 1975

As the elections for the Corporation of the City of Darwin have now been held, it is intended in the near future to submit to the Governor-General a recommendation that he withhold his assent to this Ordinance.

### 370 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING—

What were the wind loading specifications for the Government contract built houses in Nakara?

#### ANSWER

Houses constructed for the Department of the Northern Territory in Nakara were constructed to comply with the undermentioned wind loading specifications:

The roof when constructed, erected and fixed, together with associated purlins, roof sheeting and all relevant items, shall be capable of withstanding dead and live loads specified as Australian Standard CA 34, Part I, and wind forces specified in CA 34, Part 2, using Terrain Category 3.

Framework shall be of approved material and section, guaranteed by the manufacturer, when properly constructed and with all associated items fixed to withstand wind loading as set out in Australian Standard CA 34, Part I and 2.

All rafters, purlins, etc., are to have Trip-I-Grip anchors, tie rods, etc. Anchors shall be located where rafters meet exterior walls unless indicated.

### 372 Mr KILGARIFF to Mr POLLOCK—

Is it the intention of the Government to set up a Health Commission in the Territory as recommended by the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the Hospitals and Medical Services and, if so, what stage has been reached in the project?

#### ANSWER

The present position is that Dr Everingham, the Minister for Health, has directed the Department to produce a discussion paper exploring the issues involved in the establishment of an independent statutory authority to provide Health services in the Northern Territory.

It is anticipated that the paper will be ready within two months, and will set out and discuss the concepts pertaining to such an authority. Comments on the paper will be sought from a wide spectrum of people in the Northern Territory.

### 373 Mr KILGARIFF to Mr POLLOCK—

What stage has been reached in the replacement of the Department of Health's Dove aircraft and what type of aircraft was chosen as the replacement?

#### ANSWER

The Cabinet decision was that the Dove aircraft of the Northern Territory Medical Service would be replaced by "Nomade 24" aircraft. Orders have been placed for six of these planes and the first is expected to be delivered towards the end of this year with regular deliveries thereafter.

### 374 Mr KILGARIFF to Mr POLLOCK—

Pending receipt of an answer to question 64, notice of which was given on 11 February 1975, can the honourable member indicate which of the recommendations made in the report of the commissioners appointed to inquire into all aspects of the sale and consumption of liquor have been implemented?

#### ANSWER

See answer to question No. 64.



## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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375 Mr STEELE to Mr RYAN—

Has the Darwin publication "Northnews" received financial or other assistance from the Australian Government to enable it to continue publication since the cyclone?

ANSWER

The Darwin Business Relief Loan Fund has approved a loan of \$5,000 at 5% per annum for five years to continue publications of "Northnews". This approval is conditional on the registration of the business and the partners involved in the proprietorship.

We are not aware of any other financial assistance from the Government for this enterprise.

376 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

Were the persons seen to be taking photographs of houses in the suburbs of Darwin on 24 and 25 May and identifying each house by the use of a blackboard with the block number written on it acting with the authority of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and, if so, what use will be made of the photographs?

ANSWER

Yes.

Visual identification of the degree of reconstruction required.

Visual reference to particular blocks which are the subject of a telephoned enquiry from the householder.

Visual reference for use by the Commission's Homes Advisory Service in their discussion with home owners who are seeking advice on rebuilding or repairing.

380 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

Is he, as a member of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, aware that citizens of Darwin are being subjected to questionnaires and in some cases harassed by employees of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. If he is, will he take steps to make sure—

- (a) that the harassment is stopped, and
- (b) that householders are informed that they are under no obligation to answer any question put to them by employees of the Commission.

ANSWER

I am not aware of harassment of citizens of Darwin by employees of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. If the honourable member will provide me information of specific cases of harassment I will have them investigated. I am aware that the Reconstruction Commission is posing questions on important matters to people of Darwin, I am not aware of instances of the Commission advising persons that they are obliged to answer such questions. Again, if the honourable member will provide information on this I will have the matter investigated.

395 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN—

How long will the Stuart Highway between the airport entrance gates and Bombing Road remain in its present condition?

ANSWER

The road outside the airport has been in that state for some time now. I have been in touch with the contractor who is to do the work. The reason for the delay in starting the road is that the contractor has been unsure of the amount of work which the company would have as a result of the cyclone. They have now cleared up this problem and they are at present negotiating with the department of Housing and Construction on rise and fall for the contract. The manager of the company estimated that there could be about 2 weeks negotiations after which the road will be once again under repair.

396 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

Did the Darwin Reconstruction Commission make selections and recommendations to the Minister for the Northern Territory Citizens Council and did the Minister vary these recommendations and substitute some people selected by himself? If so, how was that substitution made?

ANSWER

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission did make recommendations to the Minister for some 15 places in the Citizens Council. The Minister did make variations to those recommendations in respect of 3 positions. He inserted persons other than the 3 nominated by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission.

397 Mr DONDAS to Dr LETTS—

Why didn't the Minister for the Northern Territory have a member of the northern suburbs on the Darwin Citizens Advisory Council?

ANSWER

I have some hesitation in answering that question because I have no idea what is in the Minister's mind most of the time. Therefore, that question is almost impossible to answer. I believe that it is not in conformity with Standing Orders either. I think I know what the honourable member is getting at and perhaps the only way I can answer it satisfactorily is that there was somebody representing the northern suburbs in the original recommendations made by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. That person was not included in the Minister's final list. The Minister has not given the Darwin Reconstruction Commission any reasons for any of the substitutions which he made.

398 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Would he ascertain for me before the end of these sittings how many of the staff presently employed by the Commission were formerly members of the NCDC.

ANSWER

I will endeavour to obtain that information for the honourable member in the course of these sittings.

399 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

Will he table in the Legislative Assembly a copy of the questionnaire currently being used by employees of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission in a survey of the Darwin housing situation?

ANSWER

The honourable member did give me some indication that he would ask a question on these lines. At the end of last week, I sought a copy of the questionnaire which I subsequently received. On receiving the questionnaire, I noticed that it was headed across the top "CONFIDENTIAL". In view of that heading, I feel that I should either advise the Chairman of the Commission of my intention to table this paper or seek his co-operation in having it tabled. In the meantime, I would be quite happy to make a copy of the questionnaire available to the honourable member for Port Darwin.

400 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS—

There is apparently considerable speculation regarding the movement of the headquarters of the Department of North Australia from Darwin to some other place. Can he give me any information to confirm or refute this rumour?

ANSWER

I am aware of the rumours alluded to by the honourable member for Arnhem. In fact, they are more than rumours. The Minister in a conversation with me last week indicated that the matter was in fact under consideration but no decision has yet been reached. I believe that further consideration of this proposal will take place this week in Canberra. In view of that, it is my intention to formulate a motion calling on this Assembly to express its view on this which can then be transmitted to the Prime Minister.

401 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr RYAN—

What action has been made regarding road signs for the Shoal Bay area?

ANSWER

I ask him to put the question on notice.

402 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

It is said in the press that amendments have been made to the Building Manual that was tabled here at the last meeting of the Assembly. Have such amendments been made in fact? Is that amended manual being applied and will he table a copy of the amendments?

ANSWER

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission has considered a number of amendments to the Building Code and has approved a number of amendments which would have the effect of potentially reducing the price of buildings in Darwin. In approving these amendments, the authority was given to the staff of the Commission to have them incorporated within the new Building Manual. I will endeavour to obtain a copy of all these amendments during the course of this week and provide them to the Assembly.

403 Mr DONDAS to Mr EVERINGHAM—

I understand the Auditor-General commented on the number of berths still available on the "Patris" whilst many public servants are still staying in hotels. Does he know whether any action has been taken to rectify this situation?

ANSWER

I was unaware of this position but I will undertake to do my best to find out information for the honourable member and will probably reply to him this afternoon.

404 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Has the Administrator's Council made a decision on setting up of a parole board in the Northern Territory? I asked a question along these lines at the previous sittings and I believe that the Administrator's Council were going to give further consideration to this. It is now over 2 years since the necessary legislation was passed.

ANSWER

I know the matter has been under consideration by the Administrator's Council on recent occasions. Unfortunately, I have been unable to be present at a couple of meetings of the Administrator's Council and I am not quite sure what stage this matter has reached. However, I will find out the information for the honourable member and report to her during these sittings.

405 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

Has the Australian Government yet determined the desirable extent, nature and purposes of the uses and development of the Darwin area? If it has, will he disclose in this Assembly what has been determined? If it has not, when does the Government expect to be able to make such a determination?

ANSWER

I am unable to provide a full and satisfactory answer in this matter because the Reconstruction Commission's responsibilities terminate when the plan has been put on display for a month and when the objections and comments of the public have been received and considered by the Reconstruction Commission and then forwarded to the Minister as the Commission's final version of a scheme for the plan of the town of Darwin. The views of the Commission on the plan have been formulated with the exception of one particular road and I understand those views have been transmitted to the Minister and the Government. As far as I am aware, the Commission has had no final declaration by the Minister or the Government to say that this is the plan but I will seek this information from the general manager.

406 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

Last week the chairman of the Primary Producers Board drew attention to the failure of the Australian Government to provide the funds it promised to cattlemen to provide carry-on finance. Are the promised funds available?

ANSWER

I find that question a little ambiguous. I am not quite sure what the honourable member for Elsey means. As I understand the matter the Australian Government has entered into a commitment in relation to the Northern Territory to provide carry-on finance to producers in need. Various figures were talked about as to what the ceiling on individual loans would be and what the rate of interest would be. The Minister expected to make an announcement about the final details of the scheme last week. I haven't seen any final listing of the exact details of the ceiling amounts and the final confirmation of the rate of interest which was to be a concessional rate.

The honourable member for Elsey may be speaking about the overall extent of the finance which was to be granted. I don't believe that the Minister or the government ever gave a firm undertaking that it was to be one and a half million or two million dollars or any set amount. I have heard a statement that the total amount that would be available may have been reduced to something less than the one and a half million dollars which was commonly discussed several weeks ago. This may well be so but it is not a matter of grave concern because, once the scheme is approved in principle, I am confident that, as in the case of former drought schemes and flood schemes, the government then has an obligation to meet the total amount which can be proven to be required.

407 Mr STEELE to Mr SPEAKER—

Would it be possible for him to approach the Department of the Northern Territory in respect of the Burmese plywood and do something about these desks in the Assembly?

ANSWER

I will make representations to the Department of Northern Australia to see what can be done in regard to members' desks.

408 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

What land has been vested in the Darwin Reconstruction Commission for its control and administration pursuant to section 12A of the act?

ANSWER

I do not have a copy of the act before me and I don't know the exact wording. I ask him to put that question on notice.

409 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TUXWORTH—

Why has a certain tour operator at Katherine been consistently refused permission to cross the Katherine Gorge Reserve to reach the 17 mile falls?

ANSWER

The answer that I have received from the Northern Territory Reserves Board is that they are reluctant to let anybody pass through the reserve as they are afraid that people will abuse the area, leave rubbish in their wake and generally make a nuisance of themselves. They feel that, until they can get a ranger station in the area, they will not be able to permit anybody to go into the gorge.

410 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

How many buildings has the Darwin Reconstruction Commission erected, repaired or demolished?

ANSWER

I would ask the honourable member to place that question on notice.

411 Mr Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK—

Have the staff appointments been made at the Yirrkala Medical Centre and how many have been appointed? When will the official opening date be announced?

ANSWER

I ask that the question be placed on notice.

412 Mr DONDAS to Mr TUXWORTH—

Did the Northern Territory Government Tourist Bureau consult with the Tourist Promotion Association in Darwin and Katherine before deciding to shift the bureau headquarters to Alice Springs and, if not, why not?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to find out and answer the question this afternoon.

413 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

Will the TB eradication campaign be affected by the reluctance of the Australian Government to assist the beef industry?

ANSWER

That is almost a matter of opinion and therefore is close to the wind as far as Standing Orders are concerned. Within the last couple of weeks, I have made a visit over quite a large area of the Barkly Tablelands stations which is one of the areas that has had some problems with tuberculosis in the past. In the course of my travels, I found that a number of stations had virtually ceased operations for this year. The staff had been put off; they were not active in normal cattle station work; improvements were not being maintained in the normal way. Because of this, I expect some stations will go back in their ability to handle cattle. On top of that, by far the largest cost in a tuberculosis eradication campaign is the cost on the station itself of providing the manpower and the resources to muster the cattle periodically as required by the department in order to put them together so that the veterinary and stock inspection staff can carry out the tests. That cost runs into many thousands of dollars per station and far outweighs anything that is paid in compensation or any contributions made from the public purse. You can't get blood from a stone and if there was an absence of any suitable financial help in the way of carry-on finance and assistance to enable stations to operate even at a reduced level, in many cases it would be quite impossible for the stations to be able to provide the mustering exercise to enable the TB tests to be carried out. Therefore, the national eradication program could be seriously retarded.

414 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Is it a fact that a position exists in the DRC for a Director of Information? If so, how does this position differ from the normal public relations officer? Was the position approved by the Reconstruction Commission or has it been set up by administrative action?

ANSWER

I can perhaps throw some light on the way the Commission makes appointments of this kind. The Commission decided that any senior position equivalent to the second division in the Australian Public Service would have to come individually before the full meeting of the Reconstruction Commission for authorisation and approval. For positions equivalent to the third division in the Australian Public Service, authority for approval was given to the Chairman of the Commission and the Deputy Chairman of the Commission. I feel fairly confident that the particular position that the honourable member for Nightcliff has asked about falls into that category. In any case, I have had a note taken of the question and I will try to find out precise information about how this position differs from a normal PRO position.

415 Mr STEELE to Mr RYAN—

Is he aware that between Berrimah and the Batchelor turn-off there are many narrow strips and ruts caused by workmen rebuilding the road and these are creating a hazard to the traffic? Will he ascertain when this will be repaired?

ANSWER

I will attempt to find out the answers and give them to him at a later date at this sitting.

416 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

What plant, equipment and machinery has the Darwin Reconstruction Commission taken on hire and let out?

ANSWER

I will have a note taken of this question and I will endeavour to find out the details and furnish them to him during the course of these sittings.

417 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

My question relates to the previous question about the Director of Information. Is it a fact that the salary for that position is \$19,000?

ANSWER

I do not know what the exact salary level is. I think there are some 100 positions within the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and I can't recall what each salary level is. I will check that one and advise the honourable member.

418 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TUXWORTH—

What are the circumstances relating to continuous complaints by Mr Kevin Guy who operates guided tours at the 16 mile caves at Katherine for the Reserves Board?

ANSWER

The brief details are that he was given permission to operate and develop the caves as an attractive tourist facility which he has done very well. He now finds himself in the position with the Reserves Board that he can neither get compensation for his capital outlay nor a lease to continue to operate. The Reserves Board has adopted the approach that they want Mr Guy to leave this area by the middle of 1976 and they are standing firm on this request. I am unable to fathom their reasoning for this and I sympathise with Mr Guy very much but I am unable to give any suggestion as to what he may do to get out of his dilemma.

419 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

How much money has been committed and expended to provide transport, accommodation, provisions and amenities for officers and employees of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and their families up to 30 June, 1975?

ANSWER

The financial details of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission really start operating as from the beginning of the next financial year. They are working on special appropriations at the moment until the budget is approved. Then, it will be public knowledge exactly how much money is available and in what categories. In the meantime, I will endeavour to obtain the information and advise the honourable member.

420 Mr PERRON to Mr RYAN—

Did the Fire Department consult with either the City Corporation parks and gardens personnel, the Forestry Department or the Environmental Council before undertaking the burning off of the area around the Darwin High School?

ANSWER

I am unable to answer the question. I will endeavour to make some enquiries during the course of these sittings.

421 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

How many and what directions has the Minister given to the Darwin Reconstruction Commission pursuant to section 10 of the act?

ANSWER

I ask the honourable member to place that question on notice.

422 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK—

What facilities are there in Darwin at present for the holding of female prisoners sentenced by a court or what arrangements are made in such an eventuality?

ANSWER

The situation is unchanged since the honourable member last asked this question. There are basically no facilities it would seem in Darwin at the moment for holding female prisoners under sentence. Any female prisoner sentenced in Darwin or the Top End is being transferred to the Alice Springs prison.

423 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW—

Does she have a policy on the semester versus trimester system in the schools? If so, what is it, and has it been expressed to the Department of Education?

ANSWER

I have discussed this matter at length with the Director of Education. It is going to be discussed again at what I feel is the correct forum as I am representing the Assembly on the Advisory Committee for Education in the Territory. I think that the system generally could well be adopted for Aboriginal schools but for town schools it seems that the term system will continue.

424 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN—

Has he noticed the immense bank up of traffic waiting for their turn at the registration office in Goyder Road? The waiting time at the office there is very great. Can he advise me of the cause for this delay in getting registration and what is being done about it and when?

ANSWER

The situation at the Motor Registry seems to be the same wherever you go although the Northern Territory is blessed with the worst that I have struck to date. They are presently building a new premises for the Motor Registry although I feel that this is not the problem. There appears to be a staff problem. They have recently transferred the licensing section to another place which should have eased the problem at Motor Registry office. However, this does not appear to be the case. I will contact the manager at the Motor Registry and ask him what is being done about trying to improve the situation, and give an answer at a later date in these sittings.

425 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK—

Can he advise how many terminations of pregnancy and hysterectomy operations have been performed each month this year at the Darwin Hospital and what were the reasons for them? Are comparative figures available for 1974?

ANSWER

I do not have the statistics with me this morning. I will endeavour to get them and answer the question later in the session.

426 Mr KENTISH to Mr TAMBLING—

It has come to my notice recently that what are termed full scale local government, or town councils with full authority, are being installed at places on the reserves and settlements, most recently at Maningrida, where a special ceremony occurred last week with the inauguration of a town council with full authority. Incidentally, I was not invited or even notified about this although I am the member for that area. There seems to be something wrong about this; they don't seem to be related to this Assembly, these new town councils. Can the honourable member give me any information about these new councils?

ANSWER

I am not aware of any particular links of Aboriginal town councils with the Local Government Branch of the Department of the Northern Territory. There is no established legislation link or functional role. I am aware that a number of advisory town councils have been formed in Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory and I believe they do play an important role in representing the voice of those communities. However, they are in no way traditional or linked with normal legislation, particularly through this Assembly.

I am informed by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs that legislation is being considered for incorporating or formulating a form of local government and at the moment it is purely a functional arrangement between the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the town council. In many instances they are budget allocations to the town councils, of a similar nature to local government grants, to cover such work as hygiene and minor roads and maintenance within the town council areas.

427 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

I refer to a question I raised yesterday. Has he yet any advice for me on how and when the Parole Board of the Northern Territory will be appointed or when it will be considered finally by the Administrator's Council?

ANSWER

I regret that I have not yet got the answer required by the honourable member for Nightcliff. I hope to obtain it during the course of today and advise her later in the day.

428 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN—

Can he advise me about the two short-wave transmitters which arrived in Australia late last year and were to be installed in Darwin for transmitting local ABC programs to outback areas of the Territory?

ANSWER

After many years of haggling the Northern Territory was about to get 2 short-wave transmitters for transmitting local ABC broadcasts to the outback areas of the Northern Territory. No doubt you, Mr Deputy Speaker, would appreciate this type of service if it was instigated. As the executive member concerned in answering the question, I am certainly not going to offer excuses for the Australian Government because it is obviously their decision to withhold these transmitters. I believe that they did arrive last year and are likely to be used in Victoria which means that we have to start from scratch once again to try and establish the short-wave broadcasts which would greatly be appreciated by outback people. I have written to the Postmaster-General on this subject and asked him if he could give me some advice as to what their moves would be for the future of these broadcasts, and on receiving this I will relay it to the Assembly.

429 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK—

What is the waiting time for elective surgery, other than termination of pregnancy, at the Darwin Hospital and what is the number of outstanding elective surgery cases at the Darwin Hospital?

ANSWER

I don't have this information with me but I will endeavour to get it during this session.

430 Mr ROBERTSON to Miss ANDREW—

Are children in the Tennant Creek Area School being denied an education and turned away from that school because of the continuous shortage of teachers? If this is the case what action is being taken to rectify the situation?

ANSWER

I am informed that the parents of children in 6 classes at the Tennant Creek Area School yesterday received a letter sent by the representative of the Northern Territory Commonwealth Teachers' Federation informing them that if their children belonged to one of these particular classes the children would not receive any instruction at school and they were advised not to send them. The circular listed, with dates, the amount of time that these classes had been without a teacher. The teachers have decided that rather than baby-sit the children from other classes, which has been interrupting the education of the children under their jurisdiction from the beginning of the year, they would refuse to take them. I am informed by the department that a senior officer deputising for the director will arrive in Tennant Creek at lunchtime today to undertake a survey of the situation. We hope to have some information of his findings tonight.

431 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Has the Darwin Reconstruction Commission acquired a block of land on the Esplanade on which it is proposed to build a house for the Secretary of the Department of the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I have heard only a rumour. The Darwin Reconstruction Commission has acquired a prominent block on the Esplanade. I am not certain of the purpose for which it has been acquired but I will make further enquiries and advise the honourable member later this sitting.

432 Mr DONDAS to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Are any unemployed persons in Darwin receiving unemployment benefits or social welfare benefits?

ANSWER

I will find out the answer during the course of the sittings and advise him.

433 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Is it proposed to hold any further meetings of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission in any place other than Darwin?

ANSWER

It is possible that the Darwin Reconstruction Commission may have meetings in places other than Darwin. There is no proposal at this stage to have any such meetings. There was a resolution or a firm expression of opinion and agreement within the commission that meetings of the Reconstruction Commission should be held in Darwin. Regular meetings of the commission have always been held here with one exception and I think that was back in the days of the interim commission anyway. There was one occasion when an urgent consultation was required in order to get certain recommendations to the Minister in the Cabinet and it was necessary for Darwin members of the commission to go to Canberra in order for such a meeting to take place. That was in rather exceptional circumstances and it will be the exception rather than the rule in the future.

434 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN—

Could he tell me the new contractor for installation of postal boxes at the Nhulunbuy Post Office, how many boxes will be installed and when they will complete this contract?

ANSWER

I will attempt to find out and answer this afternoon.

435 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Some time ago I wrote to the Director of Emergency Services, Mr McHenry, asking for information about meat which was given to the people of Darwin by the people of Cairns. I believe 40 tonnes of meat was involved. I asked for information as to when it was distributed, to whom and in what quantities. I am still awaiting a reply some weeks later. I ask the Majority Leader if he would attempt to get this information for me in a fairly short time. They have had notice of these queries for 3 weeks.

ANSWER

I have no direct relationship with the Director of Emergency Services other than the relationship which the Administrator's Council has with that person. However I will use whatever influence I can to obtain the information and expedite the action which the honourable member for Nightcliff has suggested should be taken.

436 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS—

Can he advise me whether the post of the Director of Emergency Services will be redundant after June 30?

ANSWER

As I understand it, the cyclone emergency legislation will expire on June 30. I intend to take no initiative to continue it after that date, nor have I had any approach from government suggesting that I should do so. I take it that the statutory position of Director of Emergency Services will expire with the legislation at that time. There is another disaster emergency organisation which is being set up within the Department of Northern Australia and involving some members of this Assembly; presumably that body will carry on the role for any future work required.

437 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

At the end of this month when the legislation expires, what is to be done with the records presently held by the Permit Section? These records contain a large amount of information about individuals in Darwin. Are they to be destroyed as I believe they should be or, if not, what is to be done with them? Who will have access to them and where will they be kept?

ANSWER

I ask the honourable member of Nightcliff to place that question on notice as I have to obtain the answer elsewhere.

438 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

I must necessarily refer to paragraphs 13, 14 and 15 of the Joint Committee's report on constitutional development for my question to be intelligible. I don't propose to read the full text of it but paragraphs 13, 14 and 15 said that the committee accepted that it was not possible for the urban land function in respect of Darwin to be immediately transferred to the Executive because the Darwin Reconstruction Act would give the urban land authority to the commission for the next 5 years. It went on to say that whilst the committee agreed that the commission needed to have full authority for the reconstruction of Darwin, it considered that the principle recommended in its original report in regard to the urban land function should not be altered; that is to say, it should be a function exercised locally under the authority of this Assembly. Paragraph 15 said that before the Darwin Reconstruction Commission had completed its task the committee would expect that negotiations would take place for the transfer of the Darwin urban land function to the Territory Executive.

I ask whether this statement by the Joint Committee has been considered by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. Will the honourable member put to the commission the proposal that, in view of the Joint Committee's statement, the Darwin Reconstruction Commission should exercise its planning powers only in so far as planning may be necessarily involved in its immediate task of reconstruction during the next 5 years?

ANSWER

I don't believe that paragraph 15 and the preceding paragraphs of the Joint Committee report had been brought to the attention of or consideration by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission as yet. I will undertake to bring this matter before them as the honourable member for Port Darwin has suggested. Certain urban land matters were partly involved in the debate that we had yesterday. As far as amendments to town planning legislation and other urban land matters are concerned, the executive members with responsibilities in those fields are continuing with the drafting of legislation and proceeding as though the authority still rests with this legislature for those matters.

439 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW—

Are educational services in Darwin considered to be now normal?

ANSWER

Most of the schools which were operating previously, with the exception of the 3 that were most badly damaged, are now operating. There were 7260 children attending school as at last Friday. The teacher situation, taking the usual standard of 1 teacher to 30 children is considered to be normal or a little better. However, there are some shortages in more specialised areas.



440 Mr ROBERTSON to Miss ANDREW—

Is she aware of reports which state that the Yirara Aboriginal College has serious structural faults and in fact has been unsatisfactorily built? Is it a fact that a lot of money is currently being spent in repairing that college and, if so, from where are these funds coming?

ANSWER

I am aware that there are serious structural faults in Yirara College. The matter has gone back to the Department of Housing and Construction who have let a contract for repairs. However, the Department of Education will be expected to foot the bill for the repairs.

441 Mr STEELE to Mr RYAN—

I ask this question because of the poor road systems and poor access to the states. Has he taken steps to seek an invitation for a Northern Territory representative to attend state transport ministers' conferences?

ANSWER

Yes, we have taken steps to get to the ATAC conference which takes place in Adelaide next month. I have written to the Minister for Transport, Mr Jones, asking him if he would invite us to the conference. I have also spoken to Dr Patterson who has given his approval for our going to this meeting.

442 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW—

Can she tell me the present situation regarding the proposed Yirrkala school? Have the tenders been sent out or accepted? Have they had a total estimate of the cost of this building? Have they an estimate of the completion date for those buildings?

ANSWER

I ask that the question be placed on notice as I do not yet have the details available.

443 Mr PERRON to Mr RYAN—

Will the honourable member ask the District Telephone Officer to have a public telephone installed at Tuckwell Court to alleviate the present situation which compels pensioners to walk a considerable distance to use a telephone?

ANSWER

I will take what action is necessary to try and establish this phone.

444 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Does he consider that the present Alice Springs court house is a suitable place to conduct the processes of the law? If he doesn't, what plans are in hand for a new court house, or houses if you like, for Alice Springs and where is it proposed that they be built? Having regard for the fact that there is going to be a considerable delay in building, if in fact somebody is going to build a new court house for Alice Springs, is he aware that an extensive space has been leased—since July 1973 the agents tell me—and that the area has never been used for the purpose of a court house in 2 years? Is he aware of what plans are on foot to get that place into operation and, if so, when?

ANSWER

I am aware of the present situation with the Alice Springs court house, having practised in it almost daily for a period of 8 years. I do consider that it has serious defects and the administration of justice is difficult there in the circumstances. The Clerk of the Court has an office which is virtually open to the public and cannot be under any circumstances termed private. The courtroom itself is a quaint, archaic, antediluvian structure—to the use the terms of the honourable Majority Leader in another sense yesterday—and we have seen in the course of the past few weeks that security in this courtroom is very seriously lacking. One of the reasons for that is that it can be entered by about 5 different doors.

These defects, I understand, were to be remedied by the construction of a new courts complex in Alice Springs adjacent to the new police station on the corner of Hartley and Parsons Streets, diagonally opposite the location of the present court house. However plans for this courts complex were delayed because the Central Australian Branch of the National Trust were concerned that an old stone cell used to incarcerate persons in years gone by might be demolished in the course of construction of the new court house and I know that this matter delayed proceedings for at least 12 months. I am not aware of the current situation on construction of the new court house complex. The plans which I did see had some serious defects in that the Clerk of Courts' Registry would have been on an upper floor rather than on the ground floor handy to the public.

As to the area leased, I assume that the honourable member refers to the area leased by the Attorney-General's Department in the REL Building in Parsons Street, Alice Springs. I do not know that this has been leased since I think it was 1972 or 1973—that would certainly be correct. Since then it has been occupied by 1 solicitor and 2 stenographic staff although it is an area, at my estimate, of several thousand square feet. I do understand, although this of course is hearsay, that it was intended for use as an additional courtroom in Alice Springs.

I cannot unfortunately give the honourable member any timetable for the construction of a new courts complex; however, I shall certainly take the matter up with the Attorney-General's Department and give the honourable member a written answer in the course of the next few weeks.

445 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK—

I refer to the brutal battering to death of a woman at Goulburn Island by drunks about 11 days ago, on June 7, and numerous incidents of this nature in the Arnhem electorate caused by liquor but not always leading to death or injury. Can he tell me if any positive or corrective action is being taken to prevent this sort of occurrence on reserves?

ANSWER

The matter of police patrols and so forth on various Aboriginal reserves and settlements in outback areas has been one of concern to me for some time. In my own electorate in recent times we have had incidents where the necessity for police attendance and patrols and so forth has come under scrutiny. The Commissioner of Police advises that the cost of establishing a police station in those areas is now estimated at \$700,000 per station. The funds required to establish stations on a number of localities which are in urgent need of them are therefore considerable and at the moment beyond the budget of that department. Heaven knows what they will get in the future since they have been finally taken away. I will take the matter up further and see what can be done to ensure more patrols and more enforcement of the law for the protection of life and property in the more remote areas of the Territory.

446 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr TUXWORTH—

Does he know whether financial and practical assistance is available to Aboriginal communities to help develop tourist attractions and facilities in remote areas and on Aboriginal reserves?

ANSWER

I have not yet received a reply from the Minister for Tourism. I wrote to him some 2 months ago seeking his advice on whether financial assistance or any other assistance would be available to Aborigines to help develop tourist facilities in their areas. I asked him if these people would have access to the tourist loans that were available through the Development Bank or whether this inquiry should be channelled through the minister representing Aborigines in the federal parliament. Shortly after he would have received this letter, there was a certain amount of movement in cabinet positions in Canberra and I do not doubt that his question has been delayed in being answered because of this. As soon as I have an answer I will advise the honourable member for Tiwi.

447 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN—

I understand on good authority that the ABC intends to continue the Darwin-Katherine television from Queensland via the microwave link but there are not any plans for the Northern Territory programs from Darwin, including proper rural shows or full news programs. Bearing this in mind I ask if he will protest against this situation with the ABC head office in Sydney.

ANSWER

I will follow this through with the ABC.

448 Mr DONDAS to Dr LETTS—

Is he aware of any move to displace the community creche now located in the previous Essington House? Will he make efforts to ensure that the creche is not relocated?

ANSWER

Information came to my ears only this morning that the Darwin Reconstruction Commission was interested in Essington House as a site and a building for other purposes. I have not yet had the opportunity to follow the matter up but I will do so and inform him of the result of my further inquiries.

449 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS—

Who owns the unbranded cattle on Aboriginal reserves?

ANSWER

This matter has been decided in the past by courts or by agreement of adjoining landholders with people on Aboriginal reserves. Mr Justice Woodward made a recommendation in his report that this issue should be resolved by negotiation within a period of 2 years between the government, the Aboriginal people and any adjoining landowners. I do not believe that there is a simple one-word answer to the question.

450 Mr STEELE to Dr LETTS—

Would he investigate the need to speed up the final contour survey of the surge line? I understand the survey is being handled by an agent of the commission and it is expected that another 6 to 8 weeks will elapse before the policy is determined.

ANSWER

Yes.

451 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

It is understood that the Darwin Reconstruction Commission is seeking views of this Assembly on the surge line. Does the Majority Leader intend putting forward a point of view of all members of the Assembly or does he intend that each member submit his own private view on the surge line?

ANSWER

There was no formal resolution to the effect that the views of the Assembly would be sought. If such a resolution was carried, I would take it that the Darwin Reconstruction Commission would communicate with the Speaker of this Assembly and then the Speaker would in some way arrange for the views of the whole Assembly to be sought. When the matter was discussed and the City Corporation's representative on the DRC indicated that he was going to have the matter referred to the Corporation, I said that the Assembly would be interested, in particular those members of the Assembly who reside in Darwin. It was arranged that a meeting would be held with the gentleman who is supposedly an expert on these matters and who has been retained by the commission to give advice on it. I believe that that meeting did take place but I did not attend it. The honourable member for Nightcliff may have been away at the time the meeting was called, but there has not been any formal request to the Assembly to express a view. As far as I am concerned, they could be given individually or collectively.

452 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr RYAN—

In view of the increased traffic on dirt roads in the rural areas which is causing a hazard and inconvenience to road users and children, what plans are there for sealing roads in the areas?

ANSWER

I assume the honourable member for Tiwi is referring to the Berrimah-Howard Springs area. I would suggest that he put the question on notice.

453 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK—

Apart from the Casuarina Hospital complex, what medical services does the Department of Health intend providing for the Casuarina district in the future?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to get an accurate reply for the member later today.

454 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr RYAN—

The ABC some time ago proposed to have a half hour daily program directed to the Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory. Has this been affected by the decision to locate radio transmitters in Victoria rather than in the Northern Territory as originally planned?

ANSWER

The decision to implement this program still stands and I have been told that this could be started in a short time. However, the effect of the program would be greatly inhibited by the fact that they would be unable to transmit the program to the more remote areas of the Northern Territory. The Aboriginal population residing around the major centres would receive the program through the normal transmitting facilities of the ABC but those Aborigines living in settlements and isolated areas would be unable to share in these benefits.

455 Mr PERRON to Mr TUXWORTH—

Could he advise the reason behind the surplus stocks of fish in Darwin which fishermen are unable to sell?

ANSWER

A study of this is currently being made by both the Department and the Fishermens' Cooperative. As a result of the cyclone, there are half as many fishing boats operating out of the port. There are 27 000 fewer people available to consume fish but there is still a discrepancy in the total consumption by the population and the amount being exported to southern capitals. The study being undertaken at the moment is to ascertain whether the local distributors are importing. It also involves a study into whether there is any irregularity in the import of fish into the Territory at the moment. Further, they are considering the effect that the prices of other commodities such as meat may be having on fish consumption.

456 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

My question refers to question 378 on the notice paper which asked certain questions about the proposal to install swimming pools in the homes of senior public servants. When can I expect an answer to this question?

ANSWER

I will see that the matter is taken up with the Department which is providing information with a view to expediting it.

457 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Dr LETTS—

There has recently been an increased interest in the Darwin area for an Australian Atomic Energy Commission. How many new employees and their dependants does the Atomic Energy Commission propose to house in Darwin and will this strain housing areas?

ANSWER

There have been some very strange goings-on with government instrumentalities in Darwin in recent days over their accommodation in which I have become personally involved in a sense. Qantas sold some of their accommodation units to TAA who subsequently disposed of theirs to somebody else and then Qantas decided to come back in and the Atomic Energy Commission is also mixed up in the whole of this accommodation shambles. None of these instrumentalities have helped the cause of the people of Darwin, especially some of those who are living in some of the accommodation that legally belong to them. As far as the Atomic Energy Commission is concerned, they have 5 additional staff to come into Darwin—and I think 12 children are with those people—and they will be taking up quite a bit of accommodation which is administered by the Department of Property and Services.

458 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING—

When will a system of releasing land by auction be recommended and how many blocks will be available between June 1975 and June 1976?

ANSWER

I am unable to give a specific answer to the honourable member's question. However, I am aware that the Department of Northern Territory Lands Branch is currently in consultation with the Darwin Reconstruction Commission on the matter of availability of land. Whilst it must be appreciated that the first priority is the reconstruction program, I know that this matter is being pursued to make available blocks at an early date for people in Darwin. However I do not see much hope of it coming about in 1975 or 1976.

459 Mr PERRON to Mr RYAN—

Can the honourable member confirm that contracts for the supply of certain building materials from Western Australia have been cancelled and will now be supplied from South Australia by road transport due to the problems associated with sea freight from Western Australia?

ANSWER

It is a fact that contracts with Western Australian companies have been cancelled because of the doubtfulness of sea transport from Western Australia. The doubt is not actually with the sea transport; their ships are quite reliable. However, we have a certain amount of bother with our wharf; the personnel there seem to take delight in turning these ships away.

During the last sittings, we had a situation where the ships had left the port still carrying the cargo which is needed by Darwin and the Northern Territory. This city is once again in a similar situation. The Gertrude Bakke has left Darwin. This ship was carrying Japanese cars which now will be unloaded in Western Australia and will be subject to higher freight costs because they have to be transported back to Darwin. The Nyanda is in port but it is not able to be unloaded because of the strike and also is unable to leave the port because they will not let it go out. They have 500 tons of freight that is required at Wyndham. The owners gave the assurance that they would return to Darwin after having delivered perishables to Wyndham but the wharflies decided that they would not allow the ship to leave the port. I do not know how long this situation is to continue but, if it does continue, our friends down at the wharf could find themselves permanently with nothing to do because people running a business in shipping are not going to continue bringing ships to Darwin just to have them sit in the port. They will return to the port unloaded. I therefore suggest that there may be some action taken.

460 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTIS—

On Tuesday, I asked him to table a copy of a questionnaire that he claimed was marked “confidential”. I asked him whether he has yet come to understand that the word “confidential” on the top of the form refers to the information to be supplied and not to the form itself? Will he table that form today?

ANSWER

I accept the view that the word “confidential” would refer to his personal details about people rather than the form being confidential in the sense that it is not to be made available to other people. I would be happy to table it.

461 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTIS—

I direct the honourable member for Victoria River's attention to his answer to question 380. I asked him whether he was aware that citizens of Darwin were being subjected to questionnaires and in some cases were being harassed by employees of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. I also asked him to take steps to ensure that householders are informed that they are under no obligation to answer any question put to them.

The answer I received was this: “I am not aware of harassment of citizens by employees of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. If the honourable member will provide me with information of specific cases of harassment I will have them investigated. I am aware that the Reconstruction Commission is posing questions on important matters to the people of Darwin but I am not aware of instances of the Commission advising persons that they are obliged to answer questions”. I direct the honourable member's attention to the question I asked him. Will he take steps to make sure that householders are informed that they are under no obligation to answer these questions? I did not ask him or suggest to him that people were told they had to answer questions but I was insisting that people be told that they did not have to answer the questions unless they wanted to.

ANSWER

I will bring this matter to the attention of the Reconstruction Commission with a view to having the matter clarified by the surveyors to the people they are interviewing.

462 Mr DONDAS to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Can he give any indication as to how long the funds of the Darwin Cyclone Relief Trust Fund will last?

ANSWER

It is expected that the funds will be totally dispersed within the next 6 weeks to 2 months.

Whilst on my feet, I will answer a question from the honourable member for Casuarina yesterday as to whether any persons in Darwin were receiving employment benefits. I have been informed by an official of the Department of Labour that no such benefits are being paid in Darwin at the present time.

463 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN—

Has there been an official tabled report on the failure of communications during Cyclone Tracy? If there has been a report, can he obtain one for me?

ANSWER

I do not know of any report and, if I can obtain one, I will see that the honourable member for Nhulunbuy gets a copy of it.

464 Mr KENTISH to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Are any other payments being made to the reputed 350 unemployed in Darwin in lieu of unemployment benefits? I refer to ration or sustenance allowances?

ANSWER

I will take this up with the Department of Labour and the Department of Social Security today.

465 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

Is it a fact that within the Commonwealth Public Service female public servants with dependants and not necessarily living with their husbands are being denied the opportunity of going on the housing list simply because they are females, even though they have dependants and are permanent? If this is a fact, has the honourable member discussed it with the department and does he agree with it?

ANSWER

This is the first occasion that this matter has been brought to my attention. I will discuss it today and hopefully provide an answer to the member later this day.

466 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN—

Has the PMG any future plans to install a new telephone at the Gove Airport?

ANSWER

I ask that he put the question on notice.

467 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr TAMBLING—

Prior to the cyclone work had commenced on Howard Springs Primary School. What plans do the government have for commencing reconstruction? What percentage is the school planned for and for how many years will the capacity be capable of serving the area before extensions are required?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to obtain the information today for the honourable member.

468 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Does he consider that executive members of this Assembly owe first allegiance to affairs of the Assembly?

ANSWER

I think that all members of this Assembly owe first allegiance to the Assembly. I would be a shining example of that in that I have never missed one day's sitting in the time that I have been in the Council or the Assembly. Possibly the honourable member for Nightcliff has in mind that one of our executive members is absent today. I would add that it is common practice in parliaments for a minister—in our case an executive member—to have to be away on other matters in which case the responsibility for answering questions or carrying the work of that member is transferred to another member. In the case of the honourable member for Education and Consumer Affairs, the honourable member for Community Development will be handling her work during the course of the day. When the honourable member for Nightcliff has the advantage of belonging to a majority group that forms an executive, she might understand better how these things work.

469 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TAMBLING—

What progress was made in discussions yesterday between the Department of Education and the striking school teachers in the Tennant Creek Area School?

ANSWER

The results of the conference yesterday have not been relayed to me. I will endeavour to seek the information today.

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